**Advent Lessons**

Week 4- **LOVE**

**Scripture:** John 3:16, Matthew 2:1-12, 2 Corinthians 9:15

**Objective:** Children will learn that God loved us so much, He sent His Son, Jesus. Jesus is the greatest gift of all!

**Materials:** wrapped box from Lessons 1-3, drawing paper, markers, Bibles, LED candles (3 purple, 1 pink 1 white), Advent Wreath.

**Preparation:**

1. Tape drawing paper to an easel or smooth wall.
2. Cut a star out of paper and tape to a wall.
3. Make copies of the “Magi Skit.” (attached)
4. Optional: Provide props, such as robes, paper crowns, and small boxes labeled: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

**Procedure:**

1. Invite children, one at a time, to draw or pantomime something they want for Christmas. Give the group 3 guesses for each drawing or pantomime. Give all children an opportunity to share.
2. Pass the wrapped gift box to each child. Invite children to guess the contents. Choose the youngest child to unwrap the gift and share with the group. Lead children to say, “The Messiah has come!”
3. **Ask:** *What did God give to us at Christmas? (Jesus) Why did God give us Jesus?*  Ask children to recite and/or find John 3:16 in their Bibles. **Say:** *Messiah means “Savior.” God gave us Jesus to save us from our sin because He loves us!*
4. Perform a short skit from Matthew 2:1-12. Assign reading parts for the narrator, one Magi, King Herod, and a Chief Priest. Give the Magi, King Herod, and Chief Priests the script. Involve other children by giving them the roles of the two Magi, chief priests and teachers, and Mary and Joseph. After the skit, **ask:** *Why were the Magi following the star? Why was King Herod disturbed? How did the Magi show their love for Jesus?*
5. Invite children to gather around the Advent Wreath. Turn on the first, second, third, and fourth LED candles. Turn off the lights. Read 2 Corinthians 9:15. **Say:** *The fourth candle represents love.* (Turn on the white candle.) *The last candle represents Christ, who is our hope, peace, joy, and love. As we pray, think of a way you can show your love and appreciation for Christ’s love.*
6. Invite children to say a sentence prayer, thanking God for His great gift of love for us.

**Mission Project:** Lead children to make a nativity ornament. (See photo for idea or create your own.) Encourage children to give their ornament to a neighbor and share about God’s love at Christmas. Children might say to a neighbor: *I made this ornament for you. It reminds us that Jesus is God’s gift to us.*

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**Magi Skit**

**Narrator:** Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea. This happened while Herod was king of Judea. After Jesus’ birth, Wise Men from the east came to Jerusalem. They asked,

**Magi:** Where is the child who has been born to be king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose. Now we have come to worship him.

**Narrator:** When King Herod heard about it, he was very upset. Everyone in Jerusalem was troubled too. So Herod called together all the chief priests of the people. He also called the teachers of the law.

**King Herod:** Where is the Christ going to be born?

**Chief Priest:** In Bethlehem in Judea. This is what the prophet has written. He said,

 ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
    are certainly not the least important among the towns of Judah.
A ruler will come out of you.
    He will rule my people Israel like a shepherd.’

**Narrator:** Then Herod secretly called for the Wise Men. He found out from them exactly when the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem. He said,

**King Herod:** Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report it to me. Then I can go and worship him too.

**Narrator:** After the Wise Men had listened to the king, they went on their way. The star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them. It finally stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy.The Wise Men went to the house. There they saw the child with his mother Mary. They bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures. They gave him gold, frankincense and myrrh. But God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they returned to their country on a different road.

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