

# LOOK Around the Stable



Children's  
Messages for  
Advent & Christmas Day



# Looking for a Place

## A Children's Sermon for the First Week of Advent

*And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. Luke 2:7*

Hello, everyone. Today, we begin the season of Advent. It is a time for us to look around and see the signs of the coming of Jesus as a baby in Bethlehem on that first Christmas. In this children's sermon, I want to think about places you see around you. On that first Christmas, Mary and Joseph had a hard time finding a place to stay in Bethlehem because there were so many people there for the census that was taking place. But eventually they did find a place, the stable. It was the place where Jesus was born and the place where Mary laid Jesus in a manger bed so that he could rest. This humble, lowly place ended up being the perfect place for Jesus to be born. It showed the world that Jesus came to be gentle and humble and lowly. And Jesus wants us to be the same during this Advent season.

So let's think about the places we go from day to day and how we can live this lesson out. One place we find ourselves is right here at church. This is a place where we can come bow our heads to Jesus in prayer, humbly asking him to listen to our pleas. This is a place where we can confess our sins to Jesus and receive forgiveness. We can also listen to the words of the Bible here and sing songs of praise to the Christ Child whom we honor and adore. This place also gives us a chance to talk to others who believe in Jesus and share the stories of Jesus with them.

Another place where we find ourselves this Advent is at home. Our homes give us a chance to rest at night in our bedrooms on comfy beds (and not rough straw). Jesus comes at Christmas so that we can rest in him all our days and be at peace. Our homes are also where we eat many breakfasts, lunches and dinners. We recall that Jesus is at the table with us whenever we have a meal together with our families. That is why we often pray before and after meals. In addition, our homes provide us with shelter from bad weather, and they keep us safe from danger. Our homes remind us that Jesus is here to protect us even more than our homes can. Jesus protects us from the devil, the world and our own sinful flesh. Home is where we talk with people in our families and grow in love for God and one another. Home is where the heart is, we often say. So home reminds us, too, of the love that Jesus has for every one of us, wherever we may live.

School is yet another place where we can look around and see Jesus at work in our lives. Take a look around your classroom this week, and watch for students helping each other with their homework. See if you can find your classmates working together on a project. Open your eyes to see someone who is sad or lonely whom you can sit with or talk to. This is Jesus making things happen within you and through you. School can be a scary place sometimes, but Advent is a time to remember that we should never be afraid. Jesus will always be with us to give us strength to face anything that takes place in this place.

There is still one more place to think about. That place is heaven. Jesus came to earth on Christmas to prepare a place for us in heaven. He came to die on the cross and then rise again so that the doors of heaven would be open to us as God's forgiven and beloved children. What a wonderful place that will be. Let us pray:

*Dear Jesus, thank you for taking our place on the cross so that we might live for you in forgiveness and love in all the places you send us. Amen.*

Activities for the First Week of Advent

# Looking for a Place

## Scramble

Unscramble these words that are places where you go.

MHEO \_\_\_\_\_

OSCOLH \_\_\_\_\_

HHCRUC \_\_\_\_\_

ETRSO \_\_\_\_\_

APKR \_\_\_\_\_

RTEATEH \_\_\_\_\_

Home, School, Church, Store, Park, Theater

## Word Search

Find these words that were mentioned in the children's sermon.

Z	J	O	S	E	P	H	T	C	N	P	S
A	T	L	M	U	B	U	B	I	Q	E	R
D	M	C	E	N	S	U	S	R	C	O	J
V	I	M	I	F	S	E	L	C	F	P	E
E	L	A	V	N	A	Z	K	L	D	L	I
N	P	R	O	G	K	A	V	E	N	E	E
T	N	Y	D	V	E	N	T	W	D	O	P
J	E	S	U	S	J	B	F	O	U	R	F
W	O	N	M	Y	L	K	C	X	B	F	G
C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	G	C	Q
P	C	A	N	D	L	E	S	H	V	G	W
P	L	A	C	E	S	Y	H	X	R	T	E

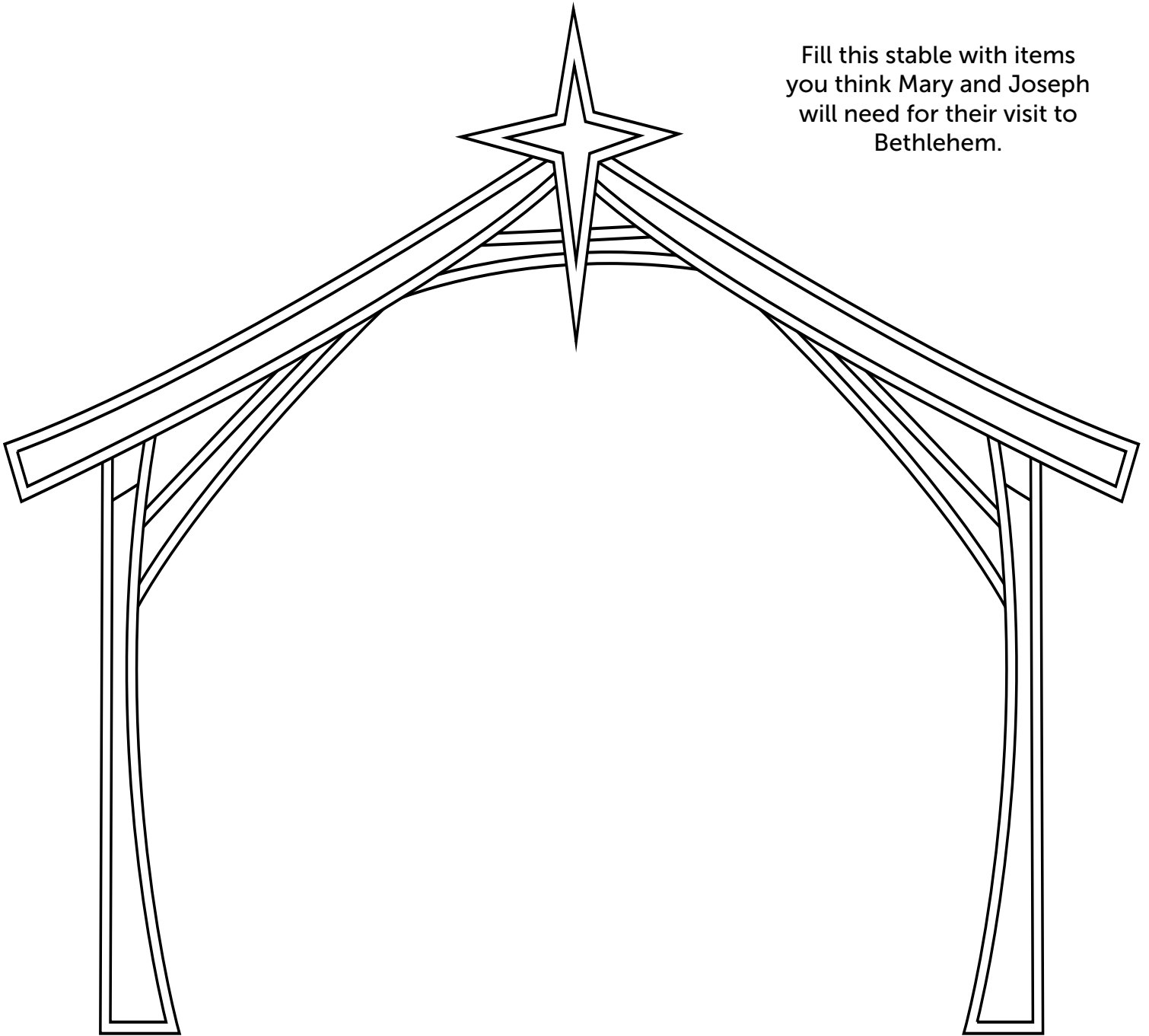
CENSUS • PEOPLE • CHRISTMAS • MARY •  
JOSEPH • ADVENT • JESUS • PLACES

## Drawing

Draw a picture of Bethlehem.

# Looking for a Place

Coloring Sheet for the First Week of Advent



Fill this stable with items  
you think Mary and Joseph  
will need for their visit to  
Bethlehem.

But you, O Bethlehem ... who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose  
coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. —Micah 5:2

# Look at the Animals

## A Children's Sermon for the Second Week of Advent

*The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. Isaiah 65:25*

Hello, everyone. We are in the Second Week in Advent, and we are continuing to look around for glimpses of Jesus in our lives as we await his arrival as a baby in Bethlehem on Christmas. When we think about the first Christmas, we remember that Mary and Joseph spent the night in a stable, which is the name for a place where animals live. And remember that the manger where Jesus slept was really just like a bowl your dog or cat eats out of. So animals were very important to the story of the birth of Jesus. Let's take a look at some of them now.

A donkey was probably the animal that Mary and Joseph rode on from their hometown in Nazareth to Bethlehem to be registered for the census. One day Jesus would ride a donkey into the town of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to be greeted by shouts of praise and waving palm branches. This would be the beginning of the road to his death on the cross on Good Friday and his resurrection on Easter. The donkey reminds us also to be humble and to live for Jesus without drawing attention to ourselves.

Another animal that likely lived in the stable was a cow. A cow is an animal that provides us with milk to nourish our bodies. Cows are a good reminder to us that Jesus came to nourish us spiritually with his holy word and he promised to care for us and love us without end. A cow is a way for us to remember to read the Bible or have someone read it to us.

Have you ever thought that there might have been a goat in the stable with Jesus? Goats can be funny when they bounce around the way they do. Maybe Mary and Joseph laughed when they saw a goat dancing and playing. The goat is God's invitation to rejoice. We have lots of things to rejoice over this Advent season, but the greatest thing we have to rejoice in is Jesus.

Have you ever heard a rooster crow at the break of dawn? Roosters are God's alarm clock. They tell us to wake up and be watchful. The season of Advent is kind of like God's rooster in that way. God wants us to stay alert and look around for Jesus. One day he will return again to bring us to heaven. So keep your eyes open for that. In the meantime, keep waking up each morning ready to live for Jesus in thanksgiving for all his love and mercy toward us.

What about flies? There were probably flies around the animals in the stable. There usually are flies wherever animals are. They can be annoying to us, and perhaps Mary and Joseph had to swat some flies away from baby Jesus' face. Believe it or not, flies do have a place in God's creation, mostly as food for birds and other creatures. So it is good for us to remember that even some things that can be unpleasant to us are important in the grand scheme of things.

God created animals of all kinds to fill the earth. The presence of animals at the place where Jesus was born is a good reminder to us that God created the whole world, and he created you and me to live for Jesus. Let us pray:

*Dear God, thank you for the gift of animals in this world. Help us to learn from them more about you and about your gift of Jesus. Amen.*

Activities for the Second Week of Advent

# Look at the Animals

## Scramble

Unscramble these names of animals.

EDNYKO \_\_\_\_\_

WCO \_\_\_\_\_

AGTO \_\_\_\_\_

OSRORTE \_\_\_\_\_

FYL \_\_\_\_\_

PESHE \_\_\_\_\_

Donkey, Cow, Goat, Rooster, Fly, Sheep

## Word Search

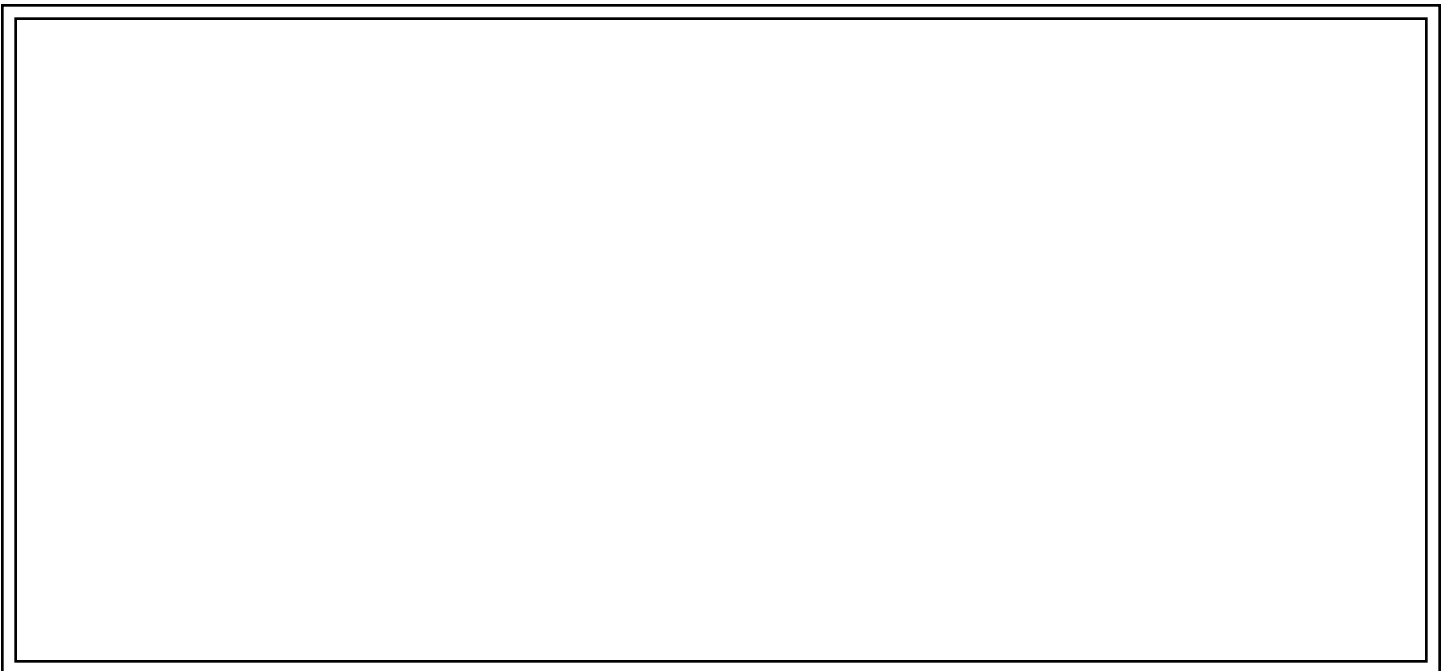
Find these words that were mentioned  
in the children's sermon.

R	E	J	O	I	C	E	T	C	S	T	C
Q	A	I	N	Z	F	E	D	B	Z	O	R
B	A	R	A	G	E	C	H	A	I	X	E
H	U	M	B	L	E	J	N	U	O	P	A
S	E	A	R	T	H	L	E	Y	J	D	T
B	T	I	S	R	D	O	N	Z	H	W	I
R	O	C	U	V	Y	F	P	G	M	L	O
A	L	A	R	M	C	L	O	C	K	N	N
N	O	U	R	I	S	H	D	U	C	H	T
I	M	P	O	R	T	A	N	T	W	S	U
W	A	K	E	U	P	G	B	N	P	D	E

HUMBLE • ALARM CLOCK • CREATION •  
WAKE UP • REJOICE • IMPORTANT • NOURISH

## Drawing

Draw a picture of your  
favorite animal.



# Look at the Animals

Coloring Sheet for the Second Week of Advent

Behold, your king is  
coming to you; righteous  
and having salvation is he,  
humble and mounted on  
a donkey, on a colt, the  
foal of a donkey.

—Zechariah 9:9

