

HAY!

A STABLE
EXPERIENCE

...For the Littlest Children



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HAY!

A Stable Experience! A Preschool Christmas Program



HAY! Is an easy-to-prepare Christmas program exclusively for children ages 3-5. Include younger students as desired. Feature costumed little ones in an appealing presentation of the story of Jesus' birth.

HAY! Is rehearsed during Sunday School or Preschool Day Care with their teachers. Gather all preschool children for a final dress rehearsal and this delightful Christmas program is set to go!

HAY! Is a 20 minute presentation sprinkled with humor and inspiration while telling the story of the night Jesus was born. Is there anything sweeter than preschool children in complete Bethlehem costume? Is there a better way to show them the story of Jesus than to have the grown ups enter into the fun and help them find the baby? Children become characters in the Nativity scene and hear the story read by a special guest.

HAY! Involves the audience singing Christmas Carols. Teaching several simple songs to the little participants and music helps HAY! Become a charming presentation completed by the youngest among us!

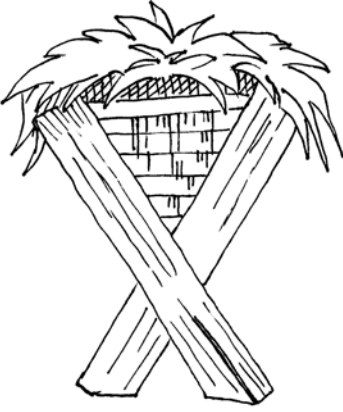
HAY! Concludes with a playful STABLE PARTY! Serve snacks, play Christmas music and celebrate!

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Preschool Christmas Director ...Creating A Stable Environment!

This Christmas presentation is designed for preschool children ages 3-5. If you lead a church preschool, day care center, Christian preschool or home school, this is the fun, easy narrated program for you.

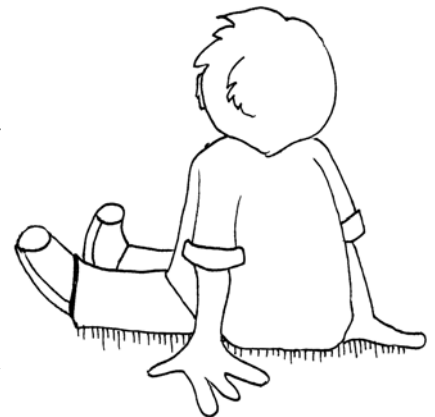
Lead your children into a celebration of the Bethlehem story. This is easy when you create well organized leadership teams.

Since this is a program created for preschool children, it is necessary to have enough children to carry out the program. A little 'cheating' on the upper age end is okay. Fill in with Kindergarten students if you need them!

Ask small group leaders or parents to organize their children complete with props or costumes for their participation in the Nativity scene. Be prepared to help the leaders but for the most part they should be able to handle the material. The result will be a precious telling of the Bethlehem story using the youngest among us.

Prepare your heart. Parents, grandparents and guests will be blessed. Mistakes become memories and children will be enthusiastic to participate. Relax and let it happen! If you have a sense of humor, now is the time to bring it out and use it.

Are you are thinking, "Why me? I cannot do this!" Put those feelings aside and dive into this charming presentation of Christmas as seen through the eyes of 'Peeka', a grown up friend of Mary and Joseph. She's a little trouble maker but she is an eyewitness to history. She tells the story of Jesus as only a true friend can, with humor and love. Discover how eagerly preschool children hold onto Peeka and her amazing story of a night she will never forget!



Neither will they.

Young students take to the stage in full costume to re-create the Bethlehem stable scene. They sing simple songs that you insert as desired. Peekka helps them speak simply at appropriate moments.

DELEGATE. Trust the staff to carry out their tasks. Never apologize when asking people to help.

PRACTICE A POSITIVE APPROACH. This little program is worth extra effort in the midst of personal holiday preparations, party going and travel. Simple planning is appreciated by everyone. Statements like “We can’t do it”, “We never did it this way”, or “No one wants to do it”, have no place in this event. If the Christmas Director’s attitude is right, even the grouchiest saint responds cheerfully!

PRAY! Pray for the staff, students and set-up. Take all details before the Lord and then—RELAX! God is in control. Carry out tasks at hand.

PLAN! Read the entire program, make a personal copy from the master copy and mark areas requiring special attention. Adapt the material to fit the size of your preschool group. Eliminate what cannot be used, divide parts according to available participants. Combine parts when necessary.

Add preschool songs as desired and don’t forget to include special music or Christmas Carols that the audience can sing! We make musical suggestions and let you make the final decisions.

PREPARE! Hopefully you have ordered **HAY!** With more than one month lead time. Copy materials for individual leaders and assign responsibility for practice to each teacher/leader.

Some groups enjoy memorization and others avoid it. Since this program is based on story telling in the form of Peekka’s experience, it is possible to read parts. If you desire memorization, lead time must be longer and more intensive rehearsal is essential.



AT A GLANCE

This is a program sample. Insert favorite Christmas Carols and Special Music wherever it is appropriate. Consider the total time as you plan music options.

PRELUDE

PARADE OF THE CHILDREN

PEEKA'S ENTRANCE

PEEKA'S JOURNAL:
Hay!

A Stable Experience

CONCLUSION

THE STABLE PARTY!





ADAPTING HAY! A STABLE EXPERIENCE

Preview and adapt **HAY!** To fit the needs of your preschool. **HAY!** Is designed to last about 20 minutes depending upon time required for special music. "The Stable Party" is not included in this time frame and is an optional event.

SMALL CHURCH/SCHOOL

If your group is small, remove segments that require more people than available. Combine parts so fewer people are needed. Eliminate what you cannot do. Use children who are younger or older than the target group. Adults are crucial to the small church/school presentation. Ask a variety of teens and adults to participate. Some people may participate several times.

MEDIUM CHURCH/SCHOOL

Adaptations take the form of personal preference. Choose presentations you personally like and eliminate the rest. Tell the Christmas story but don't leave out anything important!

LARGE CHURCH/SCHOOL

Organize speakers, snack makers, servers, prop master, sound and lighting staff, musicians and others who make the program exciting. Use as many people as possible.

A STABLE PARTY

Ask an adult Sunday School class, women's group or loving parents to take responsibility for the party. They decorate, plan, prepare food and arrange clean up. *The Stable Party* is a wonderful conclusion for little ones to show off their costumes. It is definitely an option. If time does not allow, the program will be complete without it.



CHRISTMAS MUSIC!



Choose familiar Christmas Carols to be sung by the audience. Include hymnal page numbers in a printed program or illuminate words on a screen. Coordinate music with church or school musicians.

Christmas Carols

Include traditional Christmas Carols. This music is sung by guests and not by the preschool students. Choose Carols you like the best and place them wherever you prefer within the program.

Preschool Music

We have included preschool music suggestions that may work well. These are words only. Choose several short songs. We found a collection of nursery rhyme melodies with Christmas words. There are many more songs than needed but we include them all for your enjoyment and a large selection for many group sizes. Sorry—no piano music available from our end!

Teach the preschool children the words in the weeks preceding the program. Place the songs anywhere you desire in the program. No piano accompaniment is required. You may choose to forego preschool music if time is an issue.

Special Music

Feature local church and community talent. These musical options are NOT in the existing program but may be inserted where desired. Think about time limits during planning stages.

VOCAL SOLO
VOCAL GROUP (DUET-TRIO-QUARTET)
CHILDREN/ADULT CHOIR

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE
HANDBELL/CHIME CHOIR
INSTRUMENTAL SOLO



Preschool Christmas Songs



If you do not have favorite preschool Christmas songs, consider teaching your little ones new words to familiar melodies. No piano is needed. Let them sing a capella in all their 'little voice' glory. We provide the words but we do not provide piano sheet music or CD accompaniment.

When choosing extra material for the program, consider how much time preschool children can sit still and be quiet. Shorter is better but you know your group best.

THREE WISE MEN

(Tune: Three Blind Mice)

Three wise men, three wise men,
Traveling far, See a bright star.
They found the Savior in Bethlehem,
They fell on their knees and they worshiped Him,
Never before has there ever been
A Baby like Him, A Baby like Him.

TAKE ME OUT TO THE STABLE

(Tune: Take Me Out To The Ball game)

Take me out to the stable, out to where Christ was born.
Show me the manger He used for His bed.
Show me the sweet doves who cooed by His head.
And let's look way up at the heavens, look for the star where He lay.
For it's why-we-have Christmas morning,
It's Jesus' Birthday!

J-E-S-U-S

(Tune: B-I-N-G-O)

The Lord above us gave His Son and Jesus was His name-o.
J-E-S-U-S! J-E-S-U-S! J-E-S-U-S!



And Jesus was His name-o.
THE BABY IN THE MANGER
(Tune: The Wheels On The Bus)

The cow in the manger went moo-moo-moo
Moo-moo-moo! Moo-moo-moo.
The cow in the manger went moo-moo-moo,
All through the night.

The hay on the ground went crunch-crunch-crunch....(repeat)
All through the night.

The Baby in the manger went waa-waa-waa (repeat)
All through the night.

His mother Mary went ssh-ssh-ssh (repeat)
All through the night.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS
(Tune: Happy Birthday)

On the first Christmas Day
From the Father above,
Came the little Lord Jesus,
To show His great love.

Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
I love you dear Jesus,
Happy birthday to you.

MARY HAD A BABY BOY
(Tune: Mary Had A Little Lamb)

Mary had a baby boy, baby boy, baby boy.
Mary had a baby boy
And she named him Jesus.

He was in a manger, manger, manger
He was in a manger
Sleeping in the hay.



The shepherds came to visit him, visit him, visit him.
The shepherds came to visit him
Because the angels sent them.

The wise men brought him three nice gifts,
Three nice gifts, three nice gifts.
The wise men brought him three nice gifts.
Frankincense and gold and myrrh.

MARY HAD A BABY

(Tune: The More We Get Together)

Mary had a baby, a baby, a baby.
Mary had a baby, one glorious night.

She named the baby Jesus, dear Jesus, dear Jesus,
She named the baby Jesus,
'Cause God told her too.

The shepherds came to worship, to worship, to worship.
The shepherds came to worship
The newborn King.

The star above was shining, was shining, was shining.
The star above was shining
On Jesus sweet face.

Joseph gave him baby hugs, baby hugs, baby hugs.
Joseph gave him baby hugs
And Jesus was glad.

'TIS CHRISTMAS

(Tune: Away In A Manger)

'Tis Christmas! 'Tis Christmas! The Christmas bells ring.
The birthday of Jesus, Our Savior and King.
'Tis Christmas! 'Tis Christmas! The candles all glow;
The birthday of Jesus, Let everyone know.



'Tis Christmas! 'Tis Christmas! The Christmas star shines.
The birthday of Jesus, A glad, happy time!
'Tis Christmas, 'Tis Christmas! Our Bible recalls,
The birthday of Jesus, god's love gift to all.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO JESUS

(Tune: Happy Birthday To You)

On the first Christmas Day, From the Father above,
Came the little Lord Jesus, To show us god's love.

Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you.
I love you, dear Jesus. Happy Birthday to you.

JESUS CAME

(Tune: Deep And Wide)

Jesus came, Jesus came, Had a manger for His tiny bed.
Jesus came, Jesus came, Had a manger for His tiny bed.

Angels sang, Angels sang, Told the shepherds Baby Jesus came.
Angels sang, Angels sang, Told the shepherds Baby Jesus came.

Star above, Star above, Told the wise men Baby Jesus came.
Star above, Star above, Told the wise men Baby Jesus came.

Jesus grew, Jesus grew, As a Man He made the sick ones well.
Jesus grew, Jesus grew, As a Man He made the sick ones well.

Jesus gave, Jesus gave, Gave Himself to take away our sin.
Jesus gave, Jesus gave, Gave Himself to take away our sin.

Went away, Went away, Went away to make a home for me.
Went away, Went away, Went away to make a home for me.

He will come, He will come, He will come and meet us in the air.
He will come, He will come, He will come and meet us in the air.



CHRISTMAS! CHRISTMAS!

(Tune: Praise him, Praise Him All Ye Little Children)

Christmas, Christmas, now it's time for Christmas.

Jesus came, Jesus came.

Christmas, Christmas; Now it's time for Christmas.

Jesus came, Jesus came!

ADD STANZAS: Angels Sang, I'm so glad, Praise His Name.

WISE MEN STILL SEEK HIM

(Tune: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star)

Twinkle, twinkle, little star

(hold diamond shaped hands above head)

Wise Men followed from afar.

(Shield eyes with hand)

They found the boy of whom we sing

(hold out hand to show height on little boy)

And gave Him gifts fit for a king

(arms, as if giving a gift)

They fell right down and gave a nod

(kneel and bow head)

Jesus was the gift from God.

(Clasp hands as if in prayer)

There are several traditional Christmas songs preschool children can learn easily. Consider "Away In A Manger" and "We Wish You A Merry Christmas".



STAGE AND PROPS



HAY! Is a preschool presentation of the Bethlehem story using a minimum of props and staging. Keep it simple.

SET UP. The church sanctuary will be decorated for Christmas. Christmas trees, Nativity figures, twinkle lights, poinsettias, candles and other displays add to the festive atmosphere. Leave holiday decorations in place.

STAGING. Place an empty manger in the middle of the stage. One small bench or chair for Mary is placed near the manger. Add other stable items as available. Included in this master copy are patterns for cardboard animals and simple items. Enlarge the patterns and make as desired to complete a great stable look.

Add a few large baskets, blankets, floor pillows, pottery and greenery at the edges of the stage scene.

Peeka's Chair: Place a story telling chair near the stable scene. Peeka will read portions of her ancient journal to tell the story.

Peeka's Journal: Make a large scroll with brown paper bag and dowel rods. Wrinkle the bag material to give it an old look. Tape the program inside the scroll. Peeka reads the story from her scroll.

SEATING. Reserve seating for preschool students and staff before the audience enters the area. Do this as needed. Display bows or rope off saved rows. Assign assistants to sit with young children.



SOUND SYSTEM. Use the existing sound system to its' best advantage. Place a microphone near 'Peeka' or attach a personal microphone to her costume. Any teacher/leader who speaks should have a microphone available. This detail makes the difference between a frustrating experience and a delightful program.

Place a microphone near students so they can be heard while they sing. Special music participants should have microphones available.

LIGHTING. Turn off normal lighting and overhead lights. Light Christmas trees, candles and other mood lighting. Place small spot lights on the floor of the stable area if desired.











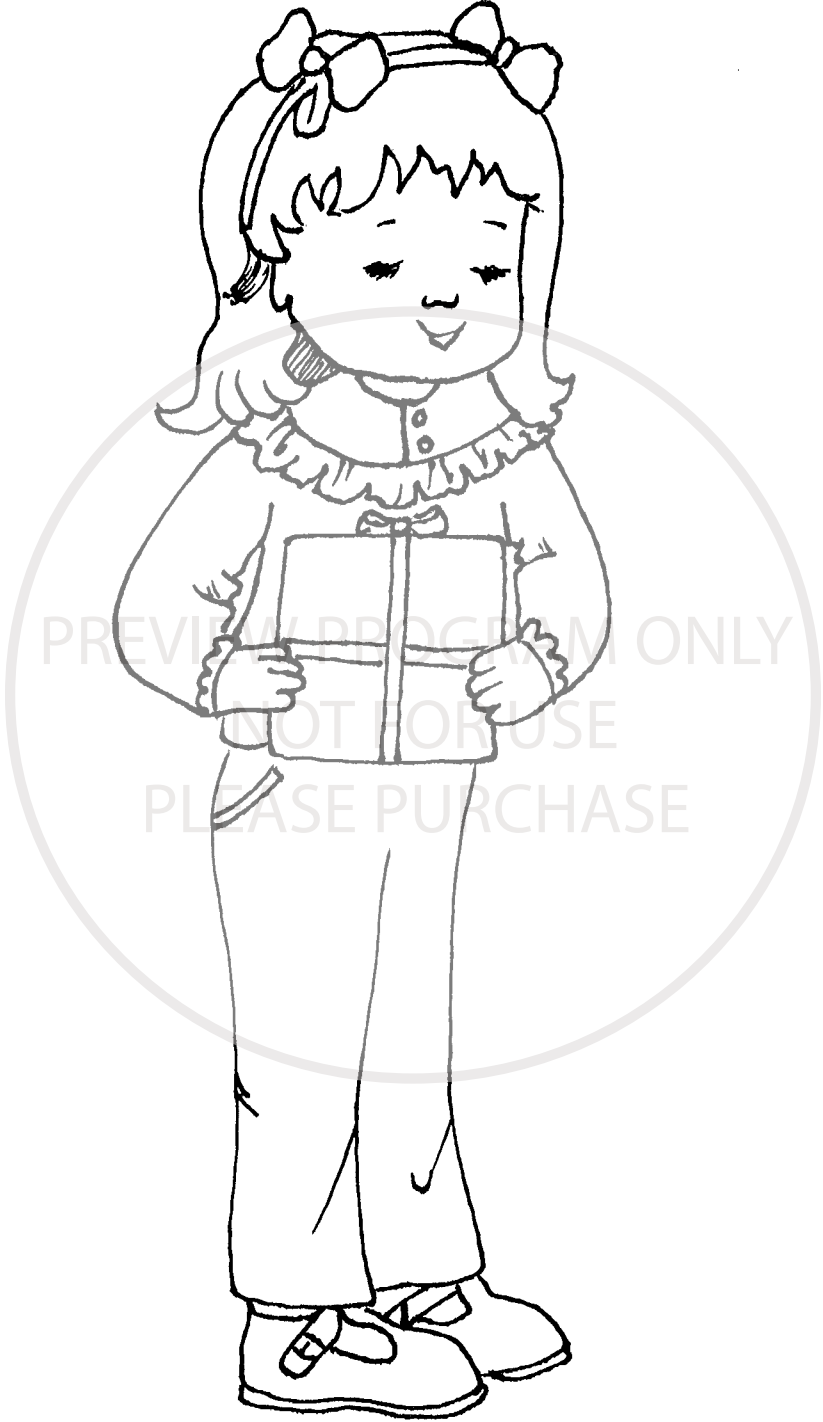
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COSTUMES

Prepare simple costuming for all preschool children. They become characters in the Bethlehem story. Follow our suggestions for Holy Land costuming or create your own costumes for each little one.

When costuming a large group, one solution is to ask each participant to prepare their attire. Parents of young students may be willing to supply the necessary clothing.



Pattern Suggestions

Pillow Cases: For small children, cut a neck hold in the top of the pillowcase. Cut up the front to the neck hole. Cut arm holes in the sides. This makes a long, vest type costume. Sometimes plaid or striped flannel pillowcases are available and work great for shepherds and wise men.

Fabric: Two wide strips of fabric (one over each shoulder) crossed across the back and front of the person, tied with a sash makes a great costume.

Head Wraps: A square of fabric over the head with a wide ribbon or piece of cloth around the top of the head makes a headpiece. If you make large scrunchies (like girls wear around pony tails) and put them over the square fabric around the head, it holds the fabric tightly.

Bathrobes: Purchase bathrobes at garage sales/resale shops.



Use contrasting fabric for headdresses and sashes to complete the costume.

Angels: Dress angels in white cotton or silver lame' for in most fabric stores. Angels may wear cardboard wings or remain wingless. Place gold or silver tinsel garland taped in a circle on each angel head. Tie tinsel around the waist for a sparkling angel belt. Angels may wear face/hair glitter for that "extra sparkle"!

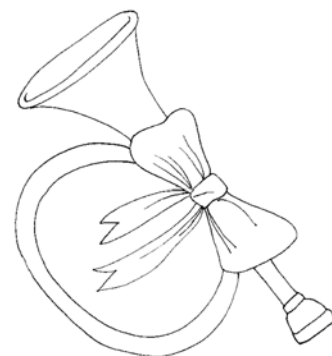
After The Show

Ask young participants to remain in costume at A STABLE PARTY. This is the time to congratulate them for a job well done and reward them with hugs and small gifts as desired.



PUBLICITY

Publicize **HAY! A STABLE EXPERIENCE** through all normal church communication channels. Announce it in the church newsletter, the weekly worship bulletin and from the pulpit.



Church Bulletin And Newsletter

Inform the congregation about this special Christmas event. Print an announcement in November and December newsletters. If you plan THE STABLE PARTY, let people know there will be a Christmas celebration including food following the program.



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Local Newspaper

Include an announcement along with other holiday programming publicity. Talk to a reporter and photographer to see if a feature article is possible.

Television And Radio

Consider advertising on your local television cable advertising channel. Radio stations often have free spots available as community service.

Christmas Card Invitations

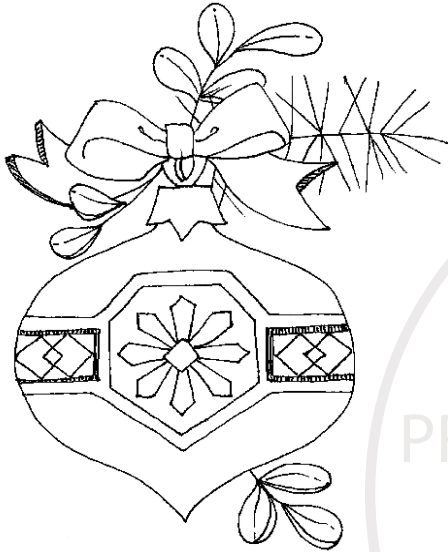
Send family invitations home with students. This is effective for families who send their children to Sunday School but are not involved. Use real Christmas cards with invitations tucked inside.



TEACHERS!

Pray! Prepare! Present!

ADAPT THIS PRESCHOOL PROGRAM
TO FIT THE NEEDS OF YOUR GROUP



Involve As Many Students As Possible

Preschool children sing together, but do not have individual speaking parts. Use every child available. Dress each one in Holy Land costume and add appropriate props for their character.

Highlight Individual Parts

Speaking will be done by 'Peeka'. Be sure written material is prepared in an easily readable format. Preschool children do not need materials in their hands. Their responses will be casual.

Practice With Your Small Group

If you are assigned a small group, be in charge of their costumes, practice their part and music and prepare them for the big event. Make changes as needed.

Communicate With Parents

Let parents know when to have their children at formal rehearsals and the performance. Invite them to attend and be sure they know what props or costuming their child is responsible to bring. It may be a good idea to collect items and store them in the classroom before performance day.



Show Up With A Smile And A Helpful Attitude

The Preschool Christmas Director values your leadership! Meet your class for the Preschool Parade. Dress in appropriate costumes in a back room, line up according to specific instructions and enter the performance area as directed. Sit with your class in the designated area. Lead them on and off stage. Perform your own part with enthusiasm. Coach students quietly if they need help.

Stage fright is not uncommon and preschool children are notorious for doing the unexpected. Keep that sense of humor! The audience will love whatever happens.

After The Program

Plan to stay for A STABLE PARTY. Collect props and program materials before your children attend the party. Consider asking children to remain in costume. Mingle with party goers and enjoy the experience with your children and their families.

If You Need Help

The Director is available if you need help. You will be responsible to have your specific preschool children ready to participate. The program comes together at the last moment with little formal large group rehearsal.

Enjoy The Experience

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to touch the lives of children and adults. Take time to enjoy your small part of the bigger picture. The Bethlehem Jesus Story is classic and life changing. The spiritual experience is amazing!

Don't Forget

Bring your camera! There will be many picture taking opportunities and you may be amazed 20 years from now how precious these memories become. Record them for 'posterity' and your own amusement!



PEEKA

Becoming Bethlehem's Town Gossip!



You have been chosen to portray 'Peeka', Bethlehem's Town Gossip. Peeka reads the story of Baby Jesus as she relates her personal experience in the stable on the night Jesus was born. The story is told simply, read from a scroll as His Story. Peeka's voice is almost the only voice heard through the entire program, except for delightful children's voices when Peeka helps them speak!

Peeka is the Narrator and speaks for little ones who cannot yet speak. Be flexible. Allow children to speak if they say something "off the cuff". This does not ruin the program and in fact their innocence, enthusiasm and curiosity makes the entire experience enjoyable for the audience.

The children dress in various Holy Land costumes. At the appropriate time, place them casually in the Nativity scene. Once you put them in the scene, they should stay there. If a few children wander, keep that famous sense of humor in place and remind them of their part.

Teachers and assistants should be in place to help with the group. It is helpful to have them guide the children as needed.

Be gentle. Preschool children are most comfortable with those they know best. Visit their classroom, talk with them and become a gentle friend in the weeks prior to the program. This pre-show preparation will reap great benefits. The youngest children will not be afraid of Peeka.

If you are the daily/weekly preschool teacher, they will respond more readily to you on stage.



PEEKA'S PLACE AND COSTUME

Peeka's Costume



Create a simple caftan Holy Land costume. Wear a long gown or robe. Add a long head scarf or tie fabric around the head. Bare feet or simple sandals are appropriate. Add accessories as available.

The character of Peeka is a bright, talkative, cheerful soul. She is a personal friend of Mary and Joseph's and is considered Bethlehem's town gossip. Her costume should reflect her joyfulness. Add light, bright make up with pink cheeks and big eyes.

Peeka's Place

Peeka involves the young, costumed children while reading from her personal journal scroll. Make a long scroll that unrolls as the story is read. Highlight private instructions as needed.

Peeka may sit down on comfortable floor pillows, on the edge of the stage or may stand and walk among the children as they are placed in the Nativity scene. Place a few baskets around the pillows and simple pottery to feature a place where Peeka is comfortable and tells her story.



CHILD CHARACTERS



HAY! A STABLE EXPERIENCE is set up to include every single child available. To tell the entire story of Jesus birth, don't forget any of the important characters!

MARY

JOSEPH

BABY JESUS

ANGELS

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WISE MEN

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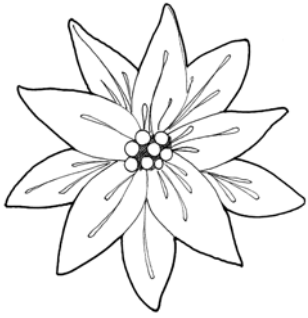
INNKEEPER

STAR

KING HEROD

Dress them in appropriate Holy Land costume. The child portraying the Star may have a large posterboard star around their neck or over their head.





TEACHERS AND ASSISTANTS

HAY! A STABLE EXPERIENCE is designed around narration by Peeka, Bethlehem's Little Gossip!

Peeka needs a few helpers to keep the children where they need to be on stage and off stage. Become one of these valued helpers.

Dress In Costume

To add to the ambiance of the entire event, all helpers of any age dress in Holy Land costume. Keep it simple. Become people of that time and place. If you are guiding children on and off stage or sitting with them at Peeka's Place, wear a costume.

If you are assigned a short speaking part, say it with enthusiasm. Unless instructed, read all parts. Memorization is not necessary.

Sing Along

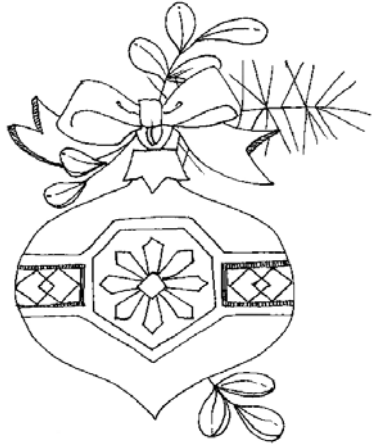
Simple songs are suggested on the CHRISTMAS MUSIC pages and may be added anywhere in the program as desired. If songs are used, teachers and leaders should sing along softly to encourage student participation. Most of the suggested songs are short and can be repeated two or three times.

There are many Christmas songs that can be performed. Choose music that is most comfortable for the staff and students. Piano sheet music or CD accompaniment is not included with this program.

On Stage/Off Stage

Keeping children quiet and involved is the best way to assist Peeka. Let them sit on your lap or place your arms around them as they sit near you. The grouping of teen and adult leaders mixed with little ones is charming and is a basic way to keep order on stage. Off stage, guide children and sit with them. Help with costuming.





THE PRELUDE

Church instrumentalists (organ/piano/keyboard) play Christmas music as the audience gather for the program. Choose happy music suited to a children's program. Other instruments can be added as desired.

THE PRESCHOOL PARADE

Gather participants in an outer room before the program begins. To keep children calm, it may be desirable to have all introductions, audience songs and even an offering (if appropriate) completed before the little one parade into the room.

Dim the lights. Existing holiday lights are left to glow. Leave stage lights and spotlights shining so anyone reading a part can see to read.

As the children enter the room from the rear, let them sing "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" or similar song. Or, ask the organist/pianist to play a Christmas Carol while they enter.

Either seat them on front rows or place them on stage. Children and helpers sit on the floor surrounding Peek-a's Place as the program begins.

Insert preschool songs as desired at the beginning, middle or end of the program. Your choice!



PEEKA'S ENTRANCE

Once costumed children are seated on stage, Peeka enters from the back of the room. She is apologetic for being late, speaking as she hurries to the group:

PEEKA: I am so sorry. I didn't mean to make you wait. I was delayed by a situation beyond my control. It was wonderful! It was delightful! It was the strangest night of my life. Why, it might have been a miracle!

(Settle into 'Peeka's Place' on stage) My name is Peeka. Welcome to Peeka's Place! Some of my friends say I am a gossip. They say, "Here comes Peeka, Bethlehem's Town Gossip." I'm not a gossip in a bad way. I just love to tell stories about my friends.

I am best friends with Mary and Joseph. They are here in Bethlehem today although they live in Galilee. That is why I am late. I just saw a baby born! I had to write down every word in my journal scroll. Would you like me to share it with you?

I see you are children of Bethlehem. It will be easy to tell my story because each of you can become part of it. When I find you, come and stand in the stable. You will become part of His Story! History, get it?



PEEKA TELLS 'HIS' STORY



Pull out your scroll. Make a big deal of settling into the pillows or chair at Peek-a's Place. Be fun and funny. Get serious as you impress upon the children and audience the importance of the birth of Jesus.

Follow the stage directions found in parentheses. This indicates the preschool group reaction. Your own bubbly, humorous personality will make their participation delightful as you include them in the staged scene. Ask them to respond casually at appropriate times. Whatever happens...happens!

PLEASE PURCHASE

Guide them through simple songs. Songs can be inserted anywhere the group desires. Plan music before program day. There are many songs included with the program so choose a few you know your group can handle. Hand print the song title in the appropriate spot in "His Story" so you don't forget!



HIS STORY



It was a dark and stormy night...
 No! It was a bright and cheery night...
 No! It was a night like every other night.
 The stars were shining, the sheep were baa'ing,
(Ask all children to 'baa' like a sheep.)

Ahh, that makes me feel like I am at home in Bethlehem!
 The people of Bethlehem were snoring.
(Ask all children to pretend to snore.)

My friend Mary was going to have a baby!
*(Where is Mary? Oh, there you are, dear friend!
 Come and stand here.)*

My friend Joseph was very concerned about his new wife.
*(Where is Joseph? Come over here and protect Mary.
 She's going to have a baby, you know.)*

And where was Peek-a?
 I was in Bethlehem waiting for my friends
 Mary and Joseph.
 They traveled to Bethlehem
 to sign their names on a census.
 It's a strange government thing to count people.

I found them at the Innkeeper's Inn.
*(I see you, Innkeeper. Stand over here at the edge.
 Cross your arms and look kind of mean.)*
 He's just kidding. This Innkeeper is very nice.



He didn't have a special hotel room for Mary and Joseph
but he gave them what he had,
a stable filled with sweet smelling Hay
where all the animals stayed.
*(Come on everyone, Moo like a cow, baa like a sheep,
neigh like a horse, cackle like a hen!)*

There! Isn't that a nice picture?
We see Mary and Joseph and the Innkeeper
*(Wave at me so I know you see me! --
Mary, Joseph and Innkeeper wave at Peek-a.)*
...And me, Peek-a!

That's just the beginning of His Story.
No baby yet! Just Hay in that manger.
*(Everybody peek in the manger. Do you see a baby?
Children respond: Nooooo!)*
Me either! Hmmm, where is that baby?

Well, just outside the town of Bethlehem
Shepherds were 'abiding in the field'.
Abiding....that means 'hanging around the sheep field.'
*(I need shepherds. If you know you are a shepherd, raise
your hand and let me see you.*
--Place shepherds in their spot at one side of the stage.)

The sheep were walking around munching on grass.
The shepherds were eating sandwiches,
Trying not to fall asleep.

An angel of the Lord appeared to them.
*(Ok, Angel of the Lord, where are you? This is your part.
Just one angel has to talk to the shepherds.)*



There must have been a bright light because the glory of
the Lord shone around them, and I want to tell you,
those shepherds were scared!

And what did that angel of the Lord say?

“Do not be afraid.

*(Hey Angel! Say: “Do not be afraid.”
Wonderful. Sounds like the real thing!)*

I bring you good news of great joy
that will be for all the people.

Today in the town of David (that’s Bethlehem)
a Savior has been born to you;

He is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you:

You will find a baby wrapped in cloths
and lying in a manger.”

*(Angel, help me out and say:
‘The baby will be lying in a manger.’)*

(Peeka Shout...) SUDDENLY!

Did you like that? Did I scare you?

It sure scared the shepherds. They were terrified.

(I need more angels! Quick!

Angels, jump up near the shepherds and scare them!)

(Peeka Shout...) SUDDENLY!

(Jump up and down, angels)

A whole bunch of angels
showed up with the angel of the Lord!

They were all praising God, saying,

“Glory to God in the Highest,

*(Say it with me, angels! Say it loud!
It’s God’s biggest announcement!)*



*All Angels Repeat after Peeka—one line at a time:
“Glory to God in the Highest...
And on earth...
Peace to men...
On whom His favor rests.”*

And thennnnnnnnn....
(Say it with me everyone: “And thennnn....”)
The angels disappeared and went back to Heaven.
*(Head out of here, angels!
We won’t make you go to Heaven.
Stand behind Mary and Joseph
because we know the angels
must have been watching Bethlehem that night.)*

The shepherds blinked their eyes at each other.
Did they really see angels?
They said, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that
has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”
(Come on Shepherds! Say: “Let’s go to Bethlehem!”)

They didn’t wait until morning.
The shepherds hurried
and found Mary and Joseph and.....
*(Carry a baby, live or doll, that you have hidden behind
you and put it in the manger or on Mary’s lap.)*

...and the baby, who was lying in the manger!
(Everybody say: “ooo, ahhh.”)

The Hay in the manger is filled with a miracle!
The Baby sent from God had arrived in the stable,
in Bethlehem.



Hay! That's cool!
The shepherds showed up.
They saw the little family just like we see them now.
The were so excited that they ran around town
Telling everyone they ran into about this baby.
They knew God had promised to send a Messiah
To save all the people from their sins.
It was time to shout, "Messiah has arrived!"
(Everybody shout: "Messiah has arrived!")

Look at Mary. Isn't she sweet?
She treasured up all these things
and thought about them in her heart.

The shepherds went back to their field and their sheep,
(Baa, like the sheep.)
Glorifying and praising God for all the things they had
heard and seen, which were just as the angels told them.
(Hey angels, say: "We told you so!")

And that's the end of His Story.
Do you believe that's the end of His Story?
(Everyone: Noooooo!)
I can't fool any of you. You are too smart!
We still have a few children who can't wait to
Tell their part of His Story.

This story is getting good!
After Jesus was born in Bethlehem village,
a group of wise men showed up
in Jerusalem from the East.
(You kids look very wise.
Come on up and take your place in the stable.)



Actually before they got to the stable,
They made a 'camel stop' to ask around
In case folks knew about the newborn King of the Jews?
They said, "We saw a star in the eastern sky that signaled
his birth. We're on a trip to worship him."
(Wise Men, you say, "Have you seen the Baby King?")

Let's not forget that beautiful star in the east.
*(Are you the Star of the show? Well, you better come and
stand behind Mary and Joseph and Jesus.
That's how the travelers found the baby in the Hay.
You are a very important part of His Story!)*

The Star shone down on the place
where Jesus slept in the manger.
(Star says: Twinkle, Twinkle!)

They weren't Wise guys for nothing.
They weren't tricked by wicked King Herod.
(King Herod get up here and act mean!)
He told them he wanted to worship the new little King.
They set off on their camels and showed up in Bethlehem

Because the Star
(Star Says: Twinkle, Twinkle)
Showed up again and led them on until
it hovered over the place where Jesus slept.

They were in the right place!
They had arrived at the right time!
Boy, were they happy!
(Wise Men, act happy! Jump up and down!)



The Wise Men walked into the place
and there was little Jesus sitting on His mother's lap.
The Wise Men were so happy.
They got right down on their knees
And worshiped Jesus.

They opened their luggage
and gave Jesus presents.

Gold

(Everybody say: Ooooo!)

Frankincense

(Everybody say: Ahhh!)

Myrrh

(Everybody say: Oooo, Ahhh!)

And the reason a baby boy needed presents like Gold,
Frankincense and Myrrh?
They were worth a whole lot of shekels—that's money.

When the Wise Men went home,
That same angel of the Lord showed up again.
*(Where are you, Angel of the Lord?
Time to show up again.
Stand here by Joseph.)*

The angel told Joseph to take Jesus and Mary
and get out of town!
The angel said Egypt would be a terrific place
to hide from wicked King Herod.
*(Where are you, wicked King Herod.
Keep looking mean.)*



When Herod heard the Wise Men tricked him
and went home another way,
he had a horrible temper tantrum.
(*Show us your best temper tantrum, Herod.*)
Herod never did find Jesus.

And that's the end of His Story!
Do you believe that's the end of His Story?
(Everybody say: "Noooo")

You are right.
The story of Jesus did not end
in the Hay in Bethlehem with shepherds
and angels or even wise men and a star.
The story of Jesus was just beginning.
Mary and Joseph loved Jesus very much.
They finally settled down in Nazareth.
Jesus grew up in a big family of brothers and sisters
and learned to be a carpenter with Joseph.
When He was older, he started to teach everyone He met
about the kingdom of God and how to get to Heaven.

There were evil people like old King Herod
(Still got that temper, Herod? Let's see it.)
They were angry that Jesus was teaching about God
So they hatched a plan to nab Him, kill Him on a Cross
and get rid of Him.

And that's the end of His Story!
Do you believe that's the end of His Story?
(Everybody say: "Nooo")



You are right.
The story of Jesus did not end in the Hay
and the story of Jesus did not end at the Cross.
Jesus did die on that rugged old Cross
Three days later He rose up from the grave!
He walked and talked to His friends
and lots of people saw Him.

Jesus was truly God's Son,
the Messiah,
Our Savior.
And that's the end of His Story!
Do you believe that's the end of His Story?
(Everybody say: "Nooo")

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PLEASE PURCHASE

You are right.
Jesus is still our Savior today.
But...that's a story we'll tell at Easter!
You have been wonderful story tellers.
Thank you for letting me show you off
and tell His Story....**Hay! A Stable Experience!**
There is one more thing you have to say:
(Everybody say: MERRY CHRISTMAS!)

Take a bow.
You have told Jesus' story well!
(All children bow and leave the stage.)



PEEKA'S CONCLUSION



PEEKA concludes the program by reading from her scroll. Stand in the middle of the stage to speak.

Dear friends of Peekka, you are privileged to hear the story of the birth of Jesus, our Savior. Many nations filled with people never get to hear the story of Bethlehem. And you? Well, you get to hear God's Good News of salvation from the littlest among us. What joy! I am honored to be PEEKA, Bethlehem's Town Gossip on this day in this place. Is there any better story to gossip than His Story.

We don't know much about Jesus' childhood. This is what we DO know: "And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him."

Luke 2:40

I leave you with words Jesus spoke to His friends before He went back to Heaven. It had been a hard time. He was arrested, tried in illegal courts, beaten, and crucified on a Cross. He didn't stay in the grave. He rose from that grave and is alive today.

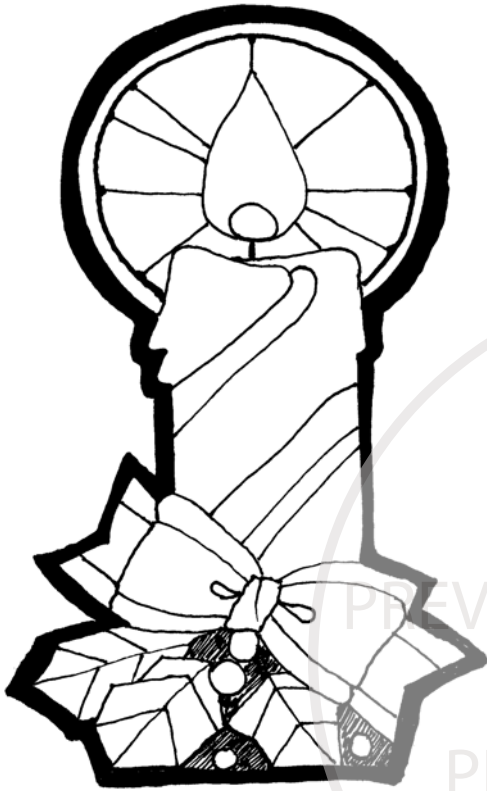
Jesus said:

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:18-20 KJV) And that, my dear friends, will be the end of His Story!

**Peeka leaves quickly,
walking back the center aisle, disappearing out the door.
Conclude the program with a Christmas Carol of your choice.
Announce the BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JESUS.**



THE STABLE PARTY!



Assign party planning to one small group. This could be a few men and women hand picked for this purpose or an adult Sunday School class.

If available, parents of the participants may set up the party area before the program begins.

Offer delicious desserts, background Christmas music and casual fellowship.

Preparations Before Party Day

Menu: Plan the menu and prepare a Christmas Birthday cake. A pleasant option may be to ask people to bring their favorite Christmas dessert to share. If this is a Sunday morning event, consider serving a Continental Breakfast complete with doughnuts, orange juice and coffee. Provide a variety of beverages.



If the party is strictly for preschool guests, consider these fun foods:

EDIBLE MANGER

Paper baking cup, chocolate pudding, Shredded Wheat, pretzel nuggets, mini marshmallows.

Fill baking cup ½ full of pudding. Have each child shred the shredded wheat biscuit over pudding to represent hay. Place the pretzel nugget on the hay to represent the body of Baby Jesus. Top nugget with marshmallow to represent the head of Baby Jesus.

BABY JESUS IN A BLANKET

Baby Jesus wrapped in Blankets need crescent rolls and little smokies. Take pieces of the crescent rolls and wrap around the smokies. Bake at 350 degrees for about 10 minutes.

APPLE STARS

Cut apples in half crosswise. Have the children look to see if they can see a star. Talk about the importance that the star played in the birth of Jesus. Option: Use Star fruit.

Seating: Decide the best arrangement for seating depending upon the size of the anticipated gathering. Position tables and chairs and serve buffet style with guests standing and moving around the room to chat. Place a few chairs in small circles throughout the area for small group conversation.

Music: Fill the room with Christmas music. This could be live music performed by local church musicians or favorite CD performances.

Centerpieces: Cover tables as desired. Christmas centerpieces should be featured on each table. Consider scattering a few lovely ornaments on each tables. Add one or two nativity set pieces in the mix to tell the Bethlehem story.



Preparations On Party Day

Decorate the serving table and guest tables. Plug in the coffee pot and put tea water on to boil while the program is in progress. Set out desserts, cream and sugar. Make your favorite Christmas Punch and place on a nearby serving table.

During The Party

Assign people to cut and serve desserts, pour beverages and refill creamers and sugar bowls as needed. Greet guests cordially as they come through the serving line. Move about the group to be sure everyone feels welcome. Find seats for those who may not be familiar with your church. Introduce people. Enjoy the program participants as they mingle.

After The Party

Don't forget! THE STABLE PARTY is not over until clean up is complete. Ask everyone to help with dishes, removing tables and chairs and sweeping the area clean.

Go home knowing you have been
a good and faithful servant.

If your own Christmas tree
is not trimmed,
you have a lot to think about
as you decorate!
Enjoy the Season!

