

Lesson #3-15

Mary and Elizabeth's Visitors

Luke 1:26-45 [46-56]

PK-2nd

Key Verse:

“For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is [God’s] name.”
Luke 1:49

The Point:

Nothing is impossible with God.

Making Connections:

The Hope of the Messiah

Bible Nuts & Bolts:

New Testament and Divisions

Spiritual Practice:

Prayer



Activities a la Carte

Activities

Supplies

Story Centers (PK-K)

15 min.

A Baby Will Be Born

Play with baby dolls.

† Baby dolls

Let's Celebrate a New Baby

Play musical instruments.

† Musical instrument or toys

Mamas & Angels

Mold figures for today's story.

† Play dough

Into the Story (PK-2nd)

5 min.

Everybody Likes Surprises

Surprises are found in unexpected places.

† Laundry bag
† Bags of treats
† Optional: worn-out suitcase

Bible Nuts & Bolts (1st-2nd)

10 min.

New Testament & Divisions

Explore the New Testament.

† Bibles

Learning the Story (PK-2nd)

15 min.

Mary Is Going to Have A Baby

Gabriel brings a message to Mary.

† Bible

Activities a la Carte

Living the Story (PK-2nd)

Praise God Prayer

Praise God like Mary did.

5 min.

† None

Singing the Story (PK-2nd)

Do You Hear What I Hear?

5 min.

† Recording of “Do You Hear What I Hear” by Noël Regney with music by Gloria Shayne
 † Music player
 † Optional: Internet-connected device

Additional Activities

Announcement, Announcement (PK-2nd)

Make megaphones to announce an unexpected message.

10 min.

† Card stock paper
 † Crayons
 † Strong tape

Who Did What? (PK-2nd)

Match words and actions with characters from today’s lesson.

15 min.

† Activity Sheet #3-15.A

Praise Pokey (PK-2nd)

Do the Praise Pokey.

10 min.

† Activity Sheet #3-15.B

Activities a la Carte

Additional Activities

Bible Book (PK-2nd)

Optional ongoing activity.

5 min.

- † Bible Book page (found at end of lesson)
- † Cardstock or plain paper
- † Markers or crayons
- † Optional: three-ring binders, hole punch

Sending the Story (PK-2nd)

5 min.

- † Advent wreath
- † Candles
- † Matches or lighter

Background for Teachers

Making Connections

Mary sings praises for the fulfillment of the promises that Isaiah announced in last week's reading. Now the future, when God recreates and renews the world, begins to unfold. Mary's son is the Messiah whom Isaiah proclaimed and the people have hoped for throughout the generations. This Messiah will usher in God's kingdom and deliver humanity from suffering and oppression.

Story Summary:

Mary and Elizabeth's Visitors

The angel Gabriel brought hope. He visited Mary to let her know that she would have a baby and that she should name him Jesus. He is the holy Son of the Most High. His kingdom will never end. Gabriel also said that Mary's relative Elizabeth was going to have a son, even in her old age. God can do what people might think is impossible. When Mary visited Elizabeth, Elizabeth's baby leaped for joy, and Elizabeth knew that Mary was carrying the Son of God.

Mary sang a song of praise to God. God chose her, a lowly servant, rather than some popular wealthy person, to carry Jesus. Mary sang of God's holiness, mercy, strength, and help. In a previous lesson, Hannah, who could not have a child for years, sang a similar song of praise when God answered her prayer and she gave birth to a son.

The Point

Nothing is impossible with God. In today's story we see God doing the impossible through ordinary people like Mary and Elizabeth. We often expect a mighty God to be among the mighty people, the powerful people, or the rich and famous people. However, God is always at work turning our assumptions on their heads. The Messiah came for those on the margins of society, just as he came for those in lofty positions. Our God walks with people in all areas of life. God's love is for everyone.

Bible Nuts & Bolts:

New Testament & Divisions

We read of the prophecy of a coming Messiah in the Old Testament. The New Testament is the story of that prophecy fulfilled. The first four books of the New Testament (the Gospels) are accounts of Jesus' time on earth from beginning to end. The Book of Acts is the early history of the Christian church. After that are the Letters. These letters tell believers in the early church how to live out their faith. At the end of the New Testament is the Book of Revelation, a letter to churches undergoing persecution, describing in figurative language how God will prevail against the evil in the world.

Spiritual Practice: Prayer

When we communicate regularly with God in prayer, we open ourselves to hearing the plans that God has for us. We also have the opportunity to express our love and admiration to God through prayer. In Luke 1:46-56, Mary's song of rejoicing provides an example for a prayer of worship and thanksgiving.

Lesson Plan



Story Centers (PK-K; 15 minutes)

Story Centers are mini-activities designed specifically for preschool and kindergarten students. Depending on the size of your class, you can set these up as centers for in-class rotations or do them as a whole class one after another. In most preschool and kindergarten classes, these centers along with a snack, the “Learning the Story” activity, and the “Living the Story” activity will fill the education time, but feel free to choose any activity you think would be fun and appropriate for your class.

A Baby Will Be Born

Students will play with baby dolls and tell each other all about their new babies. This relates to announcing that Mary will have a baby.

Let's Celebrate a New Baby

Students will play with kids’ musical instruments. If the church doesn’t have any, they can use tables for drums and their curled hands for horns. This relates to Mary’s song of celebration.

Mamas and Angels

Students will use play dough to make a scene, together or separately. Possible figures can include an angel, mothers (Mary, Elizabeth), and a baby. This prepares students to hear the day’s story.

Into the Story (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

Everybody Likes Surprises

Surprises are found in unexpected places.

You will need:

- † Laundry bag
- † Bags of treats
- † Optional: worn-out suitcase

Before class:

1. Select a special treat that your student will enjoy, ensuring that there will be one for every student, including possible visitors. Put the treats in one or more bags if they are not already in bags.
2. Put the bags into the laundry bag. Close the bag.
3. Before serving any food, always check with participants or caregivers for students who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.
4. This activity can be adapted to use an old suitcase as well.

During class:

1. Ask the students what we put in laundry bags. Make a verbal list. [*Dirty laundry—socks, pants, shirts, underwear, dresses, etc.*]
2. **What item do you think we will find in my laundry bag?** [*Answers will probably be items from the list made in step one.*]
3. **Let us look inside.** Open or reach into the bag and pull out the bags of treats. Observe the students' faces and any words they may say.
4. **You look surprised! Who was expecting to find a bag of treats inside my laundry bag?**
5. **I am going to share one treat with each of you. When you eat it, think about how we found it in an unexpected place.**
6. Distribute treats.
7. **Today we are going to learn about God's plans to send Jesus to earth in an unexpected way.**

Bible Nuts & Bolts (1st-2nd; 10 minutes)

New Testament & Divisions

Explore the New Testament.

You will need:

- † Bibles

During class:

1. **Where do you keep your shoes? Where do you keep the toothpaste? Where do you keep your coat? Where do you keep your school work?** *[Answers will vary.]*
2. **We have a place for most everything. We do not always remember to use it, but we have a place. Why do you think we put things in the same place, keeping our shoes in the closet and our toothpaste in the bathroom?** *[So we can find them later, to keep organized.]*
3. **Some people are more organized than others, but when things are organized we know what is where and can find what we need when we need it.**
4. **The New Testament of the Bible is organized. Turn to the table of contents, and let us take a look.**
5. **Invite a volunteer to read the names of the first four books of the New Testament** *[Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.]*
6. **The first four books of the New Testament are known as the Gospels. Each book tells the story of Jesus's time on earth from beginning to end. It is the same story told by four different people.**
7. **Invite a volunteer to read the name of the next book in the New Testament.** *[Acts.] The Book of Acts is the story about how the good news of Jesus started to spread throughout the world.*
8. **How many books are left, not including the last book?** *[21.]*
9. **Those twenty one books are the Letters. These letters taught believers in the early church how to live out their faith. We also learn how to live from the lessons in these letters.**
10. **At the end of the New Testament is the Book of Revelation. Revelation reveals God's plan for getting rid of evil and bringing in a new world.**
11. **When we understand how the New Testament is organized, we know what we can find where.**

Learning the Story (PK-2nd; 15 minutes)

Mary Is Going to Have a Baby

Gabriel brings a message to Mary.

You will need:

† Bible

During class:

1. Begin by helping the students find Luke 1:26 in their Bibles.
2. **You are going to play important roles today as we tell an exciting story. Half of you will be the angel Gabriel, and the other half will be Mary. I will be the narrator and Elizabeth.**
3. Students can usually come up with their own interpretations for acting out a story, but ideas are listed below in case they are stumped.
4. **Luke chapter one tells us about the day when a girl named Mary had a life-changing experience, and this led to an experience which was part of God's plan to change the world forever.**
5. Encourage the students to move around and do whatever comes to mind to look and act like their character based on what you read. If the character speaks, the students will repeat the words you say (using their character voices).
6. **God sent the angel Gabriel to a town named Nazareth.** Make sure that the students see your Bible open and in your hands. It is important that while they are acting, they know this is in the Bible. (*Angels move to a new location.*)
7. **God sent the angel to a girl named Mary.** (*Gabriels approach Marys.*)
8. **Mary was engaged to a man named Joseph.** (*Mary can act happy and in love.*)
9. **Angel Gabriel said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."**
10. **Mary wondered what this was about.** (*Mary may shake, crouch down, or shield her face, etc.*)
11. **Angel Gabriel said to Mary, "Do not be afraid."** (*Perhaps Gabriel will put an arm around Mary.*)
12. **Angel Gabriel told Mary that she was going to have a son.**
13. **Angel Gabriel told Mary that her son's name will be Jesus. He will be great.**
14. **Angel Gabriel told Mary that her son will be called the Son of the Most High.**
(*Lift arms wide to heaven.*)
15. **Angel Gabriel said Jesus' kingdom will never end.** (*Stretch arms out at sides.*)

16. Mary asked, "How can this be?" (*Look confused.*)
17. Angel Gabriel said that God's Holy Spirit would make this happen.
18. Angel Gabriel said Mary's relative Elizabeth would have a baby in her old age.
19. Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord."
20. Mary traveled to visit her older relative, Elizabeth. (*Move toward you.*)
21. Elizabeth said to Mary, "Blessed are you!"
22. Ask the students to sit.
23. **What do you think it felt like to be the angel who delivered this news to Mary?**
[*Answers will vary.*]
24. **What do you think it felt like to be an ordinary girl, being told that she was going to be the mother of Jesus?** [*Answers will vary.*]
25. What a surprise that Jesus, the Son of God, would be born to a ordinary girl and not to some rich ruler.

Living the Story (PK-2nd; 10 minutes)

Praise God Prayer

Praise God like Mary did.

You will need:

† Nothing

During class:

1. Begin by teaching and practicing Luke 1:49, “for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.”
2. **Mary’s song of praise is a prayer that worships God. We are going to pray like Mary.**
3. Ask the students to get on their knees (or sit on the ground), fold their hands, and repeat the prayer words and actions after you.
4. (With arms in the air, head down, still on knees) **My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.** (Echo.)
5. **For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.** (Echo.)
6. (Make muscle arms) **He has shown strength with his arm.** (Echo.)
7. (Rub tummy) **He has filled the hungry with good things.** (Echo.)
8. **For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.** (Echo.)
9. (With arms in the air, head down, still on knees) **My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.** (Echo.)
10. (Tap heart) **He has filled me with love.** (Echo.)
11. (Cup hands in front of you) **He has helped me in times of need.** (Echo.)
12. (Make sign of the cross) **He sent Jesus to forgive my sins.** (Echo.)
13. (Stand) **For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.** (Echo.)
14. **Amen.**

Note: the pronoun “he” is used in this prayer to match this Scripture passage in the New Revised Version of the Holy Bible. Feel free to modify.

Singing the Story (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Sing an echo song.

You will need:

- † Recording of “Do You Hear What I Hear” by Noël Regney with music by Gloria Shayne
- † Music player
- † Optional: Internet-connected device

Before class:

1. Prepare to play the music on a music player. If you do not have the music, you can find a video with music and lyrics with search terms: “Do You Hear What I Hear lyrics video.” One example is this YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t84OSRahBRo>.

During class:

1. Play the song.
2. Guide the students so they know when to echo.

Additional Activities

Announcement, Announcement (PK-2nd; 10 minutes)

Make megaphones to announce an unexpected message.

You will need:

- † Card stock paper
- † Crayons
- † Strong tape

Before class:

1. If you have time, make a sample megaphone.

During class:

1. Give each student one sheet of card stock. Instruct the students to decorate their paper to make it look colorful and joyful.
2. While the students are making their megaphones, read aloud some of the words that angel Gabriel said (Luke 1:28, 30-33, 35-37)
3. Show the students how to roll the paper in and up from a bottom corner to make a cone shape.
4. Help the students tape their cones.
5. After the megaphones are made, give the students some time to use them, telling Mary not to be afraid, and announcing that she will have a son named Jesus.

Who Did What? (PK-2nd; 15 minutes)

Match words and actions with characters from today's lesson.

You will need:

- † Activity Sheet #3-15.A

Before class:

1. Print one copy of Activity Sheet #3-15.A.

During class:

1. Divide the class into teams.
2. Explain that you are going to go around the room, one group at a time, and ask questions. The group members will work together to determine their answer and will give their final answer to the class. If the answer is correct, the team earns 5 points and the next team is asked a question. If the answer is incorrect, the team wins no points, and the next team is asked the same question.
3. Using Activity Sheet #3-15.A, address the first team by listing the possible answers (names at the top of the activity sheet). Then read the question. You may want to determine a reasonable amount of wait time that teams are allotted before they must answer. After using the ten questions, repeat, making sure each team is asked questions it was not asked in a previous round.
4. When the activity is complete say: **The Angel Gabriel told Mary that she was going to be the mother of Jesus. God chose someone of a simple lifestyle to bring the King of Kings to earth. All people matter to God, and Jesus came to bring God's love to all people.**

Praise Pokey (PK-2nd; 10 minutes)

Do the Praise Pokey.

You will need:

- † Activity Sheet #3-15.B

Before class:

1. Print one copy of Activity Sheet #3-15.B.

During class:

1. Form a circle. Lead the students through the activity on Activity Sheet #3-15.B to the tune of “The Hokey Pokey.”
2. After the activity say: **Today we are celebrating the unexpected good news that Mary received. Every day we can celebrate that God fulfilled the promise of the Messiah and sent Jesus to earth.**
3. **What will you do to celebrate the Messiah this week? [Answers will vary.]**

Bible Book (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

Optional ongoing activity.

You will need:

- † Bible Book page (found at end of lesson)
- † Cardstock or plain paper
- † Markers or crayons
- † Optional: three-ring binders, hole punch

Before class:

1. Make copies of this week's Bible Book page on cardstock or copy paper for each student.

During class:

1. Pass out Bible Book pages.
2. Read the bottom of the Bible Book page aloud, reminding students of what they learned in the lesson.
3. Have them put their names on their pages, and draw a picture of something they particularly liked or remember from story in the middle of the page.
4. Optional: Collect and three-hole punch the pages, and put them in individual binders for each student to be kept at church until the end of the year. If you wish, you can investigate other options for binding the Bible books through a local print shop at the end of the year instead of using a three-ring binder.

Sending the Story (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

You will need:

- † Advent wreath
- † Candles
- † Matches or lighter

Gather around the Advent wreath in your classroom. **This is week four of Advent. Jesus, the light of the world, came into the world in a most unexpected way. He brought peace and love and forgiveness. Light the candle. Why was it such a surprise that God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus? [She was from lowly origin; she was an ordinary, simple girl, not a wealthy leader's daughter.]**

Prayer

Before ending class, make a point to come together to pray. Use the following or say your own prayer.

Ask the students to use their megaphones as we pray to God. They can listen to you first and then repeat the prayer.

Thank you God for loving us so much that you sent your Son Jesus into the world. Amen.

Who Did What?

Match words and actions with characters from today's lesson.

God
Angel Gabriel
Joseph
Mary
Elizabeth
Jesus

Who was going to have a baby in her old age? *[Elizabeth.]*

Who was sent by God to Nazareth? *[Angel Gabriel.]*

Who told Mary that the Lord was with her? *[Angel Gabriel.]*

Who asked the angel, "How can this be?" *[Mary.]*

Who said, "Here I am, the servant of the Lord"? *[Mary.]*

Who was Mary's relative? *[Elizabeth.]*

Who was Mary engaged to? *[Joseph.]*

Who was called, "Favored one"? *[Mary.]*

Who would be called the "Son of the Most High"? *[Jesus.]*

Whose kingdom will never end? *[Jesus.]*

Note: reuse these questions as time allows, so the teams can answer questions they have not already been asked.

Praise Pokey

Do the Praise Pokey.

1. God sent Gabriel with a message for Mary. Let's do the praise pokey!
2. You put your praise hands in (both hands in the circle), you take your praise hands out (both hands out of circle). You raise your praise hands up (both hands in air) and you shake them all about (wave or shake them), you do the praise pokey and you turn yourself around (turn around), holy is God's name.
3. Gabriel said Mary would be Jesus' mother. Do the praise pokey!
4. You put your praise foot in (one foot in), you take your praise foot out (take foot out), you put your praise foot in (the other foot in), and you shake it all about. You do the praise pokey and you turn yourself around (turn around), holy is God's name.
5. Here am I, Mary said, I am a servant of the Lord. Do the praise pokey!
6. You put your praise self in (whole body in), you take your praise self out (take body out), you put your praise self in (whole body in), and you shake it all about. You do the praise pokey and you turn yourself around (turn around), holy is God's name.
7. God sent the Messiah for you and me. Do the praise pokey!
8. You put your praise hands in (both hands in the circle), you take your praise hands out (both hands out of circle). You raise your praise hands up (both hands in air) and you shake them all about (wave or shake them), you do the praise pokey and you turn yourself around (turn around), holy is God's name.
9. God sent the Messiah for you and me. Do the praise pokey!
10. You put your praise foot in (one foot in), you take your praise foot out (take foot out), you put your praise foot in (the other foot in), and you shake it all about. You do the praise pokey and you turn yourself around (turn around), holy is God's name.
11. God sent the Messiah for you and me. Do the praise pokey!
12. You put your praise self in (whole body in), you take your praise self out (take body out), you put your praise self in (whole body in), and you shake it all about. You do the praise pokey and you turn yourself around (turn around), holy is God's name.

Mary and Elizabeth's Visitors

Luke 1:26-45 [46-56]

The Point:

Nothing is impossible with God.



The Story @ Home

PK-2nd

Living the Word: Teaching Kids God's Story

Narrative Lectionary, Year 3 (2020-2021)

Lesson #3-15

Luke 1:26-45 [46-56]

Last Week

Isaiah proclaims the promise that God will someday restore the people to their land and make life better than it was before, with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable (Isaiah 61:1-11).

This Week

God chooses Mary to be the bearer of the Messiah, and she goes to her cousin Elizabeth's home. Mary sings her gratitude in a song echoing the reversals in Isaiah 61 (Luke 1:26-45 [46-56]).

The Point

Nothing is impossible with God.

Bible Nuts & Bolts

New Testament & Divisions

We read of the prophecy of a coming Messiah in the Old Testament. The New Testament is the story of that prophecy fulfilled. The first four books of the New Testament (the Gospels) are accounts of Jesus' time on earth from beginning to end. The Book of Acts is the early history of the Christian church. After that are the Letters. These letters tell believers in the early church how to live out their faith. At the end of the New Testament is the Book of Revelation, a letter to churches undergoing persecution, describing in figurative language how God will prevail against the evil in the world.

Story Summary

Mary and Elizabeth's Visitors

The angel Gabriel visited Mary to tell her that she would have a baby and that she should name him Jesus. He is the Son of God. Gabriel also said that Mary's relative Elizabeth was pregnant, even in her old age. When Mary arrived, Elizabeth's baby leaped for joy, and Elizabeth knew that Mary was carrying the Son of God. Mary sang of God's holiness, mercy, strength, and help. God can do the impossible.

Practice: Prayer

When we communicate regularly with God in prayer, we open ourselves to hearing the plans that God has for us. We also have the opportunity to express our love and admiration to God through prayer. Mary's song of rejoicing was a prayer of praise and admiration. Using Mary's song (Luke 1:46-56) as an example, write your own prayer songs and sing or say them together.

Next Week

The Messiah arrives, born of Mary in the town of Bethlehem. He is heralded by angels and visited by lowly shepherds. (Luke 2:1-20).

Family Discussions

Use the questions below or other questions you think of to discuss today's Scripture reading (listed above) with your family.

- † What good news is there in this passage?
- † What surprises are in this passage?
- † What does this tell you about God's love?

Family Devotions

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. What is God's message to us? How should we respond?

Sunday—Read Luke 1:26-45 [46-56]

The angel Gabriel delivered a message to Mary about her important part in fulfilling the hope of the Messiah. Mary would be Jesus' mother. Pretend to hold a baby and talk about how a parent takes care of a baby.

Monday—Read 1 Samuel 1:9-18

Hannah asked God for a son and promised to dedicate him to God. Pray together for specific needs. Pray for help to serve God as a result of the answer to that prayer.

Tuesday—Read 1 Samuel 2:1-10

Hannah prayed a prayer of praise and thanksgiving. Take a praise walk (inside or outside) where family members take turns thanking God for specific things. After each item is spoken, recite 1 Samuel 2:2.

Wednesday—Read Genesis 18:1-15

God promised a child to Abraham and Sarah when they were very old. God had special plans for Abraham's family. Make special plans as a family, promising to do something specific together at a designated time. Look forward with hope. Follow through. Remind each other that you kept your promise.

Thursday—Read Isaiah 7:13-17

Isaiah announced that God would send Jesus, Immanuel. Locate birth announcements from when each child in the family was born and talk about them, or make those birth announcements now using paper and crayons. Alternatively, share what it was like to tell others that each baby was on the way.

Friday—Read Luke 2:1-20

Jesus is born! Set up a manger scene. If you already have one, use that. Alternatively, be creative with household items and family members.

Saturday—Read John 1:1-13

John the Baptist prepared the way for people to know that God's son was on the earth. Turn off the lights and use flashlights to guide the way around the room. Jesus is like this light. He helps us know the way through life. John the Baptist showed others the way to Jesus.