

Marshall Memorial United Church Journey to Bethlehem 2020 Stand-Up Nativity Set Instructions

Here are our instructions for making the Nativity set.
Feel free to be as creative as you like!



Materials:

- Print out of the Nativity Character patterns (see attached pdf)
- Crayons or markers
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Tape or glue stick
- Clear self-adhesive Con-Tact type plastic – optional but recommended (available at Dollarama or other stores as well as Amazon)
- Cardboard or box (for the stable) – we used a shoe box
- Paper rolls – optional (such as TP, paper towel or wrapping paper rolls)

1. Print the nativity set from <https://www.catholicicing.com/diy-printable-nativity-for-kids/>

We have included the pdf in this package, assuming we can distribute a limited number as we would at our live event, but please **do not post or share** this pattern without credit. It is free on-line, so you can share the link with others.

HINT: We printed extra pages with the sheep so we could have a flock.

2. Colour the characters

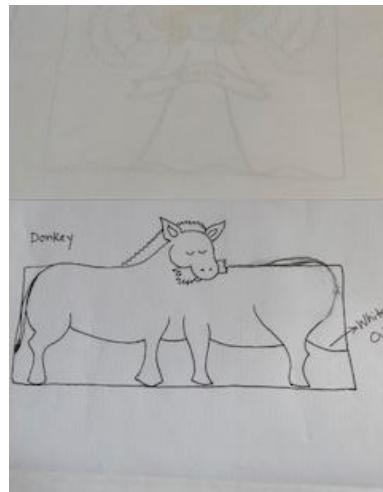
HINT: We thought the angel was cuter with a skirt, so we drew one in, and then coloured the 'background' blue. We also drew on a cutting line around the 'shoulders' of the angel so the wings would be more secure once cut out.

Here's what the modified pattern looks like and coloured and cut out:



We also modified the donkey because we found the back looked awkward with too much tummy showing at the bottom. We redrew the hind quarter to match the other side, and suggest using white-out to cover the 'tummy line' next to the leg.

Here is what the modified pattern looked like:



3. Cut out the figures

We modified the instructions shown on the website and cut the figures out with the top section cut away. The original instructions are to cut them out as rectangles to cover a TP roll, but we thought they looked nicer this way:



4. Cover the figures with clear Con-Tact

We did this to make them more durable. If purchasing at Dollarama, the brand name is **Studio Protector** – for Books, Maps, Documents – 17.5" x 53.9" 2 rolls should be lots.

NOTE: The original instructions say to glue the figures onto TP rolls (or similar). We found that if we protected the paper figures with plastic Con-Tact, they were sturdy enough to stand up without the rolls. You can decide if you want to stick them to cardboard tubes or not. We only covered the fronts with Con-Tact, but if you want them to be even stronger, you can cover both sides. You might need a third roll of Con-Tact.

For each figure:

- Cut a piece of contact larger than the figure, so that there is about 1.5" overhanging one side and about .75" overhanging the other. These overhangs will be used to 'tape' the ends together to form the tube shape of the figures.
- Peel the backing off the Con-Tact and place it sticky side up on your work surface. Place the figure on the sticky surface **RIGHT-SIDE DOWN**, so that the front of the figure will be covered in plastic.

Here is what the donkey looked like from the front when positioned correctly on the Con-Tact:



- Trim the Con-Tact from the top of the figures, but leave the excess plastic on the sides.
- Trim off the shorter excess on one side of the body of the figure and stick it on the **BACK** of the figure like a piece of tape **STICKY SIDE UP, overhanging the edge**. This will secure the inside seam when you attach the ends together to make a tube.

NOTE: be sure to leave the extra Con-Tact on the **'tail' end** of the animal figures, since when you wrap them around to form a tube, you want the tails to be on the outside.

Here is the donkey with the **Con-Tact trimmed** around the top, leaving extra on the sides to fasten the ends together to form a tube:



- Wrap the 'body' of the figure around to form a tube and use the excess Con-Tact to secure the ends together. When finished, they will stand up like this:



Here is the back view of the modified donkey:



5. Make a Stable

The pattern has a stable backdrop that you can print out and colour. They suggest you attach each end of the backdrop to a TP roll to make it stand up.

We decided to make a stable from a shoe box. We kept the lid so that all the pieces could be stored in the box. Luckily, our box was plain brown, but if you have a box that has writing on it, you can paint it or cover it in brown paper.

Here's what our stable looks like:



Our shoe box had double walls, so we used an X-Acto knife to cut the sides loose on the inside to make one layer into a flap. Then we cut a bit off the bottom of the flap, and measured and cut the roof line.

If your box does not have a double wall like ours did, you can make a front for your stable with any other cardboard and tape it to your box. If you leave it loose on the sides and just 'hinged' across the top, you will be able to fold it down when you put everything away in the box.

We cut two lengths of paper towel roll to fit on the edges of the box below the flap.

We coloured and cut out two palm trees. We put Con-Tact on the **BACK of the tops** of the trees and trimmed it (to make them stronger).

Then we put Con-Tact on the **entire FRONT** with lots of extra on each side to wrap around the paper towel rolls. We trimmed off the excess around the tops so they stand up freely.

We wrapped the extra Con-Tact on either side of the tree trunks around the paper towel rolls and pressed it on to attach the trees to the cardboard tubes. Then we cut a slit up the back of the paper towel rolls so they would slide onto the front of the stable, like this:



Finally, we coloured and cut out a star and saved it to add to the stable when the Magi arrive. Cover both sides with Con-Tact to make it strong and to allow you to fasten it to the stable with some tape, and to easily remove the tape to store the set in the box.

We kept the lid to the box so that all the pieces, including the palm trees which come off, can be stored in the box. Here is the Nativity set all packed up:



We decorated the lid with a graphic from a different nativity set pattern we found online and used Con-Tact to attach it to the lid so kids can easily identify what is in the box:

