

You're invited

Birthday Party for Jesus



When: _____

Where: _____

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Happy Birthday Jesus Party

 ministry-to-children.com/happy-birthday-jesus-party

Nicole VanderMeulen

Are you looking for a special activity for your children's ministry this Christmas? Then consider having a Jesus Birthday Party. This activity includes hearing the story of Jesus' birth and thinking about what gifts we can give to Jesus, and compares the celebration of Christ's birth with a traditional birthday party. It would make an excellent Sunday School or Children's Church lesson, and could also be a really fun and effective intergenerational family ministry event.

Estimated length is 45-60 minutes.

By contributing writer, Nicole VanderMeulen, Children's Ministry Coordinator at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Renton, Washington.

Learning Objectives:

Children will hear the story of Jesus' birth, brainstorm what gifts they have to give to Jesus, and participate in traditional birthday party activities to help them explore how celebrating Christmas is like having a birthday party for Jesus.

Target Age Group: Children age 3-12 years

Bible Story: Luke 2:1-16 The Birth of Jesus

Explanation: Children learn what birthday parties are all about at a very young age, so having a birthday party for Jesus is an extremely cognitively appropriate way for kids to see what celebrating Christmas is all about. Just like we celebrate another year of life with a birthday party, Christmas is an annual celebration of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection.

Items Needed:

- Bible
- Markers/Crayons
- Paper
- Cone Shaped Birthday Hats or Construction Paper and Elastic
- Glue Sticks
- Stickers/Foam Shapes/Sequins/Other Decorations
- Chairs
- Christmas Music
- Large Manger Picture

- Yellow Feathers
- Tape
- Blindfold
- Cake or Cupcakes
- Plates and Forks

Optional Items:

- Balloons, Streamers, or other decorations
- *The Legend of the Poinsettia* by Tomi dePaola
- Nativity Set or Picture of Nativity Characters
- Birthday Candles and Lighter or Matches

This program plan will detail four different activities that could be included as part of a birthday party for Jesus. Depending upon your group size, volunteers, and available resources you may want to do each activity together as an entire group, or split the class into smaller groups and set up each activity as a separate station each led by a different volunteer, which each small group will rotate to for a set amount of time. Encourage each activity leader to ask the children how a birthday party and Christmas are the same? How are they different? Continue to reinforce the idea that Christmas is a birthday party for Jesus. If time, money, and resources permit you may want to add decorations to your activity space. Even simple things like a few streamers and balloons make things extra special for your children.

Birthday Gift Giving: For the story portion of this activity, there are several options. One would be to read the book *The Legend of the Poinsettia* by Tomi dePaola. An alternative option would be to share the story of Jesus' birth by reading it from the Bible in Luke 2:1-16 or using another children's book that tells the story. If reading from the Bible, you could use a nativity set or pictures of the nativity characters and show the children each one as they are mentioned in the story. Following the story, ask the children what gift they would bring to Jesus at his birthday party. The children could write words or draw pictures of their gifts and then place them by the nativity.

Birthday Hat Making: Provide each child with a plain, colored, cone shaped birthday hat to decorate. An alternative would be to make hats using colored construction paper and elastic. Use stickers, sequins, foam shapes, markers, or whatever you have available for decorating.

Birthday Game Playing:

Musical Chairs– Children walk around chairs (one less than number of participants) placed in a circle as Christmas music plays. When music stops, they must find a seat. The person left standing is out. For younger kids, use enough chairs for everyone and do not call

anyone “out”.

Pin the Hay in the Manger– Played just like “Pin the Tail on the Donkey”. Blindfold each child. Spin them around, and then have them attempt to add a yellow feather (hay) with a piece of tape on it to the manger picture. Little ones can add their hay without the blindfold or spinning!

Birthday Cake Eating: For snack, sing “Happy Birthday” to Jesus and then eat cake or cupcakes. You may want to provide each child with a lit candle on their cake and let them blow it out. A great discussion question while you are eating would be, “What do you think Jesus would wish for when he blew out his birthday candle?”

Prayer: Consider gathering the group to conclude your event with a “repeat after me prayer”. Pause between every few words, allowing the children to echo what you have said. Dear God/Thank you/for our birthdays/especially/Jesus’ birthday. /Amen.

You are invited!

Come join us!

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Jesus Birthday Party for Children

 ministry-to-children.com/jesus-birthday-party

Reader Submitted

November 14,
2012

***This is a guest post by Glenys Nellist from Kids Ministry Matters*

Imagine this... you are a young mom with three little kids. It is Christmas Eve. Your kids are in a state of high excitement. The kitchen counter top is strewn with multi colored sprinkles and blobs of red frosting... tell tale signs that you have just finished decorating the last of the Christmas cookies together. You still have to call Grandma to wish her Merry Christmas; the turkey is waiting patiently to be stuffed; a few presents still need to be wrapped; the kids are getting hungry—and then there's church. You really want your kids to remember the true meaning of Christmas... but there's just too much to do. What do you choose?



Now imagine this... you are a children's ministry leader who has been praying about how your church might be able to provide a family friendly Christmas Eve service. In your conversations, some folks thought that it wasn't necessary to change anything... after all, your church already provides two great services on Christmas Eve... one for families at 6pm, only one hour long, where the kids can sing along to the traditional carols, and listen to a five minute rendition of the Christmas story by the pastor; and then a quieter, candlelit, more reflective worship experience at 11pm—what else is needed, they argue? But you are persistent. You know about that busy young mom who has those multi-colored sprinkles scattered all over her kitchen counter top. You know that at around 4pm, her kids are hungry and that by 6pm, they'll be ready for their bath. What do you choose?

You choose to offer a 'Happy Birthday Jesus' service (which actually sounds more like a party) at 4:30pm—with food for those kids. And because of the choice you made, you just helped that young mom with hers.

So how can you offer a truly family friendly Christmas Eve 'service' at your church? Begin by exploring some of the 10 ideas offered here, and then adapt them to your own particular situation. Whether your service is elaborate, or simple, families will appreciate that you have

taken the time to try to accommodate their needs.

1. Pray About It

Pray for guidance. Meet with your pastor and children's ministry team to brainstorm possibilities. Pray together.

2. Plan the Details

Work out what time would suit you best. Around 4 or 4.30 is a really family friendly time, and probably 30 minutes is long enough. Once you have decided the basics, such as time, location, and you have an idea of what you will offer, advertise it! Challenge your young families to bring another family along with them. Use our [printable invitation cards](#) to get kids involved.

3. Decide the Location

Your 'Happy Birthday Jesus' service does not need to be held in the sanctuary. In fact, if you have a separate room to use, it might help you to think out of the box, be more creative, and give you the freedom to organize your space in a kid-friendly way. Is it possible to have a large size nativity set on display? (Or maybe even a living nativity?) Do you have access to a screen or large TV? Can you decorate the doors and windows in a festive theme? Can you hang 'Happy Birthday' balloons? What about arranging the chairs in a circular design, or leaving a central space for rugs, blankets and cuddly toys such as sheep, where the children can gather?

4. Recruit Help!

This part may be your biggest challenge, but if you personally approach parents and grandparents, and help them catch the vision of what you are trying to do, they are sure to help. Focus on peoples' gifts and talents. Is there someone with a passion for interior design? Ask them to help with the room décor. Do you have a baker at your church? (Every church has one!) Ask them to bake a large birthday cake. Who has kids that would be good at greeting other kids? Who has a teenager that is a computer wizard and would love to put together a PowerPoint nativity show? The possibilities are endless... Here are gift ideas for kids. Working as a team will build excitement and energy.

5. As Families Arrive...

Have them greeted at the door by older children. Bulletins are not necessary but you might think about handing out a Christmas card that includes an invitation to your great Sunday school program. Give each child a Glow Bracelet. You can also use these free "[Jesus Birthday Card](#)" coloring sheets.

6. Set The Atmosphere

It's important to create a worshipful yet fun, relaxed atmosphere right from the beginning. As people enter, have either Christmas carols playing on a CD (sung by kids would be best), or if you have access to the Internet, have a [Veggie Tales Christmas](#) playing from YouTube.

7. If you have a screen or TV...

Purchase [Cedarmont Kids Christmas DVD](#) and choose one or two favorite carols to sing along to. Words are shown on the screen, along with cute visuals. If you have Internet access, simply use [YouTube](#)

If your church had a children's Nativity program earlier in the month and you videoed it, show a portion of this. Kids LOVE to see themselves on screen and so do their parents!

Create a PowerPoint nativity show and play 'Feliz Navidad' in the background. There are so many creative nativity sets that you can show images of—from Veggie Tales and Beanie Babies, to balloons, Legos, Peanuts, cats, dogs, and even [Duck Nativities](#) Kids love to see these!

Show a DVD/video clip from any of these 3 great sources:

- Jesus Storybook Bible: He's Here!
- The Read & Share DVD Bible: Jesus is Born
- [Bed Bug Bible Gang Christmas Show](#)

8. If you don't have a screen or TV...

Have a nativity puppet show.

Have an unrehearsed Nativity play, inviting the children to participate as the pastor retells the story. Use simple props and animal masks.

Have the pastor or children's ministry leader engage the kids in an interactive nativity story by using [What God Wants for Christmas Interactive Nativity Set](#)

Read the Christmas story from a children's Bible, such as the large size edition of [The Jesus Storybook Bible](#)

Include a simple prayer, read by a child.

9. Sing Happy Birthday!

Finish your service by turning the lights down and have a big cake brought in with a single candle. (Re-lighting candles that cannot be blown out are a great illustration). Sing Happy Birthday to Jesus and then close with 'Silent Night'. Keep the lights low so that everyone can see their glow bracelets as a reminder that Jesus is the light of the world.

10. Party!

Now you can eat cake together (and maybe a little cheese, fruit and crackers!)

Whatever services you decide to offer on Christmas Eve, remember that this time of year is a huge opportunity for us to proclaim the gospel. And maybe if we get it right, that young mom we talked about earlier might just decide to bring her kids back to your church—not just for next years' Christmas Eve service, but also for your children's Sunday school the first week of January. They might even bring their friends. Imagine that.

[Total: 0 Average: 0/5]

Printable Resources & Game for Jesus Birthday Party

 ministry-to-children.com/printable-resources-game-for-jesus-birthday-party

Shirley McKinstry

A birthday party for Jesus reminds young children of the true meaning of Christmas. Here is a game as well as cupcake toppers and wrappers.

First Christmas Game

- Print one game board per child on cardstock or heavy paper.
- Print one sheet of small cards for each two children on cardstock or heavy paper, and cut the cards apart.
- Shuffle the small cards and put them face down. Give each player a game board.
- When it is your turn, take a small card.
- Place the card on the matching picture on the game board. (picture 1)
- If you don't need the card, give it to another player who needs that picture.
- If nobody needs the card, put it in a discard pile.
- See if you can be the first player to collect all seven pictures. (picture 2)



Place the card on the matching picture on the game board. (picture 1)



See if you can be the first player to collect all seven pictures. (picture 2)

Cupcake Toppers and Wrappers

- [Christmas cupcake toppers](#)
- [Baby Jesus cupcake toppers](#)
- [Christmas cupcake wrappers](#)



The following are included (picture 3):

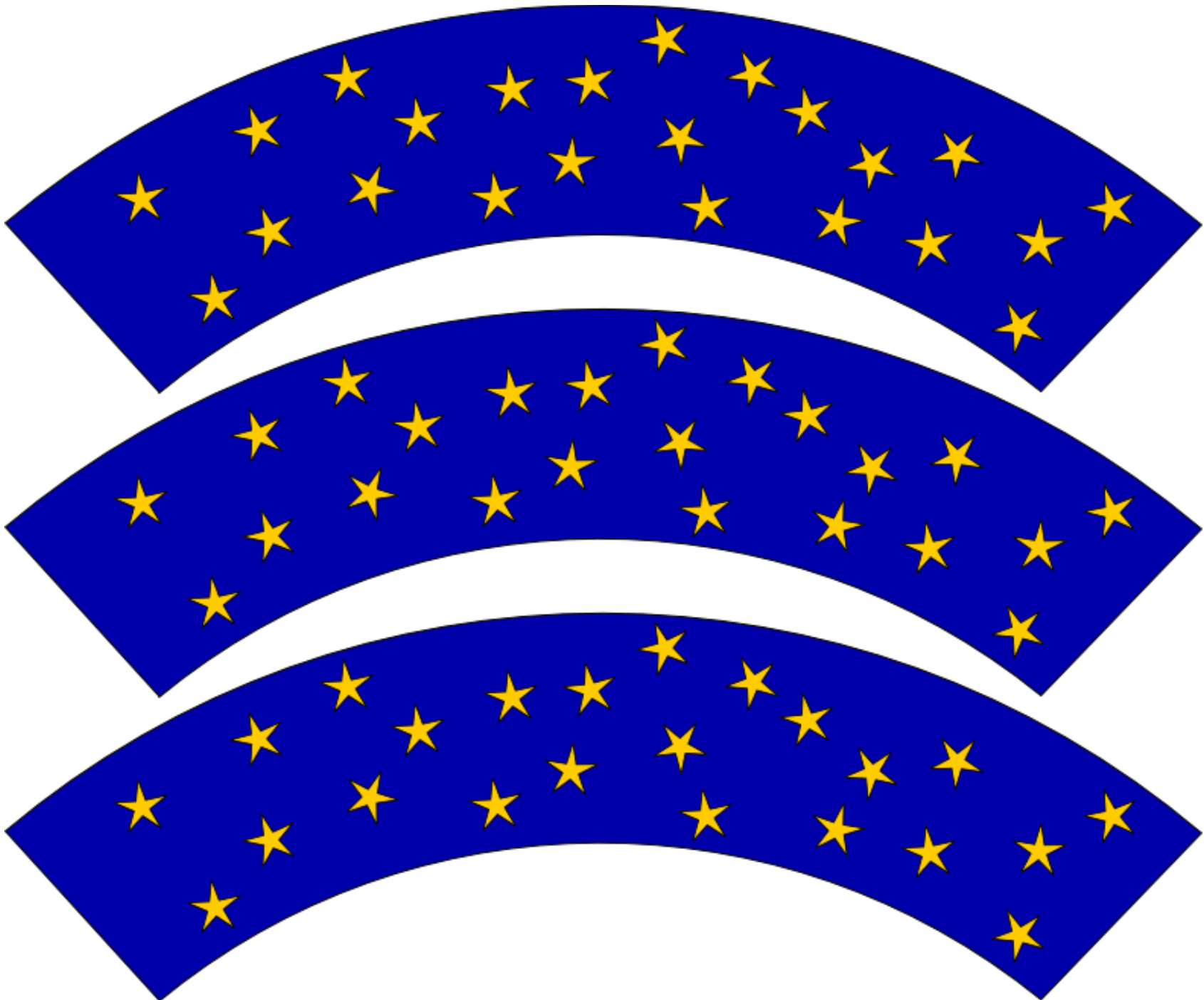
For preschoolers, especially 2 or 3 year olds, I would recommend using the Baby Jesus cupcake toppers, because every child will want Baby Jesus.

You will need to provide your own sticks for the toppers.

[Total: 0 Average: 0/5]







Christmas Cupcake Wrappers from Shirley McKinstry at ministry-to-children.com

First Christmas

Gabriel



told Mary that she would be the mother of God's Son.

Angels



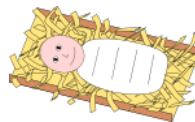
told the shepherds about Jesus' birth.

Mary



was chosen by God to be Jesus' mother.

Jesus



was God's Son and came to earth as a baby.

Shepherds



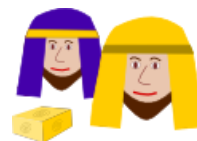
visited Jesus in the stable where he was born.

Joseph

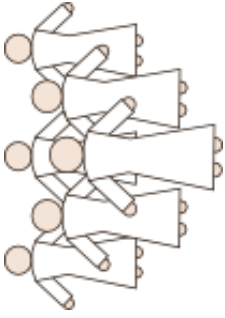

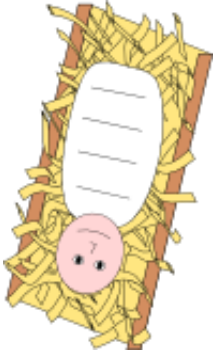
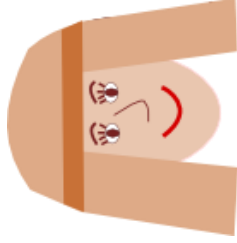









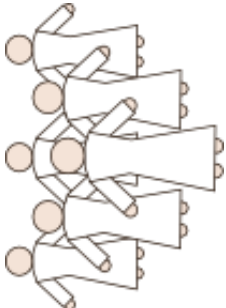



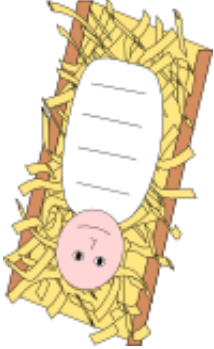


was Mary's husband and Jesus' earthly father.

Wise Men



visited Jesus much later and brought gifts.

We hope you enjoy this free resource.

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I'm Tony Kummer - I started this website in 2007, but God is using it beyond my imagination. The mission is simple.

Help you tell kids about Jesus!

Our team is honored that you choose our material. Thank you for ...

- serving where God has placed you.
- telling children about Jesus.
- allowing us to be a part of your mission.

We don't ask for money, but we do need your help.

Please consider the following:

1. Comment on the website to encourage our authors.
2. Link to us from your blog or church website.
3. Share our posts on Pinterest or Facebook.
4. Tell a friend to google "Ministry to Children."
5. Add me (and our team) to your personal prayer list.

I'd love to hear your feedback on this download. Tony@ministry-to-children.com

May God bless you and continue to bless your ministry!



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Our website now has over 4,000 free resources for your children's ministry. Each month we're adding even more! Here are a few popular sections:

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