

## THE ISLAND

LEADER	DATE (am) 14 December 08
HELPERS	TIME (mins) 40 minutes
PUPPETEER	No. of KIDS (m/f)

- **SERIES / LESSON:** Christmas Traditions / Shepherds hear the news!
- **SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Luke 2:8-21
- **CONCEPT:** We can tell others about Jesus

### GOALS:

- To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.
- To help kids realise that God does not value some people over others.
- To challenge kids to tell others about the good news of Jesus Christ.
- To lead kids into a prayer time and help them understand that God listens.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ DVD player / laptop / projector / screen, etc.
- ✓ Song DVD
- ✓ Black slide / white slide (dark and light)
- ✓ Candy cane
- ✓ Treasure chest
- ✓ Prayer Net
- ✓ Prayer cards and pen
- ✓ Name tag box

<p><b>A. Worship through Music (with puppets)</b> <b>10 minutes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome kids and invite them to praise God by singing.</li> <li>2. Sing 2 songs together (<b><i>This is the Day / I Am Not Forgotten</i></b>).</li> <li>3. Open in prayer.</li> <li>4. Tell kids to lift a mat each and sit down.</li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b>  <i>DVD player / projector</i>  <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</i></p>
<p><b>B. Message</b> <b>15 minutes</b></p> <p><b>1. Recap</b>  Ask a child to help you open the treasure chest and take out The Island census sheet you put there last week. Ask for someone to explain what the census should remind us of. Ask a few follow-up questions to recap last week's story of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem and the birth of baby Jesus, as well as the fulfilment of God's promise.</p> <p>Finish by eliciting the Bible concept: God always keeps His promises.</p> <p><i>You could also ask if anyone remembers last week's memory verse and have them recite it, with actions, individually and as a group. Or refer kids to the verse if you displayed it following the last session – "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6</i></p> <p><b>2. Set the scene</b>  Who's afraid of the dark? <i>Allow kids to answer this and the following questions.</i> Why are you afraid? What don't you like about being in the dark? Do you feel safe when you're tucked up in bed at night? Do you like to be outside at night? <i>Initiate discussion.</i></p> <p>Close your eyes. <i>Show a black screen. Speak in a very soft voice, calming and relaxing the children.</i> Imagine that it's the middle of the night. Imagine that you are a shepherd. You are looking after your sheep in a field just outside the little town of Bethlehem. It's nighttime. It's December. Keep your eyes closed. Tell me what the weather's like. What can you see? What can you smell? Can you hear anything? <i>Direct these questions at individual children and allow them to answer.</i> You are a shepherd. What clothes are you wearing? What did you eat for supper? Do you like your job? Why/why not? Do you get scared being out in the fields at night? Why/why not? Are you afraid of the dark?</p> <p><b>3. Tell the story</b>  <i>Show a white screen. Shout in terror!</i> What's that bright light?! I can hardly see! Shepherds! Are we going to die? I'm shaking! What is it? What is it? <i>Kids' eyes should be open by now!</i></p> <p>In the fields close to the town of Bethlehem, there were shepherds keeping watch over their flocks of sheep. It was</p>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Black screen</i></p> <p><i>White screen</i></p>

nighttime. Just like we imagined, it was dark except for the light of the moon and stars. There were only the sounds of the sheep sleeping and bleating now and again ... and a few noises of the countryside in the distance. The shepherds had to be extra careful at night in case any wild animal would come to try and steal a lamb or a sheep from the flock. All in all, it was dark, it was lonely, and it was quiet.

All of a sudden, an angel of God appeared to the shepherds, right there in the field in front of their very eyes! The light coming from the angel was so bright the shepherds had to shield their eyes. Well, I guess they covered their eyes anyway in fear of what this strange creature wanted with them! What a supernatural shock on this cold December night! What had they done wrong? What did God want with them – poor, lowly shepherds. Terrified, they almost fainted. Have you ever been terrified of something? Really, really scared? What happened? How did it make you feel? How did your body react? – Did you sweat? Or go cold? Did you start to shake? Or collapse to the ground? Did your eyes grow big and wide? Did your mouth open wide in astonishment? ... so, you can imagine how terrified the shepherds were!

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)

Gulp! The shepherds looked at each other. You're telling us something good? We're not in trouble? This is a message for everybody? Why are you telling us? We don't live in Bethlehem, or even in the big city of Jerusalem. We don't see people too often because we're usually working here in the fields with our sheep. Maybe you've made a mistake? Hang on ... you say a **Saviour** has been born? A **Saviour**? You mean, someone to save us? Someone who can save us shepherds ... our families ... our town ... our country ... the world?

The angel hadn't finished speaking. "[Shepherds ...] This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." *Clap your hands quickly to emphasise the suddenness ...* **Suddenly** there were *loads* of angels in the sky with the angel who brought the message. They were all praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men" (Luke 2:14). The sound was awesome. If the shepherds eyes and mouths were wide open before, they were even wider now! The sight of angels in the sky before them, and the sound of these angels praising God in heaven, was more than enough to make the shepherds fall to their knees in amazement. Wow!

The shepherds watched while the angels left them and flew back through the skies to their home in heaven. One of them looked at the others and breathed a sigh of disbelief! What had just happened? "Was I dreaming?" They started to talk about the angel's message ... "Today in the town of David a Saviour has



been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. A Saviour, in Bethlehem, Christ the Lord. Just imagine if this is true! If we stay here with our sheep and don't bother going to check it out, we'll be sorry!" "You're right," said another shepherd, "Let's go down to Bethlehem town and find the Saviour. The angel said he would be wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. If we all go, we're sure to find him more quickly. Let's go!"

The shepherds jumped up and ran down from the fields to get to the town as quickly as they could. They hurried, and they searched, and finally they found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger – just like the angel had told them. This was amazing! A baby who would be a Saviour. Wow! The shepherds were so excited at this message from God, and so happy that they were the first people to know this good news of great joy that would be for all people! The shepherds left the little family. They went into the streets of Bethlehem and told everyone they met about this special baby, the Saviour sent from God. Everyone who heard the shepherds' story was amazed! And the shepherds made their way back to the fields, praising God and thanking Him for all the things they had heard and seen – just as He had told them through the angel's message.

#### 4. Explain

What a great and awesome God who would send His son, a baby, Christ the Lord, to save all the people from sin. Amazing! And that little baby grew up to be a man who went to die on the cross ... and after three days, He rose up from the dead and went to live in heaven, waiting for us to go and be with Him. What good news of great joy we have to tell people! Boys and girls, God didn't tell this news to the king, or to the politicians, or to the priest or minister in the church ... He chose to tell His good news to shepherds first. That tells us that God sees everybody as being important – it doesn't matter what your job is, or how much money you have, or how old you are, or where you live. God loves you. But what we should remember from this story is that the shepherds didn't keep this good news to themselves. Oh no! After they saw Jesus, they told everyone about Him and how He was God's promised Saviour. That's our job too, boys and girls. God wants us to tell our families and our friends and the people we meet from day to day about how wonderful Jesus is, how He loves us and helps us, and how He made a way to save us.

I have a candy cane today to put into the treasure chest. A cane because this is what the shepherds used when they were out in the fields with their sheep. Let's put it into the treasure chest and we'll take it out again next week. Remember how the shepherds were so excited and happy to spread the news? I hope that you will tell at least one person this Christmas time about the good news of great joy – that Jesus Christ loves us and saves us from sin.

*Candy cane*

*Treasure chest*

#### C. Prayer Net

10 minutes

**You'll need ...**

1. Ask a child to explain what it means when we *pray* – We talk

*Net (with last week's*

<p>to God and He listens.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Explain that prayer / talking to God is very important because that's how we get to know Him.</li> <li>3. Choose a child to retrieve the prayer net. Lift out the prayer cards you put there last week. Ask the kids for updates on those situations.</li> <li>4. Explain that when we are scared or have something to be thankful for, like the shepherds, we need to tell God about those things.</li> <li>5. Tell kids that we are going to make a note of some special prayers today and put them in the prayer net. Next week they will tell us what happened in those situations.</li> <li>6. Ask a few kids if they have a prayer to put into the net. As they tell you, write their name and the topic of their prayer on a small card. Ask the child to say a prayer aloud (help them to do so) before they place their card into the prayer net.</li> <li>7. Finish by leading a prayer for the whole group.</li> </ol>	<p><i>prayer cards)</i>  <i>Small cards / postcards</i>  <i>A pen</i></p>
<p><b>D. Conclusion (with puppets)</b> <b>5 minutes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Challenge kids to remember to be like the shepherds – ready and excited to tell others about the wonderful gift of Jesus.</li> <li>2. Remind kids to come back this evening.</li> <li>3. Sing a closing song. <b>(Supernatural)</b></li> <li>4. Ask kids to put their mats away and put their name tags in the box before they leave.</li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b>  <i>DVD player / projector</i>  <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</i>  <i>Name tag box</i></p>


## THE ISLAND cont'd

<b>LEADER</b>	<b>DATE (pm)</b> 14 December 08
<b>HELPERS</b>	<b>TIME (mins)</b> 40 minutes
<b>PUPPETEER</b>	<b>No. of KIDS (m/f)</b>

### GOALS:

- To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.
- To reinforce today's Bible concept by learning a related Scripture verse.
- To consolidate today's Bible story and concept by playing a series of candy cane games.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ Song DVD / laptop / DVD player / projector / screen, etc.
- ✓ Memory Verse Slide (Isaiah 9:6)
- ✓ Activity – picture of candy cane without its hook
  - Candy cane hook (mounted on card to strengthen it)
  - Blu-tack
  - Blindfold (scarf or length of fabric)
  - Pencil
  - Candy canes (two hidden in your room, and enough for one for each child for hockey game)
  - Goals (2 for each group of 4 kids – fold a length of card into 3 sections and stand it on its edge to make a goalmouth) 
  - Jelly beans
  - Whistle
  - Clock
- ✓ Small prizes (selection of bookmarks, stickers, pencils, etc.)
- ✓ Name tag box

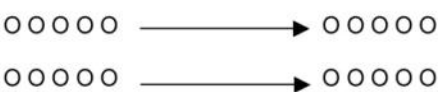
<p><b>E. Worship through Music (with puppets)</b> <b>10 minutes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome kids and invite them to praise God by singing.</li> <li>2. Sing 2 songs together. (<i>I Am Not Forgotten / Everyday</i>)</li> <li>3. Open in prayer.</li> <li>4. Kids should remain standing for the following activity.</li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b>          DVD player / projector          Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</p>
<p><b>F. Memory Verse (with puppets)</b> <b>10 minutes</b></p> <p><i>"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."</i> Isaiah 9:6</p> <p>*This is a repetition of last week's verse. Kids should be more familiar with the verse today, so you can test their memories later and try to have them recite the verse without seeing it.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask a few questions to recap this morning's story:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who were the first people the angel told about the birth of Jesus? <i>Shepherds out in the fields</i></li> <li>- What did the angel tell them? <i>"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."</i></li> <li>- How would the shepherds know that they had found the right baby? <i>The angel told them, "This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."</i></li> <li>- The shepherds went to find the baby Jesus. What did they do after they had seen him? <i>They told everyone they met what the angel had told them and what they had seen. Then they praised God!</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>3. <i>Explain:</i> The shepherds could hardly believe what this angel of God was telling them. They were terrified! But they went to the town and found Mary and Joseph, with baby Jesus lying in a manger. The shepherds knew that the angel really was from God and they praised and thanked God for this baby – a Saviour!</li> <li>4. Look at what Isaiah wrote hundreds of years before Jesus was born. <i>Show kids the memory verse on screen. Read the verse together. Repeat it a couple of times.</i></li> <li>5. Talk about what the verse means – Jesus is the Son born to Mary and Joseph, and to the people of the world. The government will be on His shoulders – means that Jesus is the Ruler of the world. He is in control. Talk about what the names of Jesus mean:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a counsellor is someone who listens and gives advice – Jesus is a wonderful counsellor;</li> <li>- Jesus is God's Son, and He has the power of God in Him – Jesus is mighty;</li> <li>- Even though Jesus was born as a baby, He grew up and still lives now. He is like a father or a daddy to us, wanting the best for us and loving us even when we make mistakes, and He will <i>always</i> be there, forever and ever!</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Memory verse slide (Isaiah 9:6)</i></p>



- Jesus is part of David's family tree, King David. That means it's a royal family tree, so Jesus could be called a prince – the Prince of peace. Jesus wants to bring peace to your heart and mine – love, joy and peace.
5. Repeat the verse with actions. Leave the verse on the screen as it is long and perhaps more difficult for the kids to remember.
- For to us a child is born – *rock a baby in your arms action*
  - To us a son is given – *hold out hands, palms up, as if giving something*
  - And the government will be on his shoulders – *pat shoulders*
  - And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor – *start with both hands around mouth, and reach up with hands in the air*
  - Mighty God – *hold arms up to show muscles*
  - Everlasting Father – *with hands at the heart, stretch out sideways to show infinity*
  - Prince of Peace – *hold up two fingers and make a peace sign*
- \*Idea from  
<http://rotation.infopop.cc/eve/forums/a/tpc/f/7136059161/m/2396069161>
6. Repeat a few times, individually and as a group. If you think the kids are ready, show a blank screen and have them recite the verse without seeing it.
7. Finish with a group repetition of the verse with actions.

G. Activity	15 minutes	You'll need ...
<p>1. Show kids a Christmas candy cane. Ask a few questions to elicit the symbolism associated with the legend of the candy cane:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who in the Christmas story uses a cane while they are working? <i>Shepherds</i></li> <li>- If we turn the cane upside down, what do we get? <i>The letter 'J' which stands for 'Jesus'</i></li> <li>- What does the white cane symbolise? <i>Jesus is pure and holy, without sin</i></li> <li>- What is the red stripe for? <i>Jesus' blood when He died for us</i></li> </ul> <p>2. <i>Tell kids:</i> Remember when you are eating your Christmas candy canes that Jesus, the little Christmas baby, grew up to be the Saviour of the world!</p>		<p><i>Candy cane</i></p>
<p><b>The next few activities are a series of candy cane games. You can choose from them which you want to use.</b></p>		
<p>3. <b><i>Cane without a hook</i></b> – Have a picture of a candy cane stuck or pinned onto the wall. The cane in the picture should be just the straight stem of the cane, minus the hooked top. Cut out a matching hooked top for the cane and stick it onto card to strengthen it. Fix a small piece of blu-tack to the back of it. Blindfold a child. Spin them around a couple of times.</p>		<p><i>Picture of candy cane without its hook</i>  <i>Candy cane hook</i>  <i>Blu-tack</i>  <i>Blindfold (scarf or length of fabric)</i></p>



<p>Tell them to do their best to stick the hook onto the top of the candy cane. Mark on the picture where the child placed the hook. Repeat with a few more children and mark the locations each time. The winner is the child who was closest to getting the hook in the right place. Give a prize if you want.</p>	<p><i>Pencil to mark locations</i></p>
<p>4. <b>Hide and seek</b> – Have two candy canes hidden somewhere in your room before the session begins. Tell kids that there are two candy canes hidden in the room. Allow kids to look for them (you could do this a variety of ways – have the girls look for one, and boys for the other; ask one child to look for one, and one child to look for the other; have all the kids go mad looking for both candy canes; have one boy and one girl look for one, one boy and one girl look for the other, etc.). As they look, give them clues by saying 'warm' when they come closer, and 'cold' when they move further away from the hidden canes.</p>	<p><i>Two candy canes hidden in your room</i></p>
<p>5. <b>Relay</b> – Use the two candy canes the kids have found in the <i>Hide and seek</i> game. Divide kids into two teams. Divide each team into two again. Half of each team should stand in a line, one behind the other, at one end of the room. The second half of both teams should stand in a line, one behind the other, at the other end of the room, facing the other half of their team.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  </p> <p>Each child should hold their hand out in front of them, pointing their index finger. Hang a candy cane on the finger of the first person in the first half of each team. They should go as quickly as possible towards their team mate at the opposite end of the hall with the cane balancing on their finger (no support from other fingers or hands), and transfer it to the finger of their team mate. This child should then do the same, transferring the cane to the finger of their team mate at the opposite end of the room. Repeat this until each child has carried the candy cane. When the team has finished they should sit down. The first team to sit down wins.</p>	<p><i>Two candy canes</i></p>
<p>6. <b>Candy Cane Hockey</b> – Divide kids into small groups of four. Tell each group to sit in a different area of the room, away from the other groups. Give each group two 'goals' (These can be two strips of card folded into three and set up on their sides to create goalmouths). Help kids to place the goals about a metre apart, facing each other. Two kids should sit behind one goal, two behind the other – opposing teams. Give each child a candy cane. Explain that the cane is a hockey stick. Put a jelly bean or similar sweet into the middle of the 'playing field'. If you have a whistle, tell the kids that their hockey matches will begin as soon as you blow the whistle. They will have two minutes to play. They must try to score a goal by hitting the jelly bean into their opponents'</p>	<p><i>2 card 'goals' for each small group Candy canes (one for each child) Jelly beans Whistle Clock</i></p>

goal. Have your adult helpers help the kids to keep track of the goals scored (and act as referees in case of disputes!). After two minutes, blow the whistle again to signal the end of play. (You could develop this game by running it as a tournament – the winners of each group play each other in the next round and so on until you have a Candy Cane Hockey Champion!)

**H. Conclusion (with puppets)**

**5 minutes**

1. Ask one boy and one girl if they can recite the memory verse. The puppets / another leader will judge if they deserve a prize. Award the prizes.
2. Ask kids to hold hands and sing *Jesus Loves Me* (first verse and chorus) *a cappella*, or with an instrument if preferred.
3. Close in prayer. Remind kids to come back next week!
4. Give each child a candy cane to take home.
5. Make sure kids put their name tags in the box before they leave.

**You'll need ...**

*Small prizes – bookmarks, stickers, etc.*

*Candy canes  
Green box*