

## **The Advent and Christmastide Season (Christology)**

The Christian Year commences with Advent, the season of preparation for the birth of Jesus and in anticipation of his return in glory. It combines joyful celebration and sober contemplation: joyous because the Day of Salvation is at hand and contemplative in that it calls for repentance – “Prepare ye the way of the Lord ... repent.”

The church gathers the faithful to a collective process of discerning Christ's presence in the midst of life and in the transformative power already at work among those who hope for the Day of Deliverance.

The Christmastide begins on Christmas Day and ends on the day before the start of the Epiphany Season. Christmas marks the fulfillment of God's promise of the world's redemption. It is a day of pure rejoicing and thanksgiving. The color is white signifying the purity and holiness of the infant Jesus lying in the manger.

**First Sunday of Advent Liturgy****Words to Ponder**

“Advent is a season of waiting, expecting, and hoping. Beginning four Sundays prior to Christmas and ending on Christmas Eve, Advent helps us prepare for the coming, or “advent” of the Christ child at Christmas. (The word “advent” comes from the Latin word that means “coming.”) Arlene M. Mark

**Soft Music** (Preferably Harmonica)**Processional**

Worship Leaders  
The Wreath with the Advent and Christ Candles  
The Minister/Pastor

**+Call to Worship**

Liturgist: Let us hear the revelation of God’s promise  
Church: For Advent is a time of expecting new light to shine.  
Liturgist: Let us receive light from the prophets,  
Church: for light penetrates darkness and prepares the way of the Lord.  
Liturgist: Let us see God’s glory shine forth.  
All: For we long to be transformed by the light of God’ holiness.

**+Lighting the First Advent Candle: The Candle of Hope** (One family to lead)

Father: Today is the beginning of Advent,  
Mother: The celebration of God’s Coming to us in Christ Jesus.  
Children: Advent offers us another way to see our world;  
To become aware of the presence of God’s Rule all around us,  
To acknowledge once again that God is in charge of history.  
All Members: We light this first candle to symbolize the promises found in the prophecy  
given to us from God. God, you have promised to come quickly and  
abide with us.  
Parents: We are **watchfully praying**.  
Church: “Even so Lord, quickly come!”

**Song: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”**

Translated: John Neal, 1818-66

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear  
Refrain:  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to you, O Israel.  
O come, O Wisdom from on high, who ordered all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in its ways to go.

**Advent Prayer** (Unison)

We come, our God, seeking light; light to reveal your majesty; light to clear our blindness;  
light to illumine our understanding. Come into our hearts and lives as we worship, so that  
we may serve in your kingdom as bearers of light and guide others to the Light. In Jesus’  
name, we pray. Amen.

**Sound of Ching** (if no ching you can play cover of kettle or the spoons)

**+Opening Song: "My Soul Magnifies the Lord" HFJ # 116**

Words by Henry W. Kiley, Philippines; based on Luke 1:46-55  
 Music based on Kalinga Motive

**All:** My soul magnifies the Lord, and in God my heart Exults:  
 Salidum salidumay, insinalidumiway. Ay ay salidumay me

**Solo (Female):** Favored look he casts on me, shadowed me so tenderly  
 Generations then will see deep things God works silently,  
 Ay ay salidum-may.

**Men:** To God fearing souls he goes, on them mercy he bestows;  
 With the strength of his right arm scatters all the proud who swarm,  
 Ay ay salidum-may.

**Women:** Those enthroned he will bring down, and the lowly he will crown;  
 Hungry ones he'll fill with cheer, but the rich his Day will fear.  
 Ay ay salidum-may.

**Children and Youth:** So the Promise from of old comes to life has not gone cold;  
 Promise made to Abraham bears its fruit the Kingdom come.  
 Ay ay Salidum-may.

**Unison:** Blessed Mary, all Saints say; your consent has paved the way.  
 Our salvation now is won, by the coming of God's Son.  
 Ay ay Salidum-may, Salidum-may, Salidum-may.

**Call Confession (Minister)**

We can no longer play dumb. We not only know the lives we are called to lead, we are well aware of how we fail—through our words as well as our silence, by our deeds and our unwillingness to act. Let us confess to the God who comes to us.

**Prayer of Confession Through Song and Dance**

Let a young boy/girl sing this song and have the other children do some movements.

O God Who Looks into Our Hearts

Music: Elman S. Caguindangan, 2001      Words: Proceso J. Udarbe, 2001

O God who looks in - to our hearts, Your pre - sence now we seek; And  
 We own our er - ror, sin and shame, We're guilt - y in your sight; Come  
 And though our sins be crim - son red, Your power is to re - new; We  
 Then from your mer - cy seat, O Lord, We seek those who have erred; To

by your judg - ment wash us now, With all your cleans - ing power.  
 save us from our mis - er - y, And set our steps a - right.  
 pray that hence - forth we will be So ra - diant white for you.  
 those who choose to dis - o - bey, We speak your sa - ving Word.

**Assurance of Pardon (Minister)**

Hear the words of assurance given to all who turn in faith to Christ our Savior. God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

**Sharing of God's Peace**

Let us go around and share God's peace to one another

**+Reading of the Scriptures**

Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-38

**Anthem**

If there are adult/children/youth choirs, at this advent service, it would be nice if they can sing together as one choir.

**Proclamation of the Word****Response**

Children will recite the meaning of Advent through Acrostic Way. The SS teacher can ask the children make their own meaning of the word Advent or the teacher can find the acrostic of the word advent and give it to 6 children a week before the Advent Sunday for them to memorize and recite during the Advent Sunday.

**Call to Offering**

In this busy season, our most important preparations will happen here in our hearts when we make a way for God to come into our lives, when we "prepare the way of the Lord." In the midst of our preparations, we bring gifts to share so that God's love will shine brightly through the ministry of this church and in our own lives as well. Let us gather our offering.

**Offertory Song**

One child, Youth, UCM and CWA, or if the church has a family of singers let them sing the offertory song.

**+Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below  
Praise God above ye heavenly host! Creator Christ and Holy Ghost! Amen.

**+Offertory Prayer (Unison)**

God of promise and hope, we take time this morning to share offerings of time, talent, and treasure. We present ourselves to you, knowing you are the source of all good gifts. Your word reminds us that we do not know the day or hour when our faithfulness will be examined, and so we pray that we might live each day and each moment striving for lives of love and compassion for the least, lowliest, and the lost, in a way that is pleasing to you. We pray this in the name of the Christ, whose coming calls us to preparation and repentance. Amen. (*Matthew 24:36-44.*)

**+Closing Hymn**

"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

Words: Charles Wesley, 1744

Music: Rowland H. Prichard, 1830; harm. The English Hymnal, 1906

1. Come, O long expected Jesus, born to set your people free;  
From our fears and sins release us, Christ, in whom our rest shall be.  
You our strength and consolation, come salvation to impart;

Dear desire of many nations, joy of every longing heart.

2. Born your people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,  
Born to reign in us forever, born your gracious realm to bring.  
By your own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone;  
By your all sufficient merit, raise us to your glorious throne.

**+Closing Prayer**

Elder of the Church

**+Benediction**

Minister

There is a world out there that is oversupplied with theories and technology, but drastically undersupplied with hope. You however, like Christ, are tomorrow's people, those who know the future is pregnant with promise and hope.

This same Jesus comes again with glory, to judge the living and the dead.

Go and live out your hope graciously and courageously.

**+Postlude (Harmonica)**

**+Recessional**

Choir Members, Worship Leaders

**Sources**

1. Words for Worship edited by Arlene M. Mark
2. Worship Resources 9<sup>th</sup> CCA Assembly
3. Resources and Reflections for Worship
4. Worship Together
5. Worship Elements and Symbols
6. Hymnal of Faith Journey
7. **[www.ucc.worshipresources](http://www.ucc.worshipresources.com)**

First Sunday of Advent

Lectionary Title 1: **The Ethnic and Historical Roots of Jesus**

*Old Testament: Genesis 17:1-8* [New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible (NRSV, 1989)]

The Sign of the Covenant

<sup>1</sup>When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. <sup>2</sup>And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' <sup>3</sup>Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, <sup>4</sup>'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. <sup>5</sup>No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations.

<sup>6</sup>I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. <sup>7</sup>I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. <sup>8</sup>And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God.'

*New Testament: Matthew 1: 1-17* (NRSV, 1989)

The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah

<sup>1</sup>An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham. <sup>2</sup>Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, <sup>3</sup>and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, <sup>4</sup>and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, <sup>5</sup>and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, <sup>6</sup>and Jesse the father of King David. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, <sup>7</sup>and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, <sup>8</sup>and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, <sup>9</sup>and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, <sup>10</sup>and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, <sup>11</sup>and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. <sup>12</sup>And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup>and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, <sup>14</sup>and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, <sup>15</sup>and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, <sup>16</sup>and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah. <sup>17</sup>So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

*General Concept: Jesus is a child of history and of his times.*

*Key Concepts in the Different Age Levels in Sunday School*

Nursery/Kindergarten Level (K)/ Younger Elementary Level (YE): **Jesus is born.**

Middle Elementary Level (ME)/Older Elementary Level (OE): **Jesus belongs to a Jewish family.**

Youth Level (Y): **Jesus accepts His beginnings and loves his Jewish ancestry.**

Adult Level (A): **Jesus is a child of history and of his times.**

### *Exegesis of the Biblical References*

Genesis 17:1-8 talks about the signs of promise of God to Abraham. It happened 13 years after the birth of Ishmael, Abraham's son to Hagar. Three signs of God's promise were noted in the event as God appeared to Abraham; first, he shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations and even monarchs shall come from his ancestry. Second, his ancestry will establish the same covenant with God as promised first to Abraham, and third, Abraham and his ancestry will inherit the land of Canaan. It is in this context where God has established and renewed his covenant with Abraham. It is God who initiated it and not Abraham. The story before this covenant is also essential as it tells the story of Abraham having a son to Hagar. The covenant serves as a reminder to Abraham that God has not forgotten the promise to Abraham and Sarah to have a child, though Abraham and Sarah have already initiated their own plan in having a son through Hagar. But this was not the promise God has made to Abraham and Sarah. As will be seen in the following verses and chapters, these signs of promise are fulfilled through their son Isaac, then through Jacob and his descendants who went on to occupy the Land of Canaan. With their settlement there they established the Tribal Confederacy and then the monarchy which is mentioned as among the signs of the covenant. Then there was the establishment of the Davidic and Solomonic monarchy. This was followed by the division and subsequent creation of the southern kingdom and northern kingdom. Eventually, both the northern and southern kingdoms collapsed and were both thrown into exile. After the exile of the leaders of the southern kingdom they were able to return to Judah and rebuild the temple. There took place some revolts against their colonizers coming to the time of Jesus. This means that the covenant made by God is both given and renewed and remembered well at each moment. In the process of renewing and remembering God's covenant with them especially during times of festivals (e.g., Passover, Weeks, Tabernacles), God's faithfulness to His covenant promises is always affirmed with rejoicing and gratitude. With God's covenant promise to Abraham being remembered, affirmed and celebrated throughout the time of his descendants until Jesus, his rootedness to the covenant remains upheld, affirmed and celebrated even in the present.

It is not a surprise why Matthew is the first book in the New Testament as it presents the link between the ancestry of the Old Testament heroes and the family of Jesus. Matthew 1:1-17 presents a picture of the genealogy of Jesus starting from Abraham to his immediate family, Joseph from the line of David. It is by his rootedness in the family of Abraham and his relationship to the fulfillment of the covenant which makes the gospel of Matthew a resource on how Jesus will respond to God's call to embody and fulfill the covenant made by God to His people. The names which are included give us a picture of the historical significance and faith implications of how God has chosen the ancestors with their respective stories each of which has deep manifestations of faith such as Rahab's and Tamar's who were also recipients of the promise of God in spite of their questionable reputations along with the others. Matthew keeps the timeline in a way people can understand the faith tradition with a major historical undertaking. From this long line of ordinary, very human and even not so perfect lives of each of the ancestors comes the historical rootedness of Jesus and the distinct, concrete, caring mode of spirituality that he manifested in his life and ministry.

*Companion Guide for the Teachers and Other Users*

The concept of Christian spirituality is based on the doctrine of Christ's dual nature, namely, his true humanity and his true divinity that subsist in one unified personal center whose unique unity allows the exchange of properties between the two natures, in the language of classical Christian theology. In addition, the exchange of properties from one to the other does not in any way diminish or dilute the other, which is a paradox and a *sui generis*, that is, unique in the absolute sense of the word. This means that Christ is not any more human than we are and not any less God than God.

On that basis, believers of Jesus are called and destined to achieve the full stature of *human nature* by following his way, accepting his fate and being transformed by the power of the resurrection. Christian spirituality is a *process of becoming like Jesus* which is both a struggle to follow his way and a passive experience of being renewed by the power of the Spirit. For Christian believers, spiritual formation is a life-long course in reenacting, individually and collectively, Jesus' concrete and historical life under the discipline of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul's description of Christian life as being *in Christ* refers to both in the resurrected and in the crucified Christ. In other words, the whole sequence of Jesus' Christhood – ministry-suffering-glorification – is contemplated in the meaning of being in Christ.

It follows that the course in Christian spirituality requires the members to *re-discover the human side of Jesus* by delving into his life and times – what kind of persons his parents were, the historical and social circumstances into which he was born, the cultural influences surrounding his childhood and the political forces that were at play which helped shape his consciousness. Jesus wasn't a *tabula rasa*, an empty mind, who instantly became the Christ but a person whose sense of identity resulted from an assimilation of the role models of his childhood and youth available in his time. The defining moment that thrust him into the role of Israel's messiah took place when, led by the Spirit, he prevailed over Satan and surrendered to God his whole being – his consciousness, his loves and hates, his personal ambitions, his politics and loyalties – and fate. This was also his moment of realization that he was chosen and prepared by God for a special purpose.



## Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session and with the consistent example shown by parents and other significant adults, the children will be able to:

1. begin to tell that Jesus is born;
2. begin to accept that Jesus is born as a human being like us; and
3. begin to talk about the joy of a child being born.

### II. Concept: Jesus is born.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), picture of Jesus' birth, baby dolls, baby stuff, cue cards, scavenger hunt box, activity sheets

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Greet the children warmly as they arrive. Check the attendance.
2. Please refer to the Advent Liturgy.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. *Talk Time.* Teacher puts on a bib and holds a baby bottle. She asks the learners, "What is teacher wearing?" (a bib) She holds the baby bottle and asks, "What do you call this? (a baby bottle) Who uses both of them? (a baby) Why does a baby need a bib each time s/he drinks milk in a baby bottle? (to keep baby shirt from getting wet)
2. *Game.* What Goes With It! Say: "Bib and milk bottle go together. They are like a pair. Today, let's work in pairs. I will give each of you a picture of baby things. Look for the child who has the picture that goes with what you have. When you find your pair, sit together." Try to guide other children who are shy. Let's check your work afterwards. Let the children answer the activity sheet made for this purpose. Expect the following answers.  
soap and basin                      booties and mittens                      bottle and powder milk  
comb and mirror                      pillow and blanket
3. Ask: "Who uses all these things?" Say: "In our story, find out who uses these things."

#### C. Learning Time

1. Teach the song "Many, Many Years Ago".
2. Tell the story.

#### When Jesus Was a Baby

One early morning, baby Jesus wakes up. He starts to cry loudly. Mary puts the bottle of warm milk on the table for a while. She checks on his diaper.

"Oh, it's wet!" she said. She changes his cloth diapers immediately.

Then, she carries him in her arms. She takes him near the window. Baby Jesus squints as he catches the morning sunshine on his face. The sweet scent of the field calms Jesus.

Joseph prepares a basin of warm water near the sink. Jesus takes a bath! Mary and Joseph take turns holding Jesus. They enjoy watching him bathe. They dress him in his tiny clothes. Mary combs his delicate hair until he falls asleep.

Suddenly, Joseph remembers how his forefathers, Abraham and David, took care of their family. Joseph promises God that he will continue caring for his family.

*D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

Ask the following questions:

1. In the story, who uses the things that we talked about earlier?
2. Who took care of Jesus when he was born?
3. Pretend that you are Mary. How do you take care of Baby Jesus? What would you do if:
  - a. Jesus cries.
  - b. Jesus needs sunshine.
  - c. Jesus is hungry.
4. Pretend that you are Joseph. How do you take care of Baby Jesus? What would you do if:
  - a. Jesus needs a bath.
  - b. Jesus feels cold.
5. Aside from crying, what do babies do when they are born? (Call on each pupil to show before the class to act out what babies do besides to cry. Have the class guess what each pupil tries to show the class.)

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

1. Ask: How was Jesus like when he was a baby? Learners say: Jesus was born to a family. He had a mother and a father. His parents cared for him.
2. Ask: What did Jesus need when he was a baby? Learners say: Jesus needed clothing, food and sunshine. He needed his parents to look after him.
3. Ask: How was Jesus like us when he was a baby? Learners say: Jesus had a family like ours. Jesus needed clothing, food, fresh air, and sunshine like we do. Jesus also cried like most babies do.

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

**For N/K**

1. *Play 'Dress Up Jesus'.* How do you feel if you were given the chance to put clothes on Baby Jesus. What items would you use to clothe Him? (In the Scavenger Hunt Box, put things that a baby boy could likely wear such as mittens, booties, small shirt, bib, small jumper, small jacket, small brief and other nuisance items like big shirt and shorts, and clothes for girls.)
  - a. Teacher holds a baby doll. Teacher says, "Let's pretend that this is baby Jesus."
  - b. Call on a pupil to "hunt" in the box for one thing that baby Jesus could wear.Have each child experience the act of putting clothes on the doll.
2. Say: Thank you all for helping me. This baby will definitely will grow strong and healthy.

**For YE**

1. *The Joy of Caring for a Baby.* Say: Like Jesus, we were born and we were once babies, too. In the family of Joseph and Mary, the birth of Jesus brought them so much. It is always a joy to care for a baby in one's family. Who among you can help me take care of the baby. Find something in the scavenger box what the baby needs. (In the Scavenger Hunt Box, put things like baby bottle, a toy, a fan, a small pillow, a nail cutter, a comb, and a diaper.)
  - a. This baby is crying so loud. He is hungry.
  - b. This baby wants to play.
  - c. This baby wants to sleep.
  - d. This baby feels hot. She sweats.
  - e. This baby's nails need to be cut. It's already long.
2. *Art activity.* Complete the baby picture. Draw the missing part of this baby and color the completed picture.

**G. Closing Worship**

1. Memory verse: "And Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah." (Matthew 1:16)
2. Reflective action: We thank God for Jesus who was born. (Clap three times)
3. Offering
4. Closing songs "Joy to the World" and "Many, Many Years Ago"
5. Closing prayer: "Thank you God for baby Jesus who was born like us. May we continue to make Jesus happy as we take care of our brothers and sisters, too. Amen."

## Middle and Older Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. describe Jesus as one who is born to a Jewish family;
2. talk about his parents;
3. practice being obedient to one's parents as Jesus was to his parents; and
4. express one's thanks to God for giving us families.

### II. Concept: Jesus belongs to a Jewish family.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), Pictures of Jesus' birth, pictures of different families e.g. Jewish, Filipino. Chinese, American families

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Greet the children as they come.
2. Please refer to the Advent Liturgy.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. *Family tree.* On a chalkboard or a manila paper, teacher presents his or her family tree. Say that a family tree shows the people who are related to us.
2. *Make your own family tree.* Reproduce the template above and have the pupils fill out the boxes or have the pupils draw their own family tree.
3. *Talk time.* Ask: How many persons are related to you? Do you have a big or small family?

#### C. Learning Time

1. Say: "Let us read more about Jesus' family. Find out who are the other members of his family." Ask: "Can I have volunteers who can read the dialog between the characters?" (Write the story in a manila paper for oral reading among learners.)
2. Present the story in the activity sheet. You can enrich this activity by calling pupils who can do responsive reading of the characters.

#### At Family's Dinner

It was dinnertime. All of Jesus' family was seated on the table. As they started eating, Jesus became curious about Abraham and David.

Jesus: Father, what do you know about Grandfather Abraham?

Joseph: He was a righteous man. God made a covenant with him.

Jesus: What is a covenant?

Mary: It is an agreement between two parties, God and Moses.

Joseph: Just like this. Finish your vegetable and I will make you a wooden horse later.

Jesus: You will? Oh boy! Thank you, Father. What did God and Abraham agree to do?

Joseph: Abraham must worship only God and nothing else...

Mary: ... for God will multiply Abraham's descendants as many as the stars in heaven. God will make Abraham's family a great nation and bless him with land to live. We are Abraham's descendants, Jesus. As many as the stars in heaven! Oh that's really a lot. Are Uncle Zechariah, Aunt Elizabeth and Cousin John also included?

Mary: Yes, they are!

- Jesus: How about King David?
- Joseph: Yes, he is also your grandfather. Before he became king, he was then a young shepherd who, with God's help, defeated the giant.
- Jesus: He did great!
- Mary: Abraham kept on listening and obeying God. Our big family has a lot of stories where God delivered us from all sorts of trouble. Jesus, you must remember to listen to us, your parents, and obey us. For God will bless you and have you live a fruitful life ahead.
- Jesus: Yes, I will mother. I am really happy we have a big family!
- As the family finishes their dinner, Jesus helps wash the dishes.

**D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time**

1. As a class, make the family tree of Jesus to show who are related to Him.
2. Ask these questions.
  - a. What did the family talk about over dinner?
  - b. What did Mary say a covenant is? What was the covenant or agreement between God and Moses?
  - c. How did God keep His promise to Abraham?
  - d. Name the older members of Jesus' family. How were Abraham and David important to the big family of Jesus?
3. *The biblical truth.* Assist the class to say: Jesus was born to a Jewish family that comes from a long bloodline of Abraham and David. Jesus learns more about God's faithfulness to His people through His family.

**E. Discovering the Biblical Truth**

Say: *To what family does Jesus belong? To what family do we all belong?*

**F. Applying the Biblical Truth**

**For ME**

1. *Solve the maze.* Present the maze in the activity sheet. Tell the class to help Jesus find his family. After the learners have answered, group them into dyads and let them compare their work. Check their work. learners' work.
2. *Talk time.* Say: "Name the families in our maze." Ask: "To what family does Jesus belong? To what family do we belong? Why do you think God gave Jesus a family?"

**For OE**

1. *Expressing oneself in writing a letter to God.* Ask, "Why do you think God gave us Jesus and our family?" Say: Write a letter of thanks to God. Thank God for giving us our own family. Have each learner read the letter before the class.
2. *Completing Matthew 1:17.* Tell the class to replace the blanks with the given pictures. Let them to use the activity sheet.

**G. Closing Worship**

1. Reciting the memory verse: Matthew 1:17
2. Reflective action: Ask the class to recite: "Jesus belongs to a family. We belong to a family. We thank God for our family."
3. Offering
4. Closing song: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"
5. Closing prayer: "Dear God, as Jesus loves his family, may we continue to love our family. Teach us to obey and listen to our family always. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

## Youth Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. identify Jesus in the lineage of Abraham;
2. describe Jesus as he accepts to be a human being like us;
3. support Jesus' life as one chosen and prepared by God for a purpose; and
4. balance one's life as one chosen by God for a purpose.

### II. Concept: Jesus accepts His beginnings and loves his Jewish ancestry.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), hymnal, activity sheet, family wheel of Jesus (to make one, Jesus is at the center then start from the left to assign Abraham clockwise)

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Please refer to the Advent Liturgy.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Divide the class into three groups/pairs. Hand each group an incomplete family wheel of Jesus. Each group will supply the missing name using the text found in Matthew 1:1-17. Check afterwards.
2. Have the children pick one character in Jesus genealogy. Have them look through other books and verses from the Old Testament so they can tell something about this character.
3. Ask: What does this activity tell you about Jesus and his human ancestry?

#### C. Learning Time

1. Say: Just like Jesus, we belong to a family too. Our parents teach us lessons of life and faith. Jesus, the Chosen One, was raised by Mary and Joseph. They taught him how to love and obey them as His earthly parents and how to love and obey God, His heavenly Father. They always reminded him to be faithful to the God of their ancestors.
2. Let us read Genesis 17:1-8 and find out how Jesus' ancestry responds to God. (Assign the learners to read responsively.)
3. Tell the class to summarize the text by arranging the following sentences: (1. c 2. a 3. b 4. f 5. d 6. e)  
\_\_\_ (a) Abram fell on the ground as he listened to the Lord.  
\_\_\_ (b) God reminded Abraham's ancestry to recognize God.  
\_\_\_ (c) The Lord appeared to Abram who was very old then.  
\_\_\_ (d) Abram will now be called Abraham for he will worship God alone.  
\_\_\_ (e) God will grant them land to live.  
\_\_\_ (f) God promised Abraham to be the father of many nations including kings.

#### D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time

Ask the following questions:

1. How is Abraham and Jesus related? (Abraham was Jesus' great grandfather.)

2. How did Jesus' ancestors respond to God? (They worshipped and recognized God.)
3. What do you think is the connection of God's covenant from Abraham to Jesus? (Abraham is the father of many nations. Jesus is the Chosen One to be the Messiah of all nations. People who come to faith in Jesus are also considered Abraham's seed through faith.)
4. What do you think did Jesus learn from his family and his ancestors in relation with the God's covenant with them? (Answers may vary: Jesus learned that God's people are called to worship God alone. Jesus learned that He is called to be the Messiah of God's people. Jesus learned that he is the Chosen One to serve God's people. Jesus learned to love and obey his parents.)

*E. Discovering Biblical Truth*

Say: "Jesus was raised to worship God and love his family." Ask: "What did your parents teach you about God? How were you taught to show your love for God, for your family, for your school family and your church family?"

*F. Applying Biblical Truth*

1. Present this situation: According to news, hundreds of tribal/indigenous families in Mindanao decided to leave their homeland/nation because their security is threatened. Armed men continue to harass them and even accuse them of supporting the leftist group. Your local Pastor plans to visit these tribal/indigenous people in their evacuation center by Tuesday.
2. Have the children act out in a 2-minute skit what they would do in the given situation: Assist them by reminding them that as members of God's one big family and as seeds of Abraham through faith, they can help in ministering to these displaced peoples/nations. Let them give ways on how they can extend help among our Lumad brothers and sisters and be of service to them.

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Offering
2. Memory verse: "and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah. (Matthew 1:16)
3. Closing song: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"
4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, thank you for the blessings of our family where each of us belongs. Teach us more to obey and respect our parents and elders. Remind us that as Abraham's seed through faith, we are called to worship you alone and to be ready to respond in situations where we are called to be a blessing to the nations. Amen."

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## Adult Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. tell that genealogy of Jesus starting from Abraham as a part of history;
2. explain the significance of such lineage;
3. describe Jesus based on His dual nature, true humanity and true divinity; and
4. internalize the behavior of Jesus as a human being and apply such insights to one's life.

### II. Concept: Jesus is a child of history and of his times.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), hymnal, activity sheets (family tree, pictures)

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Please refer to the Advent Liturgy.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Encourage the class to share their experience related to the celebration of thanksgiving.
2. Give each learner a blank sheet of family tree. Allow them to accomplish the family tree. They can add names of their siblings. Assist those who have difficulty in remembering.
3. Ask these questions.
  - a. What are the circumstances related to the family tree that you have made? (place of birth of parents and siblings, socio-cultural environment)
  - b. What family values did you learn from them?

#### C. Learning Time

1. Say: "Like you, Jesus has his family tree. Open your Bible on Matthew 1:17 and find out who are included in his family."
2. Present the following excerpts:
  - a. *Exegesis on Genesis 17:1-8 and Matthew 1:17.*

Genesis 17:1-8 talks about the signs of promise of God to Abraham. It happened 13 years after the birth of Ishmael, Abraham's son to Hagar. Three signs of God's promise were noted in the event as God appeared to Abraham.

First, he shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations and even monarchs shall come from his ancestry.

Second, his ancestry will establish the same covenant with God as promised first to Abraham.

Third, Abraham and his ancestry will inherit the land of Canaan. It is in this context where God has established and renewed his covenant with Abraham. It is God who initiated it and not Abraham.

Matthew 1:1-17 presents a picture of the genealogy of Jesus starting from Abraham to his immediate family, Joseph from the line of David. It is by his rootedness in the family of Abraham and his relationship to the fulfillment of the covenant which makes the gospel of Matthew a resource on how Jesus will respond to God's call to embody and fulfill the covenant made by God to His people.



Matthew keeps the timeline in a way people can understand the faith tradition with a major historical undertaking. From this long line of ordinary, very human and even not so perfect lives, each of the ancestors comes the historical rootedness of Jesus and the distinct, concrete, caring mode of spirituality that he manifested in his life and ministry.

b. *Companion guide.*

It follows that the course in Christian spirituality requires the members to *re-discover the human side of Jesus* by delving into his life and times – what kind of persons his parents were, the historical and social circumstances into which he was born, the cultural influences surrounding his childhood and the political forces that were at play which helped shape his consciousness.

Jesus wasn't a *tabula rasa*, an empty mind, who instantly became the Christ but a person whose sense of identity resulted from an assimilation of the role models of his childhood and youth available in his time. The defining moment that thrust him into the role of Israel's messiah took place when, led by the Spirit, he prevailed over Satan and surrendered to God his whole being – his consciousness, his loves and hates, his personal ambitions, his politics and loyalties – and fate.

This was also his moment of realization that he was chosen and prepared by God for a special purpose.

D. *Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

Discuss the verses in relation to the advent of Christ.

1. How is Jesus related to Abraham and David? (They are Jesus' great grandfathers.)
2. Which character in the lineage of Jesus is significant to you and why? (These answers can be drawn for the class based on their previous knowledge of the Bible: Abraham is obedient to God. Rahab hid the Israelite spies from the king's guards to save them. Jacob struggled with the Angel of the Lord and his name is changed from Jacob to Israel. David is a man after God's own heart. Ruth is a faithful believer of God when she chose the God of her mother-in-law. Joseph and Mary served as good parents of Jesus who is to be the Messiah of God's people.)
3. How can you explain that Jesus is a child of history and not a legend? (Historically, Jesus is born in his time like any ordinary human being. He learned the traditions of the Jewish faith from his parents. He shared common aspirations with his people. He saw how his people were treated unjustly by the Roman government. As he grew, his mind was set to serve as God's instrument to establish God's kingdom.)
4. Why do you think the human nature of Jesus is significant to us? (Part of the companion guide: Christ is not any more human than we are and not any less God than God. On that basis, believers of Jesus are called and destined to achieve the full stature of *human nature* by following his way, accepting his fate and being transformed by the power of the resurrection. Christian spirituality is a *process of becoming like Jesus* which is both a struggle to follow his way and a passive experience of being renewed by the power of the Spirit. For Christian believers, spiritual formation is a life-long course in reenacting, individually and collectively, Jesus' concrete and historical life under the discipline of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul's description of Christian life as being *in Christ* refers to both in the resurrected and in the crucified Christ. In other words, the whole sequence of Jesus' Christhood – ministry-suffering-glorification – is contemplated in the meaning of being in Christ.)

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: **“How can you explain that Jesus is a child of history and of his times?”**

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

Tell the class to analyze how Jesus lived among the following situations and how they can apply this in their daily life.

	How Jesus lived in these situations	How you can apply in one's our daily life
Relating with his family		
Relating with neighbors		
Relating with his environment		

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Offering
2. Closing song: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”
3. Closing prayer: “Thank you God for giving us Your Son Jesus Christ who lived to be one of us and among us. Help us Lord on becoming like Jesus in our daily life. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.”