

**Bible Point** ▶

# Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us.

## Bible Verse

“The Savior...has been born today in Bethlehem” (Luke 2:11a).

## Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will learn that Mary and Elizabeth believed in God's promise, continue to prepare for Jesus' arrival, understand that Mary and Elizabeth were part of God's plan, and teach Pockets that we can share God's promises with others.

## Teacher Enrichment

### Bible Basis

**Mary and Elizabeth celebrate their part in God's plan.**

**Luke  
1:26-56**



Imagine the shock felt by Mary, a simple teenager engaged to a local carpenter, when the angel Gabriel spoke of her role in the arrival of a Savior. God had certainly blessed her with an important part in his amazing plan! She excitedly made an 80-mile trip to see her cousin Elizabeth who was also expecting a miracle baby. The women celebrated God's blessing and praised God for his greatness.

Like Mary, your 5- and 6-year-olds may be surprised to learn that God has a plan for their lives, too. God uses children in many ways—as helpers, encouragers, friends, and teachers to those around them. Use this lesson to teach children that just as Mary and Elizabeth trusted in God's plan, they, too, can trust that Jesus came to save us.

### Prayer

- Read Jeremiah 29:11.
- It's important for you to remember that, like Mary, God has a plan for your life. How has God revealed his plan to you? How does this make you feel?
- Pray: Dear Lord, thank you for being a part of my life. Please begin to reveal your plan for my life and the lives of my students by...

### Before the Lesson

Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use. Refer to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies columns to determine what you'll need.

Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.

Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction in teaching the lesson.

# This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
<b>Welcome Time</b>	<b>Welcome!</b> —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Star Name Tags” (p. 26), markers, pins or tape	
<b>Let’s Get Started</b>  Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	<b>Option 1: Angelic Message Center</b> —Decorate angels, and make special messages for others.	Glitter glue, markers, “Angelic Greeting” handouts (p. 40)	
	<b>Option 2: Happy House</b> —Work together to build Elizabeth’s house.	Newspapers, masking tape, paper grocery sacks	
	<b>Option 3: Bethlehem Builders</b> —Add the finishing touches to the town of Bethlehem on the <i>Learning Mat</i> .	Construction paper, scissors, glue sticks, paper lunch sack	
	<b>Pick Up Our Toys</b> —Sing a song as they pick up toys, and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
<b>Bible Story Time</b>	<b>Setting the Stage</b> —Spread good news without using words.		
	<b>Bible Song and Prayer Time</b> —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, basket of surprise cards from Lesson 1, CD player	
	<b>Hear and Tell the Bible Story</b> —Talk about God’s plan for Mary and how she shared the news with Elizabeth, based on Luke 1:26-56.	Bible, cloth or facial tissue, tape, house from Option 2, CD player	
	<b>Do the Bible Story</b> —Search for a clue to a hidden treasure, and then share that treasure with others.	Individually wrapped treats, Gift Box from Lesson 1, index cards	
<b>Closing</b>  	<b>Pockets’ Good News</b> —Hear Pockets share a good-news promise.	Envelope, tape	
	<b>Sunday Best</b> —Decorate Mary and Joseph to prepare them for Jesus’ arrival.	Jar of cinnamon, colored sugar, glue sticks, paper plates, bowl	

\*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

## Welcome Time

### Welcome!

**SUPPLIES:** "Star Name Tags" handout (p. 26), markers, pins or tape

- Kneel down to make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week's "Today I Learned..." discussion. Ask questions such as "How did your family share God's promises with others?" and "How did you prepare for Jesus' arrival this week?"
- Say: **Today we're going to learn that ► Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us.**
- Hand out the star name tags children made in the first lesson, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if some of the children weren't in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable handout.
- Direct the children to the Let's Get Started activities you've set up.



**BIBLE POINT**



It's important to say the Bible Point just as it's written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.

## Let's Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children's conversation toward today's lesson. Ask questions such as "How do you feel when you get good news?" or "What do you do when you hear good news?"

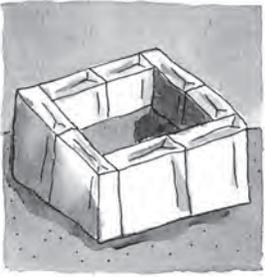
### Option 1: Angelic Message Center

**SUPPLIES:** "Angelic Greeting" handouts (p. 40), glitter glue, markers



Before children arrive, make several photocopies of the "Angelic Greeting" handout. Set out the angel from the *nativity kit figures*, glitter glue, markers, and the *angel stamp* and *ink pad*.

Allow children to help spread glitter glue over the figure. Explain that today they'll be learning that Jesus came to save us and that the angel was God's special messenger of that great news. Then have children cut out the cards on the handouts, fold on the dotted lines, and use the glitter glue, *angel stamp* and *ink pad*, and markers to make cards to use for special Christmas messages of their own. As children work, tell them that in today's story an angel brought an important message to someone. Encourage children to use their cards to tell someone about Jesus' birth. Set the angel aside for use in the "Hear and Tell the Bible Story" activity.



## Option 2: Happy House

**SUPPLIES:** newspapers, masking tape, paper grocery sacks

Set out paper grocery sacks, newspapers, and masking tape, and direct children to set up an assembly line to make blocks for building a house. Have some children be Fillers who wad up newspapers and stuff them in the sacks. Others can be Toppers who slide inverted (upside down) bags on top of the stuffed bags to form the shape of a block. When children have made a good supply of blocks, allow them to build a house and tape the bricks together. Tell them that this is a happy house because of the good news God sent to the people who lived there. Explain that two women, ►Mary and Elizabeth, knew that Jesus came to save us. You'll use the house in "Hear and Tell the Bible Story."



## Option 3: Bethlehem Builders

**SUPPLIES:** construction paper, scissors, glue sticks, paper lunch sack



Before class, cut sheets of purple, blue, and gray construction paper into small pieces, and put them in a paper lunch sack.

Lay the *Learning Mat: Nativity* on the floor, and place glue sticks and the sack of paper pieces nearby. Demonstrate how to glue the paper pieces mosaic-style onto the buildings in the town of Bethlehem. Help them work to fill in as much of the town as possible. As children are working, tell them that today's story is about a special woman who would soon make an important visit to Bethlehem. Explain that she knew that Jesus was coming to save us.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

## Pick Up Our Toys



track 2

**SUPPLIES:** CD player

Lead children in singing "Pick Up Our Toys" (track 2) with the CD to the tune of "Skip to My Lou." Encourage the children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

You'll be using this song each week to alert children to start picking up. At first they may need a little encouragement. But after a few weeks, picking up and singing along will become a familiar routine.

If you want to include the names of all the children in your class, sing the song without the CD, and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the CD, vary the names you use each week.



**We will pick up our toys.  
We will pick up our toys.  
We will pick up our toys  
And put them all away.**

**There's [name] picking up toys.  
There's [name] picking up toys.  
There's [name] picking up toys,  
Putting them all away.**

*(Repeat.)*

# Bible Story Time

## Setting the Stage

**SUPPLIES:** none

Tell the children you'll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap, children are to stop what they're doing, raise their hands, and focus on you. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Form two groups, and send each group to an opposite side of the room. Say: **Since today's story is about a special message, let's practice sending special messages to each other. I'll whisper a Christmas message to each group. Then you'll get to pass your message to the other group...without using any words!**

Huddle with Group 1, and whisper a Christmas message such as "Jesus is God's Son," "Jesus was born in Bethlehem," or "Jesus came to save us." Then give them a few seconds to come up with a way to deliver that message, such as acting it out or drawing a picture about it. After Group 1 has delivered its message, let Group 2 try to guess the message, and repeat the process with Group 2. Then have the children form a circle.

Ask: • **What was it like to tell that good news?** (Fun; hard; silly.)

• **What other good news have you heard lately?** (We're going to Disneyland; my sister won an award; my mom's having a baby.)

• **What do you like to do when you hear good news?** (Tell people; share it; jump up and down.)

Say: **Today we'll learn what a woman named Mary did when she heard some extra-good news! God sent her the good news in a special way. You'll see that ►Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us.**



## Bible Song and Prayer Time

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, basket of surprise cards from Lesson 1, CD player



Set the basket of surprise cards that you made in the first lesson next to you. If you don't have surprise cards, follow the directions in the "Bible Song and Prayer Time" section of Lesson 1 for this activity. Bookmark **Luke 1:26-56** in the Bible you'll be using.

Have the children sit in a circle. Say: **Each week when we come to our circle for our Bible story, I'll choose someone to be the Bible helper. The Bible helper will bring me the Bible marked with our Bible story for that week. Before I choose today's Bible helper, let's sing our Bible song. As we sing, I'll pass out the surprise cards. Don't look inside your card until the song is over.**

Lead children in singing "Read God's Book" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "The Muffin Man." As you sing, pass out the folded surprise cards.



Now it's time to read God's book,  
Read God's book, read God's book.  
Now it's time to read God's book.  
Let's hear a Bible story.

Now it's time to read God's book,  
Read God's book, read God's book.  
Now it's time to read God's book.  
Let's hear a Bible story.

(Repeat.)

After the song, say: **You may look inside your surprise cards. The person who has the angel stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible helper for today.**

Identify the Bible helper, and then have the rest of the children clap for him or her. Ask the Bible helper to bring you the Bible. Assist the Bible helper in opening the Bible to the marked place, and show the children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible helper sit down.

Say: [Name] **was our special Bible helper today. Each week we'll have only one special Bible helper, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we're all learning that ►Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us.**

**Let's say a special prayer now and ask God to help us learn why Jesus came to save us. I'll pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, "God, thank you for sending Jesus to save us."**

Pass around the basket or box. When you've collected everyone's surprise card, set the basket aside for use next week, and pick up the Bible. Lead children in this prayer: **God, thank you for the Bible and all the stories in it. Teach us today that ►Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us.**



This Bible story is featured in the new *My First Hands-On Bible*. Order several now for your ministry at [group.com](http://group.com).



## Hear and Tell the Bible Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, cloth or facial tissue, tape, house from Option 2, CD player



Hold up the Bible and say: **Our Bible story today comes from the book of Luke in the Bible. In our last Bible story, we learned about the promise God gave to Isaiah. And Isaiah told that promise to God's people.**

Ask: • **What was the promise God gave to Isaiah?** (Jesus would come to save us; there would be peace; everyone would get along.)

Say: **God's promise was to send a Savior who would save us from our sins. In our Bible story today, we'll learn more about God's promise to send Jesus.**

Set out the Mary, Joseph, and angel figures from the *nativity kit figures*. Choose three volunteers, and give each one a nativity figure to hold up during the story. Say: **Our story today is about a woman named Mary. Point to the figure of Mary.** Pause. **Mary loved God very much. Let's show how special Mary is by putting a nice shawl around her shoulders.** Choose a volunteer to tape a small piece of cloth or a facial tissue around the figure of Mary. **She was getting ready to marry a carpenter named Joseph. Joseph loved God, too. One day Mary had a special visitor! An angel came to her house and told her a wonderful message.** Have the child holding the angel stand near Mary. **The angel told Mary that God had chosen her to be the mother of Jesus! Mary was surprised and excited! Can you show me your surprised and excited expressions?** Pause for children to show you their expressions. **Well, that's how Mary might have looked! She just had to tell someone her wonderful news. So she took a long trip to see her cousin Elizabeth. Let's help Mary take her long trip.**

Lead the children on a winding journey around the classroom until they arrive at the house from Option 2. Set the figure of Mary in front of the house. If you didn't use Option 2, you can return to your original story area.

Say: **When Mary arrived at Elizabeth's house, she excitedly told Elizabeth what the angel had said. She was going to be Jesus' mother! Elizabeth was extra excited because she was going to have a special baby, too! The two women celebrated and praised God because ►Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us!** Collect the figures, and put them out of sight. Then ask:

- **What did the angel tell Mary?** (That she would be Jesus' mommy; that she was going to have a baby.)
- **How do you think Mary felt when she heard the news?** (Excited; glad; happy.)

Say: **That's right! Mary was excited. I'll bet there was lots of joy in Elizabeth's house that day. We can celebrate, too! Let's sing "Joy to the World!" to remind us how happy Mary was that she was going to be Jesus' mommy.**

Sing "Joy to the World!" (track 4) with the CD.



**SING**

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King.  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

*(Repeat.)*

"Joy to the World" by George F. Handel.

When the song ends, turn off the CD player and put the CD away.

Say: **Mary and Elizabeth praised God because ►they knew that Jesus came to save us.** Mary was happy to share her good news with Elizabeth.



**We can share the good news about Jesus, just as Mary did. Let's try it. Turn to the person next to you and say, "Jesus came to save us!" and give that person a high five.**

Let children share the news with several classmates.

Say: **When we're at home or with our friends, we can talk about Jesus and share the good news about him.**

Pray: **Dear Lord, thank you for sending Jesus into the world to save us all. Help us to share your story with others. We love you. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Say: **In our next activity, you may have a chance to share something terrific with your friends!**

## Do the Bible Story

**SUPPLIES:** individually wrapped treats, Gift Box from Lesson 1, index cards



Before class place a bag of individually wrapped treats in the Gift Box children made last week. Put the box in an inconspicuous place in the room, such as behind a desk or curtain. Stamp the *angel stamp* on several index cards, and draw a picture of a wrapped gift on one card. You may want to color the picture to look like the box your class decorated last week.

Lay the index cards in front of you, face down. Say: **This game will give you a chance to be like an angel and bring good things to others. Each card has a picture on it. Most of them are pictures of angels. If you turn over an angel card, give a high five to the person who's sitting on your right. There's one card in here that will give a clue about where to find a treat. If you turn that card over, find the treat, and share it with all of us right away. Ready?**

Call children forward one at a time to turn over a card. Be sure each person has a turn, even after the Gift Box card has been found. After each child has turned over a card, ask:

• **Which kind of card did you want to get? Explain.** (An angel card so I could give my friend a high five; the treat card because I like to find things.)

Say: **Mary's good news was even better than getting a treat! She was going to be Jesus' mommy! Mary was excited to share that with Elizabeth.**  
**► Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us. It's sure nice to share good things! Say, let's share our happy story with Pockets!**



## Closing

### Pockets' Good News

**SUPPLIES:** tape, envelope

Before class tape a small envelope to Pockets' hand.

Bring out Pockets the Kangaroo, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Pockets away and out of sight.



**Pockets:** *(Out of breath)* Hi, everyone! *(Waves envelope.)* I ran all the way here! I got a card—see, a real card in the mail!

**Teacher:** Hi, Pockets! That's great! Who's the card from?

**Pockets:** Oh, that's the best part! It's from my grandmother! She's coming to see me. And she's promised that we'll go shopping, and she'll make cookies and tell me stories!

**Teacher:** That's wonderful news! When's your grandmother coming?

**Pockets:** She'll be here in one...two...three days—that's a long time.



**Teacher:** Yes, but sometimes we have to wait for promises. We've been learning about a promise God made long ago. Children, let's share our good news with Pockets. (*Let children tell Pockets about the angel's visit to Mary and what he told her.*) Mary was so happy about her good news that she went to share it with Elizabeth. Sharing good news makes us happy!

**Pockets:** I like that Bible story! I sort of know what Mary felt like.

**Teacher:** Why is that, Pockets?

**Pockets:** Well, she had good news and I do, too. She shared it with Elizabeth. I shared my news with you. And we both have to wait on promises!

**Teacher:** That's right, Pockets.

**Pockets:** You know, one...two...three days isn't very long—I've got to get my room all cleaned up for Grandmother. Did Mary have a lot to do to get ready for Jesus to be born?

**Teacher:** I imagine so, Pockets.

**Pockets:** Goodbye, everyone! I'm going to get ready for Grandmother!

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## Sunday Best

**SUPPLIES:** jar of cinnamon, colored sugar, glue sticks, paper plates, bowl



Set out one-half cup of colored sugar in a bowl and a jar of ground cinnamon. Say: **I'm glad Pockets shared her good news with us! I bet she's home cleaning her room right now—getting ready for her grandmother's visit. We need to get our nativity figures ready for Jesus' visit, too.**

Run a glue stick over the robes of the Mary and Joseph *nativity kit figures*, and set each figure on a separate paper plate. Call children up one at a time, and allow them to choose which figure they'd like to decorate. Have children sprinkle a pinch of colored sugar on Mary's robe or shake a bit of cinnamon on Joseph's robe. As each child comes forward, say: [Name], **God had a special plan for Joseph and Mary, and God has a special plan for you, too.**

Say: **It's exciting to get these figures ready. It was exciting for Mary and Elizabeth to know that God's promise was about to come true. Our Bible verse, from Luke 2:11, says that soon an angel would tell the world, ►"The Savior...has been born today in Bethlehem."**

Close with a prayer similar to this one: **Dear God, thank you for the special way you used Mary and Elizabeth. And thank you that ►Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us. Help us learn to serve you in special ways, too. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Allow the glue to dry before putting the figures back in the nativity kit.



If you have more than 10 children in your class, call students up two at a time to be affirmed.

◀ **BIBLE VERSE**

◀ **BIBLE POINT**





### **Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.**

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



## For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

### ***Lively Learning: Angel's Flight***

Have kids form a large circle, and give each child a paper plate to stand on. Take away one plate, and choose one child to be the Angel to stand in the middle of the circle. Tell children that when the Angel says, "Fly, angels, fly," everyone must tiptoe to a different plate. Explain that the Angel will be looking for a plate to stand on as well. The child who can't find another plate is the next Angel. As children are playing, remind them that God sent a messenger angel to tell Mary the good news about Jesus.

### ***Make to Take: Angelic Greeting***

Photocopy the "Angelic Greeting" handout from page 40 so you have enough for each child to have one. Have children cut, fold, and decorate the cards to look like the special angel that brought Mary the good news. You may want to help children write a special message to a family member or friend on the inside. As children work, remind them that ►*Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us* because the angel Gabriel told Mary.

### ***Treat to Eat: Edible Map***

Before class add a few drops of green food coloring to a container of white frosting or soft cream cheese, and pour red cinnamon candies into small bowls for children to share.

Set out bowls of colored frosting, and give each child a graham cracker and a plastic knife. Have children spread frosting on their crackers, and then have them place two candies at the top corner to represent Galilee and two at the bottom to represent Elizabeth's house. Then have children make Mary's path with a single squiggly line of candies, connecting the two places. As children make their edible maps, encourage them to tell about good news they've shared with friends. Remind children that the best news to share is that Jesus came to save us.

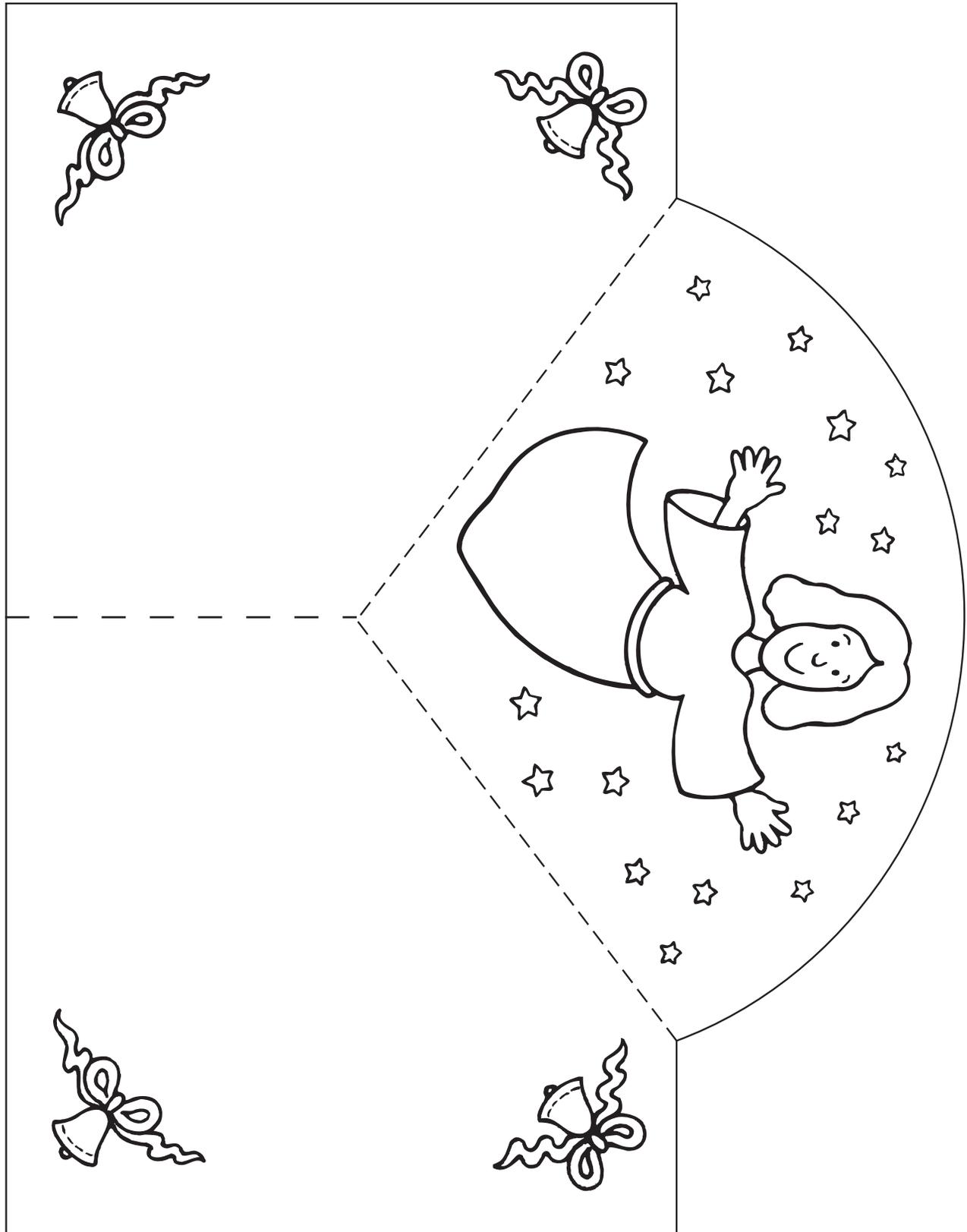


### ***Story Picture: Mary Visits Elizabeth***

Give each child a photocopy of the "Today I Learned..." handout, scraps of material, glue, scissors, and crayons. Direct children to cut out material for Mary's and Elizabeth's clothes and glue them to the picture. Use crayons to color the rest of the picture. Talk about how happy the women were about God's promise.

# Angelic Greeting

Cut out the card and fold the pop-up angel inside.



# Today I learned...

Today your child learned that Mary and Elizabeth knew that Jesus came to save us. Children learned about God's special plan for Mary to be Jesus' mother and that God has a special plan for them. They praised God for his promise in Jesus.

Mary and Elizabeth  
knew that Jesus  
came to save us.

## Verse to Learn

"The Savior...has been born today in Bethlehem" (Luke 2:11a).

## Ask Me...

What was God's special plan for Mary?

Who can you tell the good news about Jesus?

In what ways can our family praise God for sending Jesus to save us?

## Family Fun

Share the joy! Surprise elderly neighbors, church members, or relatives by making an old-fashioned popcorn and cranberry garland. Offer to help them put up their lights and decorations.

Work together to write a family letter to send with your Christmas greetings. In the letter, share the good news that Jesus came to save us.

## Mary Visits Elizabeth (Luke 1:26-56)



