

“Step Inside the Stable”

by
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What This is an interactive skit where the audience is invited inside the stable with Mary to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Part of the “Step Inside” series, each skit focuses on a word that you can choose to use as your lesson or theme for the day and works alongside other skits in the series to send the message that God is always there for us.

Special Word of the Day: Worship. “God is always there for when we worship him.”

Themes: Christmas, Jesus, Nativity, Step Inside, Manger, Christmas Eve, Worship, Kids Ministry, Sunday School, VBS

Who Mary

When Biblical Times

Costumes and Props A room with decorated with elements to resemble the inside of the stable where Jesus was born (see below). Mary should wear a simple tunic and head covering and should hold a baby doll wrapped in a plain white blanket.

Why Luke 2

How Transform a classroom or large space into the stable where Jesus was born! Place speakers around the room and quietly play occasional sounds of barn animals or crickets to indicate that its nighttime (there are many free sound samples available online). For ideas on how to Go Simple! or Go Big! with your stable, continue reading below:

Go Simple! To create the inside of your stable, cover the walls with brown bulletin board paper, brown builder’s paper or cardboard. Decorate it to look like wood planks. Around the room place boxes, cushions, or other items. Decorate or cover them with yellow tablecloths from the dollar store or yellow pieces of fabric to look like hay bales.

PURCHASE

You could add additional details to the cloths with paint or permanent marker to look more like hay if you'd like. At intervals around the room, place cardboard cutouts or large printed pictures of barn animals.

In the center, create a small manger using a small cardboard box and additional scraps of cardboard or reinforced toilet paper tubes. Paint or cover with paper to make it look like it's made out of wood.

Go Big! Use wood pallets to line the walls of your stable. Create a basic wood frame with 2x4's and attach the pallets. Use additional pallets to create stalls for animals and seating for children. Hay bales could also be used for seating.

You could also line the walls with rolls of plastic wood wall scene setters. Cut holes for windows and place images of a night sky with one large bright star. Place large animal cutouts (available online) or large plush animals in stalls and throughout the space. You could also use PVC and faux fur, felt, or other fabric to make animals and place them throughout the room. Construct a small manger out of wood and place loose hay inside.

Time

Approximately 5 minutes

REMOVE

WATERMARK

AT

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At start of scene the audience is waiting outside of the room. Mary calls out to them.

Mary: *(calling from inside the stable)* Hello? Are you here to see the Messiah?
(waits for response) Please, come inside the stable, but be very quiet...the baby is sleeping.

Mary waits as children enter the room and are seated. She may assist in directing them to their seats or may also need to improvise a little. When everyone is seated, Mary looks at the assembled group.

How many of you followed a bright star in the sky to get here today?
(waits for response) I've been hearing that a lot lately...a bright star appeared out of nowhere and shines right up there *(points upward)* guiding weary travelers who will do anything to worship before the Son of God.

Looks down at baby doll and smiles, perhaps adjusts the blanket.

In fact, a couple of shepherds came by earlier today and told us that a choir of angels appeared in the sky while they were tending to their sheep and told them that the Messiah had been born! The angels pointed out the star and told them to follow it right here, to this stable. Isn't that amazing? *(waits for response)*

Now tell me, how many of you are shepherds? *(waits for response, ad libs response to how many—or none—raise their hands)* And how many of you are kings from faraway lands? *(waits for response, ad libs response to how many—or none—raise their hands)* Well whoever you are and wherever you came from, you are welcome here. God gave this child not only to me, but as a special gift to the entire world.

Picks up the doll and cradles it, looking at it lovingly.

Does anyone know what Joseph and I named this baby? *(waits for response)* That's right, we named him Jesus, just as God told us to. You see, many months ago, when I was just a young girl betrothed to Joseph, an angel named Gabriel appeared to me and told me that I would become pregnant with the Son of God. How do you think I felt when that angel appeared to me? *(waits for response)* Those are all great answers, and to be honest, I felt many things. Sometimes I felt scared or excited or nervous or happy. Have any of you ever had a moment when you felt all sorts of different feelings at once? *(waits for response)* It can be very confusing to feel so many things at once, can't it? Sometimes I felt special to be chosen by God and other times I felt like I wasn't worthy, but I knew that I had been chosen for a very important task—I was going to be the mother to the Son of God. God had called to me and I had to answer that call. I knew God would be there for me every step of the way.

I talked to Joseph about what the angel had said, but he wasn't happy. I don't think he believed me at first, and who could blame him? It was such an incredible story. So, once again, God sent Gabriel to deliver a message to Joseph while he slept. Gabriel told Joseph that everything I said was true and that we were both chosen to take on this very important task of raising Jesus. After that, Joseph felt a lot better, and we could both be excited...and nervous...and scared together. We were both ready to answer God's call. We spent the next few months making our home together and preparing for the birth of our son...of God's Son.

But just as it was getting close to the time for me to give birth, King Herod sent out a decree. Does anyone know what a decree is? *(waits for response)* A decree is an official order given by a person in charge, and the person in charge of the Roman Empire is King Herod. Does anyone know what King Herod decreed? *(waits for response)* King Herod decreed that everyone must register for the census and in order to do that, they must travel to the land that their family came from. Well, Joseph belonged to the family of David, so we had to travel all the way from Nazareth, where we lived, to Bethlehem. *(incredulously)* That's a five-day journey...on the back of a donkey...while pregnant! Needless to say, that was *not* the best trip I've ever been on. What is the best trip you've ever been on? *(waits for responses)* Those all sound like a lot more fun than my trip to Bethlehem.

By the time we got here I was sore and very tired. Do you know what I wanted to do more than anything when we arrived? *(waits for response)* Rest! *(looks upward dreamily)* All I wanted was a comfortable bed with a warm blanket and a soft pillow to rest my head upon. But when we arrived in Bethlehem, we went from one inn to the next and guess what happened? *(waits for response)* They were all full! There were no more rooms! We didn't know what to do. We had come all this way and I was ready to give birth at any time.

All Joseph and I could do it put our faith and trust in God. We knew he would be there for us and that he would find a place for us to stay—and he did! It turned out that one of the innkeepers had a stable out back—*(indicates the room they are in)* this stable right here, and he allowed us to stay in it.

Now I know what you're thinking...it's a stable for animals and this is where God sent you to give birth to his son? *(looks around and smiles)* It may not look like much, but it's warm and it's safe and I'm so happy God provided it for us. *(chuckles)* And yes, it's filled with animals. What are some of the animals that might live in a stable like this? *(waits for responses)* That's right! Those are all types of animals that could be in a stable like this as Jesus was born. And animals can be noisy, can't they?

What sound does a cow make? *(waits for response)* And what sound does a horse make? *(waits for response)* And what sound does a sheep make? *(waits for response)* Great! Yes, those are all sounds that Jesus may have heard as he was born. Now each of you choose your favorite barnyard animal and let's make all the noises together. *(waits as children make animal noises)* I think Jesus is waking up! Let's all be quiet now so he can sleep. *(chuckles)* Quite a funny way to come into the world, isn't it, hearing all those animal sounds? But I wouldn't have it any other way. *(looks down at baby doll)* This is right where God wants us to be...in a humble place, where anyone who wants to worship Jesus can come and kneel before him and tell him how happy they are that he came into this world. *(looks at children)* Hey, I just realized that you came all this way to see Jesus too. Why don't we take this moment to kneel and say a prayer to tell God just how happy we are that he sent his son Jesus into the world?

Mary places the baby doll in the manger and kneels, waiting for all the children to kneel as well. Then she holds her hands in prayer.

(prays) Dear God, thank you for sending your one and only Son, Jesus to the world to teach us about your amazing love and your infinite grace. And just like the shepherds and the wise men that journeyed from afar to worship before the newborn king, we know that you will always be here for us when we worship you and your Son Jesus. We will remember the special gift you gave to us by giving Jesus to the world, not only today, but every day of our lives. Amen.

(looks up) Thanks so much for coming here today to hear about the birth of Jesus. *(picks up doll)* Now, it looks like this little guy is getting hungry so I'd better feed him. *(puts a finger up to her mouth)* Please be extra quiet as you leave and remember to think about the special gift of Jesus as you celebrate with your families this month*! *(or "today" if using as part of a Christmas Eve program)*

The end.