

Rotation.org's @Home Advent Lessons: Jesus Is Born!

Music is a big part of Advent celebrations because it reaches into our hearts and minds. It helps us create and recall memories, including remembering the Story. Music expresses our longing and joy and the mystery of God with Us. And it is something generations share with each other, which is an essential part of the story - our part! We couldn't imagine a "Jesus is Born!" lesson set without music. We hope you have fun with this music-creating workshop.



Jesus Is Born! Advent Idol Songs Workshop



Summary of the activity:

"Joy" is an essential part of the Advent story. God sent angels, a star, and a chorus to celebrate! You will work together using the Lyrics Worksheet to ponder and complete lyrics to three short songs set to familiar Christmas tunes. Then, perform and videotape your songs on the hit TV show "Advent Idol" and share your video show – maybe you'll go viral?

Scriptures for the lesson:

[Matthew 1:18-25](#): the story of the angel's announcement to Joseph.

[Luke 2:1-7](#): the story of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, and Jesus' birth.

For additional reading, see the [Bible Background](#) at Rotation.org.

What you need:

- Bible (or you can read the Scripture passages online)
- Copies of the Lyrics Worksheets
- Pencils
- Camera or phone to record the singers (a tripod or stand will help you get better quality video).
- Piano or guitar (optional)
- Your "idols" will get more into it and everyone will have more fun if you can "set the stage." Have fun with this! Suggestions:
 - A stage area and backdrop (hang a blue tarp).
 - Special lighting (turn off your overhead lights and aim a few clamp lamps towards the stage).
 - Stage decoration (a few strings of Christmas lights will do).
 - Live microphone on a stand.
 - A box of fun costumes and props (cloth, tunics, hats, sunglasses, jackets, wigs, scarves).
 - Print out the big "Advent Idol" logo, or make your own.
 - An "MC" and celebrity judging panel (a la American Idol).

Why the staging? People find it easier to get up and sing in front of others if they have someone doing it with them, music accompanying them, lyrics in front of them, a special stage area, and lighting that brings out their playfulness.

Start your lesson!

1) Work together to prepare lyrics and rehearse.

Using the Lyric Worksheet attached to this lesson, read the scripture passage and then work together to change the lyrics of a familiar Christmas song to express ideas found in the passage and reflect on the meaning of Jesus' birth. The three Christmas songs were chosen for their familiarity, but you could change them if you like. (It will be very helpful to have a piano or guitar playing the music while the Advent Idols sing.)

Rehearsal Tips: Not everybody has to sing. Some can be back-up dancers. Someone could be the "lead" singer. Rehearse movements, too; that makes the presentation more fun.

These are the three songs found on the Lyrics Worksheet that you will be writing and performing after reading the scripture:

"Hark, I'm Harold, Hear Me Sing!"

Matthew 1:18-25, the angel speaks to Joseph

Tune: Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

"Go Travel Cross the Mountains"

Luke 2:1-5, the story of the decree and trip to Bethlehem

Tune: Go Tell It on the Mountain

"O Hey from the Manger"

Luke 2: 6-7, Jesus is born in the stable

Tune: Away in the Manger

2) Record your performances.

The more playful and "showy" effort you put in, the more everyone will relax and buy into performing. Fun lighting, an over the top MC, and a live mike will help.

Each song will only take about two minutes to perform.

If (when) someone messes up and needs to restart, go ahead. Or, create a bloopers reel!

3) Reflection: Jesus' birth is Good News to share!

View your video and talk about how "Sharing the message" and "Going and telling" are what God wants us to do with the Birth Story. Talk about ways you can share your video with others, and do it!

Adapted from [this lesson](#) by the Rotation.org Writing Team

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