

MT OLIVE PH CHURCH

Christmas  
Mini-Series  
2025




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TEACHER GUIDE

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# 2025 Christmas Mini-Series – Student Guide

## Week 1 | He Is... “A Reason to Celebrate”

 Luke 2:7–16, 20 (NKJV)

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This lesson opens with the story of Isaac Watts, a young boy who felt the hymns of his day lacked joy and meaning. His response? He began writing his own—and eventually gave the world “Joy to the World,” a song that still celebrates the birth of Christ over 300 years later.

That idea—joyfully celebrating Jesus—is exactly what we’re invited to consider in this lesson.

### So why is Jesus “a reason to celebrate”?

When He was born, there were no grand announcements from kings or world leaders. Instead, the Son of God entered the world quietly, born in a stable, laid in a manger, and surrounded by animals and a busy, distracted city. From a human perspective, it looked like nothing special.

But heaven saw it differently. Heaven erupted with celebration—and the angels came to show the shepherds (and us) how to truly respond to the arrival of Jesus.

### The Celebration of the Angels

1. **They celebrated in God’s glory**

God’s glory surrounded the shepherds, lighting up the night. The angels reminded us that God’s presence is something to rejoice in, not fear. Even in darkness, God’s glory brings light and hope.

2. **They celebrated in God’s Word**

The angel declared “**good tidings of great joy**”—because the long-awaited Savior had come. This was not just a sweet baby; He was **Christ the Lord**. The message was for everyone, and it was filled with love, peace, grace, and salvation.

3. **They celebrated with praise**

A multitude of angels filled the sky singing: “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!*” Though angels can’t experience salvation, they still rejoiced at the arrival of the Savior who came to redeem mankind. Their praise wasn’t casual—it was powerful, passionate, and eternal.

### The Shepherds Respond

After hearing the message and seeing the glory, the shepherds didn’t keep it to themselves. They went to see Jesus, and then returned glorifying and praising God. Their lives were changed—not because of what they had heard, but because they encountered the presence and promise of God firsthand.

## What About Us?

If the angels in heaven and shepherds in the field could celebrate Jesus so joyfully, shouldn't we? Jesus isn't just a baby in a manger—He is the Son of God, the Savior of all mankind. His birth is the beginning of God's rescue plan for the world. That's more than a holiday story—it's the greatest reason to celebrate.

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## Why Isaac Watts Wrote Hymns

Isaac Watts, as a young boy, felt that the music in church lacked excitement and meaning. His response was to begin writing hymns that stirred the soul—hymns like “**Joy to the World.**”

**In your own words, what should “Joy to the World” remind us of during Christmas?**

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**Jesus is a reason to celebrate—because of who He is and what He came to do.**

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**Luke 2:7–9 (NKJV)** ...*And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.*

**From the outside, Jesus' birth seemed unremarkable. But heaven saw the moment as worthy of celebration.**

**Why do you think heaven celebrated so loudly when Jesus was born?**

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## The Celebration of the Angels

### 1. They Celebrated in God's Glory

- God's presence surrounded the shepherds.
- It was a moment of awe, fear, and joy.

- The angels showed it's okay to **rejoice in God's presence**.

**Have you ever felt God's presence in a way that made you want to worship or celebrate? What happened?**

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**Luke 2:10–11 (NKJV)** *“Do not be afraid... I bring you good tidings of great joy...”*

## **2. They Celebrated in God's Word**

- The angel's message brought **joy to all people**.
- This child—**Christ the Lord**—was the long-awaited Savior.
- Their response: **announce it with passion!**

**What is one promise or truth in God's Word that gives you joy?**

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**Luke 2:12–14 (NKJV)** *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”*

## **3. They Celebrated with Praises**

- The angels sang a **heavenly anthem** to honor God.
- Though they couldn't experience salvation, they rejoiced in God's plan for us.

**Why is praise such an important part of celebrating Jesus?**

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# The Shepherds' Response

*Luke 2:20 – “Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God...”*

They didn't stay silent. They praised God for what they **heard**, **saw**, and **experienced**.

**What's something God has done that you can praise Him for right now?**

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## Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think God announced Jesus' birth to shepherds first?  
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2. Which part of the angels' celebration speaks most to you—God's glory, God's Word, or their praise?  
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3. What's one way you can celebrate Jesus this Christmas (in words, actions, or worship)?  
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4. How can you “make room” for Jesus in your life this season?  
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## Memory Verse

**Luke 2:14 (NKJV)** *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”*

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**Key Takeaway:** The birth of Jesus is a call to celebrate. Let joy, worship, and praise overflow—because He is the Son of God, the Savior of all mankind.

## 2025 Christmas Mini-Series

# Week 2 | He Is... “A Reason to Celebrate” Part II

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In Week 1 of our Christmas Mini-Series, we reflected on the joy and celebration surrounding the birth of Jesus Christ. We looked at the story of Isaac Watts, a young boy who wanted worship to reflect the excitement and power of the gospel. His response was to write hymns, including the beloved “Joy to the World.” That same joy and celebration were echoed in heaven at Jesus’ birth, as the angels declared His arrival to a group of humble shepherds. They celebrated in God’s glory, through His Word, and with powerful praise, declaring, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.”

This week, our focus shifted to the shepherds themselves and their response to the message and presence of the Savior. After witnessing the glory of God and hearing the good news from the angels, the shepherds went to see Jesus for themselves. Once they had seen Him, they returned to their lives glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Luke 2:20 captures it beautifully: “Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.”

These shepherds were ordinary men—not religious scholars or community leaders—but they were among the first to experience the presence of Christ and respond with worship. They show us that glorifying God means to magnify Him, to honor and exalt Him openly. Praise is more than music; it is a deep, inward joy that finds expression in testimony, thanksgiving, and worship. The shepherds’ praise was not silent or private—it was social and contagious. Their encounter with Jesus changed them. Though they returned to the same fields and the same responsibilities, they were not the same men. They carried with them a new perspective, a new joy, and a new song in their hearts.

This kind of transformation is still possible today. Like the world back then, many places are too crowded and too busy to make room for Jesus. Many hearts are too distracted to notice His presence or to celebrate His coming. Yet the message of Christmas remains unchanged: unto us a Savior is born—Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is still a reason to celebrate. Our response should mirror that of the shepherds: to glorify God, to lift up praise, and to let our lives reflect the joy of encountering the Savior. The celebration of Christ’s birth is not just something to remember, but something to live out in worship, gratitude, and open expression of faith.

Let us not let the season pass without acknowledging the true source of joy. Jesus is still the reason for the celebration. Let us adore Him, not just in word, but in the way we live and worship every day.

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## The Shepherds Celebrate

*Luke 2:20 (NKJV) “Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.”*

The shepherds were not religious leaders or prominent in society. Yet when they received the news of Jesus’ birth, they didn’t hesitate. They went to see the Savior and responded with joyful worship.

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### 1. Glorifying God

To glorify means to celebrate, magnify, honor, and lift up with reverence.

Reflection: What does “glorifying God” look like in your life?

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### 2. Praising God

Praise starts in the heart—an inner joy that becomes outward expression. It calls for community and often finds its voice through music, testimony, prayer, or spoken worship.

*Psalm 40:3 “He has put a new song in my mouth—Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, and will trust in the Lord.”*

Reflection: Has God ever given you a “new song”? How do you express praise?

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### 3. Encounter and Response

The shepherds encountered God's glory and heard the message of salvation. Because of what they heard and saw, they responded with worship. Their lives were forever changed, even as they returned to their daily responsibilities.

Reflection: How do you carry your faith and joy into your everyday life—like the shepherds returning to their flocks?

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The joy of Jesus' birth should spark more than a holiday feeling—it should ignite a life of worship. Whether in the fields or in the church, God invites ordinary people to experience His glory and respond with praise.

Why do you think God chose shepherds to receive the angelic announcement? What does that tell you about how God values people?

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#### Challenge This Week:

Make time to worship God intentionally—through music, prayer, gratitude, or service. Like the shepherds, respond to the good news with action, joy, and reverence.



## 2025 Christmas Mini-Series

# Week 3 | He Is... “A Reason to Celebrate” Part III

Matthew 2:1–2, 10–11 (NKJV)

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In this third week of our Christmas Mini-Series, we continue exploring why Jesus is a reason to celebrate—this time by looking at the wise men, or magi, who traveled from the East to worship Him. Unlike the shepherds, who received an angelic announcement and responded immediately, the wise men noticed a distant star—a divine sign—and began a long, difficult, and costly journey to find the newborn King. Their story is one of intentional pursuit, reverence, and worship. Matthew highlights their determination to honor Jesus, contrasting it with the religious leaders of the time who, despite their knowledge of Scripture and proximity to Bethlehem, made no effort to go and worship Him.

The magi’s journey reflects true worship. When they found Jesus, they responded with joy, reverence, and generosity. They didn’t come to be entertained or to get something from Him. They came to give—because they understood His worth. This is the essence of worship: to recognize and respond to the supreme value of the One we honor. The English word “worship” comes from the old word “worthship,” which speaks to the worthiness of the one being honored. These wise men understood that the child before them was more than a baby—He was a King, worthy of their finest treasures and heartfelt reverence.

Today, many people treat Christmas as a season focused on receiving rather than giving—especially giving to God. The wise men remind us that the true meaning of Christmas is found in seeking Jesus and offering Him our best. Matthew 2:10–11 tells us that when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they found Jesus, they fell down and worshipped Him. Their worship was not only expressed in posture but also in presentation—they brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the most valuable gifts their region could offer. Each gift carried meaning: gold for His royalty, frankincense for His divinity, and myrrh for His future suffering.

New Testament worship is centered on the saving work of Jesus Christ. It is marked by joy, thanksgiving, and heartfelt devotion. We worship through prayer, testimony, singing, preaching, and learning from Scripture. Like the wise men, our worship should be motivated not by what we hope to receive, but by a desire to honor Jesus for who He is and what He has done.

Ultimately, our ability to give begins with God Himself. “For God so loved the world that He gave...” Our response should be to give back to Him—not just material things, but our whole lives: our hearts, minds, bodies, and service. The greatest gift we can give to the One who gave everything for us is our worship. The wise men came from far away to do just that. Today, we are invited to do the same.

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## Wise Men Come to Worship Him

### Matthew 2:1–2 (NKJV)

“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.’”

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### Key Truth #1: Wise Men Seek Him to Worship Him

These men traveled **thousands of miles** just to bow before the newborn King. Unlike the religious leaders who knew Scripture but did not act, the wise men **responded** to what they saw and understood.

- Herod **opposed** the King.
- The priests and scribes **ignored** the King.
- The wise men **sought** the King—to worship Him.

**Reflection:** How do you respond to the message of Jesus in your life—like Herod, the priests, or the wise men?

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### Key Truth #2: What Is Worship?

**Worship** means to bow down, to honor, to recognize worth.

It’s not just what you **do outwardly**, but what you **believe inwardly** about God’s value in your life.

Worship isn't about getting something—it's about giving everything.

**Reflection:** What does true worship look like in your own life? What do you give to God in your worship?

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**Matthew 2:10–11 (NKJV)** *“When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”*

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### Key Truth #3: Worship Includes Giving

The wise men didn't just come with words—they came with **gifts**. They gave the **best of what they had**, and each gift symbolized something profound:

- **Gold** – royalty
- **Frankincense** – deity
- **Myrrh** – sacrifice

Their worship cost them something. It was **joyful, intentional, and sacrificial**.

**Reflection:** What gift can you give to Jesus this Christmas—not wrapped in paper, but offered from the heart?

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### New Testament Worship Includes:

- Prayer
- Testimony
- Singing praise
- Giving thanks
- Listening to God's Word

**Reflection:** Which of these practices do you use to worship Jesus? Which ones can you grow in?

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**Key Takeaway:** The wise still seek Him. Worship is more than words—it's action, sacrifice, and honor. Don't let Christmas be about gifts under a tree. Let it be about giving your **heart to the King**.

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**Challenge This Week:**

Make room in your day for **intentional worship**—through prayer, song, reading Scripture, or giving. Like the wise men, come before Jesus with your best.

## 2025 Christmas Mini-Series

# Week 4 | Do You Hear the Sound?

*John 1:1–5, 14; Isaiah 9:6–7; Matthew 1:21 (NKJV)*

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In the final week of our Christmas series, we're invited to consider the *sound* that changed everything. The birth of Jesus wasn't just the next chapter in the story of God—it was the *sound* that broke through centuries of silence. For 400 years, God hadn't spoken through prophets or visions. Heaven was quiet. Then, on a still night in Bethlehem, the cry of a baby rang out. But this was no ordinary cry—this was the eternal Word, Jesus Christ, entering into human history. John 1 describes Jesus as the Word who was with God and was God from the beginning. He is life, and His life is the light of all people. His arrival was God's loud and loving announcement: *"I'm here. I see you. I've come for you."*

This week's lesson reminds us of three deep truths.

First, **Jesus is the Eternal Word**—He is not a last-minute rescue plan but has always been the plan. He is the voice of God made visible, the Author of all creation.

Second, **Jesus is the Light in Darkness**—He steps into the brokenness of our world and pushes back the shadows with His truth, love, and presence.

Third, **Jesus is the Word made flesh**—not a distant deity, but God *with us*. He walked with humanity, felt our pain, lived our life, and ultimately died and rose again so we could live. His birth wasn't just an event; it was a divine invasion of light and love.

Centuries earlier, the prophet Isaiah spoke of this moment: "For unto us a Child is born... and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Matthew's Gospel confirms it: His name is Jesus, and His mission is clear—to save His people from their sins. That's what we celebrate at Christmas. Not just that a child was born, but that salvation arrived in human form. The silence of sin was broken by the shout of grace.

As we approach Mt. Olive's Christmas Worship Celebration, remember: this story is not just a tradition or a performance. It's a call to listen—deeply. Jesus is still the sound of God's love, truth, and redemption today. He's still speaking. The question is: are we listening?

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**Reflection:**

- What does it mean to you that Jesus is the “Word” God has spoken?
- Where do you see the light of Christ pushing back darkness in your life or in the world?
- How will you respond to the sound of Jesus this Christmas—with worship, trust, or a fresh commitment?

***The silence has been broken. Jesus is the voice of God’s love. Don’t just hear the sound—respond to it.***