



The Prince of Peace

By Vicki F. Matsumori



And if you are faithful, behold, I am with you until I come—And verily, verily, I say unto you, I come quickly (Doctrine and Covenants 34:11–12).



In December, we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. We sing and think about that peaceful night when He was born in a humble stable. One day, He will come again but in great glory. Ancient and modern prophets tell us that “he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth” (Job 19:25) and “reign on the earth over his people” (Doctrine and Covenants 76:63).

No one, not even the angels, knows exactly when He will come again. However, the scriptures tell us this about His Second Coming: “I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God; wherefore, gird up your loins and I will suddenly come to my temple” (Doctrine and Covenants 36:8). He may appear in other places, too, but He will surely come to the temple because it is the house of God.

We can read about those who were with Jesus at the temple anciently. Both Simeon and Anna were at the temple and saw Baby Jesus when He was presented there. They had been hoping and waiting to see the Messiah, or Savior. (See Luke 2:25–38.) And when He was twelve years old, He astonished the learned men in the temple with His understanding and knowledge. They knew the law and the commandments, yet they were taught by the boy Jesus. (See Luke 2:41–47.)

The “more righteous part” of the Nephites saw the resurrected Savior when He appeared to them at the temple in the land of Bountiful. Jesus Christ

comforted and blessed them and filled them with joy and peace. (See 3 Nephi 10:12; 17:5–17.)

Jesus Christ is the Messiah. Those who keep the commandments will one day rejoice to stand in His presence. If we choose to do what is right and learn to help and comfort others, we can be the kind of people who will be at the temple when He comes in glory.

This Christmas, we can remember the Baby born in the manger; we can also think about the resurrected Savior, Jesus Christ, who will one day come to earth as the Prince of Peace.

Instructions

Mount page 16 on heavy paper. Cut out the three boxes and around the figures on the dotted lines. Punch holes where indicated. Make a book by putting the pages in order with page 1 on top and fastening the pages together with string or yarn (see illustration). Use the book to tell about when Jesus visited the temples in Jerusalem and in the land of Bountiful in ancient America. Talk about the time when Jesus will someday return to earth.

SHARING TIME IDEAS

(Note: All songs are from *Children’s Songbook (CS)* unless otherwise indicated; GAK = Gospel Art Kit; TNGC = Teaching, No Greater Call)

1. To review the birth of the Savior and two of the times when He went to the temple, write the following references on separate slips of paper: Luke 2:4–21, Matthew 2:1–11, Luke 2:22–39, and Luke 2:40–52. Provide paper and crayons, and divide the children into four groups. Have each group choose one of the references and prepare to present that scripture teaching to the rest of the Primary. For each scripture, the group is to draw people, buildings, and scenery for it; have a narrator read it; and choose one or more appropriate songs for the Primary to sing for it.

Give the children time to prepare, then have the groups take turns presenting their scripture. While the narrator reads it, others in the group

place its drawings on a wall or chalkboard. Discuss with all the children how the people in the scripture were prepared to be with the Savior. Why were they worthy to see Him? After the discussion, sing the chosen song(s).

Show GAK #239 (the resurrected Savior) and discuss how He will come again to earth, to a temple. Sing “When He Comes Again” (pp. 82–83). Discuss, and list on the chalkboard, ways in which the children can be worthy to be in the Savior’s presence when He comes again.

For younger children: Invite four adults, dressed in simple costume, to tell the story of the Savior’s birth and visits to the temple. They may represent people who witnessed the account or who hear about the events. Use stations (*TNGC*, p. 179) to allow the children to hear all four stories. Have them draw scenes of one of the stories to take home and share with their families.

2. Share the Christmas message from the First Presidency (see pp. 2–3 of this issue of the *Friend*). Explain that while peace on earth is one of the promises of Jesus Christ’s Second Coming, we can have peace now as we follow His example.

Have the children read Isaiah 2:2–4 aloud together. Discuss what the Lord’s house is. Ask, “What are swords and spears used for? What are plowshares and pruninghooks? How do we walk in His paths?” Sing “Keep the Commandments” (pp. 146–147). Discuss and list on the chalkboard specific commandments the children can keep.

Have the children read Isaiah 11:6–8 aloud together. Use the footnotes to help them learn the different types of animals mentioned. Sing the second verse of “I Feel My Savior’s Love” (pp. 74–75).

Have the children use clay or salt dough (for recipe, see *TNGC*, p. 165) to make something that might be used in times of war. Then have them “beat” their weapons into farming implements or other tools used in peace.

Next, have them make any animal, reptile, or insect. Place all of the creatures together in a display. Discuss how these animals would get along today; compare that with how they will get along after the Savior comes again. Discuss how the children can get along with everyone today. How can there be peace in their homes? In Primary? At school? Testify of the difference even one child can make in promoting peace.

3. Before Primary, gather a number of beanbags and a container. Place the container at the front of the Primary room. Using tape or paper, mark a yard (or meter) from the container. Make ten more marks, spaced evenly, to the back of the room.

Help the children understand that the things they do to be worthy to enter the temple are the same things that would help them prepare for the Savior’s Second Coming. Tell the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1–13), and discuss what the children can do to “put oil in their lamps.” Show a copy of My Gospel Standards, and help the children see that by living these standards, they add oil to their lamps.

Tell them that the container at the front of the room is the Primary’s oil lamp. The beanbags are drops of oil. The children are to try to fill the lamp with oil by saying a gospel standard by memory. The more of the standard they have memorized, the closer to the lamp they may stand when they toss the drop of oil (beanbag).

Each class will have either one or two attempts to add oil to the container. The first child from one of the classes tries to say the standard from memory. For every word said correctly after “I will,” he/she gets to move one mark closer to the container (but no closer than the closest mark). The child then tosses the beanbag. If it lands in the container, the next child in the class gives an example of how he/she could live the standard, then throws another beanbag from the same spot. The turn then moves to the next class. If the first beanbag did not land in the container, the turn immediately goes to the next class. Use the same standard until the children have a good understanding of it. Sing a song that reinforces the standard. Repeat with other standards you wish to highlight.

Challenge the children to do more than memorize the words of the standards. They should truly live the principles. Tell of a personal experience, or tell a story from the *Friend*, that shows the blessings of living

one or more of the standards.

4. Have a Christmas gift-choosing time for singing time. The week before, have the children name some of their favorite Christmas songs, songs about the temple, or other favorite songs. On the back of nativity figures (see Primary Visual Aids Cutouts, Set 8) write the titles of the songs you will use.

Write one of the following directions on each of ten pieces of paper: Boys sing. Girls sing. Adults sing. Stand and sing. Sing a cappella. Hum or sing. Loud and soft. You lead the song. Sing all verses. Sing with actions.

Put each paper in its own gift box, bag, or other container. Place the cutouts on the chalkboard and the containers on a table. Tell the story of the Wise Men bringing gifts to Jesus (Matt. 2:1–11). Help the children understand that one gift we can give Him is the gift of song. “For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart” (D&C 25:12).

Invite a child to choose a nativity figure and read the song title on the back of it. Have another child open a container and have the Primary follow the directions for singing that song. The boys, girls, or adults could come to the front when it is their turn to sing. For “Hum or sing,” choose two children. One represents hum; the other, sing. Have one face forward, the other face backward. Throughout the song, the two children turn in the opposite directions. The Primary hums or sings based on which child is facing them.

For “Loud and soft,” have a child direct the volume by holding his/her arms out and placing his/her hands together to indicate soft, then moving them far apart for loud. If a child picks “You lead the song,” teach the child the correct beat pattern (see *CS*, pp. 300–301) and help him/her for the first few measures. For “Sing with actions,” have different groups of children try to come up with appropriate actions for different lines of the song. Have them teach the Primary their actions before everyone sings the entire song using the actions.

End with a song that brings reverence. While singing it, have a child walk from the front of the Primary room to the back, inviting each row to fold their arms as he/she walks past their row.

5. Help the children understand symbolism. Discuss symbols used every day, such as your country’s flag, road signs, product logos. (See Sharing Time Idea #4, *Friend*, Feb. 2002, p. 32, for temple symbols.) In the scriptures, “ceremonies and ordinances are symbolic in their performance, and all bear record of Jesus Christ” (Bible Dictionary—Symbolism).

Give the children pieces of paper or their booklets. Tell the Christmas story (Luke 2:1–20) in your own words. Have the children draw around the border of their papers Christmas symbols found in the story: lambs, stars, angels, etc. Point out that all of them should remind the children of Jesus Christ. Sing songs from the Christmas section of *CS*.

Post pictures of temples, and write on the chalkboard this statement by President Howard W. Hunter: “I . . . invite the members of the Church to establish the temple of the Lord as the great symbol of their membership” (*Ensign*, July 1994, p. 2). Have the children either draw inside their Christmas symbols border a picture of a temple or write the quote from President Hunter. Remind them of some of the principles they have learned about the temple this year. Sing songs about the temple, families, and following the Savior. Have the children take the booklets home to share with their families. If a piece of paper was used, the children can attach a string or piece of yarn to hang the temple picture as an ornament on a tree.

Express gratitude for the things you have learned about the temple, and testify of the blessings you have because of your membership in the Church. Explain that during the coming year, the children throughout the world will study the blessings of membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

6. Additional *Friend* resources: “Obedience Brings Blessings,” May 2001, pp. 34–36; “When He Comes Again,” Dec. 1999, pp. 35–37; “Peace,” Jan. 1994, pp. 44–45; “The Songs of the Gospel Bring Peace,” July 1994, pp. 12–13; flannel-board figures for “Jesus Christ Will Come Again,” Dec. 1999, pp. 10–11.