

Growing Together

Inspired by the Christian Faith

WHAT IS... CHRISTMAS ABOUT?

GOD IS WITH US.



Read together

Everything needs a beginning and Christmas has the best beginning of all, because it really does begin right at the beginning! It begins with God.

God who loves people, and talks to people, and enjoys spending time with people. It also begins with people. People who love God, and talk to God, and enjoy spending time with God.

God gave the people a whole world of amazing and beautiful things. Different things so they could be free to choose.

One day the people chose to know about **everything**.

They bit off more than they could chew.

The people found out about sadness and illness and anger, and things fell apart.

The people didn't love God, didn't talk to God, or enjoy spending time with God anymore.

Since that beginning God tried and tried and tried to put everything back together. To love people, to talk to people, to spend time with people.

Nothing quite worked so God made a choice.

God chose to come to the world himself to love people, talk to people, to spend time with people. So there was only one thing for it. God put some skin on and became a tiny, wrinkly, hungry, crying, nappy-wearing human being.

They named God Jesus.

Jesus knew about being human. He knew about love and joy but also sadness, illness and anger.

When Jesus grew up, he helped people to put themselves back together by making it possible for people to love God, talk to God and enjoy spending time with God.

Read more of the Christmas story in the Bible at... Luke 2:2-21 or read your favourite Christmas book.



Did you know



Lots of the words we hear at Christmas in carols or Bible readings are unusual words, they come from different ancient languages.

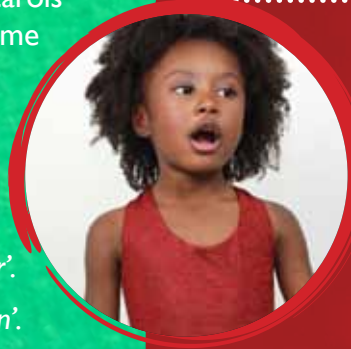
Advent is Latin for 'waiting' and **incarnation** is Latin meaning 'in flesh'.

Emmanuel is Hebrew, meaning 'God with us'.

Jesus is Hebrew and means 'rescuer' or 'saviour'.

Christo is Greek, meaning 'anointed' or 'chosen'.

Are there other words you have heard that you don't know the meaning of? Who could you ask about them?



Courageous Advocacy



Bravely making the world better

At Christmas we celebrate God coming to live on earth with us. Can you use this idea to make a Christmas card? Give it to someone you wouldn't usually give a Christmas card to.

If you enjoy singing Christmas songs find out if your local church or your school are going carol singing.

Create & make



Can you create a nativity scene using toys or props you already have like Lego® or Playmobile®.

Family Fun



Play a guessing game, drawing clues for a Christmas carol or song and seeing who can work it out first, for example *Away in a Manger*, *Once in Royal David's City*, *O little Town of Bethlehem*, *Little Donkey*, *Jingle Bells*, *Good King Wenceslas*, *When Santa Got Stuck up the Chimney*.

You will need:

- Paper
- A list of songs you all know
- Pencils
- A way to keep time

Write song titles on strips of paper, fold them up and put them in a bowl, then take turns to try and draw them in one minute.

If you like competition, split into teams.

Idea for Pre-schoolers



Explore Christmas through a Christmas treasure box. Use a box or basket and fill it with items for your children to explore and talk together about Christmas. For example, strong fir cones, star shapes, donkey, sheep and cow, bricks to build a town or stable.

Prayer space ideas



God is with us

If you have some pipe cleaners make two people or simply draw them, one is you and one is Jesus. Then hang them on your Christmas tree or in another special place to remind you that God is always with us, not just when we celebrate Christmas.

Web Links & Extended Ideas



Find a nativity story on Youtube: <https://bit.ly/37gRNyL>
www.flamecreativekidsblogspot.com has lots of advent activities.

Calm jars are a lovely addition to treasure baskets ideas of how to make them can be found here

<https://preschoolinspirations.com/6-ways-to-make-a-calm-down-jar/>

The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey by Susan Wojciechowski is a beautiful story to share in Advent.

Walking to Bethlehem by Fay Rowland has 25 imaginative and interactive devotions for adults and children.

The Jolly Christmas Postman by Janet and Allan Ahlberg.