



Neighbourhood Carol Service Resource Pack

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1 Welcome!

Neighbourhood Carol Services are a new development from The Salvation Army in Gloucester, providing an opportunity for a community to join together in a Christmas celebration in the heart of their neighbourhood. Combining elements of a traditional carol service with the idea of a street celebration, we hope you will be able to encourage your community to join together in this way.

This resource pack, freshly prepared for Christmas 2008, contains a host of ideas and resources to help you to plan your carol service with your neighbours – but ultimately it's your vision and enthusiasm which will turn these ideas into an evening of Christmas enjoyment with your friends. In these few pages you will find readings and drama sketches, a list of carols, written prayers and other ideas for ways in which you can turn your carol service into a real Christmas celebration for the whole community.

We hope you will find this pack inspirational in planning your event – please get in touch with The Salvation Army in Gloucester if you feel that a small group of our musicians would help your event, or if you have any other suggestions, questions or ideas.

If you plan to hold a Neighbourhood Carol Service using suggestions from this resource pack, please drop us an email so that we can add your event to our website. Full contact details can be found on the front page of this pack.

1.1 Safety Notes

If you plan on holding your Neighbourhood Carol Service in the street, please ensure that you choose a location that will not obstruct traffic and that is safe for both the participants and for anyone else using the roads and pavements. If necessary, contact the local police to check that they are happy with your planned location.

Please ensure that children are safe at all times. We recommend ensuring that at least two adults are with children if they move away from the main group to carry out craft activities etc. It is also advisable that they do this in a location where they can be seen – for instance an open garage.

2 Readings

2.1 From the Bible

2.1.1 Luke 1: 26-38 – The Birth of Jesus Foretold

In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

The angel went to her and said, Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

But the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God.

You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; his kingdom will never end.

How will this be, Mary asked the angel, since I am a virgin?

The angel answered, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God.

I am the Lord's servant, Mary answered. May it be to me as you have said. Then the angel left her.

2.1.2 Luke 2: 1-7 – The Birth of Jesus

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)

And everyone went to his own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

2.1.3 Luke 2: 8-20 – The Shepherds and the Angels

And there were shepherds living out in the fields near by, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

But the angel said to them, Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests.

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

2.1.4 Matthew 2: 1-12 – The Visit of the Magi

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.

In Bethlehem in Judea, they replied, for this is what the prophet has written:

'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.

He sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

2.2 Twas the night before Christmas

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads.
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tinny reindeer.

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

"Now Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! on, on Donner and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky.
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of Toys, and St Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler, just opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly!

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He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself!
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk.
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose!

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, 'ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

By Clement Clarke Moore

3 Drama

3.1 Dramatised Bible passages

3.1.1 Luke 1: 26-38

Narrator In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a young woman pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The young woman's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said:

Angel "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

Narrator Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her:

Angel "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will become pregnant child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

Mary "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

Angel "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. The holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she is now sixth months pregnant For nothing is impossible with God."

Mary "I am the Lord's servant. may it be to me as you have said."

Narrator Then the angel left her.

3.1.2 Luke 1: 39-56

Narrator Mary got ready and hurried off to a town in the hill country of Judea. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby moved within her. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and said in a loud voice:

Elizabeth "You are the most blessed of all women, and blessed is the child you will bear! Why should this great thing happen to me, that my Lord's mother comes to visit me? For as soon as I heard your greeting the baby within me jumped with gladness. How happy you are to believe that the Lord's message to you will come true!"

Narrator Mary said:

Mary "My heart praises the Lord;
my soul is glad because of God my Saviour,
for he has remembered me, his lowly servant!
From now on all people will call me happy,
because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me.
His name is holy;
from one generation to another
he shows mercy to those who honour him.
He has stretched out his mighty arm
and scattered the proud with all their plans.
He has brought down mighty kings from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away with empty hands.
He has kept the promise he made to our ancestors
and has come to the help of his servant, Israel.
He has remembered to show mercy to Abraham
and to all his descendents forever!"

Narrator Mary stayed about three months with Elizabeth and then went back home.

3.1.3 Luke 2: 1-7

- Narrator** Emperor Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire.
- Commentator** When this first census took place, Quirinius was the governor of Syria.
- Narrator** Everyone, then, went to register himself, each to his own hometown.
Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the town of Bethlehem in Judea, the birthplace of King David.
- Commentator** Joseph went there because he was a descendant of David.
- Narrator** He went to register with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him. She was pregnant, and while they were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have her baby. She gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger – there was no room for them to stay in the inn.

3.1.4 Luke 2: 8-14

- Narrator** There were shepherds living out in the fields near Bethlehem, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them:
- Angel** Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.
- Narrator** Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God.
- Chorus** Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to all on whom his favour rests.

3.1.5 Luke 2: 15-20

- Narrator** When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another:
- Shepherd 1** Let's go to Bethlehem -
- Shepherd 2** And see this thing that has happened -
- Shepherd 3** Which the Lord has told us about.
- Narrator** So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. (pause)
But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

3.1.6 Matthew 2: 1-12

- Narrator** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked:
- Magi** “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”
- Narrator** When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them:
- Herod** “Where will the Christ be born?”
- Teacher 1** “In Bethlehem in Judea”
- Teacher 2** “For this is what the prophet has written:”
- Prophet** “Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.”
- Narrator** Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem:
- Herod** “Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”
- Narrator** After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

3.2 This is the Christmas ...

This is a light-hearted script which hopefully needs little rehearsal or costume and needs only readily-available props. Feel free to adapt it to your group size and taste by cutting or adding characters and lines. Each number represents a character who should wear a little costume if possible – lots if you've got the time. Mary (1) must hold a baby from the start. It's a bit like "The house that Jack built" or "I knew an old lady who swallowed a fly".

- 1 This is the baby that God sent. *(slight pause)*
- 1 This is the mum who gave birth to the baby that God sent.
- 2 This is the dad, who looked after the mum ...
- 1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.
- 3 This is the shepherd, who visited the dad ...
- 2 ... who looked after the mum ...
- 1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.
- 4 This is the king, who trod on the shepherd ...
- All Ow! Sorry! *(alternatively half can say "Ow!" and half "Sorry!")*
- 3 ... who visited the dad ...
- 2 ... who looked after the mum ...
- 1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.
- 5 This is the sheep ...
- All Baa!
- 5 ... who pushed the king ...
- All Oi!
- 4 ... who trod on the shepherd ...
- All Ow! Sorry! *(as before)*
- 3 ... who visited the dad ...
- 2 ... who looked after the mum ...
- 1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.
- 6 This is the donkey ...
- All Eeyore!
- 6 ... who kicked the sheep ...
- All Baa!
- 5 ... who pushed the king ...
- All Oi!
- 4 ... who trod on the shepherd ...
- All Ow! Sorry! *(you've got the idea by now)*
- 3 ... who visited the dad ...
- 2 ... who looked after the mum ...
- 1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.

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- 7 This is the innkeeper, who owned the donkey ...
All Eeyore!
6 ... who kicked the sheep ...
All Baa!
5 ... who pushed the king ...
All Oi!
4 ... who trod on the shepherd ...
All Ow! Sorry!
3 ... who visited the dad ...
2 ... who looked after the mum ...
1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.
8 This is the night that annoyed the innkeeper ...
7 ... who owned the donkey ...
All Eeyore!
6 ... who kicked the sheep ...
All Baa!
5 ... who pushed the king ...
All Oi!
4 ... who trod on the shepherd ...
All Ow! Sorry! (*as before*)
3 ... who visited the dad ...
2 ... who looked after the mum ...
1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.
9 This is the star that shone on the night ...
8 ... that annoyed the innkeeper ...
7 ... who owned the donkey ...
All Eeyore!
6 ... who kicked the sheep ...
All Baa!
5 ... who pushed the king ...
All Oi!
4 ... who trod on the shepherd ...
All Ow! Sorry! (*as before*)
3 ... who visited the dad ...
2 ... who looked after the mum ...
1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.

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- 10** Christmas is the time we remember the star ...
9 ... that shone on the night ...
8 ... that annoyed the innkeeper ...
7 ... who owned the donkey ...
All Eeyore!
6 ... who kicked the sheep ...
All Baa!
5 ... who pushed the king ...
All Oi!
4 ... who trod on the shepherd ...
All Ow! Sorry! (*as before*)
3 ... who visited the dad ...
2 ... who looked after the mum ...
1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.
11 These are the lights, the presents, the tinsel, the baubles, the beer, the cake, the turkey, the Christmas tree, the shopping and the crackers we use to celebrate ... (*during this Mary (1) is covered in as many seasonal things as possible. The baby she is holding is, at least covered, if not removed altogether*)
10 ... Christmas – the time we remember the star ...
9 ... that shone on the night ...
8 ... that annoyed the innkeeper ...
7 ... who owned the donkey ...
All Eeyore!
6 ... who kicked the sheep ...
All Baa!
5 ... who pushed the king ...
All Oi!
4 ... who trod on the shepherd ...
All Ow! Sorry! (*as before*)
3 ... who visited the dad ... (*about here the pace gradually slows more and more as everyone realises that no-one can see the baby Jesus*)
2 ... who looked after the mum ...
1 ... who gave birth to the baby that God sent.
All Sorry! (*all Christmas bits and pieces removed*)
1 This is the baby that God sent.

By Jon Bishton, October 2008



4 Carols

These are the carols for which The Salvation Army band have music, and which are included in the carol sheets which we can bring along for your use on the night of your carol service. Just choose which ones your neighbours would like to sing and note down the numbers and titles in your order of service.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. A child this day is born | 49. Little Jesus, sweetly sleep |
| 2. A Christmas Lullaby | 50. Little donkey |
| 3. A great and mighty wonder | 51. Long, long ago |
| 4. A starry night | 52. Mary's boy child |
| 5. A virgin most pure | 53. Masters in this hall |
| 6. All my heart this night rejoices | 54. Noel |
| 7. Angels from the realms of Glory (Come and worship) | 55. O come, all ye faithful |
| 8. Angels from the realms of Glory (Iris) | 56. O come, Immanuel |
| 9. Angels, sing again! | 57. O come with me to Bethlehem |
| 10. Angels we have heard on high | 58. O little town of Bethlehem (Christmas Carol) |
| 11. As with gladness men of old | 59. O little town of Bethlehem (Forest green) |
| 12. Away in a manger | 60. O little town of Bethlehem (St Louis) |
| 13. Away in a manger (the manger scene) | 61. O Heaven-sent King |
| 14. Bethlehem | 62. O holy night! |
| 15. Brightest and best | 63. Once, in royal Davids city |
| 16. Brightest and best (Spean) | 64. Past 3 o'clock |
| 17. Child of Mary | 65. Personent hodie |
| 18. Calypso Carol | 66. Praise ye the Lord |
| 19. Carol for the Nativity | 67. Rise up, shepherd! |
| 20. Carol of the bells | 68. Sans day Carol |
| 21. Carol of the drum | 69. See, amid the winter's snow |
| 22. Christ was born on Christmas Day | 70. Silent night! |
| 23. Christians Awake | 71. Sleep, holy babe |
| 24. Come, children, come quickly | 72. Softly the night is sleeping |
| 25. Coventry carol | 73. Sussex carol |
| 26. Do you hear what I hear | 74. Stars are shining |
| 27. Ding dong! Merrily on high | 75. Sweet chiming Christmas bells |
| 28. Gabriel's message | 76. Sweet chiming bells |
| 29. Glory in the highest | 77. The angels sang the story |
| 30. Go, tell it on the mountain! | 78. The first Nowell |
| 31. God of God, the uncreated | 79. The holy Boy |
| 32. God rest you merry, gentlemen | 80. The holly and the ivy |
| 33. Good Christian men, rejoice | 81. The infant King |
| 34. Good king Wenceslas | 82. The shepherds farewell |
| 35. Hark the glad sound! | 83. The virgin Mary had a baby boy |
| 36. Hark! The herald angels sing | 84. The stable door |
| 37. How far is it to Bethlehem? | 85. They all were looking for a king |
| 38. I saw three ships come sailing in | 86. Three kings march |
| 39. I wonder as I wander | 87. Unto us a boy is born |
| 40. Il est né | 88. Wayfaring |
| 41. Immanuel appears | 89. We gather round the manger bed |
| 42. In the bleak mid-winter | 90. We three kings of Orient are |
| 43. Infant Holy | 91. What child is this? (Greensleeves) |
| 44. It came upon the midnight clear (Traditional) | 92. When wise men came seeking |
| 45. It came upon the midnight clear (Willis) | 93. While shepherds watched |
| 46. Jesus, good above all other | 94. Who is he? |
| 47. Joy to the world! | 95. Zither carol |
| 48. Little baby Jesus | |

5 Prayers

Dear God,

Thank you that we can share as a community at this Christmas time, celebrating the birth of your son Jesus as the gathered community of shepherds, angels and wise men did that first Christmas.

May we, like them, recognise in Jesus your love for the world.

May we, like them, share the wonder of your coming to earth as a baby.

May we, like them, express to those we meet the great news of your arrival on earth.

Help us in the coming year to build our community further – seeking ways to help and encourage one another and looking for opportunities to work together to improve the world around us.

Amen.

Loving Father,

Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be your children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake.

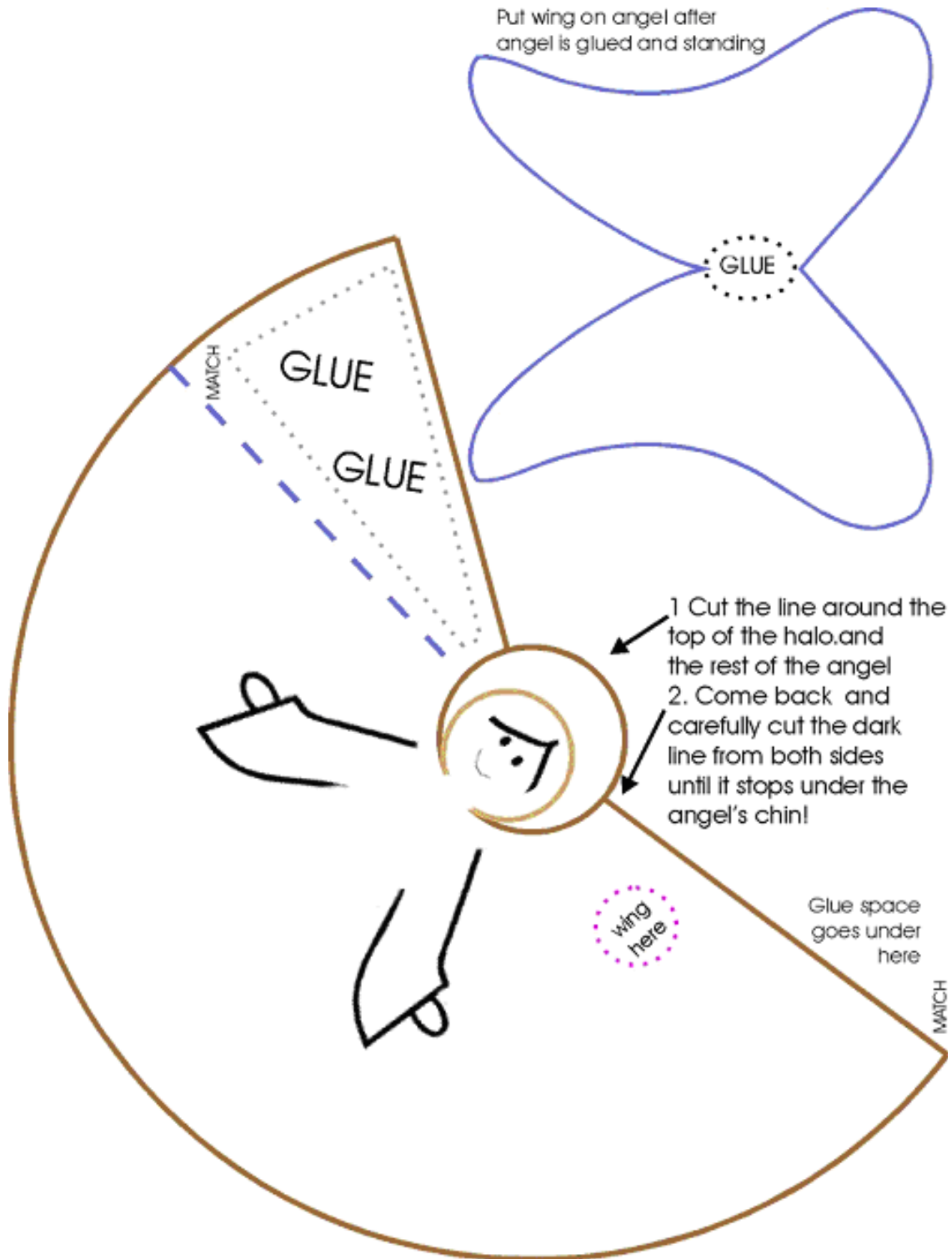
Amen.

By Robert Louis Stevenson

6 Craft Ideas

Here are a couple of simple Christmas craft ideas for children aged about 4 upwards. Make sure you practice these yourself before trying them out with children! They'll get bored very quickly if things don't go right!

6.1 Angel decoration



6.2 How to make a Christingle

Christingle is a custom which originated in the Moravian Church in 1747.

- **Christingle** means **Christ-Light**,
- the Orange represents the **World**,
- the four cocktail sticks portray the **Four Seasons**.
- the Fruits and the Sweets illustrate **God's love in providing the fruits of the earth**,
- the Red Ribbon depicts the **blood of Christ**,
- and the Lighted Candle symbolises **Jesus Christ, the Light of the World**.



1. Take an orange and cut a small cross in the top.



2. Fasten a piece of red sticky tape around the middle of the orange to represent the ribbon.

Allow sufficient overlap at the join.



3. Place a 7.5cm (3 inch) square of silver foil over the cut in the orange, then take a votive candle, place it on top of the foil and then push both into the cut, until the candle is firmly wedged in the orange.

The foil ruff helps to prevent hot wax from the lighted candle from running on to a child's hand.



4. Load four cocktail sticks with a selection of raisins, sultanas, cherries or soft sweets and insert evenly into the orange near the base of the candle.

Please note that **nuts are not recommended** as some children are allergic to them.



5. To keep your completed **Christingles** upright, ask your local greengrocer or supermarket for some pre-formed fruit trays; borrow clean polystyrene plant pot trays, or alternatively take a thin slice off the bottom of each orange to form a flat surface.

7 Ideas for celebrating

You and your neighbours may wish to prepare some warm food and drinks to share before, during or after the service. Here's a warm apple and cinnamon drink recipe to get you started:

7.1 Spiced Apple Punch (non-alcoholic!)

1 litre apple juice	15 cloves
½ litre water	2 cinnamon sticks
3 tbsp light soft brown sugar	Juice of 1 lime

Place all ingredients in a large saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring until the sugar has dissolved.

Simmer for 20 minutes stirring occasionally. Strain and serve while hot.

Serves about 6-8.

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