



You're invited...

Can you think of some different times and reasons when people hold a celebration? What kinds of things to do they do?



Have an envelope with an invitation inside. (It could be a real invitation or just a handwritten one!) tell the children that you have an exciting invite and ask them who it might be from and what they think it might be for. When might we receive an invitation? How do you feel when you get an invitation- there can be several feelings we might feel surprised, excited and joyful- we might also feel a bit nervous. In today's story we're going to find out about some people who got a special invitation too!

A special invitation.

[Read Luke 1v26-28 & Matthew 1v18-25 or watch Mary and Joseph Bible Passage Animation and Mary and Joseph Saddleback kids link](#)



There are two people in our story today. A lady called Mary and a man called Joseph.

Mary was going about her day when all of a sudden she had a really special invitation! An angel suddenly appeared and said to her 'don't be frightened, God has chosen you to have a really special job'. How do you think Mary felt? She was probably a bit shocked- can you do a shocked face?

The angel told her she was going to have a baby! Now Mary was a bit confused (can you do a confused face?) because she wasn't married and she wanted to follow God's best, but the angel explained that the power of God's Holy Spirit would come on her and put a baby in her tummy.

Now Mary wasn't married but she was engaged to a man named Joseph and so although she said 'Yes!' to God's special invitation she probably felt a bit nervous and worried about what Joseph might say... (can you do a worried face?)

But Joseph also had a special invitation- one night when he lay down and went to sleep and an angel appeared in his dream and explained that Mary's



What do we want our children to know?

To remember the real reason we celebrate at Christmas.

To look at how Mary and Joseph trusted God to use Him in His big plan.

To think about what that means for us- will we accept our invitation to God's family and be willing to play our own part in His plans.



Memory Verse

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

Revelation 3v20

**YOUNGER GROUPS
TEACHING**

baby was God's Son and that God wanted Joseph to marry Mary and help look after the baby who He should call Jesus. Joseph loved God and trusted His plan. He also said 'Yes!' To God's big invitation even though he probably wondered what other people might say and if he'd be a good Dad to a this amazingly special baby that was God's special rescuer!

RSVP...

We have that same choice to make too! We are invited to join God's family and to be part of His big plan but as we would with a party invitation we have to decide whether or not we want to accept and think about our reply.



Open the invitation. Inside it should say 'You're invited (you could include the children's names!) to be God's special friend. Jesus invites you to believe in Him and join the celebration that He has saved you!'

What do you say? Mary and Joseph both said Yes to God's special Christmas invitation. Will you? We might feel surprised, excited and maybe a bit nervous but just as Mary and Joseph could trust God so can we.

We are starting advent- the countdown to Christmas, as we prepare for our Christmas celebrations putting up decorations, baking yummy food and buying and wrapping all kinds of presents make sure you remember the real reason for the party and make time to think about whether or not you say yes to the invitation to be a part of God's special family party.

'Dear Father God, Thank you that you sent Jesus as a tiny baby at Christmas to kickstart your rescue plan. Thank you for Mary and Joseph being faithful and willing to be a part of that plan. Thank you that the baby didn't stay in the Manger, thank you that He grew up up to save me by dying on the cross for me. Please help me to remember the real reason to celebrate this Christmas. Help me to be like Mary and Joseph and to trust you. Please use me to share your Good News with other people who need to hear it. Amen'

TEATIME TEASER

- Read the parable of the feast in Luke 14v15-24. Talk about how you would respond to God's invitation to you?? Will you be at the feast? Are you willing to be part of His plan like Mary and Joseph?

Activities!

1

LOOK OUT FOR YOUR ADVENT CALENDAR DELIVERY OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS AND START PLANNING YOUR ADVENT ACTIVITIES- HOW CAN YOU BE MAKING SPACE FOR JESUS THIS ADVENT? WHICH SUGGESTIONS WILL YOU CHOOSE OR CAN YOU COME UP WITH SOME OF YOUR OWN?

2





2

WHY NOT MAKE AN ADVENT WREATH- EACH OF THE CANDLES REPRESENTS SOMETHING ABOUT WHO JESUS IS AND WHAT HE CAME TO DO.

[PAPER ADVENT WREATH](#)

[ADVENT WREATH CRAFTING IDEAS](#)

[SYMBOLISM OF CANDLES EXPLANATION](#)

3

MAKE A CHRISTINGLE- THEY TOO ARE FULL OF SYMBOLISM THAT HELP US TO REMEMBER THE REAL REASON FOR CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS

[CHRISTINGLE INSTRUCTIONS AND EXPLANATION](#)

