

Children and families talk for the 4th Sunday in Advent, 18th December 2022

Hello everyone and thank you for joining with me to look at our bible story today and to worship God. It's the 4th Sunday in our count down to Christmas today, otherwise known as Advent, and today we're looking at the part Joseph played in the arrival of Jesus as a baby. Our bible reading today comes from Matthew 1, verses 18 to 25.

This is the story of the birth of Jesus, the Messiah. ❄️

A young girl called Mary was engaged to a man called Joseph. They weren't married when Mary discovered that she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Now Joseph was a righteous man and always tried to do the right thing. ❄️ So when he found out that Mary was pregnant, he knew the right thing to do was to cancel their marriage. ❄️ Other people would be very angry if they knew Mary was pregnant before they got married. Joseph began to make plans to break off his engagement to Mary. He thought he was doing the right thing. ❄️

But Joseph hadn't understood what God was doing, so God sent an angel to tell him. The angel came in a dream, while Joseph was asleep. ❄️ 'Joseph, son of David,' the angel called to him. 'Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. She will have a son, and you shall call him Jesus. He will save people from their sins.' ❄️

This dream changed Joseph's mind. He still wanted to do what was right, ❄️ but now he knew that this meant marrying Mary. They got married and when Mary's son was born, Joseph named the boy Jesus. ❄️ Everything happened

as the prophet Isaiah had said in the Old Testament: ❄️ 'Look, an unmarried woman will get pregnant and have a son. His name will be Emmanuel,' which means 'God is with us.'

Matthew 1:18-25



Let's talk about our bible reading:

Have you ever felt that something you do isn't very important and then realised that it really is? Joseph's part in the story of Jesus' birth can seem very small and not very important, in fact we don't really hear about Joseph again in the bible after this story. But God chose Joseph to help bring up His Son, Jesus. Which seems very important to me. Helping Jesus to grow up and learn all the things he needed to learn before he could begin teaching people about his real Father, God, was a very important job, and just like every Father, not always an easy one. I mean, do you remember the story of Jesus going to the temple with his parents when he was about 12 and they lost him for 2 whole days? Very scary times for a parent.

So, God chose Joseph and sent an angel to tell him in a dream. Joseph may have been chosen because he was always trying to do the right thing, so God trusted Joseph with his Son. What do you think? Joseph seems to have been a quiet, but reliable man.

Let's think about all the other roles in the Christmas story; Mary, Jesus' mother; the angels; the shepherds; the innkeeper; the wise men; are there any I've missed? Which one do you think you are most like? They all have important parts to play, don't they, and the story would be missing something without them. We all have important parts to play in God's continuing story – some of you may be quiet and trustworthy like Joseph; or full of hope and trust like Mary; maybe you are searching like the wise men; or full of joy like the shepherds; however you are, there is a role for you in the family of God.

Let's talk to God now:

God, who is with us,
send us out in your love

and help us to discover our place in your story.

Amen.

And let's say the grace together:

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

The love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

Be with us all, now and forever more,

Amen.

Here is the children's activity page from Roots: [activity-sheet-18-december-2022.pdf \(rootsontheweb.com\)](https://www.rootsontheweb.com/activity-sheet-18-december-2022.pdf)