

POINT ➔ **WE
CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH.**

SAY: Today we're learning about a **Mighty Mini** who loved Jesus even before he was born. Open your Bible to Luke 1, and show children the words. **We'll learn something from the Bible, God's book.**

First, an angel told Mary she was going to be Jesus' mother. She was so excited, and she celebrated by going to visit her relative, Elizabeth. Elizabeth was celebrating, too, because she also had a baby growing inside her. That baby was named John. It was a long walk for Mary to visit Elizabeth. Let's pretend to walk with Mary around the room. Walk around the room.

SAY: The Bible says Mary hurried to get to Elizabeth's house. Let's walk faster. Walk faster around the room. **As soon as Mary arrived at Elizabeth's home, the two women gave each other big hugs. Find a partner and share a big hug.** Wait for children to hug each other.

SAY: When Mary and Elizabeth said

hi to each other, the baby growing inside Elizabeth jumped. Let's pretend we're little babies lying on the floor and jump up. Wait for children to lie down and then jump up. Repeat a few times.

SAY: Elizabeth was so excited. She said to Mary, "God has blessed you above all women! Blessed is the child that is growing inside you. When I heard your greeting, the baby inside me jumped for joy!" Even a baby inside his mother celebrated Jesus' coming birth. Let's celebrate, too. Let's shout "Hip, hip, hooray! We love you, Jesus!" Have kids cheer a few times.

ASK: What's something that made you so excited that you jumped around?

What's exciting to you about Jesus' birth?

What do you want to say to Jesus to celebrate his birth?

SAY: John wasn't even born yet, but he knew that ➔ **WE CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH.** He was so excited to be near baby Jesus that he jumped in his mommy's tummy! When we get excited about Jesus, we can jump up and down and tell him why we're excited he was born.



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SAY: It's an exciting time when we get ready to celebrate Christmas. What do you do to celebrate Jesus' birth at your house? Have kids share about their Christmas celebrations.

SAY: ➡ **WE CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH.** Let's jump for joy using our *Bounce Ball*. We'll make the ball jump for joy the way John jumped for joy inside Elizabeth.

Have children stand in a circle and bounce the *Bounce Ball* to one another while you repeat this chant as a group:

**Celebrate!
Jump for joy!
Jesus will be born!**

When you finish the chant, have the child holding the ball say something about Jesus and then bounce the ball really hard to celebrate. Repeat the game several times.

ASK: What things make you really excited?

What kinds of things do you do when you're excited?

SAY: When John was excited, he jumped up and down, even before he was born. We can show that ➡ **WE CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH** by showing how excited we are that Jesus was born.

Put away the *Bounce Ball*.

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SAY: ➔ **WE CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH.** We can celebrate by jumping for joy while we sing this song.

Play ● "Joy to the World!" (track 8) on the CD. Lead the children in singing this song twice so kids become familiar with the words. While you sing, celebrate by jumping for joy.

SING:

Joy to the world! (4x)
Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King.
Let every heart prepare him room
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and
nature sing.

(Repeat.)

Joy to the world! (5x)

"Joy to the World" by George F. Handel.

SAY: This song talks about how everyone in the world can be happy and sing about Jesus.

ASK: What's something you think would make everyone you know happy?

What are some ways you've seen Jesus make people happy?

SAY: **When Jesus was born, it meant joy for the whole world! That's because Jesus came to help everyone in the world. John knew Jesus would bring joy, so he jumped in his mom's tummy. ➔ WE CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH and the joy he brings.**

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SAY: After Mary learned about baby Jesus coming and that her relative Elizabeth was going to give birth to John, Mary went to visit Elizabeth. They were glad to see each other.

ASK: What do you like to do with your friends?

SAY: ➔ **WE CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH.** Jesus came to earth, so we can all be his friends and God's children when we believe in Jesus. Let's sing about that. Find a partner, face each other, and hold hands. When I play the music, skip around in a circle with your partner as you sing.

Play ● "All God's Children" (track 2) on the **CD**, to the tune of "Mulberry Bush." When the song is over, encourage children to switch partners and skip with a new friend.

SING:

**We are all God's children, children,
children.**

We are all God's children.

Let's sing and praise his name.

(Repeat.)

ASK: What does it mean to be God's child?

Why do we need Jesus to help us be God's children?

Why is being God's child worth celebrating?

SAY: If we believe in Jesus, we're God's children! That's all we have to do. Jesus came to earth so that he could make a way for us to be God's children and friends. That's why ➔ **WE CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH.**

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SAY: John jumped inside his mommy's tummy to celebrate Jesus' birth. Let's make a craft to help us remember John.

Hand out paper and crayons, and have kids draw pictures of Elizabeth with a baby in her tummy. As kids finish up, help them cut a hole where the baby is so that it's just attached to the drawing at the very top. (You may need to ask kids to show you their baby if you can't distinguish the parts of the drawing.)

When everyone has a cut-out drawing, **SAY: Now let's make our baby Johns jump! Hold your picture up. When I read about John leaping, poke your finger through the hole from behind your picture, so that John jumps.** Read Luke 1:41 and 44, pausing for kids to make their babies jump. You may also have kids talk about what happened when Mary visited Elizabeth, using their pictures to act it out.

ASK: What do you think about John jumping?

What are some reasons to celebrate Jesus' birth?

What are some reasons a baby in his mommy's belly would have to celebrate Jesus?

SAY: When Mary and Elizabeth saw each other, they both knew ➔ WE CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH. And so did baby John! Everyone was excited that Jesus was going to be born!