



14. God with us

Age range: Primary

Theme: We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community. In this final 2 weeks of term, we turn to the Nativity account for our inspiration – and draw some links with our Moses series. We are very grateful to FreeBibleImages for the use of their PowerPoint slides and images for many of the assemblies this term.



How does this link to your school’s Christian vision & values?

Building on last week, the focus for this week is on some words from the writings of Isaiah, and the experiences of the first visitors to Baby Jesus, as they encountered Immanuel, ‘God with us’.

Resources:

- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation. There are slides to go with today’s script, but you could quite easily use this collective worship without the PowerPoint if you preferred.
- **Today’s focus reflects on the meaning of one of Jesus’ names, ‘Immanuel’ – which means ‘God is with us’.** The introductory game uses some familiar names and their meanings, and we would encourage you to customise this with some names from your own school community.
- **The words ‘Immanuel – ‘God with them’’ are a feature within today’s script. If you wanted to, you could use this as a call and response each time: when you say ‘Immanuel’, pupils could respond each time with ‘God with them’**
- **Reflective prayer activity:** Use the online Advent calendar.

Gathering:

Slide 1: Use this Advent greeting for this last part of the term.



- **Leader: As we light our Advent candle...**
- **All: May today’s story show us something new, like light in the darkness.**

Engaging:

- **Slides 2-6: the Name Game** Play this together – the answers are on each slide.
- **Slide 7: Jesus – yeshua, ‘God saves’**
This is the meaning of Jesus’ name, which is a really important idea for Christians – the idea of Jesus as Saviour, the Great Rescuer. We often think about this at Easter time, but there are words in the story of the very first Christmas – listen out for them!
- **Slide 8:** We’ve been thinking over the last couple of weeks about how God came to live amongst his people, in the tabernacle – that he ‘dwelled’ there. We’ve heard in the stories of Moses how God rescued his people many times.
Much later in the history of God’s people there are some words that are often read during Christmas services, ancient words that Christians believe are words about Mary & Jesus:
She will give birth to a son, and she will call him ‘Immanuel’ – which means ‘God is with us’.
Isaiah 7:14
This name, Immanuel, is one of the names given to Jesus. This is a very big idea, that God might be ‘with us’ – not living in a tent, but as we heard last week....
- **Slide 9:come to earth as a tiny baby. Immanuel – ‘God with us’**
We’re going to use this idea now as we hear about the visitors who came to see this miracle – and finish off the story that Christians (and we in school!) tell every Christmas. As we tell the story, we are going to think about how these different people experienced ‘God with them’and try to imagine how it felt....
[there are wondering questions to think / talk about to go with each slide]
- **Slide 10:** We heard last week that Baby Jesus was born in a stable because all the inns were busy.
I wonder how Mary and Joseph felt to know that this baby was ‘Immanuel – God with them’?....
This part of the story is especially important to Christians because they believe that Jesus, God’s son, was born as a human baby, to live a human life, just like them.
- **Slide 11:** The account in Luke’s gospel tells how the angels went first to the very poorest people in Bethlehem – some shepherds, who were out in the fields watching over their sheep through the night.



- **Slide 12:** The shepherds heard from the angels how this new baby would be their Saviour and so they rushed to Bethlehem to find Jesus in the stable, just as the angels had said they would! *[did you spot the word 'Saviour' – rescuer there?!]*
I wonder how the shepherds felt knowing that they were the very first visitors to see 'Immanuel – God with them'?
- **Slide 13:** After the shepherds left the stable, they told everyone they met about what they had seen – how God had been born among them.
I wonder how these people felt when they heard that God was 'with them'?
- **Slide 14:** We hear in Matthew's gospel (another part of the story) that wise men had been studying their books, maps and charts. They believed that one day, a new King would be born – and that a bright star would tell them when. They had been watching the skies for years and years, waiting for the moment when this time would come. And so, the star led them to this new King. The gifts that they brought with them – gold, frankincense and myrrh – showed that this was no ordinary King...
- **Slide 15:** The wise men were the final visitors to see the good news that not just a new King, but God himself, had been born among them.
I wonder how the wise men felt to know that God was finally here – with them?and why they worshipped?
- **Slide 16:** But we also know that during that very first Christmas, there were many people gathering in Bethlehem as Caesar had ordered that everyone go back to the town of their birth to be counted. Bethlehem was a very busy place, full of people.
I wonder if these people had any idea that God was 'with them'?....it's quite likely that very few of them ever realised that some very important events were to take place. I wonder what they might have done if they had realised that Immanuel – 'God with them' – had been born?

Slide 17: Responding & words for worship....Let's bring our thoughts together now.

We've heard that at the very first Christmas, many people came to see Jesus, Immanuel – 'God with us' ...whom Christians believe to be God's son.



I wonder what you think about the idea of Immanuel – 'God with us'?

I wonder what difference it might make as we gather as a school community this Christmas time?

We're coming to the end of our time together today, so let's be quiet with our own thoughts.....
....we've heard today about the people who witnessed the arrival of Immanuel – 'God with us'
....we've heard how the wise men's visit caused them to worship....
....and Christians ever since have done the same....

Slide 18: Opportunity for reflection / prayer

We're going to give you an opportunity now to listen, reflect, or pray – whichever you feel most comfortable with. One of the most familiar Christmas carols that you might hear, or even sing, over Christmas is one called 'O Come All Ye Faithful' – which was first published in 1751, but was probably written much earlier than that (in an ancient language called Latin....) We're going to use a few of the words to help us to pray now (and in a while, we can listen to it too!)

Slide 19: Prayer

Like the wise men – and those many other visitors who came to gaze at Jesus, Immanuel – 'God with us' – the words that Christians sing say **'O come let us adore him!'**

If you want to pray with me, then you might want to join in those words when they come on the screen, or you can continue to be quiet with your own thoughts.

Slide 20: As we think about this special story, of Jesus, born as a baby.... **'O come let us adore him!'**

Slide 21: As we remember how the shepherds saw him first.... **'O come let us adore him!'**

Slide 22: As we remember how the wise men knelt in worship.... **'O come let us adore him!'**

Slide 23: With Christians all over the world, may we sing this Christmas time.... **'O come let us adore him!'**

Slide 24: Immanuel – God is with us.

Slide 25: Amen



Sending: Slide 26 (*You might want to use this slide throughout the Advent season to end your time together*)

Leader: As we leave this place and time....

All: May the light of Advent shine brightly in our school today.



To listen to / sing:

[Hear The Bells - Nick & Becky Drake // Christmas Worship Song - YouTube](#) or [The angels knew](#) (NBD)



Moses: Are we nearly there yet?!!!

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