

THE INSTANT NATIVITY:

THE MYSTERY OF THE NEW NOISY NEIGHBOUR



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The basics

Stressful nativity preparation is a thing of the past with the 'Instant Nativity'. You will need this script, an enthusiastic narrator, a person in charge of the PowerPoint, and a willing congregation. That's it!

Your narrator simply follows through the script, telling the nativity story and encouraging audience participation. We've included some ideas for readings and carols, but it's yours to customise. There are a few accompanying resources you might want to use too (see below).

All we suggest is that you give it a good read through beforehand and make it your own. Then you're good to go. Have fun!

Characters

This nativity doesn't require dozens of characters and hours of line-learning. However it can be great fun to encourage your church congregation to come dressed up as nativity characters!

In the weeks leading up to your nativity, remind people to come in their outfits. There are moments in the script where groups of characters will get a chance to shine!

So encourage those Marys, Josephs, animals, angels, shepherds and wise men. No lobsters though, sorry.

The narrator's character is a detective mouse! Can you find a suitable costume? If you don't want to be a mouse then you could change all the mouse references to a human detective.



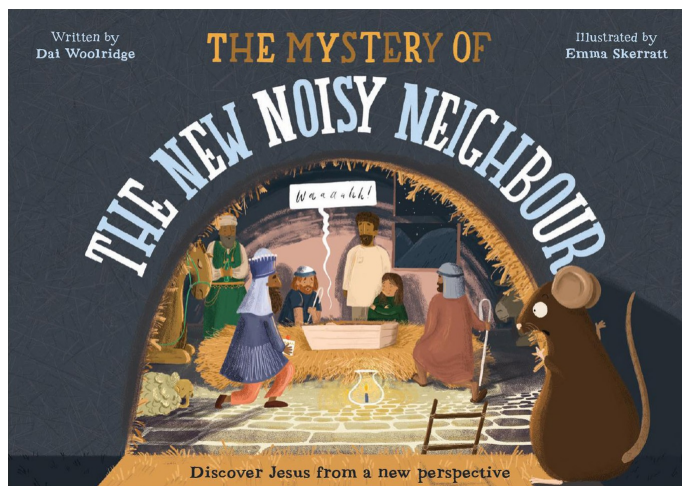
Accompanying resources

We have created a set of visuals you can use alongside your nativity. Download the slidedeck from our website, available in both 16:9 and 4:3.

This nativity is based on our children's story, *The Mystery of the New Noisy Neighbour*. Why not give away copies as a gift at the end of service? Order online at special subsidised prices.

We have also created a video animation of *The Mystery of the New Noisy Neighbour* that you can download or stream and show in your church services.

Check these out and all our other Christmas resources for you and your church at biblesociety.org.uk/christmas



Give the story

Free resources like this nativity, and our mission around the world, are funded by our generous supporters.

You can help orphans and poor families in Malawi read the nativity story and have Bibles for themselves this Christmas.

To find out more about holding a collection at your church for Bible Society and children in Malawi, please visit biblesociety.org.uk/malawichristmas. At the back of this pack you'll find a poster to display in your church.



THE SCRIPT

Slide 1 Welcome to our service! Today we'll be retelling the Christmas story. And there will be a chance for everyone to get involved.

Opening prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for sending your son into the world to live among us. As we explore this familiar story, please give us a fresh sense of wonder about what Jesus came to do and what it means for us. Help us to share this good news!

Amen.

Suggested Bible reading: Micah 5.2

Suggested carol: O Little Town of Bethlehem

Slide 2 Introduction to the story

Hello—I'm Mouse!

I live in a little place called Bethlehem.

My favourite food is cheese (obviously).

And my favourite hobby... is doing detective work! Oh yes, I love a good mystery I do.

And today I'm here to retell the Christmas story, which also just happens to be the greatest mystery I've ever solved!

But first, I'm going to need some help from you... When I say each of these words, I need you to join in with an action:

Slide 3 **NOISE/NOISY**—Put your hands over your ears.

ONES WITH STICKS—Lift Shepherd's crook (real or imaginary) and tap it on the floor.

ONES WITH GIFTS—Mime holding a gift and giving it to someone.

RESCUE/RESCUER—Strike a superhero / victory pose.

KING—Mime placing a crown on your head.

EMMANUEL—Point heavenwards then place hand over heart.

Have a bit of fun practising these words and actions with the congregation. They'll be highlighted in red (as above) throughout your script so you can really emphasise them and remind the audience as you go.

There are also some parts of this story where I need you to make different sounds. (Instructions will come up on the screen, so keep your eyes peeled!)

Thank you so much to everyone who has come dressed up as one of the characters from the nativity story. When we get to your moment in the story, I'll explain how you can join in.

Okay! I hope you're ready to begin.

The story begins...

Slide 4 Picture my house. I've got this really cosy bale of hay. And it's in the downstairs part of an old stone house in Bethlehem.

Now, on the day in question, things had been pretty normal. I spent my time avoiding the cat and searching for food. Little did I know my life was about to change.

SUDDENLY, the peace and quiet was shattered by this strange, awful **NOISE!** It was a baby crying!

Sound Instruction (whole congregation):

Slide 5

Waaaaaaah!

Slide 6 'Where's all that racket coming from?' I thought. That's when I spotted them—my new **NOISY** neighbours.

They were a strange group of humans! Some had sticks and looked quite hairy, some had gifts and looked quite clever and there was a mum and a dad and they were all staring at a **NOISY** human baby.

Who were they? Finding out was clearly a job for a mystery-solving mouse. Like me!

THEN, another sound caught me by surprise. It was a donkey!

Sound Instruction (whole congregation):

Slide 7

EE-AW!

It gave me quite a shock!

Slide 8 I started chatting to Donkey—an interesting old chap, going a bit grey... he was *very* happy to help me with my detective investigation.

He told me he'd been on a journey with the mum and the dad of the baby. Apparently they were called Mary and Joseph.

An Emperor called Augustus had ordered a census to be taken throughout the whole of the Roman Empire Everyone had to go and register in their home town.

Slide 9 Joseph had to travel all the way from Nazareth to Bethlehem. He went to register with Mary, who he was going to marry.

Invite any Marys, Josephs and Donkeys to parade around the church as the rest of the church creates the sound effects!



Sound Instruction (whole congregation):

Slide 10

Clip-clop, clip-clop, clip-clop!

Slide 11 On the way, Donkey said he overheard Mary and Joseph say that Manuel would be born. 'Manuel?' I asked. It seemed like an unusual name for a baby. But I wrote it down in my detective book in case it was a clue.

Slide 12 Donkey said when they arrived at my house, the upstairs was full and that's why the **NOISY** baby was born downstairs and placed in a feeding trough. And after that, the **ONES WITH STICKS** and the **ONES WITH GIFTS** came to visit.

I couldn't understand why they'd come to visit. Was the baby special? Why?

Donkey said I should talk to the sheep as they know everything about the **ONES WITH STICKS**. Apparently they're actually called shepherds!

So we set off!

Invite all the shepherds and sheep to come to the front of the church as the rest of the congregation creates the sound effect below.



Sound Instruction (slightly faster this time):

Slide 13

Clip-clop, clip-clop, clip-clop!

Slide 14 We trekked up a hill and met with a whole flock of grass-munching sheep!

Sound Instruction (whole congregation):

Slide 15

Baaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa

Slide 16 I asked the sheep what they could tell me about the **ONES WITH STICKS** and why they had visited the **NOISY** baby.

They told me they'd been minding their own business on the hillside when suddenly a shining angel had appeared in the sky!

Invite any angels to parade around the church. They could do this during the suggested carol.

Suggested carol: Angels from the realms of glory

Suggested Bible reading: Luke 2.8-20

Slide 17 When the angel appeared, the **ONES WITH STICKS** went all wobbly with shock! But the angel told them, 'No need to get all wobbly! Instead jump for joy because a baby has been born who will **RESCUE** God's people!'

Then, loads more angels appeared in the sky singing praises to God and the **ONES WITH STICKS** rushed off, jumping for joy.

Invite all the shepherds to display their finest jumps for joy!



Slide 18 But I was left wondering: how could a baby **RESCUE** God's people? According to the sheep the **ONES WITH STICKS** said they'd been waiting for a **RESCUER** for a really long time... It sounded like 'good n-eeee-ews,' the sheep told me!

But they couldn't tell me anything about the **ONES WITH GIFTS**. So Donkey and I went chasing after Camel to find out.

Sound Instruction (as fast as you can):

Slide 19

Clip-clop, clip-clop, clip-clop!

Slide 20 We were quite out of breath when we caught up with Camel, I can tell you! But she was more than happy to help!

Invite any stars to come up to the front of the church and do some shining!

Slide 21 Camel told me the **ONES WITH GIFTS** had spotted a special star and they'd followed it a really long way just to meet the **NOISY** baby!

Invite any wise men and camels to parade around the church. They could do this during the suggested carol.

Suggested Bible reading: Matthew 2.1-12

Suggested carol: The First Noel

Slide 22 The star had stopped outside my house and the gifts I'd seen the **ONES WITH GIFTS** giving, were gold, frankincense and myrrh—three gifts fit for a **KING!**

A **KING?** I could hardly contain my excitement! But how?

I hadn't spotted a crown on his head! Didn't we already have a **KING** called Herod?

But Camel said it was written a long time ago that someone special from Bethlehem would take charge of God's people. Camel said the **ONES WITH GIFTS** had been warned not to go back to Herod because he was only out to kill the baby! So they were going home a different way.



Sound Instruction (whole congregation):

Slide 23

Boooooooooooooooooo!

Back at my house, I thought about all the clues I'd been given:

Slide 24 Camel said baby is a **KING**

Sheep said baby is **RESCUER**

And Donkey said baby is Manuel.....

The first two made sense to me, but what about Manuel?

Then suddenly Donkey remembered: 'Wait!' he shouted. 'On the journey, Mary and Joseph didn't say Manuel. They said **EMMANUEL!** It means God is with us!'

Slide 25 I couldn't believe it! But that's what Angels had told Mary and Joseph about the baby. They said, 'The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God.' So the baby wasn't just an ordinary boy, he was God too!

Slide 26 Wow! I finally understood! My new **NOISY** neighbour really was something special: **KING, RESCUER** and **EMMANUEL**, God is with us!

Suggested Bible reading: Isaiah 9.6-7

Suggested carol: Once in Royal David's City



As I gazed at him lying there in a feeding trough, the only mystery left to solve was to find out his real name.

At that moment Mary, his mum, spotted me. She turned to Joseph and said, 'Look Joseph! Our little Jesus has got another visitor!'

Slide 27 JESUS! So that was his name.

And that's the greatest mystery I've ever solved. I'm the mouse who shared a room with Jesus and it's a story I'll never get tired of telling! Everybody needs to know about Jesus.

Slide 28 He is God who came into the world as a human so that we could truly get to know him.

He came to save us from the consequences of our wrongdoing so we could be right with God.

He loves us so much he was willing to pay our penalty, dying on the cross.

And that's not all! He didn't stay dead but he is alive again!

Jesus is the ultimate King with power and authority over evil and death.

And he offers us life to the full with him.

He really is the greatest one who ever lived.

Suggested Bible reading: Colossians 1.15-21

Suggested carol: Joy to the World



At Bible Society we believe the Bible can be a catalyst for change for good around the world. Working across Africa, China and the Middle East—in places where Christianity is growing fastest—we're translating, distributing and helping people to relate to and make sense of the Bible. And we're advocating for its place in society so that its wisdom, inspiration and relevance are not lost.

Here at home, where the Bible is readily available but rarely read, we're introducing a new generation to the life changing stories it contains and helping people engage with it better so that the Bible will continue to shape our communities.

We were founded over 200 years ago by a passionate group of people who believed God's word should be shared across the world, and we've been sustained by the commitment of thousands of supporters—people like you—who've joined our mission to bring the Bible to life.

Everything we do is driven by one conviction: that when people engage with the Bible lives can change, for good. So if the Bible has made a difference to your life, please join with us through prayer and support to bring the Bible to life around the world.

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Find more resources to help you share the big story this Christmas at

biblesociety.org.uk/christmas

