

NATIVITY TREASURE HUNT RESOURCE PACK



What is it?

An invitation for households to visit scenes taken from the Nativity story that are displayed in windows, front gardens, the school yard, businesses, the library or shop windows in their village, market town or local area. The households will be offered

- ✓ a downloadable map with the scenes marked on,
- ✓ a quiz sheet to fill in, and at the end of the trail,
- ✓ a QR code to link them to some resources for activities at home & answers to the quiz.

Why not around our church?

It is an opportunity to make the Nativity known on the streets rather than expect people to leave their usual places of work and living to visit the church. During the Covid restrictions, assuming there could be a local lockdown, it is still possible for households to experience the story as they explore the trail in their bubbles. It is not possible to have large numbers of people inside churches.

What is the purpose?

To put the Nativity story on display in our community, to make it accessible and memorable to as many as we can and to create a joyful, hopeful, creative and reflective experience that overflows into people's homes.

Who makes the scenes?

The church family are key in this, with different households volunteering to make a scene. But it is made richer if a wider variety of people can be involved, as this gives them opportunity to explore the story and share it with others.

What should the scenes look like?

It is up to each 'host' of the scene – this is the glory of the project. The church will provide the story, with suggestions of which scenes might be covered, even with some ideas for what might be created, but is up to each host to use their imagination and what is available to them to form a scene to display. The hope is that as they consider the piece of scripture they are representing, they will 'own' that part of the story and their display will reflect this. It could be a poster, a mini scene made out of garden furniture or scarecrows, a lit up window with cut out figures, a sign post, lights, models made out of Duplo or card, knitted sheep or a telescope looking up into space...

When should we do this?

Keep it simple and manageable. So perhaps it is best to aim for a weekend in December, rather than overload people by keeping up displays for lengthy periods. But start planning and communicating the intention from as early as possible so that people can get ready and to ensure the community has a clear expectation of what will be happening.

What resources are in this pack?

- Planning your Event with Church and Community
- The Nativity story for the hosts to work from
- Photo ideas of some of the different scenes
- Risk Assessment
- The Nativity Treasure Hunt Quiz (adapt to your setting)
- QR code to website & activities at end of Treasure Hunt
- Ideas for further activities to be included in the QR link
 - Answers for the quiz
 - The Nativity Prayer Star
 - The Nativity Prayer Crown
 - Suggested Bob Hartman resources (for All Age)
 - First Christmas Story film (For younger families)

Don't forget you need to make your own map

Draw a map marking the Nativity scene locations with a number, with a suggested beginning and end of the route. If the scenes are not in the right order, make it part of the quiz to put them in order.

Planning your Event with church and community

Start early!

Give both the church and the community a clear idea of what you are doing. **Explain** this is a way of telling the story so that everyone can enjoy it and as a way for everyone to be involved. Explain that this has come out of thinking of fresh ways of doing things during the Covid Pandemic, and a way that the whole community can safely experience the Christmas story.

Invite shop keepers, local businesses, the library, the school to be involved as they will own their piece of the story and create their take on it.

Work out who is doing what, **give** them the script and photo ideas to work with. The photos are just a starting point to inspire their own imaginations and creativity.

Task someone to **draw** a map, and to **adapt** the quiz to fit your Treasure Hunt scenes.

Look at what you want to include as the '**treasure**' contained in the QR code – you can use the material here, link to the diocese site or, or create your own.

Publicize the dates of the treasure hunt in as many ways as possible – Through school is a great way – especially good if they are hosting a scene – they are already invested!

Remind church and community to download the quiz and the map, though many may choose to enjoy walking around the streets without. This means it is worth having some words printed out on the windows and displays to explain each scene.

Complete a risk assessment and **Remind** people to be Covid-safe. For instance, on the quiz sheet you could write something like 'Please keep to the social distancing regulations to keep everyone safe.'

Take photos, show it on FB or in the local magazine, and ensure you find a way to review how it went, celebrating people's efforts (If the odd reindeer appears – don't worry too much!)

Invite people to get in touch, to your other Christmas events/services, to another event in January...

Planning the scenes - The First Christmas Script

Purpose

An easy to read script to be given to those who are 'hosting' the scenes so that they can plan their scene

How many scenes do you need to have?

The minimum =

- Mary & Angel Gabriel
- Bethlehem sign
- The manger
- The Shepherds
- The Wise men
- A Final Nativity Scene & QR code scanning point

The maximum =

- As many as you like!

(Suggested scenes are written in purple italics, but it's up to you to create your own ideas.)

Can we display the script?

- Each scene could have the part of the story that they are representing printed out on a laminated sign by it so the treasure hunters know what it is displaying
- Or just a title – the story can always be downloaded from the QR code at the end

The First Christmas

An imaginative retelling of the Nativity story based around the Bible accounts from the Gospels of Matthew 1 & 2, Luke 1 & 2

The beginning

From the beginning the men of old had foreseen the day when God Himself would come and make His home with us. The prophets declared it, and all of Israel awaited His arrival and the centuries passed.... Surely the day would come.

And then the heavenly orders were given, the plan was set into motion as God's messengers carried the heavenly design.

(Possible scene: A big clock and the Bible/scrolls open 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, He shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace' Isaiah 9:6)

Angel Gabriel and Mary

It was in the 6th month, in a plain, little Israeli town of white-washed houses surrounded by fields, Nazareth of Galilee, where a young woman, soon to be married to Joseph, was getting on with her daily life. Her name was Mary.

(Possible scene: A teenager's bedroom? Or Mary sweeping a floor?)

God's messenger approached Mary's home, drew back the heavenly curtain to announce the heavenly orders. Angel Gabriel greeted Mary

"Mary it is good to see you! You have made God smile. You have won the highest of honours! The Lord God is with you."

Mary was afraid – what was this all about?

So the Angel Gabriel continued:

"Don't be frightened Mary – You are God's pride and joy and He delights in you. You are going to have a baby son. He is the One that everyone is waiting for – God's King, the Son of God."

Mary asked,

"How will this be, since I am not married yet?"

Angel Gabriel replied,

"The Holy Spirit will come over you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. The Lord God is His Father."

Mary trusted God and agreed to God's plan,

"I am the Lord's servant and I shall be glad to do whatever God wants."

(Possible scene: Angel and Mary: could be a bright light with silhouette of a woman)

Joseph and the Angel

Joseph was a good man, a carpenter. When he heard the news about Mary having a baby, he didn't think they could get married anymore. He did not want to shame her, but quietly bring an end to their future plans to be married. But God had other plans and wanted Joseph to be the baby's step dad. That night, when Joseph was sleeping, an angel appeared in Joseph's dream and said:

"Joseph, Joseph, do not be afraid. Take Mary as your wife. She is going to have God's very own Son. Call the baby, 'Jesus' – He is the One everyone has been waiting for – He is the very One who will rescue everyone"

Joseph awoke with new hope, a changed heart and new resolve. He married Mary, as the angel had told him to, and took care of her.

(Possible scene: Garage/Shed – Joseph's workshop, camp bed stuffed with newspaper and angel/Light hovering over?)

Journey to Bethlehem

Nearly 9 months later, during the time when Caesar Augustus ruled, Joseph had to travel to his home town to be counted with all the other people by the Romans in a census. It meant leaving his home town Nazareth with Mary and travelling all the way to Bethlehem.

(Possible scene: Sign post to Bethlehem '30 miles to Bethlehem')

It was a long journey through hills, woods and trails – about 30 miles. Perhaps they travelled by donkey?

(Possible scene: Silhouette of donkey, Mary, Joseph and/

Sign post: 'Welcome to Bethlehem – 'The House of Bread' This would be great in a bakery window as Bethlehem means 'House of Bread')

Finding a place to stay in Bethlehem

When Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem, it was full of people who had arrived to be counted like Joseph. They started to look for a place to stay as the baby was soon to be born. Perhaps they knocked on many inn doors

"Have you got any room at the inn for my wife and I to stay?"

Over and over, the reply was:

"No room – there's no room at the inn!"

(Possible scenes: Posters on several front door or in windows: 'Have you got any room at the Inn?')

Not one spare room, no one spare bed, every inn was full. Until, someone offered the only place they had:

"Around the back..."

All that was left was the place kept for animals, the donkeys and the sheep – a stable. That very night, Mary's baby was born. Joseph named the baby 'Jesus' which means 'God saves'.

Mary tenderly wrapped him up in cloths, called 'swaddling bands'. Mary had no cot or Moses Basket to lay him down for his first sleep, so instead she laid him in the animals' feeding trough, the manger. There Jesus sleeps – 10 toes, 10 little fingers, warm olive skin, milky chin, breathing our air with us, making his home with us.

(Possible scene: Doll in manger with hay, gazebo for stable, a sign with 'Jesus' – 'God Saves' – 'God is with us')

The Shepherds and the Angels

That very birthday night, on the hillside surrounding the town of Bethlehem, the local shepherds kept watch over their sheep.

(Possible scene: Toy or model sheep on grass lawn)

The Shepherds drew their cloaks around them for another night out with their sheep. When all of a sudden, the air changed and something stood out in the sky:

An Angel of the Lord appeared before them and the glory of the Lord shone all around. Heaven's joy was exploding all around them. The Shepherds were terrified

(Possible scene: A big angel in a window with fairy lights all around, or a disco ball for lights)

The Angel announced to them:

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news – full of great joy for everyone. Today in the Royal city of Bethlehem, the Life-Saver has been born to you. The boy is God's promised Son. Go have a look for yourself. You will know it is Him as you will find the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly, the sky lit up with a whole cascade of angels, hundreds of angels singing with God's praises:

"Glory to God in the highest ~ This is all about peace to you, your families, your loved ones and neighbours! This is all about peace for this planet! This is all about God's favour, love and Him resting with you!"

(Possible scene: Music playing and lots of cut out angels in a window with fairy lights all around)

When the Angels left, the Shepherds agreed to go and find the baby:

“Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this baby that God has told us about.”

They found Mary and Joseph, and there was the little baby, lying in the cattle trough, in a stable.

Before they went back to the fields they told everyone about what had happened’

“Have you not heard? Have you not seen? The God child has arrived!”

The amazing news about the stable boy spread. And Mary? Well, she treasured these things up in her heart. The shepherds? They returned to their sheep on the hills, but as changed men – now praising God who had shown them the gift of His stable boy living among them.

(Possible scene: Big poster in window with ‘Have you not heard? Have you not seen? The God child has arrived?’ Or

Possible scene: A treasure box in the window with hearts all around)

The Wise Men, Stars and Gifts for a King

On another night, God nudged the brightest star and sent it floating across the night sky. Who would look up and see? This time, not locals in Bethlehem, but foreigners from the East noticed God’s signpost. They were wise men who studied their writings and discovered that this new star meant that God’s King had been born.

(Possible scene: Scrolls open explaining that God’s King would be announced by a new bright star, He would be the everlasting king – this would be great displayed in a library)

The wise men decided to go and find the new king:

“We need to find the new king, to bow down to Him and give Him our gifts.”

The wise men packed their bags and set off to find the King. It was a long journey, perhaps they went by camel. They travelled over hills following the star, through valleys following the star, through woods following the star, through fields and towns following the star, until they arrived in Bethlehem.

The bright light of the star filled them with joy, and they followed its spotlight until they found the exact place where Mary, Joseph and Jesus were staying.

(Possible scene: Silhouette picture in window of Bethlehem with lit star over it – could be made from Duplo, or camel and king silhouettes following star)

They came in and bowed down to the boy and gave Him their gifts:

“I offer you gold, fit for a king.”

“I offer you frankincense, a beautiful scent pleasing to God.”

“I offer you myrrh, a soothing ointment.”

(Possible scene: 3 big presents, labelled, Gold etc)

They went home, full of God in their hearts having met Jesus, God with us.

(Final scene: End of Treasure Hunt is focused around a Nativity Scene, with a clearly visible QR code, saying ‘Well done for following the Nativity Treasure Hunt, now collect your treasure: Answers to your quiz, the Nativity story and an activity to display in your window’)

Photo ideas for the different scenes

Angel Gabriel and Mary

Cut out figures in a window, or a brightly coloured big picture



Or A 3-D Model suspended from an upstairs window/tree (Card wings or hard board, (painted gold), polystyrene head from craft shop, head attached to wings, hung up high with wire, white cloth over Gabriel's head and draped to ground. Can be used for scene with Mary or over the fields of Bethlehem with the Shepherds - Fields are boxes covered with painted green sheets and toy sheep)



Or a 'Scarecrow angel'

Joseph

An open garage/shed that looks like a Carpenter's workshop, or a painted sheet of a workshop with a table out with tools and woodshavings. Perhaps Joseph could be represented as having a nap under a blanket on a camp bed (news paper stuffed down a sleeping bag) and the angel light shining upon him in his dream?



Or A big sign with 'His name will be 'Jesus' – 'God saves'

Sign Posts for Bethlehem

Simple sign post with '30 miles to Bethlehem'



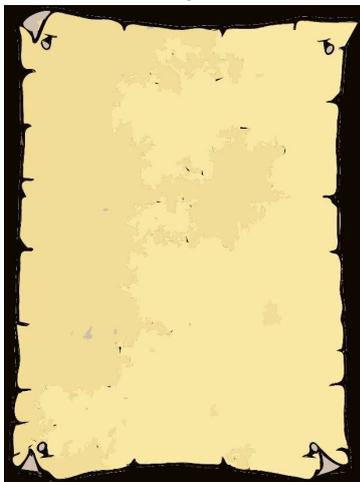
And a 'Welcome to Bethlehem' sign with 'Bethlehem – The House of Bread'

Bethlehem

A village scene made out of card board boxes



3 or 4 doors/windows with posters that say, 'Have you any room at the inn?'



Baby born in a stable

Turn a garden shed into the place Jesus was born, perhaps laid in a shopping trolley?



Or a silhouette in a window



Or a Duplo or Lego Nativity (Great for shop windows where they can be viewed up close)



Shepherds

A well-lit stain glass window



Or A window full of the heavenly host of angels (Could do an equivalent window for the wise men following the star to Bethlehem)



Or Knitted woolly sheep and woollen Shepherds and angels



Wise men, following the star and sharing their gifts

Star on a ladder with prompts from the story below on boards



Or a telescope looking up to the sky



Silhouettes of wise men with gifts (very easy to find templates on the web of wise men that can be used to get these easily recognisable figures)



Lego model scenes (again great in shop windows for viewing up close)



3 presents in a garden/one present in each of 3 gardens, labelled 'Gold – fit for a king', 'Frankincense – a beautiful aroma', 'Myrrh – a soothing ointment'



Final Nativity scene with QR code to link to the quiz answers, the Nativity film, templates for the treasure hunters to make to put in their windows (Great if this can be near the church or somewhere central as it tells the whole story in one great big picture!)

Nativity figures painted on planks of wood in bamboo stable/lit up gazebo



Or figures cut from wood and painted **Or** a message written in words



Or something more simple



Or Go buy an inflatable Nativity!



Risk Assessment

Although this activity is outside, and can be fairly risk free in terms of Covid transmission and general safety, we need to ensure we have done what we can do to remind people to keep safe. Here is a rough template to help you think about ensuring people are kept safe:

Risk Assessment for Nativity Treasure Hunt Date:

Hazard	Risk	Measures	Action? By whom?
People congregate around displays and mingle beyond their group of 6	Corona Virus could be transmitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The treasure hunt is outside On Quiz sheets and maps, remind treasure hunters to wear a mask, keep 2 metres apart, give space to other groups, don't touch the displays. Notices to be displayed at each scene 'Remember to wear a mask, keep a 2 metre distance, don't touch the display' Reminders to be present in all publicity literature, on social media 	
Infection passed through quiz sheet, map and quiz answers sheet	Corona Virus could be transmitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quiz sheet, map and quiz sheet will be downloadable resources to be printed from home 	
Hidden away or unlit location for scenes	People could be vulnerable to getting lost, feel vulnerable or fall where there is not good lighting if walking the trail in the evening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check all the locations of the scenes are on well-lit paths and easy to find, familiar places Ensure the guiding map is accurate, with all the locations clearly marked Parents are encouraged to accompany their children in publicity material 	
Uneven ground	Tripping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check the trail ahead of time, and mark uneven pavement with tape. If people walk at night, remind them to bring torches and be careful of their step 	

The Nativity Treasure Hunt Quiz

Welcome to our Nativity Treasure Hunt. The purpose of this treasure trail is to have fun and to find all the scenes in the first Christmas story, and put them in order. Make sure you have your map, and tick off all the places you visit. At the end you will find some treasure that you can look at back in your home, and make your own window display. Make sure you have your map and off you go, ... Enjoy!



As you pass each scene, write the location on your quiz sheet –These are the scenes (not necessarily in the order that you walk around!)

- 1) From the beginning God promised to send His Son
- 2) The Angel Gabriel visited Mary with good news
- 3) Joseph had a dream that the baby would be called Jesus
- 4) Mary and Joseph travelled to Bethlehem
- 5) There was no room at the Inn
- 6) Mary gave birth to baby Jesus and laid him in a manger
- 7) The shepherds were visited by angels
- 8) The wise men saw a star that was a sign
- 9) The wise men followed the star to Bethlehem
- 10) Jesus was given presents
- 11) The final scene
- 12) Get the QR code for your treasure

Did you notice?

Who told Mary the good news about baby Jesus?

How far was it to Bethlehem from Nazareth?

Why wasn't Jesus born in a comfy home?

How many angels visited the shepherds?

How did the wise men find Jesus?

What presents did they bring?



Which was your favourite scene? Why?

Can you tell the story to someone after this Treasure Hunt?

QR Code to Diocesan Resources

This is the code:



Scan it and see what it contains:

- Answers for the quiz
- The Nativity Prayer Star
- The Nativity Prayer Crown
- Suggested Bob Hartman resources (for All Age)
- First Christmas Story film (For younger families)

It may be all you want to share, or you may want to use some of it, or add more to it.

If you are happy to just use the diocesan material, use this QR code

If you want to create more material, or link it to your website for instance, you will need to create your own QR code

Create your own QR Code



To create your free code, go to:

<https://www.the-qr-code-generator.com/>

enter the URL for your website, save it and then add to your publicity.

Please note if you use the words 'QR Code' in your publicity, you need to add these words:

QR Code is registered trademark of DENSO WAVE INCORPORATED.

We suggest you just publish the code without the words

The Treasure - Resources for your web page

Further Activities

Well done for exploring the Nativity Story. We hope you managed to find all the scenes on your Nativity adventure and put the story into order.

Answers to The Nativity Treasure Hunt Quiz

Who told Mary the good news about baby Jesus? *Angel Gabriel*

How far was it to Bethlehem from Nazareth? *30 miles by foot*

Why wasn't Jesus born in a comfy home? *There was no room at the inn*

How many angels visited the shepherds? *Angel Gabriel – then a sky full!*

How did the wise men find Jesus? *They followed a new bright star*

What presents did they bring? *Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh*

Which was your favourite scene? Why? *Tell someone now...*

Can you tell the story to someone after this Treasure Hunt? *Can you do it?*

Have a go and then watch our Nativity told with puppets

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/7hobb1apdr0edv4/Nativity.MOV?dl=0>

or watch Bob Hartman's Rhyming Nativity

<https://youtu.be/D06k9vulAVQ>



And finally: *Why not make your own Nativity window?*

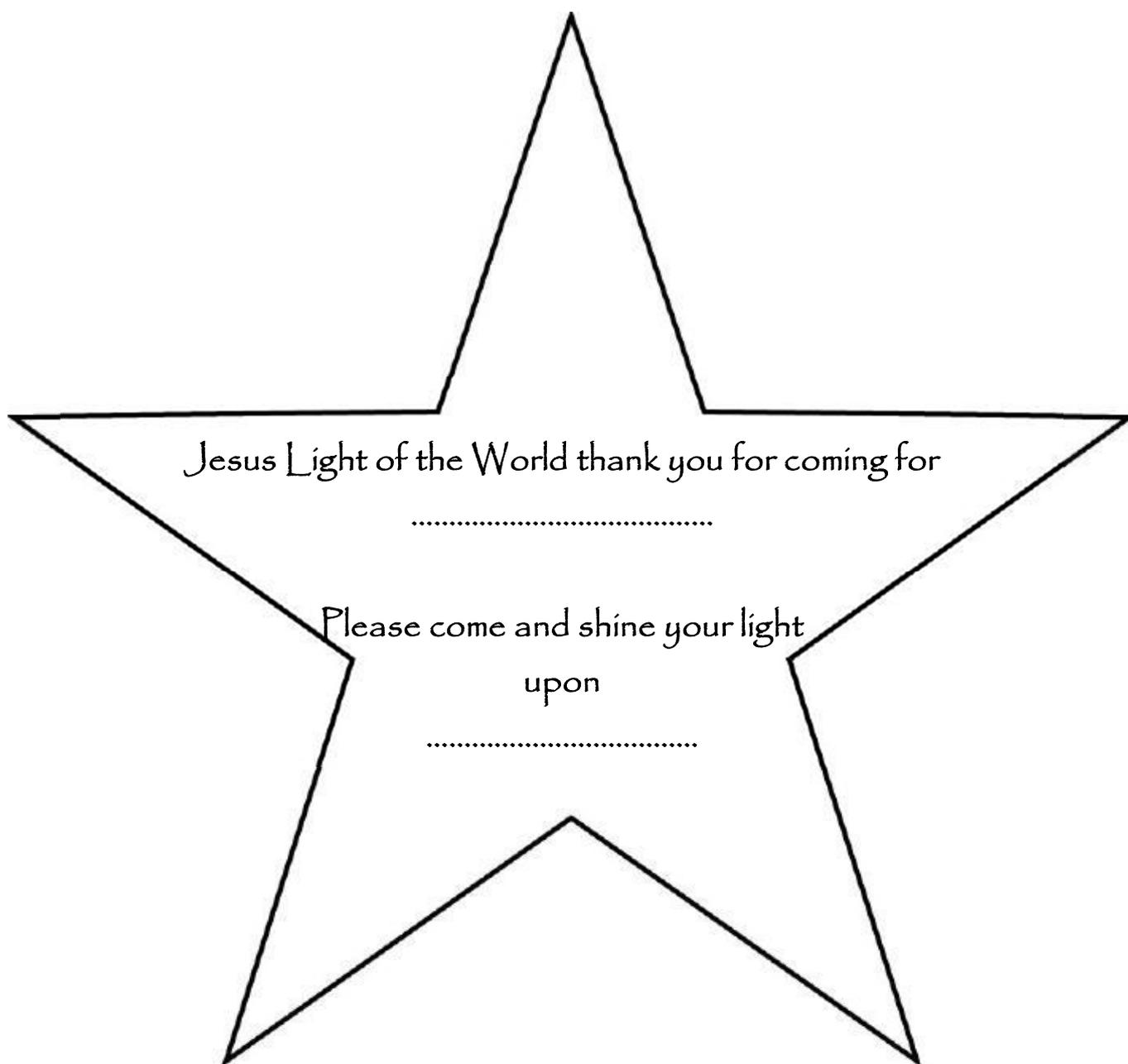
Here are 2 ideas:

A Crown to remind us that God's King Jesus has a greater crown than the Corona Virus (a little crown shaped virus)

A Star to remind us that God's light will always break through in darkness

The Prayer Star for your window

- 1) Use your star to say a **thank-you prayer and an asking prayer** this Christmas
- 2) Then colour in the other side in rainbow colours, cut out and stick it in your window as a reminder that God's light will always break through in the darkness.



The Crown for your window

The story of the Jesus' arrival is all about God's King arriving, one who will come and live with anyone and everyone, and bring His love and light and help. His crown is greater than any Corona Virus.

Why not write the name **JESUS – THE KING IS WITH US** across one side of the crown. On the other side colour in rainbow colours, stick it in the window to remind us He is the **BRIGHTER** than any darkness.

