

Mary Visits Elizabeth

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
Luke 1:39-58

Lectionary Sunday/
Church Season
Advent 4

Lesson Focus
**We celebrate God's
wonderful gift of Jesus.**



Gather (10 minutes)

Play Time

Kids interact with elements of the story of Mary and Elizabeth.

Spark Resources

Coloring Pages



Supplies

Dolls, cardboard tubes, long piece of fabric, colored paper, mural paper, markers or crayons, glue sticks, kid-safe scissors, a variety of blue art supplies such as paper, markers, crayons, ribbon, sequins

Circle Time

Kids review Play Time and the idea of sharing good news to prepare for the story.

Leaflet

None

Prayer Time

Kids pray an echo prayer with actions.

None

None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

Mary Visits Elizabeth Storytelling

Kids hear the story of Mary visiting Elizabeth and respond to the joyful parts.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

Long piece of fabric

Help Mary Get to Elizabeth!

Kids add stickers and complete a maze on the leaflet to help them remember Mary's journey to see Elizabeth.

Leaflets, Lesson Stickers

Pencils

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
How Do You Share Good News? Kids color pictures of ways they might share good news with others, as Mary did.	Leaflets	Crayons or markers
Joyful Pictures Kids create pictures of joyful events from wrapping paper.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Christmas wrapping paper scraps, kid-safe scissors, glue sticks
Advent Words! Kids play a game in which they move joyfully in response to words describing Advent.	None	None

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Good-bye Time Kids review the lesson and sing a piggyback song as they prepare to leave.	Leaflets, Family Pages 	None
Prayer Time Kids pray an echo prayer and cheer to close.	None	None



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: a Coloring Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

Gather (10 minutes)

Play Time

Partially decorate a cardboard tube as a sample. Set out the materials. As kids arrive, encourage them to nurture the dolls as they play, decorate tubes to make fancy horns to announce good news, or use mural paper to create and walk down a path. **Another thing you may choose to do is use some of the blue art supplies to create blue pictures of something joyful. What do you have to be joyful about at this time of year?** Affirm all responses, especially those related to the good news about the coming of Jesus. Provide copies of this lesson's Coloring Page for kids to color. Be sure to help them put their names on their papers.

When everyone has had time to play, ask them to put away the supplies and join you in a circle around a table or on the floor. As kids are cleaning up and settling in the circle, invite them to repeat this rhyme with you.

**Lots to tell and far to go!
Good news travels fast, you know!**

Circle Time

Greet kids enthusiastically. **Hi! I am really glad we are all here together! We have lots of fun things to do today! As we get started, let's sing a song.** Sing this song to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

**Here we are today,
God's children everyone!
We'll learn and play
and sing and laugh.
In God's name we'll have fun!**

Sing it several times, encouraging kids to sing along.

Help kids begin to connect with the lesson focus. **Do you remember the words of the rhyme we said while you were putting things away?** Allow kids time to answer. **We said: "Lots to tell and far to go! Good news travels fast, you know!" Have you ever had good news you wanted to share with someone?** Encourage kids to share their experiences. **When we began this morning, you may have played with dolls, traveled a path, or made horns to celebrate good news! Today we are going to learn about some very good news someone had about a baby, news that she wanted to share with someone who lived far away. You also might have made blue, joyful pictures. Sometimes, people use the word *blue* to mean *sad*, but not at church. At church, blue is the color of hope and joy! Show kids the leaflet. What color do you see on this border? (*Blue!*) What symbol do you see? That symbol tells us that we are in the season of Advent, a season of hope and joy!**

Spark Resources

Coloring Pages



Supplies

Dolls
Cardboard tubes
Long piece of fabric
Colored paper
Mural paper
Markers or crayons
Glue sticks
Kid-safe scissors
A variety of blue art supplies
such as paper, markers,
crayons, ribbon, sequins

Spark Resources

Leaflet

Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Let's pray together! Invite kids to copy your actions.

Dear God, (fold hands)

Thanks for bringing us together today! (open arms wide)

Thanks for giving us good news to share! (jump up and down)

We love you! (fold arms across chest)

Amen. (fold hands)

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

Mary Visits Elizabeth Storytelling

Today's story is about someone with really good news to share. She had to travel a long way to share the news. Let's pretend we are traveling to share something exciting! Spread the fabric on the floor, as if it were a road. **Let's travel down this road.** Invite kids to walk with you. **Whew! I'm tired! Let's have some water!** Pretend to drink. **Better? Back to the road! How do you think you would move if you had good news to tell?** Encourage kids to show how they would move. **OK. We are at the end of the road. Now it's time to share that good news! Are you ready? Sit down, and we'll hear all about it.** Invite kids to sit.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

Long piece of fabric

Take out your Spark Story Bibles and pass them out to the kids. Help everyone find page 202 to follow along with you. **This story comes from the Gospel of Luke in the Bible. The Gospel of Luke is in the New Testament.** Invite kids to look at the picture on the first page of the story. **Does anyone in this picture look happy? How can you tell? This story is about sharing good news. Every time you hear something happy or exciting, please shout, "WOO HOO!" and wave your arms. Are you ready?**

Read the story as it is printed in the Spark Story Bible. At the following points in the story, have kids shout, "WOO HOO!" and wave their arms.

- ... "Are you surprised to see me?"
- ... the baby inside Elizabeth wiggle and squirm for joy!
- God has blessed the baby you will have!
- "... you have been blessed."
- ... that her words sounded like a beautiful song.
- Elizabeth's family and friends were very happy for her!
- God was so good to Elizabeth.

Review the story by having kids answer these questions: **Who had good news?** (*Mary and Elizabeth*) **What was the good news?** (*They were both going to have babies!*) **Who traveled to share the good news?** (*Mary*) **What happened when the good news was shared?** (*Mary and Elizabeth were happy, sang a song, and celebrated together.*)

Help Mary Get to Elizabeth!

Gather the group in a work area with the leaflets, stickers, and pencils. Look at the front page together. **Who are these people?** (*Mary and Elizabeth*) **Mary needs to travel to Elizabeth to share her good news, and we are going to help! What was Mary's good news?** (*She was going to have Baby Jesus.*) **Along the way, Mary will need to stop a few times. You can add stickers to give her what she needs. Let's start down the path with our pencils. Whew, it's hot! Mary is thirsty! Do we have a sticker that could help her?** Assist kids with placing the water sticker, if needed. **Great! Mary's ready to travel again. Let's continue down the path. Wow, it's a long way! Mary is tired! Is there a sticker that would give Mary a place to sit?** Assist kids with placing the rock sticker, if needed. **Mary's ready to travel again. Pause for a moment. But she's getting hungry. Let's give her a snack.** Allow kids time to place the apple sticker, assisting them when necessary. **Almost there! Let's help Mary by tracing the rest of her path.** Allow time for kids to finish the maze. **Hooray! Mary has arrived at Elizabeth's house!**

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Pencils

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

How Do You Share Good News?

Encourage kids to think about good news they like to share. **What kinds of news do you like to share? How do you share that news? With whom do you like to share it? What good news about God have you told someone about?**

Have kids look at the back of their leaflets and the images of ways to share good news. Encourage kids to circle the images that show ways they share good news. **What kinds of good news could you share using a telephone, a letter, a computer, a whisper, or a happy shout?** Accept all responses. **If Mary had had the things in the pictures, what messages do you think she would have sent?**

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Crayons or markers

Joyful Pictures

What kinds of news makes you happy or joyful? Give kids time to answer. **What happy news did Mary deliver to Elizabeth?** (*She was going to have a baby—Jesus!*) Direct kids' attention to the empty frame activity on the page and show them the wrapping paper scraps. **When do you usually see wrapping paper?** (*Christmas, birthdays*) **Are those joyful or sad times?** (*Joyful!*) **Go ahead and use these wrapping paper scraps to make pictures of something joyful inside the frame on the leaflet. Then add an Advent sticker.** Invite kids to use as many of the supplies as they wish. Allow time for them to share their completed work with the group.

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Christmas wrapping paper
scraps
Kid-safe scissors
Glue sticks

Advent Words!

Move to an area in which kids can move freely. Briefly discuss the season of Advent. **What is the name of the church season we are celebrating now?** (*Advent*) **During Advent, we are waiting for something. What are we waiting for?** (*the celebration of the birth of Jesus*) **It is hard to wait, isn't it? It is hard to wait, but as we wait, we wait in some special ways. While we wait, we are joyful, because we know that the celebration of Jesus' birth is coming, and that makes us happy. We wait with amazement, because God is amazing! We wait with hope, because Jesus brought hope to the world. And we wait with love, because Jesus loves us!**

Let's play a game! Form a circle. **OK, everyone squat like this.** Demonstrate squatting. **I am going to say, "Wait . . . wait . . . wait," and then, every once in a while, I will say a different Advent word, such as love, hope, joy, or amazement. When I say one of those words, jump up and wiggle around and cheer. Why? Because Advent is a happy time!** Play until kids lose interest or you run out of time.

Supplies

None

Spark Resources

None

Send (5 minutes)

Good-bye Time

Gather together in a circle. **We had a lot of fun today hearing about sharing good news! We learned about Mary's exciting news that she was going to have a baby—Jesus! We heard about her trip to see Elizabeth to share the great news. When you take your leaflet home, talk with your family about the Faith on the Go! idea for sharing that good news.** Be sure to send leaflets home with kids, and give each of them a Family Page to take home. **As we get ready to leave, let's sing a song.** Sing this song to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

**Now it's time to go,
God's children everyone!
We learned and played
and sang and laughed.
In God's name we had fun!**

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Family Pages



Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Let's close with a prayer. Repeat after me, and whenever we tell God about something joyful, wave your arms and say, "WOO HOO, God!" Pray this prayer.

**Dear God,
Thank you for joy. WOO HOO, God!
We love playing. WOO HOO, God!
We have fun hearing stories. WOO HOO, God!
We are so happy that Jesus is coming. WOO HOO, God!
Thanks, God!
Amen.**

Spark Resources

None

Supplies
None

