

# God chose to live as **One of Us**

## **Christmas Resources for Children and Families 2012**

### ***Interactive messages:***

Below you will find interactive messages that can be used with children and families during your service, family service or other events throughout the Advent season.

### ***Advent 1: Jesus knows me***

For this message you will need:

- Some tricky topics that people can talk about—you might like to have these printed out on some cards or paper for the volunteers to choose from. (Some suggestions might be: varieties of tree bark; how to make mud; the sonnets of William Shakespeare; the big-band music of Glen Miller; how to make ice-blocks; the life of the earthworm, etc.
- Three or four volunteers covering a variety of ages.

Get each of your volunteers to choose a topic that they are going to talk about for one minute without stopping. Get them to choose the topic at the beginning of their time so that they don't have time to prepare. *(This will hopefully be a topic that they may be able to say something about but not talk for the whole minute.)*

Get you volunteers to choose a topic this time that they know plenty about—you might even say you are an expert on this topic. Get each of the volunteers to share for one minute, without stopping, on their chosen topic of expertise.

- How did you feel when you had to talk about the topic that you didn't know a lot about? *(Some of your volunteers may have been able to say some things about this topic but probably not in a lot of detail or with confidence.)*
- How did you feel when you had to talk about the topic that you choose, knew plenty about and had experienced?

'Imagine if you loved a particular sport e.g. basketball, football, netball etc. and you had a question about it. Who would you go and talk to about this—a friend who doesn't play sport or even like watching it or a friend that plays the particular sport that you love and loves playing, watching and reading about it?

'It is certainly going to be more enjoyable to talk to someone about a topic that they know about and love especially if you want to find out certain information about that topic. If you had a question, only someone who knew about this topic would really care and be able to help you in this area.

'At Christmas time we remember that Jesus was born, He became a human just like us and lived life among other people. He had lots of experiences just like other people: he got thirsty and hungry and tired; he had family and friends; there were people who loved Him and those that didn't, etc. When we are thinking about our daily lives, struggles and joys, Jesus is the perfect one to talk to. He understands what it is like to be human. Jesus knows me; Jesus knows you, and understands our ups and downs. It is encouraging to know that, when talking to Jesus, He understands us, he know us and what it is to live like us—it's just like talking to someone who is an expert on a particular topic.'

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### ***Games and activities:***

Below is a collection of games and activities that link to the topics that flow through the Advent season. You might like to use some of these in your Kids Church/Kids Club or perhaps you could use some after one of your services to engage children and their families. You may even like to use some of these while you are doing a special event in a park or at your church hall at some point during the Advent period. Each game or activity will have an outline and a link that helps connect the children and families to the key message.

The games and activities are listed in the order of the above advent themes but they can be used all together or you can pick and choose—they all link together into the overall theme of the Advent series.

### ***Jesus knows me: Advent 1***

For this activity you will need:

- Some large sheets of paper (A3 would be good);
- Some bright-coloured circles;
- Textas, pens, pencils or crayons for decorating;
- Large black marker.

You will need to get the leaders/adults to write the child's name in bubble letters using the large black marker. While they are doing that, the children can be drawing faces on the coloured circles of the people they are connected with at home, church, school etc. While the children are drawing these faces it would be good to talk to them about the people they represent.

→ Who are you drawing?

→ How do you know that person?

→ What sorts of things does that person know about you?

Encourage the children to add the faces to the inside of the bubble letters of their name, or you might like to fill the space around the name rather than the middle of the letters. Make sure that the children include one circle that is blank on their name sheet.

Link: 'I want you to have a look at the picture you have created with your name today. There are lots of people you have included that you know and who know lots of stuff about you and who you are. You have one blank face on your page—I wonder who you think might fill up that space (*give the children an opportunity to offer some guesses/feedback*). I think that there is someone who knows each of us in an amazing way, yep, that is Jesus. Not just because He is amazing and knows everything, but because at Christmas time He came to earth as a baby and lived life here with other people. He knows you because He knows what it is like to live as a human in everyday life.'

### ***Human Snake: Advent 1***

For this game you will need:

- Some space for the children/families to run around

You will need to choose two people to be 'it'. All the other people playing the game need to be at one end of the allotted space. When you say 'go', all the people need to run across the allotted space from one end to the other without being tagged. If one of the people who are 'it' tags someone else they need to join together by holding hands and becoming a snake. Once the people who are 'it' have someone connected to them, the snake needs to stand still, with only those on either end being able to move (still connected) and tag those that are running from one end to the other.

You might like to play this game a few times, changing the people who are 'it' to begin with.

**Link:** Today we have been playing a game of human snake where as you get tagged you need to become connected to the snake. It was important for this game to be connected and work together helping to achieve the goal of tagging everyone.

'I wonder how many people you are connected to—friends, family and others: can you list some? *(Give opportunity for people to respond to this.)* I am sure that there are people in your family, extended family, school, church and other areas that you are connected with; people that you know and people that know things about you. I think there is someone who knows each of us in an amazing way, yep, that is Jesus. Not just because He is amazing and knows everything but because at Christmas time, He came to earth as a baby and lived life here with other people. He knows you because He knows what it is like to live as a human in everyday life.

### ***What do you know about me?: Advent 1***

For this activity you will need to divide the group into pairs. Each person within the pair has one minute to talk about all the things that they love to do and things that explain something about who you are. When the one minute is up, swap so that the other person has the same opportunity to share.

'I wonder how many of the things that were talked about, you already knew.' *(Get each person to list three things that they found out about the other person that they might not have known.)*

**Link:** Today we have been sharing about ourselves with our partner. To really understand and know someone else, we need to listen to them as they share parts of their story with us. It is really important to listen to someone if you want to understand who they are. Jesus is always ready to listen to our story and is someone who truly understands who we are, not just because He is amazing and knows everything but because at Christmas time, He came to earth as a baby and lived life here with other people. He knows you because He knows what it is like to live as a human in everyday life.