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| **Strands** | The Bible and Christian Belief; Story of the Church | | | |
| **Stage of Development** | Primary (Years 3-6) | **Created** May 2021 | | **Review** 2025 |
| **Aim** | This unit encourages students to explore preparing for Advent by looking at the different names of Jesus. Students consider the different names Jesus is called in the New and Old Testaments and how these names help us understand who Jesus is. The inspiration for this unit came from the ‘Names of Jesus Advent Calendar’ produced by Sweet Honeycomb. | | | |
| **Content Descriptions** | **Knowledge and Understanding**   * The different names Jesus is called in the Bible and the reasons why Jesus is called these names. * An understanding of what Advent is and why it is important to Christians. | | **Religious Studies Skills**   * Concept cracking. * Prayer. | |
| **Resources** | Names of Jesus Advent Calendar <https://sweethoneycomb.com.au/> | | This would be great for a classroom display. Well designed. It has one card to peg onto some string each day of Advent. You could do this as a routine each day with your students during this unit even if the days do not align exactly with Advent. Alternatively, you could purchase an advent calendar and open it each day with the students during this unit. | | |
| The Song of the Stars-a Christmas Story by Sally Lloyd-Jones <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFbm0wS3rlg> | | This is a beautiful retelling of the Christmas story that uses many of the names of Jesus we will be looking at in this unit. You could easily read it more than once to your class. As an extension you could ask students to write their own picture book that uses the different names of Jesus to tell the story of Jesus’ birth or life. | | |
| Lumo videos of the Gospels  <https://www.bible.com/videos/3280/series> | | This website has videos for all the Gospel passages and many more. These videos could be used as an alternative to reading the Bible or looking it up online. | | |

| **Lesson** | | **Key Questions** | **Lesson Activity Ideas** | | | **Resources** |
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| **1** | Immanuel | What does Immanuel mean? | 5min  20min  5min  5min  10min | Activity: Ask the students if they know what their name means. Look up the meaning of some of the students’ names on the internet or share the meaning of your name. Explain that in Jesus’ time the meaning of a person’s name had great significance. In this unit we are going to look at the different names Jesus was called.  Activity: bring some scrap paper to class. Give the students 5 minutes to see who can build the tallest tower. Knock the towers down and organise the class into pairs. Ask them to complete the same activity again. Discuss the difference between doing something by yourself and completing a task with a partner.  Explain that Immanuel means ‘God with us’. This means Jesus is God with us. Jesus was born to Mary (a human) and become a human just like us.  Activity: List some of the activities the students do every day. You could develop a list of things the students like doing and do not like doing. Explain that Jesus is with them in all aspects of their day. The good bits and the bad bits.  Watch or Read: The nativity story. (Jesus Storybook Bible ‘He’s Here’. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2y2FJqsv_8>) and link to the ‘God with us’ (God became a human like us). Discuss why this truth is significant for Christians. “In the Old Testament, the Israelites wanted God to come and be with them. They wanted him to come and rescue them from their enemies. They wanted God to come and be with them as a fierce warrior. They wanted his presence. They wanted to ‘see his face’. In Isaiah 35:4, the prophet said: Say to those with fearful hearts, “Be strong, do not fear; your God will come... he will come to save you.” (Day 8 Advent Calendar Reflections <https://sweethoneycomb.com.au/>) | | Name meanings, maybe a baby name book  Scape paper or blocks  Children’s bible or [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2y2FJqsv_8) of the Jesus Storybook Bible nativity story |
| 2 | I Am | What does Jesus mean when he says, ‘I Am’? | 10min  5min  10min  20min | Activity: Play a game of ‘who am I?’ Teacher pretends they are someone known to most of the class. Then students can ask yes/no questions about this person, until they discover who they are. They get three chances to ask ‘Are you…X?’ until the teacher wins. Suggested figures: the school principal, Spiderman, their class teacher, one of the students in the class. Explain that sometimes it can be hard to figure out who someone really is. Today we learn about who Jesus is. God and Jesus both used the phrase ‘I am’ to describe themselves. When Jesus uses this phrase, it is thought he is claiming to be God, the source of all existence, the one on whom the whole world depends.  Read: The story of Jesus walking on water (Mark 6:45-51) from a Children’s Bible or a plain English translation.  Activity: Ask the students to imagine they are the disciples in the boat. Ask the students what they think the disciples were feeling and thinking. Ask the students to role play the types of conversations they think the disciples were having in the boat before they saw Jesus on the water and as Jesus approached the boat and after Jesus said to them ‘Don’t be afraid, I am God, who has control over the water’.  Printouts: Jesus Calms the Storm. Ask students to cut out the pictures and use them to re-tell the story in small groups or you could print the images of the key characters onto a A3 bit of paper and put a thought bubble above them for the students to move around the room and write in what they think each character was thinking or feeling.  Extend: Read Psalm 29 with your class and discuss what comfort this Psalm can bring us at Christmas time. | | Bible (CEV) or Children’s Bible  Printouts: Jesus Calms the Storm (consider printing on A3) |
| 3 | Redeemer | What is a redeemer?  Why is Jesus called our redeemer? | 5min  10min  15min  15min | Activity: During this lesson give students tokens as a reward for completing their work/sitting still/ helping others etc. Explain to the students how they can earn tokens during the lesson and what they can ‘redeem’ them for at the end of the lesson e.g. 5 min free time on the iPad, leaving first for recess etc. Discuss what the word redeem means (paying a price for something/exchanging one thing for another). Explain that in the Bible Jesus is called our Redeemer.  Activity: Ask the students to imagine they are slaves. Ask them to describe the life of a slave? What do slaves do all day? What do slaves eat? Where do slaves sleep? Ask them how someone can stop being a slave. Explain that either the slave must be rescued, or someone has to pay money for them to be freed. Explain that to redeem a slave means to pay money to set them free.  Read: Isaiah 41:13-14, Luke 1:68, Titus 2:14 and Ephesians 1:7 from a plain English translation. You could allocate students to small groups and ask each group to read one verse and to report back to the class what their verses mean in their own words. Ask the students what Christ has redeemed humanity from (sin, broken relationship with God) and to (holy life, restored relationship with God).  Activity: Ask the students to write an acrostic poem using the word ‘Redeemer’. These could be displayed in the classroom. | | Print: tokens to give out to students during the lesson  International Justice Mission has some good information on modern slavery on their website.  <https://ijm.org.au/>  Bibles, paper |
| **4** | Light of the World | What does it mean that Jesus is the light of the world?  Why is Jesus the light of the World? | 10min  10min  10min  15min | Activity: take the students to a dark place in the school. Ask the students how darkness makes them feel. Ask them to share the darkest place they have ever been. Return to the classroom.  Activity: sit the students in a circle with the candle in the middle. Ask some students to share what the candle makes them think of. Explain that in the Church a candle is used to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world. Compare the darkness in the previous activity to the light in this activity.  Watch: Lumo Project video on Chapter 1 of John (2min). Explain that this passage is talking about Jesus and what he is like. Ask the students to put up their hand when they hear the word ‘light’. You may want to watch the video a second time for any students that missed it. John 1:9 **‘**The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.’ Ask the students what they think it means that Jesus is the light of the world? Some questions that might help: what does darkness represent? (pain, evil, suffering, broken relationship with God); Why did the world need light? Why does Jesus bring light? (he fixes relationships particularly between God and humans, gives humans the right to be children of God).  Read or watch Song of the Stars a Christmas Story by Sally Lloyd-Jones  (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFbm0wS3rlg>) and discuss what it tells us about Jesus the light of the world. | | Dark place  Candle  Video: [Lumo project (John 1)](https://www.bible.com/videos/250-in-the-beginning-was-the-word-from-lumoproject-dot-com)  Song of the Stars by Sally Lloyd-Jones or watch it on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFbm0wS3rlg) |
| **5** | Son of God | What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of God? | 5min  5min  15min  15min  5min | Discussion: Ask the students to share one thing they have in common with another member of their family e.g. same colour eyes, loves AFL etc. Discuss what it means to be in the same family as someone else. Explain that Jesus is the SON of God i.e. in God’s family.  Brainstorm: list as many things as possible that can’t go together e.g. hot/cold, grumpy/happy. Explain that normally we would not put God and human together. Look around the classroom and point out that there are lots of humans but no humans + gods. Yet the Bible calls Jesus the ‘Son of God’ e.g. Luke 1:35. This lesson we will look at what this means.  Read: Ask the student to read Luke 1: 26-38 from a Plain English Bible or a Children’s Bible in small groups and report back to the class what the passage is about.  Ask the students some questions to try and understand the meaning of the text. Depending on the ability of your class this could include questions that encourage students to locate meaning within the text, with the reader and with the author.  e.g.  The first question is ‘what do we know about the author?’ This means asking questions about the story like:   1. Who is the author of the story? 2. What do we know about the author of the story? 3. When was the story written? 4. Who was the story first told to? /who was the story written for?   The second question is ‘what happens in the story?’ This means asking questions about the story like:   1. What characters are involved in the story? 2. What happens in the story? 3. Is there anything in the story I don’t understand?   The third question is ‘what does the story mean?’ This means asking questions about the story like:   1. What do I think someone who believed in God would think about this story? 2. What do I think my friends and family would think of this story? 3. What do I think of this story? 4. How could this story change the way someone thought about this topic?   “Mary is getting some very special news. You could tell it was special because there was an angel of the Lord delivering this message. The news - She was going to have a son… This is the king whom God promised would come through the line of King David a thousand years beforehand, whose kingdom would have no end. And though David was a great King, God’s promised King would be far greater. In fact, God refers to this promised king as His son.” (Day 3 Advent Calendar Reflections <https://sweethoneycomb.com.au/>).  Take the students outside to a hard surface. Break the students into small groups and ask each group to draw a big crown on the ground. Ask the students to decorate the crown with their chalk.  Brainstorm all the things that tell us what king Jesus/God’s son is like e.g. miracles, calms the storm, feeds 5000 people, raises the dead to life, has the power to forgive sin. | | Bibles |
| **6** | Alpha and omega | What does Alpha and Omega mean?  Why does Jesus call himself the Alpha and Omega? | 5min  10min  15min  5min  10min | Activity: Ask for student volunteers. See how many times a student can say the alphabet in 60 seconds. If they say ‘um’ they are disqualified. You could offer a reward to the winning student. Explain that at the start of Revelation Jesus calls himself the ‘Alpha and the Omega’. Which are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. You may wish to show them pictures of the two letters.  Activity: Ask the students to organise themselves into a line based on their birthday month (e.g. January to December). Explain that we each have a beginning. But Jesus claims to have existed since the beginning of time/eternally (teacher reference John 8:56-59). Ask the students to organise themselves into a line based on various other characteristics e.g. height. Each time they complete the activity emphasis the beginning and the end of the line. Ask students what it means to be at the beginning of the line or at the end of the line. Ask the students to name some things that identify the beginning e.g. beginning of a sentence, school year, day, baby. In the same way ask the students to identify things with an end e.g. movie, prayer, sentence etc. Explain that by calling himself the Alpha and the Omega Jesus is claiming he is both the beginning and the end and everything in between. This means everything comes from him and ends with him.  Activity: Write out a timetable for a day with the students or ask students to individually write out their timetable for the day. Explain that we see time as limited, but Jesus speaks about eternity (time goes on and on and on). Ask the students what the problem would be if our current world went on forever? e.g. pain, suffering, environmental damage, unequal distribution of wealth etc.  Read: Revelation 21:1-6 from a plain English Bible or a Children’s Bible and discuss what it means that Jesus is the Omega or the end. What hope does this passage provide for Christians about what the end will look like?  Worksheet: Print out the nativity storyboard onto A3 paper (one frame per page). Hand the pages out to student volunteers and ask the students to arrange the story in order (from beginning to end). Break the students into groups and get each group to decorate a page and display in the classroom. | | Stopwatch  Paper  Bibles  Worksheet: Nativity Storyboard  (Nativity story if required <https://www.bible.com/videos/3280/series>) |
| **7** | Prince of Peace | Why is Jesus called the Prince of Peace?  In what ways does Jesus bring peace? | 15min  5min  15min  10min | Activity: Sit students in a circle. The teacher says, ‘we’re going to a party and I’ll bring….something starting with the same letter as their name’. The student next to the teacher says. ‘We’re going to a party and Mrs S is bringing sausages and I’m bringing…something starting with the first letter of the students name’. The aim is to go around the circle. The last person needs to remember everyone’s name and what they are bringing to the party. You can break the students into smaller groups if the whole class is too hard. Ask the students what present they think our world most needs from God? e.g. rain, happiness, money, good health etc. Explain that when Jesus came into the World he brought the gift of PEACE! That’s why the Bible calls Jesus the ‘Prince of Peace’. Explain that the peace Jesus brings, fixes broken relationships. Relationships between people and God, people and other people and people and the creation. Christian’s long for true peace in heaven but we can also taste the goodness of the peace now. Christians believe the Holy Spirit helps them do things in a different way when trouble comes.  Brainstorm: Ask the students to think of all the places our world needs peace e.g. certain countries, school playground, at home with the student’s siblings etc.  Read: The story of the Prodigal Son from a Children’s Bible or a plain English Bible (Luke 15:11-32). Discuss how forgiveness brings peace in this story.  Brainstorm: ways the students could work to bring peace in your school community during Advent.  Extension: Listen: PEACE (Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZNDD2qxJYo>) | | Bible |
| **8** | Good Shepherd | What is a shepherd?  Why is Jesus the Good Shepherd? | 10min  15min  10min | Role play: Bring some dolls or soft animals into the classroom. Ask the students to act out what looking after the babies/animals would look like. Then ask the students to act out, what not looking after the babies/animals would look like.  Explain: that a shepherd looks after sheep. God talks in the Bible about bad Shepherds who don’t look after their sheep and the Good Shepherd who cares for his sheep. Jesus came to be the Good Shepherd - the best shepherd, who would rescue and care for everyone.  Read: John 10:1-18 from a plain English Bible or a Children’s Bible. Split the students into groups and ask them to act out this passage. They can share their play with the class if you have time.  Worksheet: The Good Shepherd | | Dolls/soft toys  Bible/Children’s Bible  Worksheet: The Good Shepherd |
| **9** | Messiah | What does Messiah mean?  Why is Jesus called the Messiah? | 10min  10min  25min | | Listen: Play the students part of Handel’s Messiah and speak about the significance of this piece of music in Western culture (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Messiah_(Handel)>).  Activity: Ask the students to look up Messiah in the dictionary or online and write down its meaning. Discuss the definitions the students have collected. Literally translated Messiah means anointed. This refers to the consecrating of someone for something special e.g. Samuel pouring oil on David’s head to anoint him as King of Israel. Christian’s believe that Jesus is the special leader that God tells us about in the Bible. Jesus is anointed to the save the world.  PowerPoint: Jesus and the Old Testament. Look at some of the prophesies in the Old Testament and discuss how they relate to Jesus. You may need to explain to students that the Old Testament was written a long time before Jesus was born and that prophesies are like predictions. Discuss what the prophesies tell us about the kind of king Jesus is anointed to be? Make this a Bible skills lesson. Show the students how to look up books using the Table of Contents. For each passage you could have a race to see what student can find the verse and read out the first word of the verse first OR you could give each child a different verse and get them to read their verse to the class. (warning the word virgin appears in the PowerPoint). | [Handel’s Messiah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Messiah_(Handel))  Dictionary or internet  PowerPoint: Jesus and the Old Testament, class set of Bibles |
| **10** | Son of Man | What does ‘Son of Man’ mean?  Why is Jesus called the Son of Man? | 5min  5min  10min  10min  15min | Activity: Have students sit in a circle place the images of the monsters provided in the centre. Ask the students imagine what special powers they think each monster has. Then, ask each student if they could transform into one of the monsters for a day, which would it be and why? Explain that just like they pretended to transform into one of the monsters, Christians believe that Jesus is God come to us as a man.  Brainstorm: the things humans do e.g. eat, sleep, grow older, cry, laugh etc. Explain that Son of Man translates to ‘human being’. Jesus was a human and he did all the things humans do. Jesus became a human and this means he understands humanity and what it’s like to be a human.  Activity: Give the students a piece of scrap paper and ask them to write one thing they find hard on the piece of paper. Get each student to place their paper in a bucket. Ask each student to pick out a bit of paper (not their own) and read it out to the class. Explain that because of his humanity Jesus is able to understand our weaknesses. Hebrews 4 (CEV) “**14**We have a great high priest, who has gone into heaven, and he is Jesus the Son of God. That is why we must hold on to what we have said about him. **15**Jesus understands every weakness of ours, because he was tempted in every way that we are. But he did not sin! **16**So whenever we are in need, we should come bravely before the throne of our merciful God. There we will be treated with undeserved kindness, and we will find help.”    PowerPoint: Son of Man. Looks at Jesus family tree, considers key points in Jesus’ life and a passage from Daniel 7 that describes how Jesus (Son of Man) is crowned king over all creation and rules over an eternal kingdom.  Summary activity: Bring a nativity set to class and ask the students to explain what they know about the nativity as well as what they know about Jesus and the different names he is called in the Old and New Testament. | | Print out: Monsters  PowerPoint: Son of Man  Nativity Set |