



Children's Sermon

Supplies:

- Matthew 1:23 (recommend the CEB translation) written or typed on a card — wrapped in a gift box and tied with a bow
- Pictures of Christmas Joy Offering recipients and strips of paper that say “I can share the gift of God’s love” — wrapped in a gift box and tied with a bow

Good morning!

This is such a wonderful time of year. Many of you might be thinking about what gifts you are going to be giving your family members or your friends. And you have probably thought about what gifts you want to get this year, too.

What would be your idea of the perfect gift? *Invite the children to answer.*

Those all sound wonderful. But I’ve got a gift right here, and I wonder if it can give us a hint to the most perfect gift we’ve ever been given. Is there someone who wants to help me open this gift?

Unwrap the gift and read aloud the scripture.

Emmanuel. It’s a word that in the Hebrew language means God-with-us.

During this Advent season, we’re preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus. And Jesus is God-with-us. God came down to be one of us. What a perfect gift for God to give God’s self to us to show us what love looks like.

So we can enjoy that gift of God with us. But just like it’s fun to *receive* a gift, sometimes it’s even more wonderful to give a gift.

And that’s what God calls us to do. Because we are so happy about the gift of God with us, we just can’t help but share God’s love with others. We can do that in so many ways!

Would someone help me open this other gift?

Unwrap the gift and show the cards inside.

One way we can share the gift of God’s love with others during this Christmas season is by participating with our families in the Christmas Joy Offering.

Let’s read these cards to see if we can figure out what the Christmas Joy Offering goes to support.



CHRISTMAS JOY

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Children's Sermon *(continued)*

Invite an older child to read the cards and show the group the pictures.

We can make a big difference in the lives of leaders when we contribute to this offering!

But there are also other papers in here. *Pass out an "I Can Share the Gift of God's Love" paper to each child.*

In addition to the Christmas Joy Offering, you can respond to the gift of Jesus for us by sharing God's love with others.

Be thinking about ways you can be a gift to others in the ways you love them. Talk with your family about it at home, and write down on this piece of paper (or draw a picture) of one way you will share with someone the gift of God's love this Christmas. Then put it in a place where you will see it to remind yourself to do it.

On Christmas morning, when you're opening presents, remember the gift of Jesus from God to us. And remember the ways that God uses us as gifts to others too.

Let's pray together: *(use this prayer or one of your own)*

God, your gift of Emmanuel, God-with-us, is the perfect gift. Thank you for showing us what your love looks like in Jesus. May we be people who share the gift of your love with others in this Christmas season and beyond. Amen.

Jenna Campbell, a Certified Christian Educator serving as the Director of Children and Youth Ministry at First Presbyterian Church in Stillwater, Oklahoma