



#59954

Blessings from the Manger

Needed: *One Narrator, One Response/Song Leader, Six Readers*

Suggested Use: Advent Candlelight Service

Use a black tri-fold board, drill small holes through the back, placing white mini lights through each hole. "Blessings from the Manger" may be cut out of felt, glued on the board and outlined with gold glitter glue. Place an empty manger on a mirror in front of the board. Add greenery. Place six candles around the manger, three on each side. Each reader lights one candle before they speak. Present the service in a darkened candle-lit room.

Narrator: *O Lord Almighty, blessed is the man who trusts in you.* Psalm 84:12 The Bible is emphatic in telling us that we, who trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, are a blessed and chosen people. His Word reminds us that we have abundant blessings. We are told in the book of Revelation, *Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart...* (1:3a) *Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy...* (22:7b) Our blessings come through our Savior, Jesus, who entered this world one obscure night in the busy and bustling town of Bethlehem. God chose parents for His Son, Joseph and Mary, and while they were on business in Bethlehem, Mary's time came to give birth to the baby. They had no reservations for the inn, there was no local hospital, the couple was sent to a barn; there were no cradles; no cribs; our Savior was first laid in a feeding trough for animals known as a manger.

Song: "Away in a Manger" LW 64; LSB 365 (stanza 1)
Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Narrator: Let us look at the blessings we received that Holy Night:

Reader 1: **M stands for mediator.** Did you even know that we needed a mediator? Do you know what a mediator does? The function of a mediator is to intervene between two parties in order to promote relations between the two parties. The Supreme Mediator is Jesus Christ and the only mediator between God and man. We are blessed with a mediator.
For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:5

For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance... Hebrews 9:15a
God knew we needed a mediator and He blessed us with one.

Response/Song Leader: Please join us in our response.

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for knowing we needed a mediator. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: **“Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord”** *LW 33; TLH 91; LSB 352* (stanza 1)
Let the earth now praise the Lord,
Who has truly kept his Word
And at last to us did send
Christ, the sinner’s help and friend.

Reader 2: **A stands for Access** – Access is like a gate. Jesus gives us access to our Heavenly Father.
For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Ephesians 2:18
Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. Romans 5:1-2a

Response/Song Leader: Please join us in our response.

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for knowing we needed an access to come into Your presence. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: **“Let All Together Praise Our God”** *LW 44; LSB 389* (stanzas 1 and 6)
Let all together praise our God
Before his glorious throne;
Today he opens heav’n again
To give us his own Son,
To give us his own Son.

He is the key and he the door
To blessed paradise;
The angel bars the way no more.
To God our praises rise,
To God our praises rise.

Reader 3: **N stands for Name** – One dictionary defines name as a label. This was hardly the case when God named someone. God was very particular with the names He gave to people. The names He chose for people always gave meaning to the person’s existence. In Matthew 1:21-23 we learn God told Joseph what name he and Mary should give the baby that was about to be born. *“She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” – which means, “God with*

us.” The name Jesus is the most wonderful name in the world. *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Philippians 2:9-11 This is the name that we can call on every second of each day and rely on to hear and answer us.

Response/Song Leader: Please join us in our response.

ALL: **Thank You Father, for the babe called Jesus. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: **“His Name is Wonderful”** *The Other Songbook 73*

Reader 4: **G stands for Gift** – A gift is something that is freely given without any strings attached. A gift is not earned because then it would be a reward. A gift is given out of love. Jesus was that gift from God to us, not because of anything that we had done, but because God loves us and He knew we needed a Savior, one who would love and care for us forever. Jesus is the greatest gift ever given. *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.* John 3:16

Response/Song Leader: Please join us in our response.

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for giving us a caring Savior, a Savior who would lead us and guide us to You. Thank You for this indescribable gift. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: **“No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus”** *The Other Songbook 149*

Reader 5: **E stands for Encourage** – We are encouraged in our faith from this Babe in the manger. The Gospel of Christ encourages and strengthens us in our faith, giving us a sure hope to go on. What a blessing we have in the sure encouragement of knowing Jesus, the Babe who lay in the manger so long ago. We are also urged to encourage one another through this Babe. *But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.* Hebrews 3:13 We can with assurance give encouragement to each other through the One who lay in the manger.

Response/Song Leader: Please join us in our response.

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for knowing that we need daily encouragement. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: **“Blessed Assurance”** *The Other Songbook 16 (stanza 1)*
Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit,
washed in His Blood.

This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story,
This is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

Reader 6: **R stands for Refuge** – A refuge is a safe place. Our safest refuge in the world is in the arms of Jesus, the One who lay in the manger. This blessing gives us the safest place as we travel throughout this world. This manger held our refuge, our strength, the one person who loves us so much that He was willing to lay down His life for you and for me. *Blessed are all who take refuge in him.* Psalm 2:12b *The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.* Psalm 9:9

Response/Song Leader: Please join us in our response.

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for giving us a refuge from the trouble in this world.
Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: **Tune – “Away in a Manger” LW 64; LSB 365**
Thank you, heavenly Father, for the gift that you gave;
Our Lord is our refuge, our Savior, our Friend,
A Name we can call on,
He came here to save.
Lord Jesus, be with me, now to the end.
(Text: Karen A. Schmitt)

Narrator: Blessings from the Manger, a lowly feeding trough. The occupant of this feeding trough is feeding us daily as we seek to follow His ways. Jesus, this occupant, blesses us as a mediator, an access; blesses us with a name that we can call upon any second of the day and night; blesses us with a gift that is above all gifts, more precious than diamonds and gold; and blesses us with a refuge for this life and for all eternity. May He bless you today and forever.

Song: **“Away in a Manger” LW 64; LSB 365 (stanza 3)**
Be near me, Lord Jesus;
I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

Acknowledgements

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BLESSINGS FROM THE MANGER – *Written by* Karen A. Schmitt
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**Blessings from the Manger
Participant Guide**

Mediator
Access
Name
Gift
Encourage
Refuge

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The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
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MEDIATOR

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for knowing we needed a mediator. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: “**Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord**” *LW 33; TLH 91; LSB 352* (stanza 1)
Let the earth now praise the Lord,
Who has truly kept his Word
And at last to us did send
Christ, the sinner’s help and friend.

ACCESS

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for knowing we needed an access to come into Your presence. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: “**Let All Together Praise Our God**” *LW 44; LSB 389* (stanzas 1 and 6)
Let all together praise our God
Before his glorious throne;
Today he opens heav’n again
To give us his own Son,
To give us his own Son.

He is the key and he the door
To blessed paradise;
The angel bars the way no more.
To God our praises rise,
To God our praises rise.

NAME

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for the babe called Jesus. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: “**His Name is Wonderful**” *The Other Songbook 73*

GIFT

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for giving us a caring Savior, a Savior who would lead us and guide us to You. Thank You for this indescribable gift. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: **“No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus”** *The Other Songbook* 149

ENCOURAGE

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for knowing that we need daily encouragement. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: **“Blessed Assurance”** *The Other Songbook* 16 (stanza 1)

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit,
Washed in His Blood.

This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story,
This is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

REFUGE

ALL: **Thank You, Father, for giving us a refuge from the trouble in this world. Thank You for this Blessing from the Manger.**

Song: **Tune – “Away in a Manger”** *LW* 64; *LSB* 365
Thank you, heavenly Father, for the gift that you gave;
Our Lord is our refuge, our Savior, our Friend,
A Name we can call on,
He came here to save.
Lord Jesus, be with me, now to the end.

Song: **“Away in a Manger”** *LW* 64; *LSB* 365 (stanza 3)
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