

# THE FIRST *Christmas* GATHERING

## Week 3: December 20-26

10min Welcome / Introduce Guests / Share Life  
Recall the Guidelines / Open in Prayer

2min **Share the Vision:** *In our group we want to live relationally no matter the time of year. Let's continue to share life together as we celebrate Christmas and the New Year.*

5min **Retell Last Week's Story: Matthew 1:18-25**  
**Hook Question:** What news have you received that has brought you great joy?

**Ask someone from your team to read or tell the following background for the story:**

2min In today's story, God reveals Himself to some lowly shepherds. You need to know that shepherds were considered as part of the outcasts in Roman society. They were the lowest, the weak, and they experienced discrimination regularly. Yet in today's story the shepherds are highly honored by God. God is no respecter of persons. This is part of what makes Him so desirable.

The story of Jesus's birth takes place in Israel about 2000 years ago. Israel was under the control of the Roman government. Caesar Augustus was the ruler of that government. Few things mattered more to Rome than collecting taxes from the regions they had conquered. The taxation in this story was especially burdensome because it required people to travel back to their hometown to register. This would have been terribly difficult for the elderly, the weak, and those carrying a child . . . Enter Mary and Joseph. Yet through this suffering, God fulfilled the prophecy in His Word that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. God is always working in our weaknesses and our sufferings. With this in mind, this is where our story begins...

**Tell the story from Luke 2:1-21:** *Remember to change up the storyteller often.*  
**Rebuild the story:** *Group members retell the story based on what they remember.*  
**Read the story from Luke 2:1-21:** *Ask the group to read these verses.*

12min **Discussion Questions: learn to talk about God's Word with others...**

Head  
Questions:  
Quicker  
tempo.

- What do you like or dislike about this story?
- What does this story teach us about ourselves?
- What does this story teach us about God?

Heart & Hand  
Questions:  
Slow down &  
wait!

- How do you need to apply this story to your life?
- Who could retell the story for us? **CHALLENGE:** Tell the story to someone this week!