

Dear Faith Shapers,

The season of Advent is upon us. Advent is my favorite season to celebrate. I love advent wreaths, nativities (I have over 75 of them from all over the world) and advent calendars. I decided to write this month's newsletter about ways to use the nativity. You can use the blessing of the nativity at home or for a congregational event where everyone brings in their nativities to bless. Have families share stories about their nativity during fellowship time. Talk about why this nativity is special and where it came from or who gave it to you. What a great cross-generational event!

Advent also comes with many smells. I've included instructions on making a sensory nativity story box. You could also make pomander balls or make cinnamon ornaments. Smells remind of us rich Christmas memories.

Have fun with your nativity this advent. Place your figures in the nativity all throughout advent! You may even have Mary and Joseph travel to the nativity. Ours make a big journey through the whole house! Have the wise men travel to see Jesus during epiphany!

Advent blessings,  
Lisa Kammerer, Deacon

## Blessing of the Nativity



### Blessing of the Nativity Scene

**Read:** Luke 2:1-14

#### **Blessing of the Nativity Scene:**

O Lord our God, with Mary and Joseph, angels and shepherds, and the animals in the stable, we gather around your Son, born for us.

Bless us with your holy presence and inspire us to help those who have no place to dwell.  
Be with us that we might share Christ's love with all the world, for he is our light and salvation.  
Glory in heaven and peace on earth, now and forever.  
Amen.

#### **Sing:** Away in the Manger

From Sundays and Seasons.com



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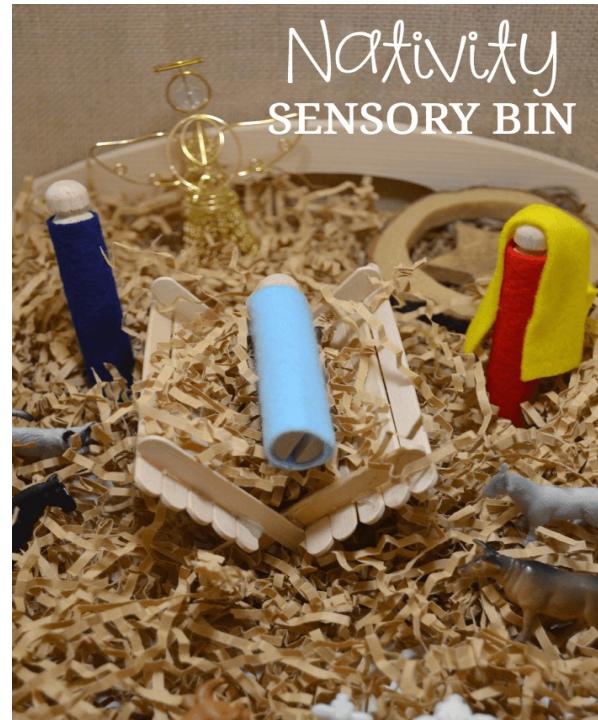
# Sensory Nativity Story Box

**Story boxes are great ways to help people interact with stories. You can touch items as you read the story or you can play with the items as you read the story. Here's how to make a sensory nativity story box.**

**You will need:**

- \* **A box or basket to hold your Sensory Nativity Story**
- \* **Straw or shredded brown paper to represent the manger where Jesus lay**
- \* **Wood peg dolls (I just left them plain) to represent Mary, Joseph, Angels, Shepherds, and Magi**
- \* **A star ornament to represent the star of Bethlehem**
- \* **Gold coin or colored rock to represent the gift of gold given to Jesus. Gold is a gift for a king.**
- \* **Frankincense candle or cotton ball dipped in frankincense essential oil to represent the gift of Frankincense given to Jesus. Frankincense was a gift for a priest.**
- \* **Myrrh candle or cotton ball dipped in myrrh essential oil to represent the gift of Myrrh given to Jesus. Myrrh is a gift used for burial.**
- \* **Toy animals to represent the animals at the birth of Jesus**

**You can find the Story of the Nativity in Your Bible in these places:**



## Nativity Activity

Add a nativity piece to your manger each day and read the corresponding Bible verses.



Stable	Micah 5:2	Shepherd	Luke 2:8
Palm Tree	Isaiah 11:1-2	Angel	Luke 2:9-11
Cattle	Isaiah 7:14	Sheep	Luke 2:15-16
Mary	Luke 1:30-31	Star	Matthew 2:1-2
Joseph	Matthew 1:18-21	Wise man 1	Matthew 2:7-8
Donkey	Luke 2:1-5	Wise man 2	Matthew 2:9-10
Manger	Luke 2: 12	Wise man 3	Matthew 2:11
Jesus	Luke 2:7		