



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

Date: December 13/16

Title: The Manger

**BIG IDEA: Keeping Jesus at the center of our manger scene.**

## GROUPS VISION

We believe life transformation happens when we engage with other people, with Jesus as our focus, and take next steps together. A next step is where we Ask, Listen, and Respond to take any action that advances our journey with Jesus.

**My Story.**

An encounter with Jesus leaves a story to tell. Share yours at [valleycreek.org/MyStory](http://valleycreek.org/MyStory).

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## KEY VERSE

**But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent Him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. Galatians 4:4-5NLT**

## POTENTIAL NEXT STEP

The entire point of our Christmas services is to worship Jesus and tell others about Him.

Who will you invite to join you at a Christmas service? See

[valleycreek.org/Christmas](http://valleycreek.org/Christmas) for service times.

## MAIN POINTS & SCRIPTURES

One of the most iconic Christmas decorations is the manger scene. It's interesting to note baby Jesus is always in the center of the scene. Christmas is all about Jesus. Jesus is the central figure of the scene and of our lives. Often, if we are honest with ourselves, someone or something, other than Jesus, is at the center of our lives.

**How is the manger scene of your heart this Christmas?**

Each character in the Christmas story teaches us a truth about keeping Jesus at the center of the manger scene of our own lives.

**Angels teach us about serving.** Angels served the purpose of God in the lives of people. **(Luke 1:19)** The angel Gabriel stood in the presence of God then went to deliver the message of God. The presence of God now lives in us so we can boldly serve the purposes of God in the lives of others. **(John 13:14-15)**

**This Christmas where do you need to serve the people around you?**

**Mary teaches us about surrender.** Mary surrendered her plans, dreams, and hopes for God's plan for her life. **(Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 10:39TPT)** Mary reminds us that when Jesus comes into our lives everything changes. Sometimes surrender is giving something to God, but often it's about receiving from God and believing what He says about us and our lives.

**This Christmas where do you need to surrender to God?**

**Joseph teaches us about trust.** Joseph had to trust that where God was leading him was better than his current situation and the dreams he had for his life. Joseph chose to trust in God's goodness, kindness, mercy, and grace in his life. **(Matthew 1:18-25, Proverbs 3:5-6)**

**This Christmas where do you need to trust Jesus?**

**Wise Men teach us about worship and generosity.** The Wise Men humbled themselves to worship a child. Once we've seen Jesus the automatic response is generosity and worship. Worship is turning the attention and focus of our hearts toward Jesus. **(Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11, 1 Peter 2:9-10TPT)**

**This Christmas how can you respond with worship and generosity?**

**Shepherds teach us about mission.** The shepherds had an encounter with Jesus and their response was to tell everyone about their experience. They realized that Jesus wasn't just for them but for everyone. Christmas isn't about us, but rather those who need to encounter the goodness of Jesus. **(Luke 2:8-20, Luke 19:10)**

**This Christmas where can you live on mission and who can you invite to Christmas services?**

Each character of the manger scene represented a unique facet of Jesus. Jesus served, surrendered, and trusted the Father, gave generously to us, and lived on mission for us. The entire Christmas story was a prophetic picture of Jesus.

**This Christmas what is your next step?**