

Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

MAIN POINT: God chose Mary and Joseph to be the earthly parents of Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE: Galatians 4:4-5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.

KIDS WORSHIP

- Countdown
- Introduce the session (3 min.)
- Giant Timeline (1 min.)
- Sing and Offering (3–12 min.)
- Big picture question (1 min.)
- Tell the Bible story (10 min.)
- The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (option)
- Group demonstration (5 min.)
- Review (4 min.)
- Group game (5-10 min.)
- Key Passage (4 min.)
- Missions (6 min.)
- Announcements (2 min.)
- Prayer (2 min.)
- Additional idea

Leader BIBLE STUDY

People had been waiting a long time for Jesus. God hinted at His coming in the garden of Eden when He promised a seed to conquer the serpent. (Gen. 3:15) The prophets told of His coming hundreds of years before His birth. God was working out His plan to bring His people back to Himself.

In the Bible, God sometimes used angels to communicate His message to people. Angels spoke to Abraham in

Genesis 18. The Angel of the Lord spoke to Balaam in Numbers 22. Now Mary and Joseph, the earthly parents of Jesus, each received a special visit from an angel to announce the birth of God's promised Messiah.

The angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary surprised her. By His grace, God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus. The angel's message revealed much about this promised child.

First, He would be great in both being and nature. He would be the Son of the Most High. Jesus is the Son of God, and the Lord God promised to give Him the throne of His father David. These words fulfilled the prophecy given to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-16. He would reign over the house of Jacob forever. His kingdom would have no end.

The good news that Jesus was coming into the world was good news because of why He was coming. An angel revealed Jesus' purpose to Joseph in Matthew 1:21, "He will save His people from their sins." The gospel is the good news of what God has done for us through Christ.

The announcement of Jesus' birth is not the beginning of the gospel; God had been planning for this moment since before the beginning of time. (See Eph. 1:3-10.) Help the kids you teach understand that God's plan has always been to save sinners and bring them back to Himself. Jesus, whose name means "Yahweh saves," is the culmination of that plan.



Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit <http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject>.

The BIBLE STORY

Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

One day, God sent an angel named Gabriel to a town called Nazareth. The angel went **to visit** a young virgin named **Mary**. **She was engaged to be married to Joseph**, a descendant of King David.

The angel said to Mary, “Rejoice! You have found favor with God. He is with you.” **Mary was very afraid and puzzled.** Why would God find favor with her? She had done nothing special.

“Do not be afraid,” the angel said. **Then he told Mary that she was going to have a very special and unique baby, and they would call the baby Jesus, which means “the Lord saves.”** The angel explained that the baby would be great—He would be God’s Son! He would even be a king—the king God had promised would come.

Mary asked the angel, “How can that happen? I am not married yet.”

The angel replied, “God will be the father of the baby. The baby will be God’s Son.”

Then the angel told Mary, “Nothing will be impossible with God!” He said that Mary’s relative Elizabeth was pregnant, even though she was old and did not have any children.

“May everything happen just as you said,” Mary replied. Then the angel left her.

Mary hurried to her relative Elizabeth’s house. When she arrived, the baby inside Elizabeth leaped for joy! The Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth and she said, “What an honor, Mary! Your baby will be blessed too!”

Mary was so happy. She praised God with a song

about how great God is. Mary knew every family in the future would say she was blessed because God was going to do great things for her through Jesus. God was keeping His promise to bless the whole world through Jesus.

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months. Then she went home.

Now Joseph found out Mary was going to have a baby, but Joseph knew it was not his baby—Mary and Joseph were not married yet! Joseph decided to quietly break his engagement with Mary so she would not be publicly disgraced.

Soon after Joseph thought these things, an angel appeared to him in a dream.

“Joseph!” the angel said. “Don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the baby she is carrying was put there by the Holy Spirit. Mary is going to have a son; name Him Jesus because He is going to save His people from their sins!”

This happened just like the prophet said it would: “See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name Him Immanuel,” which is translated “God with us.”

When Joseph woke up, he did exactly as the angel commanded. He married Mary, and when she had a son, Joseph named Him Jesus.

Christ Connection: The baby Jesus fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy, as well as other Old Testament prophecies, about the coming Savior. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus fulfilled God’s plan of redemption that God planned from the beginning of the world.

Kids Worship LEADER

SESSION TITLE: Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

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KEY PASSAGE: Galatians 4:4-5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.

- room decorations
- Theme Backdrop Slide (optional)

SUGGESTED THEME DECORATING IDEAS: Add Christmas elements to the decor you are currently using. You can try to do a Christmas “great race” by incorporating Christmas lights around traffic signs or modes of transportation.

Countdown

- countdown video
- “The Big Story” video (optional)

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as worship time begins. Since this is the beginning of a new unit, you may also show the video “The Big Story” to help kids understand where these lessons are heading chronologically.

Introduce the session (3 min.)

- leader attire

Leader Insight: Lucy is a level-headed young woman who is traveling over Christmas to visit her sister in London. Uncle Bud is very enthusiastic but tends to be absent-minded about the details of their travel.

[On one side of the stage, place a coat rack with hat and coat and a suitcase ready to go. Uncle Bud enters carrying two more suitcases. He sets them down with a huff and cups his hands over his mouth to yell.]

BUD • LUUCY! Lucy! *[Check your watch.]* Lucy! Where are you? We have to get going!

[Lucy enters, wrapping a scarf around her neck with a patient smile.]

LUCY • Uncle Bud, we have plenty of time. The taxi won't even be here for another 45 minutes!

- BUD** • Oh, sweet Lucy, of course the taxi is still not here. Taxi drivers always take their sweet time. That's why I only trust the bus.
- LUCY** • What? The closest bus stop around here is 10 blocks away.
- BUD** • [*Pat Lucy's head.*] That's why I called a taxi to take us to the bus stop. He'll be here any minute! Now, what was I looking for? [*Pat your chest and pockets, looking for something, then hold up a finger.*] Oh yes! My luggage! [*Pick up suitcases once again.*] Are you ready, Lucy? Did you pack everything you need?
- LUCY** • Yes, Uncle Bud. My things are by the door. But don't you need your hat and coat? They are on the coat rack.
- BUD** • [*Drop the suitcases and grab your head.*] Of course! How forgetful of me. [*Push the hat down on your head and fold the coat over your arm.*] Here, Lucy, Let me take your bag. [*Pick up Lucy's bag and turn to leave.*] Well, let's be off!
- LUCY** • Uncle Bud! You're forgetting your own luggage.
- BUD** • [*Shake your head and roll your eyes.*] How silly of me! [*Put down Lucy's bag and set the coat on top of it. Grab your own bags.*] Ready? Let's away!
- LUCY** • Are you sure you don't want to put on your coat? It's rather chilly outside.
- BUD** • I am wearing my coat, Lucy! [*Look down and gasp.*] How did that happen? [*Put down the bags slowly, put on the coat. Touch your hat, touch your coat, count as you grab one suitcase and the other. Turn to the kids.*] Do I have everything? [*Wait for them to respond.*] Great! Let's go.
- LUCY** • [*chuckling*] It's OK, Uncle Bud. I'm just as excited

Tip for one leader: If only one leader is available, Uncle Bud will interact with the kids in the same way that he does with Lucy above. He finally admits that he is flustered because he is so excited to visit his niece and her husband who just had a baby.

to visit London. [*to kids*] We're going to London because my sister and her husband are having a baby!

BUD • Imagine, the two of us, visiting Merry Old England! I can't wait to see Hyde Park, Trafalgar Square, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey ...

LUCY • And Megan, right?

BUD • Megan who?

LUCY • My sister! The one who is having the baby?

BUD • Oh, oh, oh! Of course. That's what I'm truly excited about. Truly.

LUCY • Well, that's what I'm most excited about. It actually reminds me a lot about this time of year, you know? Hearing good news about a new baby.

BUD • Babies do remind me a lot of Christmas elves. They're so tiny and cute. Oh, and those little shoes!

LUCY • No! It's because of the news of Baby Jesus—God the Son who was born as a tiny baby to rescue people from sin. That's what Christmas is all about!

BUD • Maybe we should tell the kids about the Christmas story. [*to kids*] How about it? Do you want to hear a Bible story while we wait for the taxi to take us to the bus to take us to the airport? [*Pause.*] Great!

Giant Timeline (1 min.)

LUCY • Uncle Bud, the kids have been learning about God rescuing Moses and calling him to deliver God's people. [*Point to the Bible stories.*] But we're going to take a break to study Jesus' birth. You know, God called Moses to deliver His people from captivity, but God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to deliver us from sin. Today's Bible story is called "Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph."

• Giant Timeline or
Big Story Circle

Sing and offering (3-12 min.)

BUD • Before we get started with our Bible story, let's praise Jesus to thank Him for coming to earth!

Sing "Joy to the World." Choose other songs as time allows.

Song suggestions:

- "Joy to the World" song (unit theme)
- "Born in Bethlehem" song
- "Let Us Adore Him" song
- "Celebrate Jesus" song
- "Come and Sing" song

- "Joy to the World" song and other songs of your choice

Big picture question (1 min.)

BUD • I've always wondered why God sent Jesus to earth as a baby. I mean, Jesus is God the Son. God the Son has always existed with the Father and Holy Spirit in heaven, and He was present at creation. Why did Jesus come to earth as baby?

LUCY • That's a great question, Uncle Bud. Let's make that our big picture question for the next few weeks. *Why was Jesus born?* Our big picture answer is, *Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.*

- Big Picture Question Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 min.)

BUD • [*Check your watch.*] Yes, we still have time for a Bible story. Thank goodness we are well ahead of schedule!

Open your Bible to Luke 1:26-56 and Matthew 1:18-24.

Tell the Bible story using the script provided, or show the Bible story video "Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph."

LUCY • Could you imagine how Mary and Joseph felt when they received such amazing news? Sometimes we forget that Mary and Joseph were regular people just like us. They were preparing to get married. One day, an angel gave them news that changed not only their

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- "Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Main Point Poster

lives, but history itself! **God chose Mary and Joseph to be the earthly parents of Jesus!**

BUD • What the angel promised sounds so impossible! But nothing is impossible with God. Mary trusted that God would do what He said He was going to do, and she accepted His plan.

LUCY • When Joseph heard the news that Mary was pregnant, he knew the baby was not his. When the angel spoke to him in a dream, he trusted in God's plan to rescue His people from sin.

BUD • Jesus became human just like every one of us, except that Jesus never sinned. God the Son experienced what it means to be fully human.

LUCY • The baby Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy, as well as other Old Testament prophecies, about the coming Savior. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus fulfilled God's plan of redemption that God planned even before the beginning of the world.

• Bibles

Tip: Anytime you share how to become a Christian in a large group environment, try to have counselors available to meet one-on-one with kids. Make sure kids know whom they can talk to and when they can talk. Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (option)

BUD • The Bible says that God made Jesus like us in every way—except that Jesus never sinned—so that our Savior could experience everything that we experience on earth. Jesus knows exactly what we're going through when we're tempted to sin, but Jesus never sinned. Jesus is holy and perfect, but He died on the cross to pay our punishment for sin, and He rose again three days later so we could have eternal life when we trust in Him.

Use your Bible and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Encourage kids to ask their parents or other adults any questions they have about becoming a Christian.

Group demonstration (5 min.)

FISHING FOR ICE

BUD • The angel told Mary that nothing is impossible with God. I've got a neat science experiment that seems pretty impossible. I need a volunteer to help me out.

Invite a volunteer to come to the front of the group.

Assemble the items for the experiment and drop some ice inside the cup of water. Give the volunteer the string.

BUD • OK, [*kid's name*]. This is the moment of truth. I'd like you to use that string to dip it in the water and fish for some ice. Go. [*Squat down and lean really close to the cup of water, waiting with bated breath.*]

Encourage the volunteer to stick the string in the water and attempt to fish for ice.

LUCY • Uncle Bud, are you sure you know how this experiment works? I mean, that string doesn't even have a hook or a lasso or anything. I don't see how this is going to work.

Thank the volunteer for the attempt and ask for the string. Carefully lay the string on top of the ice and shake some of the table salt on top of the ice. Set the countdown video or a timer for one minute. Make small talk with the volunteer while you wait. Tell the entire group to count down from the 10-second marker.

BUD • OK, [*kid's name*]. Let's try this again. [*Pause. Look around dramatically.*] Fish for ice! [*The volunteer should be able to grab the string and lift it out of the water, with the ice! Thank the volunteer and allow him to return to his seat.*]

LUCY • Uncle Bud, that's amazing! God did something even more amazing when He sent Jesus, to be born so He could die on the cross to rescue us from sin.

- clear cup full of water
- ice cubes
- table salt
- string

Review (4 min.)

Review the Bible story by playing “Two Truths and an Untruth.” Choose volunteers, or invite the group to answer together. Explain you will say three statements from the Bible story, but one will be false. Kids will discover the untruth.

1. God sent an angel: a) to Mary and Joseph, b) to the city of Nazareth, c) to a descendant of King Saul. (*C. Joseph was a descendant of David; Luke 1:27*)
2. Mary: a) was confused by the angel’s message, b) didn’t believe the angel, c) visited her cousin. (*B. Mary believed the angel; Luke 1:38,46*)
3. Elizabeth: a) had ten children, b) was pregnant even though she was old, c) told Mary her baby jumped in her womb. (*A. Elizabeth was pregnant with her first child. She had been barren; Luke 1:36*)
4. Joseph: a) found out Mary was going to have a baby, b) planned to divorce Mary publically, c) was told by an angel in a dream that Jesus is God’s Son. (*B. Joseph wanted a quiet divorce; Matt. 1:19*)

Group game (10 min.)

GOOD NEWS RELAY

- resource room items
- masking tape (optional)

Create an obstacle course from items from your resource room or create a maze with tape on the floor. Form teams of kids and send half of each team to the other side of the obstacle course. When you say go, the first kid from each team will run the obstacle course to his teammate, say “Jesus is coming,” and then go to the back of the other line. The teammate who received the “good news” will run the obstacle course from that direction. The first team to complete the obstacle course twice wins. (Kids will end up on the same side of the room as at the start.)

LUCY • When Mary heard the good news, she hurried to

Elizabeth's house. What are you going to do this week with the good news that *Jesus was born to rescue us from sin?*

Key Passage (4 min.)

BUD • Wouldn't it be nice if we had a passage from the Bible that we could memorize while we're on our trip to London? You know, a passage that holds the key to the Bible stories we're learning about.

LUCY • Uncle Bud, I think you mean a key passage. Well, we do have a key passage! Our key passage for the next few weeks is Galatians 4:4-5. I've got a fun game to help us memorize it.

Before class, write four or five words from the key passage on six index cards. (It may be easier to break up the verse at the commas.) If you have a large group, form smaller groups of six kids, and create one set of cards for each group. Mix up the cards and give one to each kid. Invite kids to arrange themselves in the correct order and say the key passage as quickly as possible. Play again as time allows. You may choose to make it a competition as well.

- Key Passage Poster
- "Adoption as Sons" song
- index cards, 6 per group
- markers

Missions (6 min.)

LUCY • Uncle Bud, I've got an idea! When we go to London, we can tell our fellow travelers about Jesus.

BUD • That's an excellent idea, Lucy. I saw a missions video about a missionary who goes out of his way to meet people who need to hear the truth about Jesus.

Show the missions video "Coffee and Tea."

BUD • God sent missionary Brian McClure to Prague, a city in the Czech Republic, to tell the people how much God loves them. One of the ways Brian does this is by handing out coffee, tea, and water once a week. This gives Brian and his team a chance to tell people

- "Coffee and Tea" missions video

Tip: Send home the prayer cards so children can pray for the missionaries throughout the week.

the good news that Jesus came to rescue them.

LUCY • Let's pray for Brian to boldly share the gospel so people could hear and believe the truth about Jesus.

Announcements (2 min.)

BUD • [*Grab your head.*] Oh, Lucy! We missed the taxi that will take us to the bus that will take us to the airport!

LUCY • Don't worry, Uncle Bud. I called a taxi too. It will take us directly to the airport. In the meantime, I've got some announcements.

Make any announcements from your kids' ministry.

Prayer (2 min.)

BUD • Dear Father, thank You for the good news of Jesus' birth! Thank You for His sinless life, His death to pay the punishment for our sin, and His resurrection to show that we will have eternal life with You. Amen!

Additional idea

TAKE THE TEXT

Invite kids or adult helpers who have their cell phones and wouldn't mind playing a game to come to the front. Write down the phone numbers for each cell phone on a sheet of paper. Invite the volunteers to stand behind a table, facing the audience. Place all of the phones (except for yours) facedown in a pile. Invite a volunteer from the audience to whisper which phone number you should text. Text *Jesus is coming!* to the number. The first person to grab the phone and read the text wins.

BUD/LUCY • Mary and Joseph didn't have text messages or phone calls from God. Today we can use technology to share the good news. What are some ways you can help people know the real reason we celebrate Christmas this year?

• cell phones

Tip: Be aware of message and data rate issues.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:19.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Journal Page

Christmas

Key Passage: Galatians 4:4-5

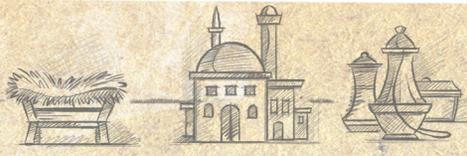
Big Picture Question: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.

Session 1: Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph
Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24
God chose Mary and Joseph to be the earthly parents of Jesus.

Session 2: Jesus Was Born
Luke 2:1-20
Jesus was born to be God's promised Savior.

Session 3: Wise Men Visited Jesus
Matthew 2:1-21
The wise men worshiped Jesus as King.

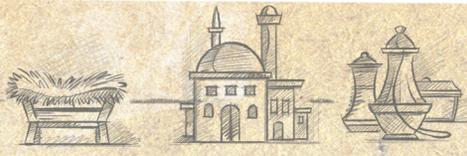




When the time came to completion, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Galatians 4:4-5

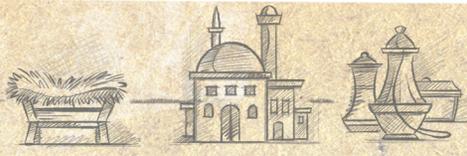




But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

Galatians 4:4-5

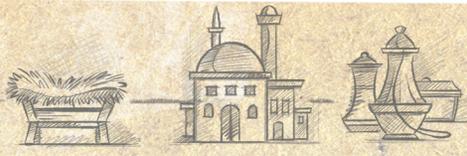




But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Galatians 4:4-5





But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

Galatians 4:4-5

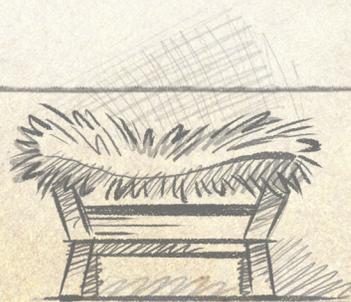


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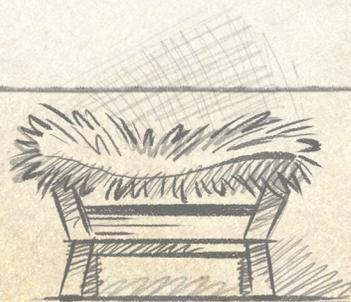


Why was Jesus born?



Why was Jesus born?

Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.



LONDON, ENGLAND

London is the capital and largest city in England, often called the “capital of the world.” More than 13.6 million people live in the London metropolitan area, and many of those people have moved to London from cities all over the world. More than 300 languages are spoken in the greater London area. In such a large, multi-cultural city, missionaries have a huge task of spreading the good news about Jesus. Pray for missionaries in London as they share the gospel with people from all over the world in one huge city.



ICELAND

Iceland is a Nordic island country located between the North Atlantic Ocean and the Arctic Ocean. Iceland is home to roughly 329,000 people. The capital and largest city is Reykjavik (RAYK-yuh-VIK). Iceland has active volcanoes, and Iceland experienced volcanic eruptions in March and April 2010 as well as May 2011. Although roughly 70% of Iceland’s population say they are Christians, only 10% of Icelanders attend church at least once a month. Pray for missionaries serving in Iceland to bring the gospel to the people of Iceland. Pray that they will equip Icelandic Christians to meet and worship Jesus together.



SCOTLAND

Scotland is a country in the United Kingdom. Located north of England, Scotland is home to roughly 5 million people. Though roughly 53% of the people say they are Christians, 43% of the people do not follow any religion. Missionaries like Gena Wilson are taking the gospel to areas of Scotland where the gospel is not welcome. Missionary families like Gena, TJ, and Eli Odom are reaching out to their community in Scotland through events. Pray for missionaries in Scotland to share the good news about Jesus.



CZECH REPUBLIC (pronounced CHECK)

The Czech Republic is a country in Central Europe with Germany to the west, Austria to the south, Slovakia to the southeast, and Poland to the northeast. Czech Republic was originally part of a country called Czechoslovakia after World War I. After World War II, Czechoslovakia became part of the Soviet Union. In January 1993, Czechoslovakia peacefully divided and became two distinct countries: the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Roughly 10.5 million people live in Czech Republic, but the majority of the people do not believe that God is real. Many have heard of Jesus, but they choose not to follow Him. Missionaries like the Johnson family build relationships with Czech families so they can tell them about Jesus. Pray for the Johnsons’ family camp outreach so they can tell kids and their families the good news about Jesus.

