

# LUKE

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## Luke, chapters 1-2; Matthew, chapters 1-2 Christmas Carols and the Two Infancy Narratives

**Objective:** In this activity, the students identify aspects of Matthew's and Luke's infancy narratives that have been woven into popular Christmas carols.

**Materials Needed:**

• copies of the lyrics for a dozen or so Christmas carols with biblical themes ("Silent Night," "The First Noel," "Angels We Have Heard on High," "Joy to the World," etc.)

1. In preparation for this activity, direct the students to read Matthew 1:18–2:23 and Luke, chapters 1–2, jotting down the similarities and differences between those accounts of Jesus' birth.
2. Divide the class into groups and give each group the lyrics for several Christmas carols to review. The students should assess whether different verses of each song echo Luke's or Matthew's version of the infancy narrative. They should also note how much of the song is not based directly on the Scriptures. They might want to use different-colored markers or highlighters to mark the different versions.
3. After the groups have completed their review, ask them to share their findings with the rest of the class. Help the students reflect on possible reasons why the gospel versions differ and why the two versions are often mixed together into one account.

Ask these questions:

*Which gospel version is most commonly used?*

*Which version touches you most deeply?*

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