

CHRISTMASTIDE

A period of twelve days beginning with Christmas Day, Christmastide is the joyous culmination of the reflection and waiting that characterized Advent.

We celebrate . . .

The One True Light . . .

Employing candlelight and lighted trees to symbolize the light that shines in darkness, and shining that light on the dark places of our world.

The Incarnation . . .

Demonstrating through acts of love and giving what it means for the Word to be made flesh.

Emmanuel, God-With-Us . . .

Identifying with the broken world and ministering to it even as we recognize our own brokenness.

Our Redeemer . . .

Reflecting and praying about the ultimate fulfillment of God's saving purpose and its beginning in the birth of Jesus.

Cardboard Tube Crèche

Children of All Ages

This crèche is easy to make and can be handled safely by children of all ages. It can be an ongoing project over several weeks, or you could schedule one session to make the entire crèche. Have older children make a crèche for young children to use, or pair an older child with a young child to make a crèche.

What You Need

- Cardboard bathroom tissue tubes or paper towel tubes
- Pipe cleaners cut in 2-inch lengths
- Brown or tan construction paper or white drawing paper and multicultural crayons
- Colored construction paper, wallpaper samples, fabric scraps, felt
- Black markers
- Rubber bands
- Yarn
- Glue sticks and white glue
- Donkey and sheep head patterns from p. 82 (photocopy)
- Cotton balls
- Scissors

What You Do

1. Make the crèche figures. For each figure, children can glue a strip of tan or brown paper one inch wide around the top of the cardboard tube. This will be the face of the figure. They can use a black felt-tipped marker to make features on the face.

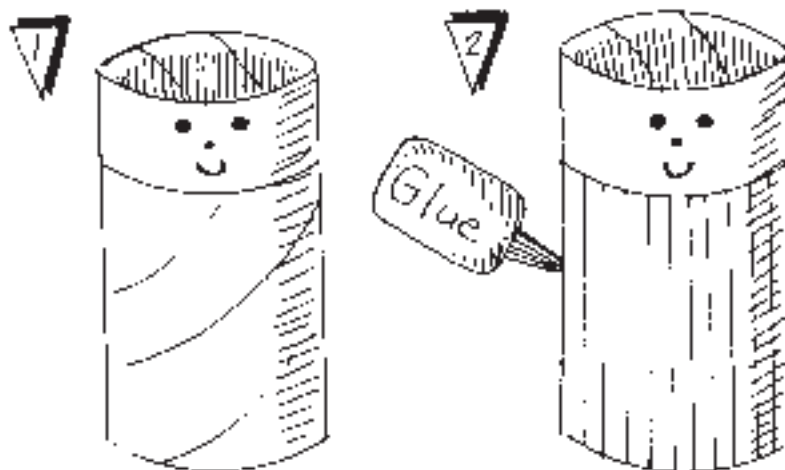
2. Tell children to glue a three-inch strip of construction paper around the bottom two-thirds of the cardboard tube.

3. To make arms, help children make a small hole in the tube just below the “head,” put a dab of white glue on one end of a pipe cleaner, and insert it into the hole. Repeat on the opposite side.

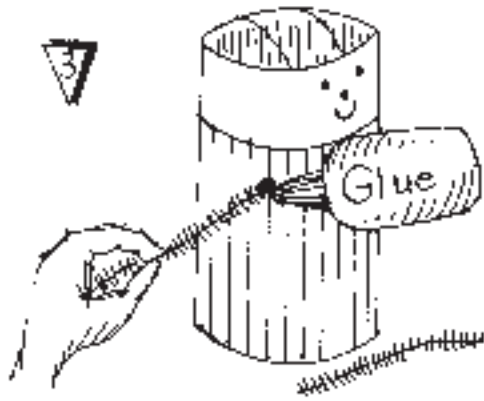
4. Children can drape fabric scraps over the back and arms of the figure to make a robe. They can use a little white glue to secure the cloth. Then direct them to put fabric over the head of the figure and secure with a rubber band. They can cover the rubber band with yarn.

5. Children can vary the costume according to the figure being made. For example, striped fabric scraps or burlap would make good clothing for shepherds, and a pipe cleaner could be bent into a shepherd’s crook. Scraps of brocade metallic fabric, or velvet or flocked wallpaper samples would be appropriate for the Wise Men.

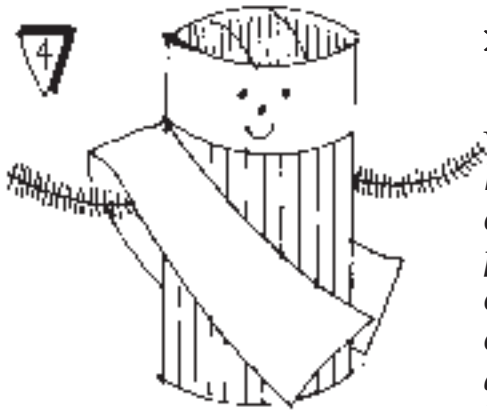
6. To make the sheep, photocopy and cut out the pattern for the head. Children can glue it to the cardboard tube. They can twist two long pipe cleaners around the body for legs, or make holes in the bottom and insert four short pieces. Let them glue cotton balls on the tube to make the wool. Use the same procedure to make the donkey, but cover the body with brown paper or felt.



7. Make the stable. Have children paint the larger box with brown tempera paint. Allow to dry thoroughly. Glue on sticks to make a roof. Have children dilute white glue with a little water and paint on the stable floor, then adhere the straw to the glue. Paint the small box for a manger and glue in straw.

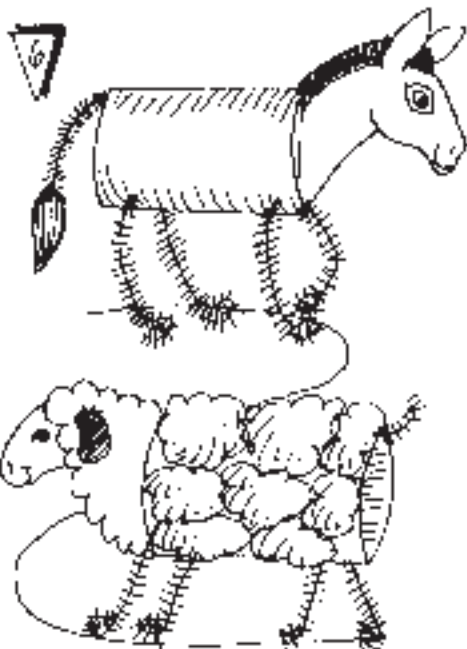
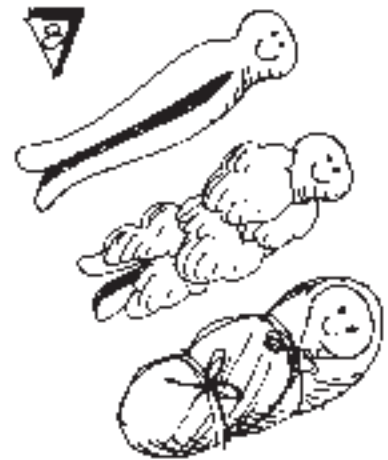
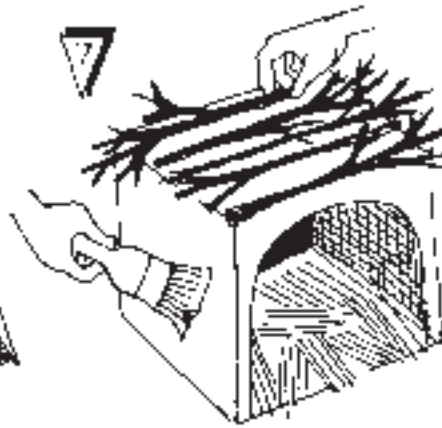
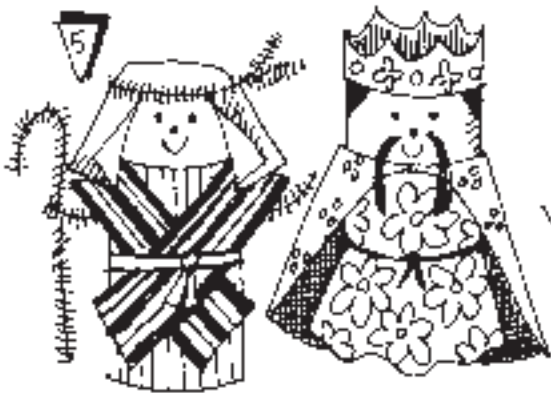


8. To make the Jesus figure, have children make features with a black marking pen on a wooden clothespin. Children can pad the clothespin with several cotton balls and wrap in a scrap of lightweight fabric. Secure by wrapping with yarn.



★And More

In some Latin American countries, people make the village of Bethlehem as well as the crèche. Moravians have a similar custom in creating a putz. Gather boxes of various sizes and scrap materials of all kinds. Using pictures of houses in biblical times as a guide, children can recreate Bethlehem. Have some children make crèche figures and others to make other people and animal figures for the town. Remind the children that Bethlehem was very crowded!



For stable:

- Small cardboard box (use completed crèche figures to gauge a good size)
- Brown tempera paint and brushes
- Small sticks or twigs, straw
- Jewelry box (for manger)
- Cotton balls
- White glue
- Straw
- Clothespins
- Fabric scraps
- Yarn