***Lesson 2: A Christmas to Remember (Make Your Own Nativity):***

 ***The Animals at the Manger***

**Scripture:** But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” (Luke 2: 10-12)

**Leader:** Welcome! We are spending Advent learning from the animals who were there on the night Jesus was born! Let’s begin with a very special song!

(Play or sing the song *The Friendly Beasts.)*

**Leader:** And now (get out a microphone)… welcome to the News!!

**INTERVIEWER**: Good Morning and welcome to the Morning News. My name is

**INTERVIEWER:** (to children) What kinds of animals do YOU think there were at Jesus’ birth? (Let several children respond.)

**INTERVIEWER:** Today we are going to interview an animal that was at the birth of Jesus.

Our first guest is a… DONKEY!

Welcome to our studio.

Tell me, DONKEY, what part did you play in the birth of Jesus?

**DONKEY:** Thank you. It’s nice to be here.

I played a big part in the birth of Jesus because I carried Mary on my back to Bethlehem.

Joseph and Mary had to make a long trip and Mary was expecting a child and so she couldn’t walk all that way. Joseph walked and I carried Mary!

She was going to have her baby soon, and I wanted to get her there safely.

**INTERVIEWER:** Did you carry Mary a long way?

**DONKEY:** I carried Mary about 80 miles to Bethlehem.

That’s a long way! It was a hard trip for both of us.

**INTERVIEWER:** I’ve heard that donkeys are very stubborn.

Did you ever stop, or want to lie down and rest for a while?

**DONKEY:** Sure I wanted to rest, but I kept on going.

We donkeys may be a little stubborn, but we are very dependable and strong.

**INTERVIEWER:** Sometimes people treat donkeys like are not very important. What do you think about that?

**DONKEY:** Did you know that donkeys are mentioned a lot in the Bible? That must mean donkeys are pretty important.

**INTERVIEWER:** Wow! That is amazing!

What else can you tell us about donkeys?

**DONKEY:** Did you know that donkeys are great mountain climbers? We can carry heavy loads up high places. That is why so many people in the Bible had donkeys.

**INTERVIEWER:** You traveled 80 miles to take Mary to Bethlehem.

Was it hard finding food for you during this time? What do you eat?

**DONKEY:** Good question! That is one of the really great things about donkeys. We eat just about anything!

Grass and hay are my favorite. (Donkey could pull out some hay and start eating it.)

I can find that everywhere. That’s why donkeys are easy to take on long journeys.

**INTERVIEWER:** You told us that donkeys eat grass and hay, but what do donkeys drink?

**DONKEY:** I drink water. But I can go pretty far on very little water.

That’s another reason I am good on long trips. I don’t have to stop a lot for water.

**INTERVIEWER:** I can see why you were an important part of Advent.

One last question, DONKEY – What advice do you have to give to the children listening to this interview?

DONKEY – My advice to everyone is to **work hard** and find ways to **help others**.

I helped Mary and Joseph get safely to Bethlehem. I stayed close to them and carried them to Egypt and then I helped them farm their land and grind their grain! I helped them all of my life and I loved helping them!

**INTERVIEWER:** **Work hard** and **help others**.

That is great advice.

DONKEY, you were a very special part of Jesus’s birth.

Thank you for being on our show, DONKEY.

Let’s give the DONKEY a big hand for letting us interview him on our show. (Children Clap)

**Scripture and Reflection:**

**Scripture**

**Leader:** It is now our sacred time.Let’s light our candle and set it in the stable. This represents the light of God. Now let’s get still … breathe in, breathe out. Listen to our Advent Scripture**.** *But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.**Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.**This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”* (Luke 2: 10-12)

**Question of the Day:**

**Leader:** The donkey was a great helper. Who can you help this week?

(Kids share in person or if on line, type it into the chat box).

**Craft:** (Make the fence inside the stable and add the straw. Cut out the donkey and add him to the nativity.)

Leader: Remind the children that when they see the donkey, to remember to help others this week!