KidsCare Christmas 2026

A standalone KidsCare Christmas lesson for ages 5–10

Campaign: A Global Christmas: Joy to and from the World

Bottom Line: Joy is meant to be shared with each other.

Scripture: Luke 1:39–45; Luke 1:46–55; Luke 2:8–20

Children explore joy that begins with Jesus and spreads throughout the Christmas story. Learning from the Bible, stories from global communities, and their own experience they build a Christmas ornament to bring home with them.

Preparation

Materials

- A Bible, with the passages listed in SEE marked in your church's preferred translation for kids.
- One cardstock ornament base per child.
- Bible and global ornament pieces, or complete printed circles.
- Glue sticks and crayons or coloured pencils.
- A leader's ornament to build alongside the children.
- A hole punch and short hanging loops.

Ornament design

Each ornament has three sections on each side, with JOY in the centre. Each section has a name along the outside edge, a small illustration to colour, and a blank printed circle for a personal drawing.

Bible side: Elizabeth and John; Mary; Shepherds.

Global side: Kenya; Bolivia; Canada.

Leader choice: Craft-supported storytelling

Children build the ornament during SEE and STORY, then set it aside for the movement game in STEP.

Choose how to prepare the ornament:

- **Piece by piece:** Pre-cut and sort the three sections for each side. Children glue each section onto the base as its story is introduced.
- **A side at a time:** Keep each printed circle whole. Children glue the Bible circle onto one side of the base, then the global circle onto the reverse. They find, colour, or draw in each section as its story is told.

Both approaches produce the same ornament. Prepare the two circles so their tops line up and leave space for the hanging hole. Invite children to listen first, then pause for gluing, colouring, or drawing. Allow a finishing and sharing period at the end of STORY.

SPARK: Joy Is...

"Joy Is..." Game

Setup

Give children room to move safely.
Keep each round brief so anyone sitting out can rejoin quickly.

Read Aloud

We're going to play a game called **Joy Is...** It's a little like Simon Says.

Only do the action when I begin with the words **"Joy is..."**

If I say, "Joy is jumping," you jump. If I say, "Joy is sharing," you make up an action for sharing. But if I leave out the word "is" and say, "Joy jumping," don't move.

If you move when I leave out "is," you have to sit down.
We'll play several quick rounds so everyone can rejoin. *Let's play!*

> **Leader Note:**
>
> For some groups, sitting people out will be difficult. You could try giving points for people to who get it right.

Debrief

- What are some ways you would finish the sentence "Joy is..."?
- Does joy always look the same for everyone?

Read Aloud

Today we'll hear how different people found joy in Jesus and shared it with others.

SEE: What Happens When the Joy of Jesus Reaches People?

Opening a Joy that Travels

Read Aloud

Who knows the Christmas song "Joy to the World"?

Today we'll follow that joy through the Christmas story.

Have you ever noticed when one person starts laughing, the whole room starts to laugh? Or when someone tells you good news, you suddenly want to tell somebody else?

Joy grows when someone shares it!

As we look at the Christmas story we'll see how joy can spread in many directions.

Our first story begins before Jesus was even born.

Piece 1

Elizabeth and John

Joy that Jumps · Luke 1:39–45

Read Luke 1:39–45 aloud

Read Aloud

Mary receives incredible news: she's going to give birth to the Son of God, Jesus! And the news is so good that, as it settles in, she hurries to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who is also expecting a baby.

When Mary calls out to say hello, the baby inside Elizabeth jumps for joy. This baby is John, who grows up to prepare people for Jesus.

Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and understands something she could not have known just by looking at Mary. She calls Mary's baby her Lord and blesses Mary. Jesus has not yet been born, but already he's bringing joy.

Ask

How do you think Mary felt when she heard Elizabeth's blessing?

Invite children's ideas; we are wondering together.

Ask

What did John or Elizabeth receive when Mary arrived? What did Mary receive from Elizabeth?

Action

Find a piece of the ornament for **Elizabeth and John.**

Jesus' presence brings joy, and Elizabeth shares that joy by blessing Mary. Find and fill in the piece of the ornament.

Piece 2

Mary

Joy that Sings · Luke 1:46–55

Invite children to listen for what God does in Mary's song. Read Luke 1:46–55 aloud.

Read Aloud

Mary answers Elizabeth with a song.
Her song helps us hear how great and good God is.

Ask

What did you hear God doing in Mary's song?

Listen to the children's observations before continuing.

Mary praises God because he cares about people others overlook, holds the lonely, and feeds the hungry. She remembers God's mercy and his promises to God's people from the beginning.

Mary receives joy from Elizabeth and now her song gives others a reason to rejoice: God is keeping his promises.

Ask

Which part of Mary's song sounds like good news to you? Who receives something good in the song Mary sings?

Action

Find a piece of the ornament for **Mary.**

This is joy that sings: Mary receives a blessing and shares a song about God's mercy. Find and fill in the piece of the ornament.

Piece 3

The Shepherds

Joy that is Shared · Luke 2:8–20

Read Luke 2:8–20 aloud

Read Aloud

Outside Bethlehem, shepherds are watching their sheep at night when an angel appears and God's glory shines around them.

Ask

What do the shepherds feel first?

Listen to responses. Luke tells us they were terrified.

The angel tells them not to be afraid and gives them good news of great joy: a Saviour has been born. He is the Messiah, the Lord.

The angel tells them how to find Jesus.

Ask

Where would you expect to find a newborn king?

They are supposed to look for a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger, a feeding place for animals.

The shepherds hurry to Bethlehem and find Mary, Joseph, and the baby, just as the angel said.

Then, the shepherds share what they heard about Jesus with others, and the people who listen are amazed.

The shepherds return to their sheep praising God for everything they have heard and seen. Their wild night has given them joy they want to share!

Ask

What did the shepherds receive? Who received something because the shepherds shared their joy?

Action

Find a piece of the ornament for **Shepherds.**

This is joy that is shared: the shepherds receive good news about Jesus and pass it on. Find and fill in the piece of the ornament.

Bring the Pieces Together

Read Aloud

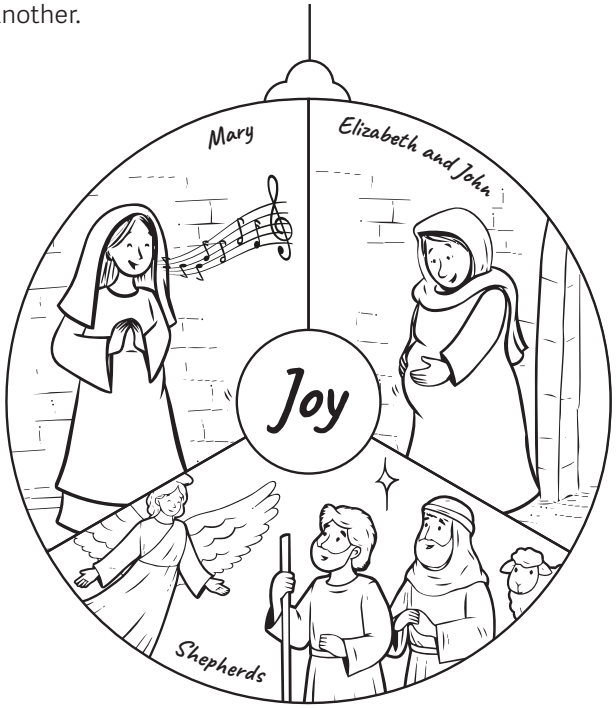
Look at the three pieces. Together, what do the stories help us see?

Listen before offering the recap below. Refer to the pieces as you speak.

Elizabeth recognizes Jesus as Lord and blesses Mary. John jumps for joy. Mary sings joyfully about God keeping his promises. The shepherds hear that a Saviour has been born, go to see him, and tell others. The joy grows and spreads! And now, after many years and lands, the joy reaches us!

Where does all this joy come from?

Jesus. God keeps his promise and comes close in Jesus. The joy begins with Jesus, and people share it with one another.



Seeing Jesus

Ask

After hearing the whole story, what do you notice about Jesus?

Respond to the children's observations. Use the following explanation to build on what they have said.

Read Aloud

If we keep reading the story about Jesus, we learn that as Jesus grows up, he shows us what God's kingdom is like. He welcomes people, feeds hungry people, forgives sins, heals people, and brings good news to those others ignore. Some people reject him, but Jesus defeats death and darkness. Because of Jesus, we can celebrate true joy! We can celebrate that God is healing all things.

After all, that is God's big mission, to heal all things: our relationship with him, our relationships with one another, and the world he loves. Through Jesus, God is healing his world and will one day make all things new.

But we don't have to pretend hard things are easy or feel cheerful all the time. We've heard about joy alongside fear, uncertainty, and waiting.

The good news gives us a reason for joy: God has come close to us in Jesus. We are loved, and we have hope. We can have joy.

What?

Choose one person from the story.
What did they receive, and what did they share?

So what?

As joy spread, what did we discover about Jesus and who the joy is for?

Now what?

Who has helped you see the joy of Jesus?
What could you share with someone else?

Transition — Read Aloud

These people help us understand more about Jesus through what they say and do.

Now we'll hear stories from communities in other parts of the world. They have gifts, wisdom, faith, and joy to share with us too. The joy is still spreading.

Invite children to turn their ornaments over. If working a side at a time, attach the global circle now.

STORY: Stories of Joy Around the World

Story Introduction

Read Aloud

Through Canadian Baptist Ministries, our churches are connected with churches and partners in other places. We can pray, learn, and share with one another.

As we learn about people all around the world, try to notice where there is joy or hope. What do their stories help you see about Jesus?

Explain that children will hear each story and talk about it before adding a drawing or colouring its piece.

Kenya

Joy that Grows when People Work Together

Read Aloud

Our first stop is Kenya, in East Africa.

In some communities, families grow food, raise animals, or pick tea leaves to earn an income. Mothers, fathers, grandparents, and other caregivers work hard to provide for their children and help them stay in school.

Local churches know these families. Church leaders visit their homes, listen to them, encourage their children, and help families find ways to grow stronger together as they work together.

Families also learn about caring for small animals and saving money together. Children receive help to continue school and encouragement to grow in confidence and hope.

Story Reflection: Choose a starting question

- How do you think joy grows when people work and learn together?
- How does working beside someone remind you of Jesus coming to be with us?

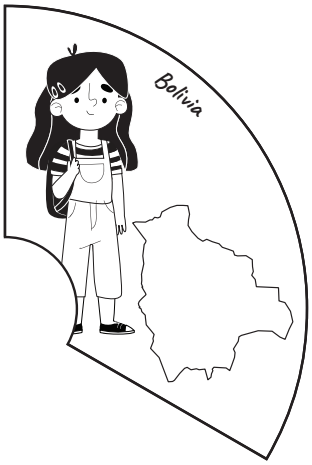
Make the Piece

Add or find **Kenya.** What would you like to remember from this story? Draw it in your circle, or colour the picture. Choose what you want to draw.

If children want ideas: You might draw farm animals, a basket, people helping one another, or Jesus' light shining among them.

Bolivia

Joy that Stays Close



Read Aloud

Our next stop is Bolivia, in South America.

In the city of Cochabamba, there is a place called Casa de la Amistad. Its name means **House of Friendship.**

Casa supports children and teenagers whose mother or father is in prison. Its staff provide help with learning, health food, health care, counselling, and spiritual care.

A mother named Estela has two daughters who attend Casa. In this story, the girls were eight and nine years old. They worked hard at school and dreamed of helping their mother.

Estela provided for the family by selling cleaning supplies on the street. Then she became seriously ill and needed a difficult operation. She was frightened about what might happen to her daughters.

The people at Casa stayed close.

The director, Casa staff, and people from another local organization worked together to find medical help. They helped gather the money needed for Estela's operation and made sure her daughters were cared for while she received treatment.

Estela had the operation and began recovering. She felt relief and recognized God's care.

Casa could not make every hard thing disappear. But its people could listen, help, pray, and stay beside the family.

Story Reflection: Choose a starting question

- How did different people stay close to Estela and her daughters?
- How does their care remind you of Jesus, God with us?

At Christmas, we celebrate Jesus, who is also called Immanuel, which means "God with us." Estela's story helps us see the joy of discovering that, during a frightening time, God has not left us alone.

Make the Piece

Add or find **Bolivia.** What would you like to remember from this story? Draw it in your circle, or colour the picture. Choose what you want to draw.

If children want ideas: You might draw a house of friendship, people surrounding a family, praying hands, or a Christmas star reminding you that Jesus is Emmanuel.

Canada

Our Piece of Joy

Read Aloud

Our last stop around the globe is Canada. This one has room for your own story.

Think of a way you have found joy this Christmas season. Perhaps someone welcomed you, you shared something, you heard a song or story about Jesus, or you enjoyed being with someone.

It can be something small. Your experience might be different from someone else's.

Would anyone like to share?

> **Leader Note:**
>
> This can be a group sharing time or an individual reflection. Let children draw without speaking. If Christmas has been difficult, invite an ordinary good moment or something they hope for. Give this contribution the same attention as the other four.

Make the Piece

Add or find **Canada.** Draw a way you found joy this Christmas—or something you hope for.

Finish and Bring the Stories Together

Action

Allow children to finish colouring, check both sides, and add hanging loops with adult help. Every space does not need to be filled. Invite children to show someone one piece they want to remember.

Read Aloud

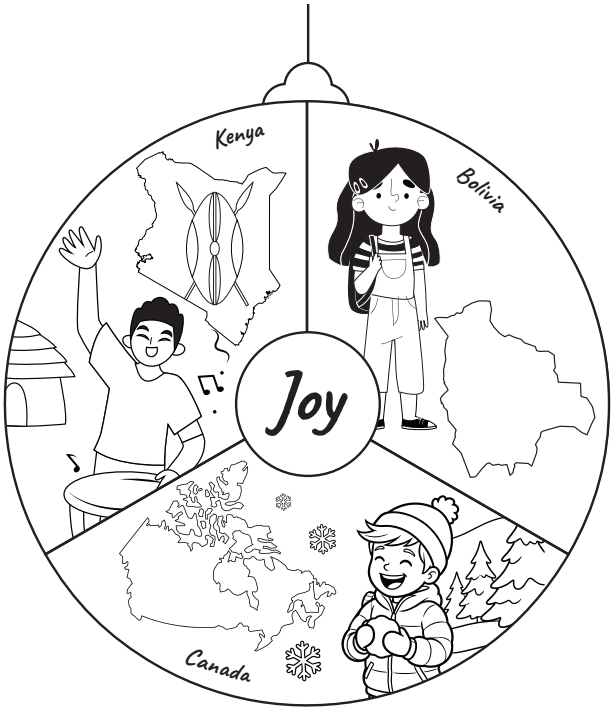
In Kenya, we heard about people sharing their knowledge and working side by side.

In Bolivia, friends stayed close during a frightening time.

And our Canadian piece includes the joy and hope we have experienced for ourselves.

The joy of Jesus is something we receive and share. We can discover more of it through one another.

Set your ornament somewhere safe. Now let's make up some actions for the ways people share joy.



STEP: Build the Joy Actions

"Joy Spreads" Game

Materials No materials are required.

Read Aloud

There are many ways joy can spread. We can welcome others. sing songs, stay close to hurting people, make room to be together, and share the good news. Let's create an action for each one.
Then we'll use our actions in a game.

Build the Actions

Invite children to suggest movements. Choose one workable action together for each idea.
If they need help, offer these possibilities:

- **Welcome:** Exchange waves or another greeting.
- **Song:** Make a four-beat rhythm together.
- **Stay Close:** Gather in a small group, welcoming anyone who needs a group.
- **Make Room:** Form one large circle and widen it together, or make an opening with your arms.
- **Share the News:** Turn toward someone and say, "Joy to the World"

The examples are starting points. Children choose the final actions. No action requires touching. A wave, gesture, or pointing response can replace spoken words. For grouping actions, others can move toward a seated child; no one should be left searching for a group.

Play

1. Practice the five actions once.
2. Invite children to move safely around the room or in place.
   They can walk, march, roll, or choose another comfortable movement.
3. Call one of the five ideas. Everyone stops travelling and performs the chosen action.
4. Call **"Joy spreads!"** to begin travelling again.
5. Continue in different orders. Keep everyone playing.

If the group is ready, call two ideas in a row or invite a child to become the caller.

Read Aloud

Joy can move from one person to another when we welcome, sing, stay close, make room, and share good news. Our joy begins with Jesus, but it shouldn't stop with us. **We share joy with each other.**

SENT: Receive Joy and Share It

Setup

Gather comfortably. Children may hold their ornaments or look at the leader's copy.

Read Aloud

We've heard good news about joy from Jesus and learned from people in different places. Let's take a quiet moment to remember.

The 3-2-1

- Think of **three things you noticed** today.
  They might be people, moments, or something about Jesus.
- Think of **two things you're grateful** for.
- Think of **one thing you're asking or hoping God will do.**

Pause after each prompt. Invite a few responses, without requiring every child to share all six answers. Children can think quietly, point to a piece, or speak.

Prayer

Read Aloud

You can finish these prompts yourself or have the group respond.

Jesus, thank you for the joy we receive through...

For the children and communities we learned about, I pray...

Help us share your joy by...

Sending

Go knowing that Jesus is with you. May you receive joy from others and share his joy wherever you go.

Learn more or support the work

To learn more about these projects or explore ways your church can support them, look for CBM's ***Hopeful Gifts for Change*** gift catalogue. Prayer, learning, and giving are ways to participate together.

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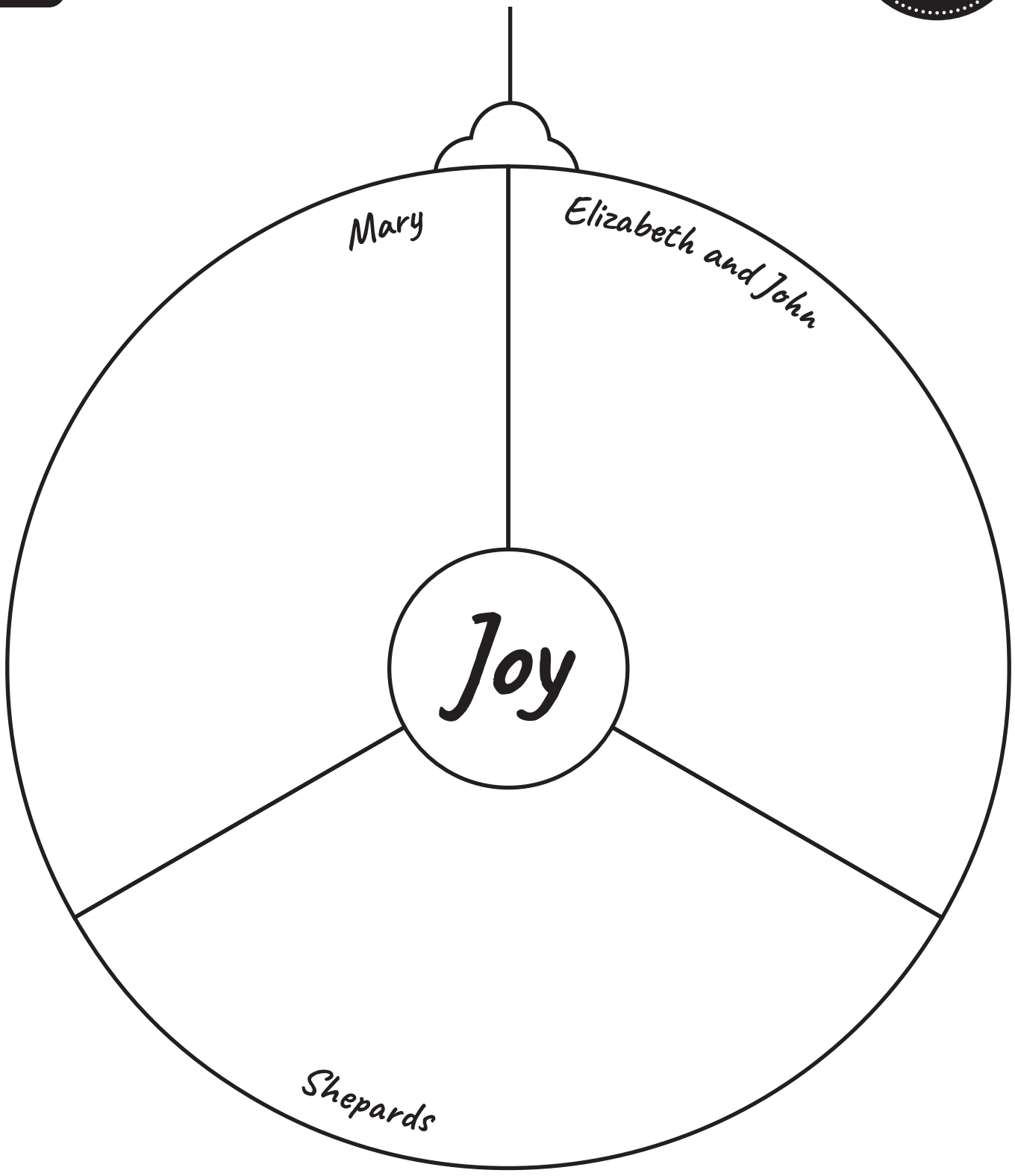
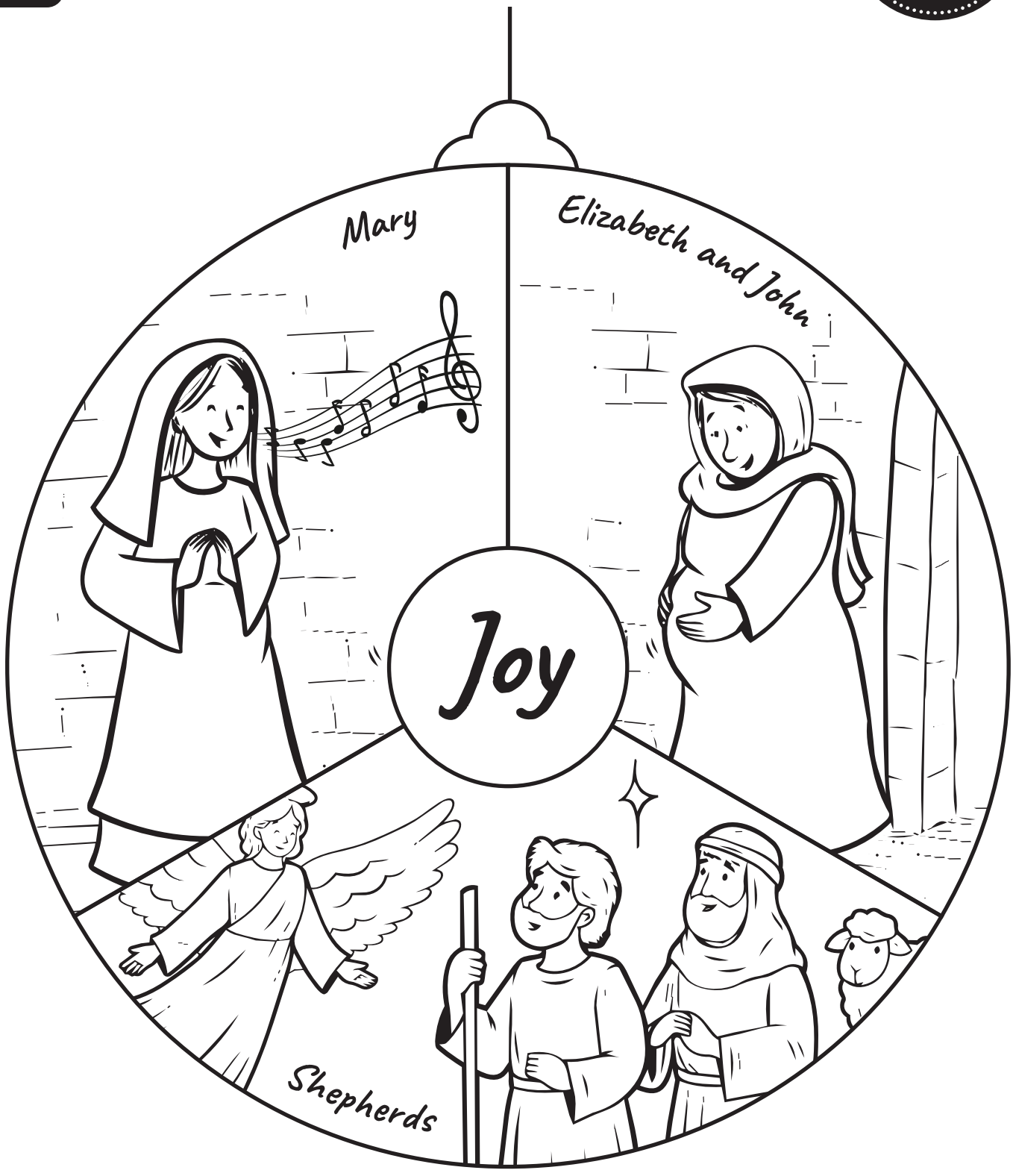


Ornament Side 1 Complete



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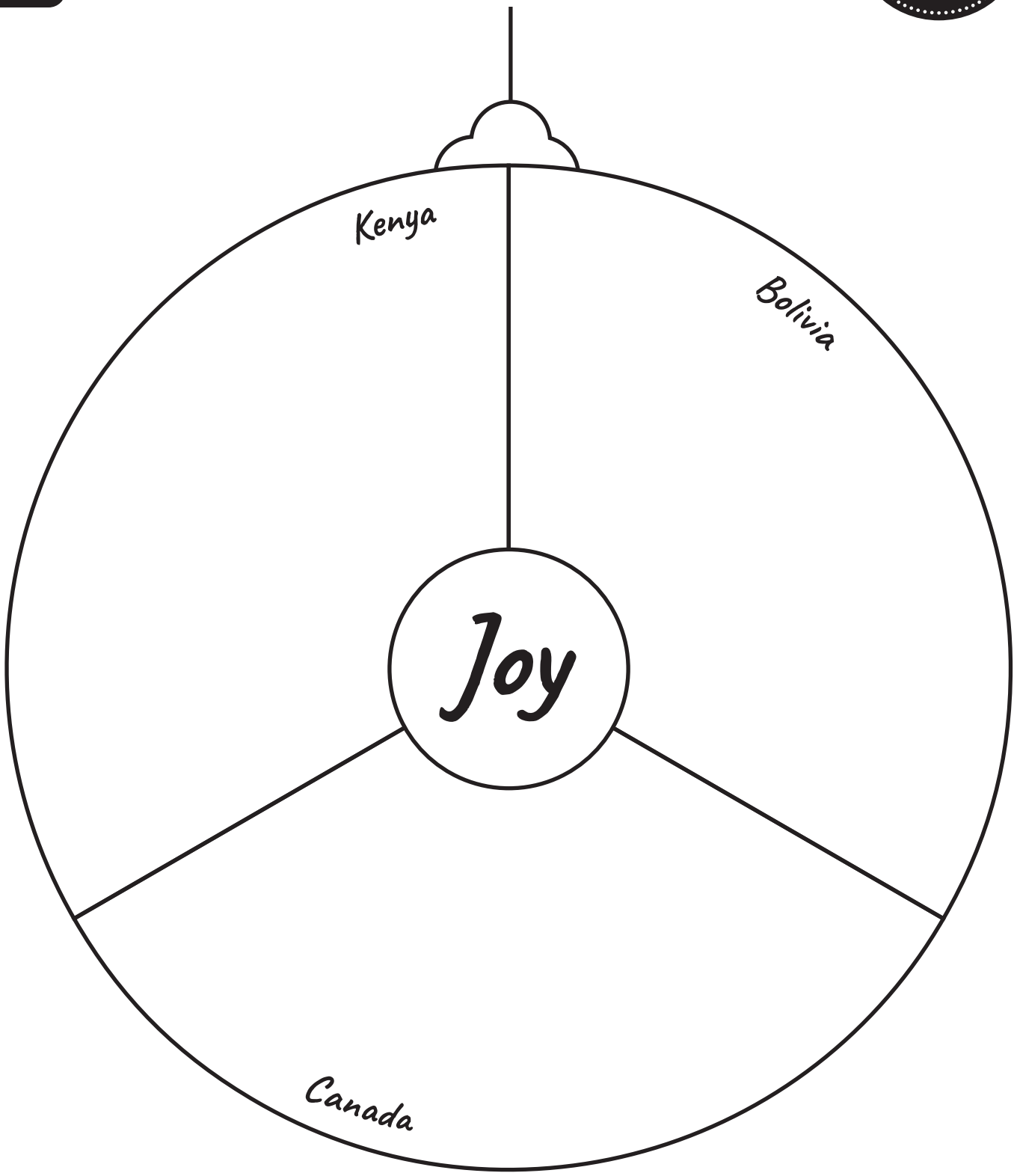
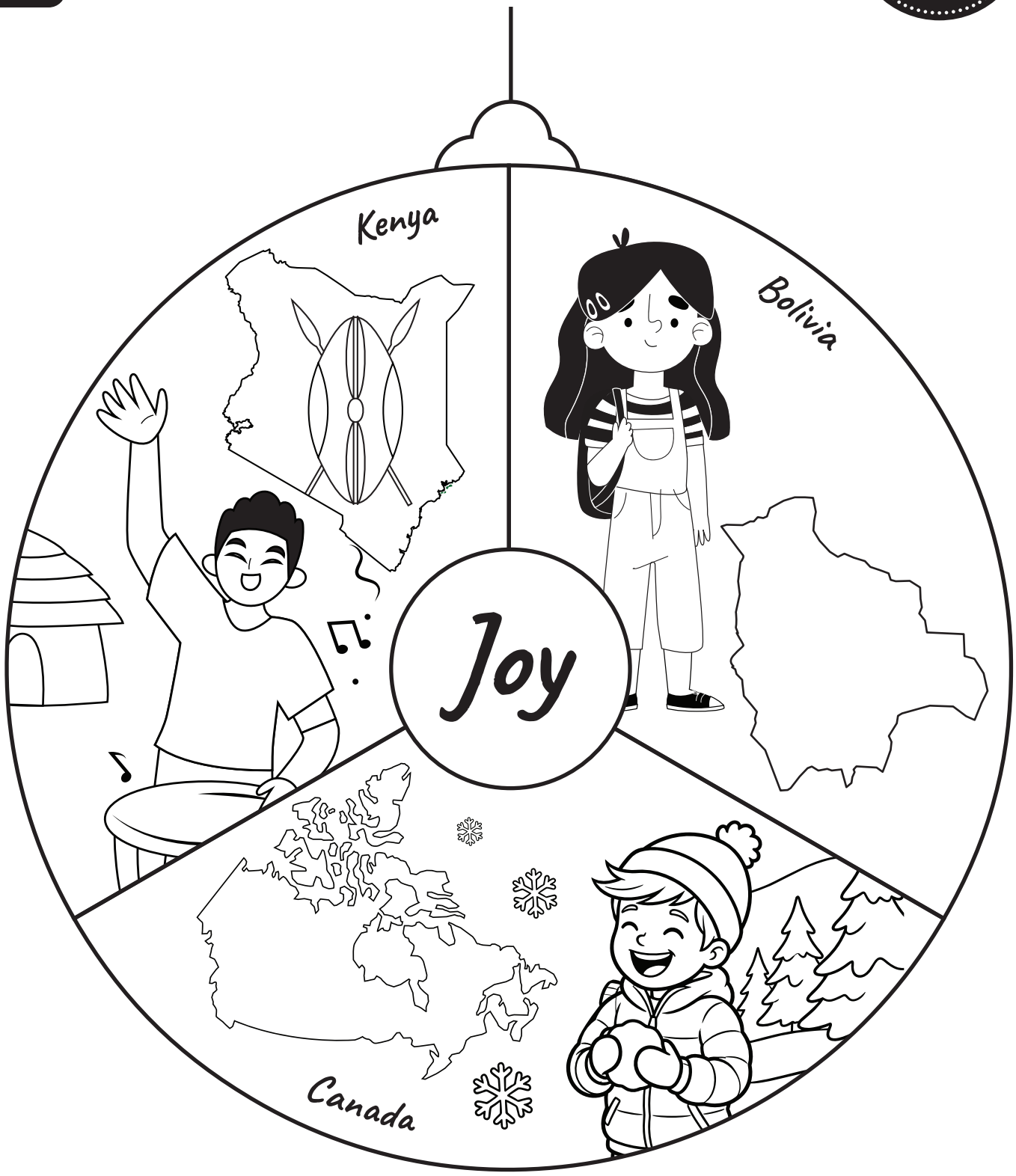
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