



This can be used in: schools, care homes, community gatherings, prisons, faith settings, pioneer ministry, workplaces, families. It serves different purposes as either Religion and Worldviews or Faith OutoftheBox.

Themes include: love, birth, inclusion, difference, adversity, Jesus, God, Christmas, creation.

Opening words

Are you ready for a story?

(from now on look at the story materials to draw people into the story)

Now we have time and space to breathe.

Let's turn this upside down (if you have a box).

Words

Actions (storyteller's perspective)

This is a Christian story about Christmas.
Let's be curious about this story.

or

Your story, my story, our story.
Let's be curious about this story.

*Unroll the cloth.
Change these words depending on the group and whether this is a Religion and Worldviews or Shalom Outofthebox e.g. if it is a school group it is important that you are not implying "this is what we all believe..."*

Everything was created by love.

Hold heart in cupped hands with one hand below the other. Place down heart in the centre.

Everything came from the stars.

Place down stars in a dome nearest to you.

God is love and created everything.

Hold out cupped hands with one hand below the other.

God is closer to us than our breath.

*Cross hands over your chest.
Pause for a breath. Place your hands back down.*

Mary and Joseph lived in a land ruled by people who came from another place. They were ordered to go to Bethlehem to be counted by the Roman soldiers. Mary was about to have a baby.

Place down 2 wooden discs touching each other between you and the heart. Place down Mary and Joseph so they are touching hands. Use two figures that are 'face on' not 'side on.'

God came so close to them.

*Cross hands over your chest.
Pause for a breath.
Place your hands back down.*

They knew their baby would change everything.

Look at the heart.

The baby was born. . .

Hold baby in cupped hands with one hand below the other.

and laid in a manger
- a place where animals normally ate.

Carefully lay the baby down on the heart.

Shepherds - people who look after sheep - were, at that time, looked down upon by others. The shepherds looked up, saw a light in the sky and heard the voices of angels.

Place down 4 wooden discs to your right to make a circle round the heart. Place down 1 shepherd and 3 sheep.

God came so close to them.

*Cross hands over your chest.
Pause for a breath.
Place your hands back down.*

Christmas

Words	Actions (storyteller's perspective)
They knew they must go to Bethlehem to see the one who would change everything.	<i>Look at the baby.</i>
Magi - which means wise people - were living far away in the East. They looked and spoke and thought differently from the people living in Bethlehem.	<i>Place down 3 wooden discs to your left. Place down 3 Magi. (Use the wooden people who look like they are travelling)</i>
They studied the stars and they saw a new star.	<i>Look at the stars but don't touch or move any.</i>
God came so close to them.	<i>Cross hands over your chest. Pause for a breath. Place your hands back down.</i>
They knew the star meant they must go to Bethlehem to see the one who would change everything.	<i>Look at the baby.</i>
They took with them unusual gifts.	<i>Hold out your cupped hands.</i>
Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, the sheep and the Magi came close to the baby.	<i>Hold your right hand near Mary and Joseph, then around the shepherd and sheep. Hold your left hand around the Magi. Pause and leave both hands encircling everything.</i>
God is love and is closer to us than our breath.	<i>Cross hands over your chest. Pause for a breath. Place your hands back down.</i>

Videos of this story on snow, on cloth and on sand can be found here:

<https://www.outoftheboxtraining.org/blog/christmas-outofthebox>

Materials

You can purchase one set of beautiful resources to share all OutoftheBox stories

<https://www.outoftheboxtraining.org/resources>

OutoftheBox uses loose parts set out on a round space (e.g. cloth, a clearing in leaves, a circle drawn in the snow).

You will need figures representing Mary, Joseph, a shepherd, 3 sheep, 3 Magi and the baby, stars and a heart shape that the baby can lie on. You could use stones for the people and stars and a heart shaped leaf or you could use nativity figures.