



Christmas Joy Offering

Materials—

- Shepherd's crook or staff
- Pastor's stole
- Backpack
- Small piggy bank with loose coins inside to jingle
- Carry supplies with you or, to save time, you may start by wearing the stole and backpack.

Good morning, boys and girls!

I have several things to share with you today . . .

First,

Take out the backpack, which will have a piggy bank inside.

Put backpack on your shoulders.

Put pastor's stole around your neck.

Hold shepherd's staff in your hand.

Ask the children if they have any ideas what these things have to do with Christmas.

Read Matthew 2:6

Ask "Who is the Bible talking about?"

That's right! JESUS!

He is the greatest ruler, the one who SHEPHERDS us all!

That is why I have a shepherd's staff in my hand. A shepherd is a protector, guide, and helper to the sheep.

Now, I know we are not sheep—but we do follow Jesus, who guides us and leads us to love God and to love others.

There are other people in the church who guide us and who are like shepherds to us, too.

Look around . . . you'll see pastors, Christian educators, and church office workers. All of these people love Jesus, and they love you.

That is why I am wearing the stole: a stole is a special piece of clothing that a pastor wears.

Now, why do I have this backpack?

Who wears backpacks?

STUDENTS!

Yes!





Christmas Joy Offering *(continued)*

Review items: shepherd's staff, stole, and backpack

Our church takes a special offering this time of year. (Pull out piggy bank and shake it to jingle coins.)

This offering helps current and retired church workers who need extra financial help, people like pastors or Christian educators who have an illness or a tragedy happen in their family. This offering also helps students who attend one of our Presbyterian related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

The wise men brought gifts to share with Christ as a response to the amazing gift God has given us: Jesus. We, too, can give gifts in response to the gifts we have been given—our church leaders and the college students who will be our future leaders.

Let us pray—*Close with this prayer or one of your own.*

Mighty and amazing God, you are a special gift to us. May we honor you in all we do and say. May our hearts and our piggy banks be poured out for others. In the mighty name of Jesus, we pray. **Amen.**

Written by Jennifer Whitford, Director for Children's Ministry, Worthington Presbyterian, Worthington, Ohio