

## Drama Ideas for Telling the Story of Christmas

*Submitted by Betsy Strain of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Crawfordsville, Indiana*

Have one or more persons prepared to sing the following lines from Christmas Carols when their “names” are mentioned in the Story of Christmas.

### Names

Bethlehem – “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Baby or Child – “Away in a Manger”

Shepherds – “While Shepherds Watched Their flocks by Night”

Angels – “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

Wise Men – “We Three Kings of Orient Are”

Star – “O Star of Wonder, Star of Light”

Lord or God – “Joy to the World the Lord is Come”

Mary – “Round Yon Virgin, Mother and Child”

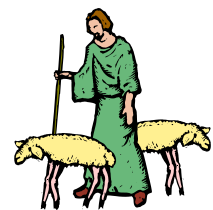
### Story of Christmas

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of



Nazareth to **Bethlehem** the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went to register with **Mary**, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While Joseph and **Mary** were there,

the time came for the **baby** to be born, and **Mary** gave birth to her firstborn **baby**, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were **shepherds** living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An **angel** of the



**Lord** appeared to them, and the glory of the **Lord** shone around the **shepherds**, and they were terrified. But the **angel** said to the **shepherds**, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in **Bethlehem** the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the **Lord**. This will be a sign to you: You will find a **baby** wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the **angel**, praising **God** and saying, "Glory to **God** in the highest, and on earth peace to all people on whom his favor rests." When the **angels** had left them and gone into heaven, the **shepherds** said to one another, "Let's go to **Bethlehem** and



see this thing that has happened, which the **Lord** has told us about." So they hurried off and found **Mary** and Joseph, and the **baby**, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen the **baby**, the **shepherds** spread the word concerning what had been told them about this **child**, and all who heard it were amazed at what the **shepherds** said to them. But **Mary** treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The **shepherds** returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told by the **angel**.

Now when the birth of Jesus took place in **Bethlehem** of Judaea, in the days of Herod the king, there came **wise men** from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is the King of the Jews whose



birth has now taken place? We have seen his **star** in the east and have come to give him worship. And when it came to the ears of Herod the

king, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And he got together all

the chief priests and scribes of the people, questioning them as to where the birth-place of the

Christ would be. And they said to him, In **Bethlehem** of Judaea; for so it is said in the writings of

the prophet, You **Bethlehem**, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the chiefs of Judah:

out of you will come a ruler, who will be the keeper of my people Israel. Then Herod sent for the

**wise men** privately, and put questions to them about what time the **star** had been seen. And he

sent them to **Bethlehem** and said, Go and make certain where the young **child** is; and when you

have seen him, let me have news of it, so that I may come and give him worship.

And after hearing the king, **the wise men** went on their way; and the **star** which they saw in the

east went before them. Then the **star** came to rest over the place where the young **child** was. And

when the **wise men** saw the **star** they were full of joy. And they came into the

house, and saw the **young child** with **Mary**, his mother; and falling down on

their faces the **wise men** gave him worship; and they gave him offerings of gold,

perfume, and spices. And it was made clear to the **wise men** by **God** in a dream that they were

not to go back to Herod; so they went into their country by another way.



## A Choral Reading

*Submitted by Betsy Strain, First Christian Church, Crawfordsville, Indiana.*

*Divide participants into 6 groups and assign each group one of the following characters. As the story is told by the narrator, the group members repeat their assigned phrases.*

1. John the Baptist—"Get ready!"
2. Gabriel—"Don't be afraid!"
3. Angels—"Glory to God!"
4. Mary—"As you say."
5. Joseph—"Yes, Lord."
6. Wise Men—"Follow that star!"

*This works very well with intergenerational groups. If there are very young children participating, it might be good to have someone hold up a symbol for each group or have the narrator simply point to the group that is to speak.*

### **The CHRISTMAS STORY**

**NARRATOR:** It's time for Christmas and we need to do what John the Baptist says . . .

**JOHN THE BAPTIST:** Get ready!

**NARRATOR:** We are too much like the first Christmas characters who weren't ready for what was about to happen. This was especially true for a young girl who had an unexpected visitor, a special messenger from God. It was Gabriel.

**GABRIEL:** Don't be afraid.

**NARRATOR:** Sure. Easy for an angel to say! The young woman hears news that will change the world and the rest of her life. She's going to have a baby, God's son. It is amazing to hear the first words from Mary.

**MARY:** As you say.

**NARRATOR:** It was a difficult time for the young woman's fiancé when he heard about the baby that would be born. So the special heavenly messenger made another visit, Gabriel . . .

**GABRIEL:** Don't be afraid!

**NARRATOR:** That's right. No fear when the messenger is speaking for God. There was only one way to respond and Joseph said:

**JOSEPH:** Yes, Lord.

**NARRATOR:** When the Governor required everyone to return to their place of birth to be counted, these two young people remembered the words of Gabriel.

**GABRIEL:** Don't be afraid!

**NARRATOR:** Mary

**MARY:** As you say.

**NARRATOR:** . . . and Joseph

**JOSEPH:** Yes, Lord.

**NARRATOR:** . . . made their way to Bethlehem. You know what happened. They needed a place to stay and there was no room except in the stable. Not to worry. Or rather, in the words of Gabriel . . .

**GABRIEL:** Don't be afraid!

**NARRATOR:** Mary

**MARY:** As you say.

**NARRATOR:** . . . and Joseph

**JOSEPH:** Yes, Lord.

**NARRATOR:** . . . accepted what God provided. While they were settling in for the night, another scene was just beginning. Shepherds

**SHEPHERDS:** Let's go.

**NARRATOR:** . . . were watching their sheep during the night. Suddenly, light as bright as day startled them. Music, like they had never before heard, filled the sky from a host of Angels.

**ANGELS:** Glory to God!

**NARRATOR:** The Angels . . .

**ANGELS:** Glory to God!

**NARRATOR:** . . . announced the birth of a special baby in a stable in Bethlehem. With great excitement, these simple men made a decision that sounded just like Shepherds.

**SHEPHERDS:** Let's go!

**NARRATOR:** And so they did. They went to Bethlehem and found the baby. "Others need to know about this," said the Shepherds.

**SHEPHERDS:** Let's go!

**NARRATOR:** And they did. They left telling everybody about the baby.

There was another journey that brought another group to find Jesus. They were Wise Men.

**WISE MEN:** Follow that star!

**NARRATOR:** That was their motto. But not just any star. This was an unusual star to lead them to the One born to be King. The Wise Men . . .

**WISE MEN:** Follow the star!

**NARRATOR:** . . . stopped at the palace of the king to ask directions. However, the palace magicians couldn't give any better directions. So they agreed with the Wise Men.

**WISE MEN:** Follow that star!

**NARRATOR:** And they did. They followed the star and found Jesus. That's what Christmas is all about, finding Jesus. Each of our characters received a message that reminds us what we need to do in order to find Him. John the Baptist.

**JOHN THE BAPTIST:** Get Ready!

**Narrator:** Gabriel.

**GABRIEL:** Don't be afraid.

**NARRATOR:** Mary.

**MARY:** As you say.

**NARRATOR:** Joseph.

**JOSEPH:** Yes, Lord.

**NARRATOR:** The Shepherds.

**SHEPHERDS:** Let's go!

**NARRATOR:** The Angels.

**ANGELS:** Glory to God!

**NARRATOR:** The Wise Men.

**WISE MEN:** Follow that star!

**NARRATOR:** Get ready! Go! Glorify God! Follow that Star! For we are *all* on the way to Bethlehem to meet Jesus, the new born son of God, the Light of the World, our Savior!

Adapted from an unknown source.

## Reading Nativity

*Based on a submission by Betsy Strain, First Christian Church, Crawfordsville, Indiana*

N = Narrator

C = Chorus

There are 2 Narrators and 4 Choruses.

\_\_\_\_\_ N1: In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

\_\_\_\_\_ N2: And all the people went their home towns to register.

\_\_\_\_\_ N1: Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

\_\_\_\_\_ N2: He went to register with Mary, to whom he was pledged to be married and who was expecting a child.



\_\_\_\_\_ C1: Let the heavens rejoice. Let the earth be glad.

\_\_\_\_\_ C2: Let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

\_\_\_\_\_ C3: Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy.

\_\_\_\_\_ C4: Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them.

\_\_\_\_\_ C 1,2,3,4: They will sing before the Lord, for he comes.

\_\_\_\_\_ N1: While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and Mary gave birth to her firstborn, a son.

\_\_\_\_\_ N2: She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.



\_\_\_\_\_ C1: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

\_\_\_\_\_ C2: For to us a child is born.

\_\_\_\_\_ C3: On those living in a land of darkness—a light has dawned.

\_\_\_\_\_ C4: To us a son is given.

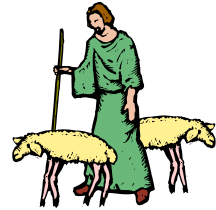
\_\_\_\_\_ N1: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

\_\_\_\_\_ N2: An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

\_\_\_\_\_ N1: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

\_\_\_\_\_ N2: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God.

\_\_\_\_\_ C1,2,3,4: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all on whom his favor rests.



\_\_\_\_\_ C1,2: Sing to the Lord a new song; Sing to the Lord, all the earth.

\_\_\_\_\_ C3,4: Declare God's glory among the nations.

\_\_\_\_\_ C 1,2,3,4: The Lord reigns!

\_\_\_\_\_ N1: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

\_\_\_\_\_ N2: So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

\_\_\_\_\_ N1: When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,

\_\_\_\_\_ C 1,2,3,4: And all who heard it were amazed.

\_\_\_\_\_ N2: But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

\_\_\_\_\_ C1: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,

\_\_\_\_\_ C2: And the government will be on his shoulders.

\_\_\_\_\_ C3: And he will be called Wonderful Counselor,

\_\_\_\_\_ C4: Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

\_\_\_\_\_ N1: Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea.

\_\_\_\_\_ N2: In Bethlehem in Judea, for this is what the prophet has written.



- \_\_\_\_\_ C1: But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C2: He will endure as long as the sun.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C3: He will judge your people in righteousness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C4: He will endure as long as the moon.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C1,2,3,4,: He will endure through all generations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ N1: During the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ N2: And the star the Magi had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C1,2: Arise, shine, for your light has come,
- \_\_\_\_\_ C3,4: And the glory of the Lord rises upon you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ N1: On coming to the house, the Magi saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C1,2: Lift up your eyes and look about you:
- \_\_\_\_\_ C3,4: All assemble and come to you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ N2: Then the Magi opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, incense and myrrh.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C1: The desert tribes will bow before him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C1,2 : All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C1,2,3: He will rule from sea to sea.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C1,2,3,4: He will rule to the ends of the earth



## An Intergenerational Choral Reading – The Coming of the Christ Child

*Submitted by Betsy Strain of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Crawfordsville, Indiana*

**Men:** He came out of the nation of Israel.

**Women:** He came to save.

**Children:** He came as a child.

**Youth:** He came from poverty and pain.

**Children/Youth:** He came to bring the light of God into a dark world.

**Adults:** He came to set us free from our sins and our burdens.

**Women:** He came to bring salvation to the children of God.

**Men:** He came to establish a new kingdom of light and joy and righteousness.

**Children:** His spirit lives in our hearts

**Youth:** To comfort and guide us through the dark times of our lives

**All:** HE HAS COME!

**All:** HE HAS COME!

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