

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"

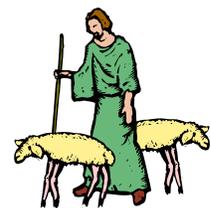
Story of Christmas

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 intergeneration 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.

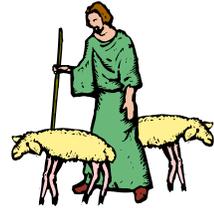
_____ N1: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

_____ 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!

DHM is Disciples Hands on Missions
©Disciples Home Missions of the
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
<http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/>
(888) 346-2631
Office of Family and Children's Ministry

