

Instant Nativity

This is a short Nativity Play designed to be used with minimal rehearsal. It is based around children forming a tableau of the nativity scene as the reader narrates the story. You may need a couple of grown ups to provide some organisation at the front.

We have not specified how many Angels or Shepherd to use, be flexible and use these roles to make sure that everyone who wants one can have a part. Next to each part I have suggested a costume that should be simple to make and aid the look.

Parts Needed

- Reader (most probably an adult, unless you have an especially strong reader among your children)
- 3-5 Children with torches
- Mary – a headdress and a baby
- Joseph – A headdress and staff
- Some Angels – Cardboard wings covered in tin foil
- Some Shepherds – Headdresses and some toy sheep
- Some Wise Men – Cardboard crowns and boxes to represent gifts

Script

Music Medley of Carols

Welcome We invite you all to join with us as we retell the Christmas story (lights go down – one light on reading desk)

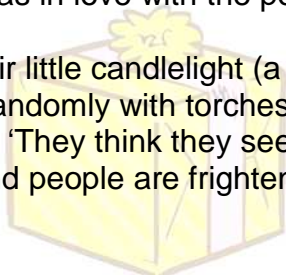
Reader Once upon a time the world was dark, and the land where the people lived was deep in darkness. It was as dark as the night in the daytime. It had been dark for so long that the people had forgotten what the light was like. This is what they did: they lit small candles (Christmas tree lights go on or other small lights) for themselves and pretended it was day. But the world was a gloomy place, and the people who walked in darkness were lonelier than they knew, and the lonely people were sadder than they could say.

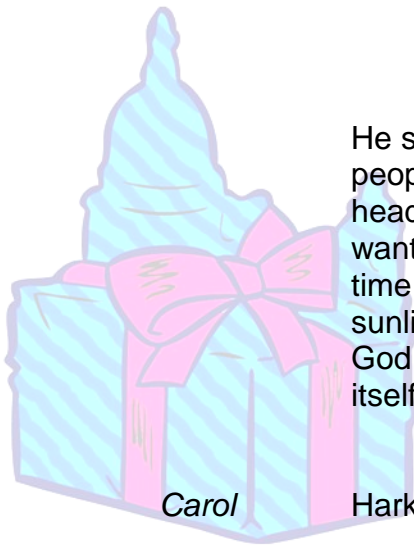
But God was in love with the world.

God looked down from heaven and saw the earth was stuck like a clock, at midnight. 'No', he said. 'This isn't good. Its time to make time tick again. Time, time' said the mighty God, 'to turn the earth from night to morning'.

And God was in love with the people especially.

He saw their little candlelight (a handful of children move across the stage randomly with torches or candles), and he pitied their pretending. 'They think they see', he said. 'But all they see is shadow, and people are frightened by shadows. Poor people!'





He said. 'They wonder why they are afraid.' God watched the people move about like fireflies in the night, and he shook his head. 'Poor people, pretending to be happy,' he said. 'Well, I want them to be happy. It's time' declared the Lord our God. 'It's time to do a new thing! I'll shatter their darkness. I will send the sunlight down so they can see and know that they are seeing!' God so loved the world that he sent his only son into the world itself. (All lights go on and straight into first carol')

Carol

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

v1 and 3

Reader

Joseph the Carpenter was worried. Mary, the girl he loved, was expecting a baby. It wasn't his baby; and they weren't married. The gossip has started already. He would have to break off the engagement.

But that night he had a dream. And in the dream God's messenger angel spoke to him:

'Don't break off your engagement to Mary,' the angel said. 'She has done nothing wrong. God has chosen her to be the mother of his Son – the promised King. You are to call him Jesus, the Saviour, because he is going to save his people from their sins.' When Joseph woke up, it was as if a great weight had been lifted from his mind. It didn't matter what anyone said! He would marry Mary and take care of her and the baby.

Carol

O come all ye faithful

v1, 2 and 5

Reader

Not long after this the Roman Emperor, Augustus, issued an order. Everyone in the Roman Empire must register in the town his family came from. Augustus wanted to make sure he had everyone on his list and that they paid their taxes!

Joseph's family was descended from King David. So he had to go to Bethlehem, where King David was born. He had to take Mary on their long journey south through the hills – eighty miles of rough dirt roads. The donkey carried their food, warm cloaks for the chilly nights, and clothes for the baby who was due to be born any day.

Mary was very tired when they arrived at last. And there was nowhere for them to stay. The inn was already crowded with travellers. The inn-keeper felt sorry for Mary – but the only space he had left was the stable. It was dirty and smelly in there with the animals. But at least Mary could rest and there was nowhere else.

Reader

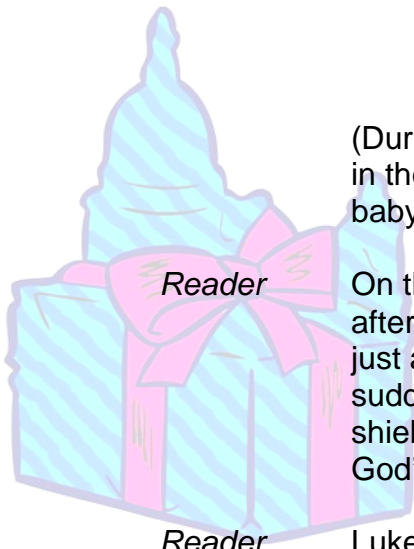
Luke 2 v6 and 7

Carol

O little town of Bethlehem

v1 and 2





(During the carol Mary, Joseph and Jesus go to the front and sit in the centre. It is effective to use a mum and dad and new baby)

Reader

On the hills around the town, shepherds kept watch, looking after their flocks. The night was dark and everything was quiet – just a little bleat now and then from one of the sheep. Then suddenly there was a blaze of light – so bright, the men had to shield their eyes. And out of the brightness came the voice of God’s messenger-angel.

Reader

Luke v10a – 12

Reader

Luke 2 v13

Reader

Luke 2 v14

Carol

It came upon a midnight clear v1 and 2
(Angels go up and stand at the back row of the tableau)

Reader

Luke 2 v15 and v6

Carol

Silent Night, Holy Night v1 and 2
(Shepherds come up and sit either side of Mary and Joseph)

Reader

The sky was black. The night was clear. The stars were bright as diamonds. ‘Perfect’ said the star-watcher. ‘Just as it should be.’ But just then God nudged the brightest star and sent it floating like a kite across the night sky. ‘Quick,’ called the star-watcher to his friends. ‘Come and see. There’s a new star and that means.....’
‘.....a new king! Said the second star-watcher. ‘Somewhere a new king is about to be born!’
‘I’ll tell you what,’ said the third star-watcher, let’s follow the star and see.’

Reader

Matthew 2 v9 - 11

Carol

As with gladness v1, 2 and 3
(One wise man to go up in each verse – Kneel, present gift and move to one side.)

Carol

Once in royal David’s City v1, 2, 3 and 4

Blessing

Carol

Away in a manger v1 and 2

(Text from The Lion Storyteller Bible)

