

Childrens Pageant Dec 17 2017



Reader 1	Our Christmas pageant is a timeless story that has unfolded over time. Our pageant comes to us from two different bible stories and traditions gathered over many years.
Reader 2	As we remember the story today, we share images from Matthew, Luke and John as well as traditions born from saints along the way.
Reader 1	We offer this telling of our story in the prayerful hope that the presence of the Christ within each of us will shine more brightly.
Hymn	O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem. Come and behold him, born the King of angels: O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him: Christ the Lord!
Reader 2	<i>Now the birth of Jesus took place in this way.</i>
Reader 1	Before Mary and Joseph were even married, they were surprised to discover that they would be having a child. Joseph was a righteous man and deeply troubled by the idea. But one night as he tossed in his sleep, an angel came to comfort Joseph.
Reader 2	<i>‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’ All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel’, which means, ‘God is with us.’</i>
Hymn	O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.

	Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
Reader 1	When Joseph awoke, he remembered the angel’s promise. He and Mary were married and together they prepared for the birth of their child.
Reader 2	<i>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.</i>
[Action]	[Mary and Joseph enter and begin slowly walking up the aisle.]
Hymn	O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light; The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
Reader 1	As Joseph and Mary came into Bethlehem, the time for the baby’s birth was near. Joseph was searching for a place to stay in this busy city, and the rooms were all taken. Finally Joseph came upon an innkeeper who took pity upon them.
[Action]	[Innkeeper enters and stands beside stable]
Reader 1	Though his rooms were filled, the innkeeper responded with compassion and led the weary couple to the stable where his animals slept.
Reader 2	While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.
[Action]	[Mary and Joseph sit behind manger.]

Hymn	<p>Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,</p> <p>The little lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.</p> <p>The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,</p> <p>The little lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.</p>
Reader 1	The first chorus to greet the new baby were the animals; the donkey who carried Mary to Bethlehem, the cows who lived in the stable, and the turtle dove who perched peacefully above. The humility of these first guests bears witness to the extravagant welcome of the Christ child then and even now.
[Action]	[Animals enter and come to the manger.]
Hymn	<p>Jesus our Brother, strong and good, was humbly born in a stable rude,</p> <p>And the friendly beasts around him stood, Jesus our brother, strong and good.</p>
Reader 2	In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.
[Action]	[Shepherds enter and walk halfway down aisle and stop.]
Reader 2	Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.
[Action]	[One angel enters and joins the shepherds at the halfway point.]
Reader 2	But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’
[Action]	[ALL remaining angels enter and join the shepherds at halfway point.]
Reader 2	And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!’

Hymn	<p>Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,</p> <p>And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.</p> <p>Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!</p>
Reader 2	When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’
[Action]	[Shepherds and angels walk to the manger and stand behind Mary and Joseph.]
Reader 2	So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.
Hymn	<p>The first Noel the angel did say Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, On a cold winter’s night that was so deep.</p> <p>Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel</p>
Reader 1	Meanwhile, in the court of King Herod, scholars from a distant land appeared. They were drawn to an incredible star and followed it to the land of the Jews. From the brilliance of the star, they knew royalty lie beneath it. They approached King Herod asking,
Reader 2	‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’
[Action]	[Star and Wiseguys come halfway down the aisle and stops.]
Reader 1	King Herod was a frightened man who tolerated no rivals. He called together all of his advisors, the chief priests and scribes, and demanded to know where to find this child.

Reader 2	They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: “And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.” ’
Reader 1	Herod was now deeply troubled. He sent the seekers to Bethlehem saying:
Reader 2	‘Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.’ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
[Action]	[Wiseguys join the manger scene (leaving Star in the aisle).]
Hymn	<p>We three kings of Orient are; Bearing gifts we traverse afar,</p> <p>Field and fountain, moor and mountain, Following yonder star.</p> <p>O star of wonder, star of light, Star with royal beauty bright,</p> <p>Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.</p>
Reader 1	The star is a timeless symbol of the light that shines in the darkness, enabling us to follow. Drawn to the light, like the wisemen from distant lands, the shepherds from nearby fields, and even the animals, we are welcomed in the presence of the Holy One just as we are.
[Action]	[Star joins manger scene.]
Reader 1	Surrounded by the angels, fleeting glimpses of the divine not bound by time or space, we remember again the mysterious omnipresence of the divine.

Reader 2	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through the Word, and without the Word not one thing came into being. What has come into being was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
Hymn	What child is this who, laid to rest on Mary's lap, is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping? This, this, is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing; haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.