

*Live in Bethlehem ~An International Christmas Pageant*

**CAST**

TV ANCHOR

REPORTER

2 TOURISTS

3 SHEPHERDS

2 WANDERERS

3 CHILDREN

ANGELS

The Holy Family (non-speaking roles)

MARY

JOSEPH

JESUS

**Music:** This is a musical pageant with an international theme. There are three places for carols to be sung in the script. Carol suggestions are:

More traditional:

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Once In Royal David's City

Away in a Manger

The First Noël

International:

In a Lowly Manger Born,

Manglakat na Kita sa Belen (Let us Even Now Go To Bethlehem),

All Earth is Waiting,

all found in found in *The New Century Hymnal*, © The Pilgrim Press 1995

Shengye qing, shengye jing (Holy Night, blessed night)

found in *Wonder, Love and Praise: A Supplement to The Hymnal 1982*, © Church Publishing 2001

Setting:

*Time: Early Evening (past and present intermingle)*

*Place: The Streets of Bethlehem*

*One small area off the stage or to the side will be the TV Anchor's desk.*

*The rest of the set is "Live in Bethlehem." Signs stating "No Vacancy" and "Census Line Begins Here" should be placed around the stage area. A curtain depicting the night sky of Bethlehem hangs on the stage, hiding MARY, JOSEPH and JESUS. A group of SHEPHERDS are down in stage front. A group of CHILDREN, dressed in 21<sup>st</sup> century clothing, are huddled together around a fire, across from the SHEPHERDS, leaving an empty space at center stage for the main street of Bethlehem. Two WANDERERS, with backpacks or hiking gear and walking sticks, walk the streets of the set of Bethlehem, sometimes stopping to talk with the children, sometimes with the shepherds. Two*

*TOURISTS are taking pictures, look at the sights and pointing at the signs. The REPORTER should be at center stage with a microphone. The TV ANCHOR is at his/her desk.*

### Scene 1

#### TV ANCHOR

This just in—breaking news from Ancient Palestine! It’s a Census year again and Cesar Augustus has decreed that all the “world” should be registered. It appears that there is some confusion in Bethlehem, and so many people have gone there that every hotel, motel, and bed and breakfast place is booked solid! One inn is rumored to have even turned away a couple that’s expecting their first child. Let’s go live to our on-site reporter (*Looks towards REPORTER*).

#### REPORTER

*(REPORTER smiles and looks out to the audience)*. It’s a madhouse here in Bethlehem. As you said, every room has been booked and there is no place to stay. You can see it is after dark, and the stars have come out here in Bethlehem. Let’s try to catch an interview with some of the many interesting people who have come from around the world to be registered for the Census.

*(TOURIST #1 walks across the main street. Reporter catches TOURIST #1 by the arm)*

#### REPORTER

Hello! I’m reporting for Good News Service. Can you tell us why you are here in Bethlehem today?

#### TOURIST #1

I’ve come from far away, over hills and valleys, to see the new baby about to be born!

#### REPORTER

Baby? What baby?

#### TOURIST #1

The new baby being born!

*(TOURIST #1 runs off to take another picture)*

#### REPORTER

Well, there seems to be a lot of people from out of town here—it seems that a baby is about to be born somewhere and it’s creating quite a stir. Let’s see if we can find out more about this baby.

*(Reporter sees TOURIST #2 as he/she walks across the main street)*

Hello! I’m reporting for Good News Service! Can you tell us why you’re here today?

**TOURIST #2**

I've come from far away, across rivers and valleys, to see the new baby about to be born!

**REPORTER**

Can you tell us about this baby? Who is this baby?

**TOURIST #2**

The baby we all have been waiting for!

*(TOURIST #2 leaves to walk down stage front to take a picture while TOURIST #1 poses by the "Welcome to Bethlehem" sign)*

**REPORTER**

*(Calling after TOURIST #2)* Wait, wait!

*(The TOURISTS, CHILDREN, WANDERERS and SHEPHERDS gather at center stage to sing—REPORTER moves to the rear of the stage)*

**International Carol #1****Scene 2**

*(When the carol is finished, the TOURISTS go to the rear of the stage and continue to take pictures in the background, stopping and pointing now and then. SHEPHERDS and CHILDREN return to their places. The WANDERERS are sitting with the children)*

**REPORTER**

*(Moving from the rear to the fore)* Well, this is one reporter who will continue to investigate this mystery baby—I will find out why this baby is so special!

*(REPORTER moves downstage and finds a group of SHEPHERDS sitting down near stage front, talking quietly)*

Hello! I'm reporting for Good News Service! Can you tell us why you're here today?

**SHEPHERD #1**

Well, I was with my friends here in the fields, keeping watch over our flocks by night, when an Angel of the Lord came!

**SHEPHERD #2**

We were really scared, but the Angel told us not to be afraid.

**SHEPHERD #3**

The Angel told us good news for everybody! Today a Savior was born in the City of David, who is the Messiah, the Lord!

**REPORTER**

The Messiah?

*(REPORTER moves to the rear of the stage. CHILDREN, TOURISTS, WANDERERS and SHEPHERDS move to the center)*

**International Carol #2****Scene 3**

*(When the carol is finished, the CHILDREN return to where they were sitting. The TOURISTS continue to walk around the chancel. The WANDERERS sit at center stage)*

**REPORTER**

Well now we know that the new baby is the Messiah, but where is the baby?

*(REPORTER finds the WANDERERS)*

**REPORTER**

Excuse me—can you tell me about the new baby being born?

**WANDERER #1**

*(Hesitates)* Yes, I can, but you must listen carefully.

**REPORTER**

*(Hesitates)* Well, ok, but this better be good. *(Sits down by the WANDERERS).*

**WANDERER #2**

This baby is very, very special.

**WANDERER #1**

This baby lives with those who have no home.

**WANDERER #2**

This baby has come for the poor and the lost.

**WANDERER #1**

This baby has come to love and bring hope to those in need.

**WANDERER #2**

To find the baby, find those who are in need.

*(REPORTER moves to the rear of the stage. CHILDREN, TOURISTS, WANDERERS and SHEPHERDS sing at center stage)*

### International Carol #3

#### Scene 4

*(The WANDERERS have disappeared behind the curtain. The TOURISTS continue to take pictures. The CHILDREN have moved back to gather by the fire, humming Silent Night)*

*(REPORTER finds the group of CHILDREN)*

Hello! I'm trying to find the new baby that is being born. Can you help me?

#### CHILD #1

We know where he is!

#### CHILD #2

He's lying in a manger, because there's no room at the inn.

#### CHILD #3

We'll take you there!

*(CHILDREN lead REPORTER to the MANGER—the curtain is pulled back to reveal the family of MARY, JOSEPH and JESUS. The SHEPHERDS gather around. The TOURISTS show up and join the crowd. ANGELS now arrive from off-stage)*

#### ANGELS

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth, peace!

**(All sing) Suggested Carol: Hark the Herald Angels Sing (first verse)**

#### REPORTER

This is an amazing story! I bring you good news of great joy for *all the people*, young and old, those who are in need, those who have no home, those from here and for those around the world: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. All the world shall know his name, and his name is...

#### EVERYONE ELSE

Jesus!

#### TV ANCHOR

That's all the news for now—stay tuned for more breaking news from the Good News found in your Bible. But before we sign off, let us all join together in one final carol.

**Suggested Closing Carol: Joy to the World**

