

## **St. Stephen's Christmas pageant**

### **Celebration of the nativity of our lord Jesus Christ**

**Celebant:** "Our King and Savior now draws near. Come, let us adore him."

**Organ Voluntary:** Wes Moulton

#### **NARRATOR 1:**

The story of the birth of Jesus happened in a real time and place more than two thousand years ago

The story has been told by the young and wise...

...in hamlets...in towns and villages...and large cities...

The story has been told in homes...in great auditoriums...in large cathedrals and in churches.

This story has been told in many ways...in song...in movies...in plays and pageants.

#### **NARRATOR 2:**

Let us close our eyes for a moment... and pray...

...O god, today we are remembering the birth of your son on earth

Today we are telling the story of Jesus, who was born of Mary, who died and was resurrected...

...and is in truth the messiah...the Christ, sent by god.

He came to save not only Israel but to save all people

#### **NARRATOR 1:**

Be with us.

Bring to our minds the wonder and mystery of this event that we may know you better

Bring to our hearts the openness and depth of feeling that we may love you more.

Bring to our bodies the freedom and grace that we may serve you well.

We offer this moment to you and to each other. **Amen."**

Let us now open our eyes and here the story and imagine how the birth of Jesus Christ took place

# Christmas Pageant 2016

## NARRATOR 2:

And it came to pass in those days, that a decree went out from emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered

It was done because the roman government wanted to make sure that everyone in the empire was paying their taxes correctly

The census was carried out all over the empire....most of Europe

But in Palestine, it was carried out in a Jewish way rather than a roman way

This meant that families had to register in the their historical tribal town rather than where they lived

## NARRATOR 1:

This also meant that Joseph and Mary would have had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem, as this was town that joseph's family....the royal family of David originally came from.... a journey of about 70 miles

And all went to be taxed....everyone into his own city

And joseph also went up from galilee...out of the city of Nazareth...into Judea, unto Bethlehem....because he was a descendant from the house and family of David

He went to be registered with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child

The journey would have taken about three days and they might well have arrived in the evening, because if they had arrived earlier in the day, it is more likely that they would have found somewhere to stay

You see.....in those times, there weren't really such things as motels or inns,

You normally would have stayed with some extended family or relations.

A more accurate translation of inn would be a guess room.

You would normally stay with extended family in their guest room but as it was a busy time the guest room was already full.

## NARRATOR 2:

Most houses would have been shared with the animals that the family kept. Houses had two levels, the upper/mezzanine level where people slept and the ground floor where the animals slept at night and the family level during the day.

The animals were a kind of central heating at night keeping the house warm.

The guest room was often on the upper level or even a hut put on the flat roof of the house.

## NARRATOR 1:

As many people would have traveled to Bethlehem for the census, all the houses, or certainly the upper levels were full

So joseph and Mary had to sleep with the animals on the lower level

And so it was that, while Mary and joseph were there, the time came for Mary to deliver her child

## Christmas Pageant 2016

And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger

In the hills and fields outside Bethlehem, shepherds look after their sheep through the long night.

Suddenly an angel appeared before them. The shepherds were very, very, scared, but the angel said...

***“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you, is born this day, in the city of David, a savior, which is Christ the lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.”***

Then many more angels appeared, lighting up the sky.

The shepherds heard them praising god singing:

**NARRATOR 1 AND 2:**

***“Glory to god in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”***

**NARRATOR 2:**

And the shepherds said one to another...

Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the lord has made known unto us

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph...and the babe, lying in a manger. And when they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child

Then the shepherds returned to their sheep, praising god for sending his son to be their savior

**NARRATOR 1:**

But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart

***“For my soul magnifies the lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my savior,  
for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.”***

When Jesus was born, a brand new star appeared in the sky

Wise men in faraway countries saw the star and guessed what it meant.

Gaspar, or Caspar, has brown hair and brown beard, wears a green cloak and a gold crown with green jewels on it. He is the king of Sheba. Caspar represents the frankincense brought to Jesus.

Melchior, has long white hair and a white beard wears a gold cloak. He is the king of

## Christmas Pageant 2016

Arabia. Melchior represents the gold brought to Jesus.  
Balthazar, has black skin and a black beard wears a purple cloak. He is the king of Tarse and Egypt. Balthazar represents the gift of myrrh that was brought to Jesus. They were very clever men that studied the stars and had read in very old writing that a new star would appear when a great king was born. They set out to find the new king and bring him gifts  
The wise men followed the star towards the country of Judea and when they got to the capital called Jerusalem they began to ask people

### NARRATOR 2:

**“Where is the child who is born to be king of the Jews?”**

And going into the manger, they saw the child with Mary, his mother  
And praising him, they said:

**“Behold the King of kings!!!”**

**“Behold the Lord of hosts!!!”**

**“Behold the Son of Mary!!!”**

**“We’ve come from far, from the east, following this star.....to find the savior of the world!”**

Then opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh

### NARRATOR 1:

Now all this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the lord through the prophet:  
The virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall name him Emmanuel

***“God is with us”.***

And so it is written.....

***“For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life”***

**The Peace**