

WESTGATE NATIVITY PLAY 2010

Shepherds: sit with leader in front of stage left

Angels, worshippers: sit with leader in front of stage right

Elizabeth, Zechariah, Isaiah, Mary, Joseph: sit in front of stage right

SLIDE #1

Welcome Everyone!

Today our Children are performing the nativity play - the story of the birth of Jesus. The book of Luke has the original version. All children from pre-school through primary age have been invited to participate, and a few teenagers are helping out too.

This play brings the message of WAITING for the PROMISE of God's gift. We wait a year for Christmas - the celebration of Jesus Birthday. People make promises to us, and we have to wait to see the blessing of that promise. Imagine, through Bible times, people heard about THE promise of a Saviour King, but they didn't see the fulfilment of the promise in their lifetime. Their dreams were placed in their children – in whose names they placed their hopes. God's promise was to send Jesus – His blessed gift to us.

NARRATOR – (stand microphone – Stage Left)

Long, long ago – since the time of Adam & Eve, God made a promise to send a Saviour into the world to break the power of Satan. The Highway of promise extended over a long period of time from Seth to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the most famous King... David. Perhaps each generation thought that the Saviour would be born in their time; perhaps each woman thought that she could be the Mother of the promised One to come! In old Bible times, runners were sent ahead of kings and princes to prepare the way – removing rocks and rough places in the road. People would shout "The King is Coming!"

**** *Isaiah STANDS BESIDE NARRATOR Expressive movement group GOES TO CENTRE STAGE* ****

And through the hundreds and hundreds of years that passed, God reminded his chosen people of the promise, by sending prophets, like the prophet Isaiah, for example:

SLIDE #2

The Prophet Isaiah stands at front of Stage Right – and opens the scroll (Isaiah 40:3-5)

Worshippers form picture of scripture as it is read

Isaiah (with scroll) reads:

A voice of one calling:
"In the desert prepare the way for the Lord;
Make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be raised up,
Every mountain and hill made low;
The rough ground shall become level,
The rugged places a plain.
And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
And all mankind together will see it.
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken".

Move into a small group behind Isaiah who sits down

SLIDE #3

ZECHARIAH - centre stage – kneels up straight, side-on to audience, bows head, and prays. Worshippers arrange themselves in a semi-circle behind him. Kneeling low.

[ELIZABETH enters and remains on side of stage at SR]

Narrator:

Once long ago... (around 6 B.C. – in a town in the Hill country of Judea) , there lived a priest called Zechariah, and his wife Elizabeth.. They had kept all the Lord’s commandments and were therefore, righteous before God. For a long time they had prayed that they would have children. But now, they were *much too old* to have children. ..

SLIDE #4

NARRATOR: One day, Zechariah was burning incense in the Temple of the Lord - while outside the temple – worshippers from his priestly division – waited and prayed. ***And ..would you believe it – AN ANGEL APPEARED!***

[Zechariah notices a bright light, falls on his knees, and puts on his sunglasses before he can face the angel]

Gabriel: [to centre stage on “X”] “Do not be afraid Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He will go before the Lord, in spirit and power, to prepare the people for the Lord”.

Zechariah “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is very old too?”

Gabriel “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time”. Light off as Gabriel leaves stage

SLIDE #5

Reader : Zechariah – remains in the temple, but he is unable to speak !!

Elizabeth [**Laughing. . and pointing at Zechariah - whispers to audience**] “The Lord has done this for me!”

Lead worshipper looks at watch and says: “He’s been praying a long time!” ***Elizabeth sits down***

[Zechariah comes out of the temple (moves to front of centre stage) – throwing his hands around..unable to speak!.]

Lead worshipper & worshippers run to front CS: “Zechariah – what happened to you in the Holy place of God?”

[Zechariah continues throwing his hands around,.. unable to speak!.

Lead Worshipper: “And why are you wearing those ridiculous sunglasses?”

Lead worshipper 2 takes the sunglasses off Zachariah

Lead Worshipper: waves at Z – and Z waves back. “Your eyes are OK; I see that you can still see !!”

They all nod together animatedly.

ZECHARIAH & THE WORSHIPPERS sit down

SLIDE #6

Elizabeth ENTERS – (to Stage Centre)

Narrator: Zechariah returns home, and one day, Elizabeth discovered that she was pregnant. She didn't leave the house for five months !

[Elizabeth (SR) - [turns, while holding stomach, and looking down] slowly and meaningfully says: "The Lord has done this for me. In these days he has shown his favour and taken away my disgrace among the people".

Elizabeth sits down

ISAIAH ENTERS to Stage Left beside narrator

Narrator: Meanwhile... The Angel Gabriel had another visit to make.... To a relative of Elizabeth's - a lovely young lady named Mary- who was engaged to be married to a Carpenter - named Joseph..

ISAIAH: *knock KNOCK*
NARRATOR: *WHO's there?*
ISAIAH: *ISAIAH ISAIAH !*
NARRATOR: *ISAIAH ISAIAH - WHO?!*
ISAIAH: *Its ISAIAH again !!*

ISAIAH (Reading from scroll)

LOUDLY: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

SOFTLY: *(In case you don't know what Immanuel means – it means 'God with us'.*

SLIDE #7

Joseph & Mary (walk slowly from SR to centre stage, then stop and stand still together)

[Mary holds up her hand to admire her ring ! and she and Joseph look at each other adoringly...]

(Joseph nods to Mary - he is going home, and she gives him a small wave as he leaves SL. She remains **standing on the "Z" spot, looking at her enormous \$2 Shop ring**)

SLIDE #8

Gabriel [entrance to "X" spot] "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you"

Mary was so surprised at seeing the angel, (*PUTS ON SUNGLASSES*) and then the angel spoke again:

Gabriel **"Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."**

Mary said "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

ANGEL **"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God!"**

Mary answered: **" I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said". [Mary sits down]**

GABRIEL sits down

Reader: Mary was found to be pregnant – before she and Joseph were to be married. Joseph knew the baby wasn't his.

JOSEPH ENTERS TO "Z" spot (microphone)

SLIDE #9

Joseph stretches, and says:

"My life was going so well, I have a great job, and I found the girl of my dreams .. but now she says she's pregnant – by some miraculous work of God ! How can this be? I want to believe her...

I love her and I feel sorry for her, so I think I will marry her and then divorce her quietly, so that she is not publicly disgraced. [Joseph settles down to sleep – facing toward X spot]

SLIDE #10

Narrator: Joseph settled down to sleep, and an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream: (Joseph jumps up – lights on)

GABRIEL: "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save his people from their sins." (sit down)

Joseph: "I will do just as the angel of the Lord has commanded" [sits down]

Narrator: How amazing ! Mary pregnant – by the Holy Spirit. . and Joseph agreeing to become Step-Dad to Jesus. Wow! Mary decided to go and visit Elizabeth for a few months

SLIDE #11

MARY & ELIZABETH ENTER TOGETHER AND FACE EACH OTHER ON X AND Z SPOT

NARRATOR: when Mary greeted Elizabeth, the baby leaped inside her and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Elizabeth (loudly): "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favoured, that the mother of my Lord should come to me. As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby inside me leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished".

Mary : "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour".

SLIDE #12

ZECHARIAH ENTERS

Reader: Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home. [Mary AND Elizabeth sit down, Elizabeth gets her baby boy and then goes back on stage]

NARRATOR: When Elizabeth's baby was born, her family and friends shared her great joy. On the eighth day the baby was to be circumcised and named. However, when it came time to name him, the people wanted him to be named after his father – Zechariah. But Elizabeth spoke up and said:-

ELIZABETH : "No, he is to be called John !".

NARRATOR: The people said “There is no-one among your relatives who has that name”. Then they signalled to Zachariah to find out what he would like to name the baby. He asked for something to write on.. (remember the angel had shut his mouth until this day!).

ELIZABETH fetches Zechariah a small CARDBOARD (have this ready in the front row beforehand – with ‘JOHN’ written.)

And Zechariah wrote, “His name is John”. Immediately, Zechariah’s mouth was opened and he began to speak, praising God. Everyone everywhere got to hear about it, and they wondered about this baby boy – because the Lord’s hand was with him. Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:-

ZECHARIAH: Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.....

NARRATOR: And Zachariah went on to say:-

ZECHARIAH: And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him.. to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.

EXIT: Zechariah, Elizabeth & John

SLIDE #13

Narrator: “When John grew up, he was to be very important. He would have to prepare the people to receive Jesus. He is known to us as John The Baptist. *How did he get that name???? Jesus asked John to baptize him in water – in the River Jordan. And John baptized lots of people*”

SLIDE #14

ENTER: Joseph & Mary- they walk slowly around the stage together, finishing at back of Centre stage – until the powerpoint slide of J,M,J appears... (Slide#15)

NARRATOR: In those days, Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census (a record) be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to his own town to register. As Joseph was descended from David, he was required to register in Bethlehem, the town of David.

SLIDE #15

NARRATOR: So he and Mary had to travel from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, up to Bethlehem. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to baby Jesus. **MANGER** to be taken onto stage – and placed in Centre **FRONT**

JOSEPH AND MARY WALK SLOWLY TOGETHER FROM REAR CS, UP TO THE MANGER, and SIT ON EITHER SIDE OF it – admiring baby Jesus, (and Mary admires her ring too!!)

NARRATOR:She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them at the inn .

Shepherds enter from SR TO THE “Z” SPOT - [SUNGLASSES READY!!]

Narrator: And there were shepherds living out in the fields near by, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

Shepherds put sunglasses on, as soon as angel speaks ! LIGHTS ON

GABRIEL: 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 Saviour 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”

SLIDE #16

Narrator: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel,

[ALL ANGELS – Big and Small enter and stand BEHIND GABRIEL – STAY THERE]

praising God and saying, *(EVERYONE SAY IT TOGETHER - from big screen!!)*

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests.”

SING: O COME LET US ADORE HIM

Shepherd1 : “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about!” *THE SHEPHERDS HI-5 EACHOTHER !*

[Shepherds sit BEHIND Joseph (Centre Stage)

SLIDE #17 – PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN GATHER AT SIDE OF STAGE WITH STAR BEARER

Narrator: Magi or wise men who studied the stars had followed a bright star – called the Star of Bethlehem and they followed it to Jerusalem (Pre-Schoolers BRING stars and stand in front of manger)

SLIDE #18 , #19 SONG TWINKLE TWINKLE XMAS STAR – CD TRACK NO.

NARRATOR: And so today 2000 years later we continue to celebrate the birth of Jesus our Lord and Saviour and the greatest gift who has ever been given to people!

SLIDE #20 SONG HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS – while cake is carried in

NARRATOR: Let’s all join in and sing in celebration of Jesus’ birth.

SLIDE #21,22,23 SONG JOY TO THE WORLD

SLIDE #24 WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

RAEWYN TO WRAP UP

MURRAY – BENEDICTION AND GRACE