

Born is the King: A Very Small Nativity

Written by Robin Hill

Cast (adult, child or mixed) with speaking parts, and props:

Choir equipped with words and music for “The first Nowell”

Narrator

Two chilly shepherds

Two angels

Flouncing star

Melchior, with gold

Balthazar, with myrrh

Caspar, with frankincense and a teddy bear

Mary

Joseph

Baby Jesus in a manger

Also:

As many non-speaking shepherds, angels, camels, etc., as you can get away with.

Cast members and props are position in front row of congregation.

Choir is positioned beside organ, ready to sing.

As organist plays chorus as introduction, two shepherds walk on stage, looking chilly.

Narrator: The night was dark, the fields were cold,
some shepherds came to tend their fold,
but none of them could dare to say
what big surprise would come their way.

Shepherd 1: Eeeeeeeh, it's proper chilly.

Shepherd 2: You can say that again!

Shepherd 1: Eeeeeeeh, it's proper chilly.

Shepherd 2: *[Looking upwards and pointing]* Look!

Both: *[Both looking upwards and pointing]* IT'S ... AN ANGEL!

*As choir sings, shepherds move to one side, allowing two
angels to come forward.*

Choir: The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay:
in fields where they lay a-keeping their sheep
on a cold winter's night that was so deep:
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

Narrator: From out the sky an angel flew
and said: "I bring good news to you.
The child of God lies in a manger.
He'll save you all from sin and danger."

Angel 1: Glory to God in the highest!
Angel 2: Peace on earth to all God's friends!
Shepherd 1: They're definitely angels, you know.
Shepherd 2: You can say that again!
Shepherd 1: They're definitely angels, you know.

As choir sings, angels move to one side, allowing the star to come forward, twinkling enthusiastically.

Choir: They looked up and saw a star,
shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

Narrator: Up in the sky, a star shone bright,
breaking the darkness of the night.
Its beams lit up the land below,
to give the earth a heavenly glow.

Star: See me? [*Dramatically*] I'm the star!!!

Shepherd 1: That's a thing you don't often see in the night's sky.

Shepherd 2: You can say that again!

Shepherd 1: That's a thing you don't often see in the night's sky.

As choir sings, star flounces off to one side, allowing three wise men to come forward.

Choir: And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

Narrator: The next good people to arrive
were wise old men who would contrive
to follow where the star might go
and find the baby King below.

Melchior: Are we nearly there yet?

Balthazar: It's a slow journey, eh boys?

Caspar: Yes, I wish I had traded my camel in for a faster model.

Melchior: That's as may be, but the fact of the matter is that I'm
needing a right royal rest.

Balthazar: Melchior! Caspar! Look! The star is drawing nigh to the
north-west!

Caspar: *[In awestruck excitement]* Ullapool!

Melchior: No! Not that far north-west.

Balthazar: Let us seek the wise counsel of yonder shepherds, for surely they will know the true identity of our celestial guide's noble destination.

Caspar: *[Over-dramatically]* All hail, you horny-handed sons of ovine husbandry! We come ... from the East.

Shepherds 1&2: Longniddry?

Caspar: No! Far further east. You see before you, Melchior *[Melchior bows]*, Balthazar *[Balthazar bows]*, and Caspar *[Caspar bows]*. Magi on a mission. These itinerant voyagers three find themselves engaged upon an odyssey of high import, to wit the search for a regal infant whose kingdom will know no bounds. Observe the stellar presence which, even yet, illumines the vaults of heaven. And there, below its ethereal light, are espied huddled habitations of humble humanity. Pray, good shepherds bold: reveal, if you will, the nature of this place and, moreover, the name by which these weary travellers might name it.

[Pause, as shepherds scratch their heads]

Shepherd 1: Can't understand a word he's sayin'.

Shepherd 2: You can say that again!

Shepherd 1: Can't understand a word he's sayin'.

Wise men shrug their shoulders, mutter to each other, then gather themselves regally. As choir sings, wise men parade around with their gifts, returning to centre stage.

Choir: This star drew nigh to the north-west,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.

Narrator: The star had led those wise men bold
across the desert with their gold
and with their myrrh and frankincense,
bought at consid' rable expense.

[Wise men try to outdo each other in the splendor of their gifts.]

Melchior: See! I bring the baby king gold of measureless worth.

Balthazar: See! I bring the baby king myrrh of finest quality.

Caspar: See! I bring the baby king frankincense of magnificentest ... something-or-other ... although I wonder if he'd really prefer a wee teddy. *[Pulls out a concealed teddy bear]*

As choir sings, wise men move to one side, allowing Mary,

Joseph and baby Jesus to come forward. Wise men then kneel by manger and present gifts.

Choir: Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

Narrator: They gave their gifts. Their job was done.
They'd met God's tiny, baby son,
laid in the oxen's feeding stall,
born to redeem us, one and all.

Mary: Look at these gifts Joseph. What do you think they mean?

Joseph: They mean far more than you and I could ever understand,
Mary.

Mary: Joseph, I think they mean ... *[looking at Jesus]* God is with us.

As choir sings, whole gathers around the holy family, joining in final chorus, sung twice.

Choir: Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of naught,
and with his blood mankind hath bought.
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel. [REPEAT CHORUS!]
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel. [BIG FINISH!]*

*Wild applause from the congregation, then just when they
think it's all over ...*

Shepherd 1: That'll be the end then.

Shepherd 2: You can say that again.

All: THE ... END!!!

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If you use the sketch, have fun, and let me know how it goes!

With best wishes, especially for Christmas when it comes,

Robin

Rev Dr Robin Hill
8A Elcho Road
Longniddry
East Lothian, EH32 0LB
Scotland

robinailsa@btinternet.com

Marjorie Clark
Programme Co-ordinator
Church of Scotland HIV Programme
121 George Street
Edinburgh, EH2 4YN
Scotland

hiv@cofscotland.org.uk

0131-225 5722