



## An At-Home Christmas Candlelight Service\*

Provided below is an adaptation of the Christmas candlelight drama. Perhaps you and your family can use it, or even personalize it in your own unique way, to experience the Christmas story in a new way this year.

Tips to help you prepare:

- You will need at least 12 candles. These will represent the Nativity: 1 Joseph, 1 Mary, 1 Christ, 2 Shepherds, 1 taller Angel, 3 Angels, 3 Wisemen. Make sure you have sturdy candleholders and matches or a lighter.
  - As always, be careful using fire around young children. If you have very small children, you may want to display the candles on a bookshelf or ledge where they can't reach the flames.
  - YouTube links and lyrics can be found in the document if you would like to use them. If you don't want to use the links, a piano or other instrument can be used. Please feel free to sing a cappella or have a CD ready to sing along with.
  - Try to get everyone in the family involved. Take turns being the narrator, playing the music, picking out the candles or lighting and blowing them out.
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### Opening Prayer

*Narrator:* And it came to pass that a proclamation was issued by Caesar Augustus that a census should be taken. And everyone went to his own town to register.

So Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem, the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. (*Light the Joseph candle.*)

He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. (*Light the Mary candle.*)

*Narrator:* While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to a son, whom they named Jesus. (*Light the Christ candle.*) She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

### *Sing "Away in a Manger"*

*Narrator:* And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. (*Light the shepherd candles.*)

*Narrator:* Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared to them (*light the tallest angel candle as narrator continues*), and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "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 Savior 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."

And suddenly a great company of heavenly host appeared with the angel (*light all of the angel candles as narrator continues*), praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

*Sing "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"*

*Narrator:* The shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child.

*Narrator:* After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We have come to worship him." (*Light the wise men candles.*)

The star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw Jesus with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold, incense and myrrh.

*Sing "What Child is This?"*

*Narrator:* Then, having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, the wise men returned to their country by another route. (*Extinguish the wise men candles.*)

And the shepherds returned to their work, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen. (*Extinguish the shepherd candles.*)

And the angels returned to heaven. (*Extinguish the angel candles.*)

And many years later, Mary and Joseph, being flesh and bone, came to the end of their lives on earth. (*Extinguish the Mary and Joseph candles.*)

But the Light that began in Bethlehem was life. And this life, Jesus Christ, was the Light of all humanity. The light still shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

And it all began on a silent, holy night . . . long ago . . .

*Close by singing "Silent Night"*

\*Adapted by First Presbyterian Church of Rochelle 12/2020,  
Inspired by "A Christmas Candlelight Drama," from *The Music Leader*, a former publication of LifeWay.