

A Seasonal All Age Worship Service

(SAAW009)

Crib Service Jesus is born

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CRIB SERVICE – JESUS IS BORN

Aim of script: To present the story of the birth of Jesus using two puppets and children dressed up in nativity costumes and Carols

Use of Script: This script works well as a half hour Crib service on Christmas Eve. It not only contains the words for the puppets, but also the directions for the children to form a nativity tableau (there are no words for the children) and suggestions of Carols to sing.

Main themes: Birth of Jesus

Biblical references: Matthew 2:1-12, Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20, John 3:16

Characters:



The script is a dialogue between a young boy puppet called “James” who wants to follow Jesus but keeps getting things wrong, and his wise old “Grandad” puppet who helps to sort him out. Each puppet is operated by one person from behind a screen and so it is essential that the voices are heard; radio-microphones are ideal. Puppets and puppet screens can be purchased from many sources including <http://www.onewayuk.com/>

Children to form a tableau: Angel Gabriel, Mary, Joseph, donkey, angels, shepherds, wise men.

Outline of Service:

Puppets: Welcome

Opening Carol: O come all ye faithful (v.1)

Puppets:

Tableau: Enter Angel Gabriel

Carol: The Angel Gabriel from heaven (v.1-3)

Puppets:

Tableau: Enter Mary, Joseph and donkey

Carol: Little donkey

Puppets:

Carol: Away in a manger

Puppets:

Tableau: Enter angels

Puppets:

Tableau: Enter shepherds

Carol: Mary had a little baby (Andy Silver © 1986 Andy Silver)

Puppets:

Tableau: Enter wise men

Carol: We three kings

Puppets:

Talk: John 3:16 and closing prayer

Carol: Christmas, it's Christmas (Alan Price © 1996 Song Solutions Daybreak)

Enter Grandad

Grandad: Hello everyone.....it's so good to see you all on this Christmas Eve. We'll be starting the service in a minute... (pause)..... just one problem.....the Vicar doesn't seem to have turned up....don't go away.....I'll just go and see if I can find him.

Exit Grandad

Enter James

James: Hello everyone. I'm so excited.....I have already hung up my stocking at the end of my bed.....I hope it will be full of lovely presents when I wake up nice and early tomorrow morning.....I love Christmas day....

Oh, by the way, can you keep a secret?.....Really? Well don't tell Grandad.....but I've locked the Vicar in the vestry.....that's why he's not here now. I thought that Grandad and I could lead the service much better ourselves..... ssshhh.....Grandad's coming.....

Enter Grandad

Grandad: Oh hello James.....lovely to see you. Well I don't know what to do because the Vicar hasn't turned up. It is most unlike him..... I can't think what has happened to him.

James: Grandad, I've got an idea.

Grandad: Ye...s

James: Why don't you tell the children the Christmas story and I'll help you.....it would be such fun and you are so good at telling stories?

Grandad: Well... I'm not sure.....you see the Vicar might turn up in a minute.....

James: He won't.....I mean I suppose he must have got stuck somewhere. We can't keep everyone waiting much longer Grandad.

Grandad: OK then James. Let's have a try.

James: Oh good.....

Grandad: What I am about to tell you is the most amazing and true story that happened over two thousand years ago. We need you to join in with the carols and I think that there are some children here who are all dressed up and ready to help us.

James: But before we start the story, I would love to sing Grandad....

Grandad: What a good idea James.....let's all stand together and sing our first Carol.

Exit Grandad and James

Carol [O Come all ye faithful \(v.1\)](#)

Enter Grandad and James

Grandad: Our story begins with an angel.

- James: What's an angel Grandad?
- Grandad: An angel is a special messenger from God who sometimes brings news from God to people living on earth.
- James: Oh....so that's why mummy says I'm not a little angel...
- Grandad: Yes James.....but there may be other reasons for that.
- James: What was the angel's name Grandad?
- Grandad: Gabriel.....and he had some news that God wanted to give to a young woman living in Nazareth called Mary.
- James: Wow.....I bet that was exciting for Mary. One minute she might have been washing up the dishes, and the next minute....flutter, flutter and there is an angel standing by the sink.....a bit like superman flying through your back door. Did the angel take Mary for a ride on his wings?
- Grandad: No James. He had to tell Mary something very important.
- James: What did Gabriel say to her Grandad?
- Grandad: He told Mary that she was highly favoured by God and that God was with her.
- James: What an encouraging message.
- Grandad: I think that Mary was actually rather troubled by Gabriel's message because the next thing he said to her was, "*Do not be afraid Mary, you have found favour with God*"
- James: I wouldn't have been afraid of the angel Grandad.....I'm not afraid of anything..... apart from the dark, and spiders, and wasps, and thunder, and seagulls eating my chips....do you know Grandad that.....
- Grandad: Can I carry on James?
- James: Sorry Grandad.....
- Grandad: Now where was I?
- James: You had just told me that the angel Gabriel told Mary not to be afraid.
- Grandad: Ah yes....well Gabriel then went on to tell Mary that God was going to give her a special baby and that He was to be named Jesus as He was God's son.
- James: I bet Mary nearly fainted didn't she? I mean it's one thing to be told that you have found favour with God, but another to be told that you are going to have God's own baby.
- Grandad: Mary was surprised and asked the angel how this could be true as she wasn't even married.
- James: And what did the angel say? "*God's got it sorted.*"

- Grandad: Something like that James.....the angel said, *“nothing is impossible with God”*.
- James: So there’s hope for me then Grandad, isn’t there?
- Grandad: Yes James, there’s hope for you.
- James: Well what about Mary....did she say “yes” to the angel Gabriel.....that she’d be willing to be Jesus’ mother?
- Grandad: Mary said to the angel: *“I will do whatever God wants”*
- James: How amazing.....I find it hard to do what my mum wants, let alone God.....she must have loved God a lot.
- Grandad: She did James. And to help us to remember this part of the story we have a child dressed up as the angel Gabriel.....so if you’d like to come forward now and stand up here so that everyone can see you.

(Child dressed as the Angel Gabriel goes to the front of the room / church and begins to form the tableau.)

Grandad: Let’s all stand and sing our next carol.

Exit Grandad and James

Carol: [The angel Gabriel \(v.1-3\)](#)

Enter Grandad

Grandad: Where are you James?

Enter James

- James: Here I am Grandad.....just checking on my stocking.....you never know it might have been filled up.....but it wasn’t! Go on.....please tell us the next part of the story.
- Grandad: Mary loved a man called Joseph, and they were going to get married.
- James: Oh.....what about Joseph? He was in for a shock wasn’t he? He can’t have been happy that Mary was having a baby.....even though it was God’s.....I mean.....how does he explain that to the neighbours?
- Grandad: Joseph was very upset about it all James until an angel visited him and told him not to worry, and that the baby inside Mary was God’s Son.
- James: I say these angels did have a busy time.....flying off to Mary, and then to Joseph....I bet their wings got tired. I wonder what angels eat to give them energy.....angel cake?
- Grandad: Hmmmm.....shall I continue?
- James: Yes Grandad. Sorry Grandad.
- Grandad: One day as Mary was getting close to having her baby, she and Joseph had to take a trip to the city of Bethlehem to sign some important papers.

James: Was it far to go Grandad?

Grandad: It was about an eighty mile journey.....

James: So did they go by car or by bus Grandad? I don't think they had trains in those days.

Grandad: You're right there James.....but they didn't have cars or buses either.....Joseph probably walked and Mary may have ridden a donkey.

James: Ridden a donkey.....all that way in her state!!! That can't have been fun.....I wonder if you can get "donkey-sick".....I wouldn't have liked that.

Grandad: I'm sure you wouldn't James and we would have all heard about it!! I think Mary would have accepted it without moaning and groaning all the way.

James: She was a pretty amazing lady wasn't she Grandad?

Grandad: She was James..... Once she and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem the city was so crowded that they couldn't find anywhere to stay.

James: How awful Grandad.....Mary must have been so tired.....I'd have let her have my bed.

Grandad: How kind of you James. Would the children dressed as Mary, Joseph and the donkey like to come forward now.

(Children dressed as Mary, Joseph and the donkey all go to the front of the room / church. Joseph and Mary both sit on chairs and the donkey lies at their feet. The Angel Gabriel stands behind them)

James: I'm off.....I definitely do not like the smell of donkeys.

Exit James

Grandad: Let's stand and sing our next carol together.

Exit Grandad

Carol: [Little donkey](#)

Enter Grandad

Grandad: Come on James, the donkey smells fine....I want to continue with the story.

Enter James

James: Alright I'm coming.....Grandad.....I've been thinking.....where did Mary and Joseph sleep.....I mean they couldn't sleep on the streets of Bethlehem could they.....what happened to them?

Grandad: One kind innkeeper had a stable where he kept his animals and he let Mary and Joseph sleep there for the night.

James: Oh.....pew.....how smelly.....fancy having to sleep next to animals.....I wouldn't have got any sleep all night. I suppose the innkeeper didn't give them pegs for their noses did he?

- Grandad: No James he didn't. Mary didn't get much sleep that night anyway as her baby was born.
- James: You mean to say that Jesus was born in a smelly, dirty old stable with animals around? That is unreal Grandad...God's own Son born in astable.
- Grandad: It is unusual isn't it James? But often God's ways are different from our ways.
- James: They certainly are Grandad.....
- Grandad: Mary wrapped up baby Jesus in special cloths to keep him warm and made a soft bed for him in an animal's feeding trough. Mary loved him, Joseph loved him and God loved him. Please stand as we sing our next carol together.

Exit Grandad and James

Carol: [Away in a manger](#)

Enter Grandad and James

- James: I suppose there may have been one advantage to Jesus being born in a stable Grandad.
- Grandad: What's that James?
- James: I guess it must have been a quiet place without people around.....although animals can make some funny noises. Bertie taught me how to do a pig impression Grandad. Would you like to hear it?
- Grandad: Not now thank you James.....perhaps later on.
- James: Alright Grandad.....perhaps I can give you my sheep impression as well....
- Grandad: Talking of sheep reminds me that Mary and Joseph didn't have a quiet night in the stable.....like you thought that they might....
- James: Don't tell me.....the sheep needed a place to stay as well as Jesus..... so they all crowded into the stable, surrounded his manger and kept him warm..... singing lullabies to him all night.....*(starts to sing) "Baa baa baa baa, ba, ba, ba, ba, baaaa..." (to the tune of "baa baa black sheep")*
- Grandad: No James.....that didn't happen.
- James: Oh.....so what did happen then Grandad?
- Grandad: It was the middle of the night. Outside the town of Bethlehem some sheep were sleeping and the shepherds were watching them. Suddenly an angel came to the shepherds.
- James: Those angels are really busy Grandad. Were the shepherds afraid when they saw the angel like Mary was?
- Grandad: Yes they were....in fact they were terrified.....

James: They need to man-up Grandad.....

Grandad: They were terrified because the glory of the Lord shone around them.....which must have been a totally awesome sight.

James: So did the angel have a message for the shepherds like he did for Mary?

Grandad: He did. He said to them: *"I am bringing you good news. This is happy news for all the people. Today in Bethlehem, God's son, the Saviour of the world was born. You can go and see him. He is wrapped warm and snug in a manger"*.

James: Wow.....what an invitation.....to be invited to see God's own Son.....

Grandad: After the angel had spoken loads of angels came from heaven praising God singing *"glory to God in the highest and peace on earth"*

James: I'd have loved to have heard those angel voices.....

Grandad: Would the children dressed as the angels like to come forward now?

(Children dressed as the angels go to the front of the room / church. They stand behind Mary and Joseph)

Grandad: When the angels had finished singing the shepherds hurried into Bethlehem. There they found the stable and saw baby Jesus.

James: I wonder what Mary thought about that! She's just given birth and here come a load of scruffy shepherds.

Grandad: It must have been strange for her.....but it must have also been wonderful for her to have heard what had happened on the hillside with the angels. I think Mary thought a lot about that special night.

Would the children dressed as the shepherds like to come forward?

(Children dressed as shepherds go to the front of the room / church and stand either side of Mary and Joseph)

Grandad: Let's sing again:

Exit James and Grandad

Carol: [Mary had a little baby](#)

Enter Grandad

Grandad: James....what are you doing now?

Enter James

James: Having a little peek in my stocking Grandad.....for a moment I thought that there was something inside it.....but no, it is still empty!

Grandad: I'm sure it will be full tomorrow James.....

James: How exciting!

Grandad: Now do you want me to carry on with the story?

James: Yes please Grandad.

Grandad: Something else rather unusual happened when Jesus was born.

James: What was it Grandad? Did God put on an awesome thunder and lightning show to say, “*come and see....my son has just been born?*”

Grandad: No James he didn't, but he did put a special star in the sky and some wise men in the east saw it and followed it a long way.

James: Why did they follow this star Grandad?.....it could have taken them anywhere.....a bit like dad's satnav which seems to have a mind of its own. The other day the silly old satnav told dad to drive down a one-way street the wrong way....and he followed it's instructions....can you believe it? The next thing that happened was this great bang on the side of the car.....I nearly shot out of my seat in shock....it was a traffic warden....banging on the car to stop dad going any further.....I think there should be rules about...

Grandad: James...

James: Sorry Grandad.....please tell me why the wise men followed the star.

Grandad: They knew that this star was a sign that a baby king had been born.....and so they followed it as they wanted to come and worship him.

James: Did the star lead them to where Jesus was?

Grandad: Yes it did.....and the wise men arrived at the place where Jesus was staying. They bowed down before Jesus and worshipped Him and then gave him some special presents.

James: Oh how exciting....what did they give him? Gold plated rattles, wind up donkeys....?

Grandad: No James.....they gave him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.....gifts that showed that Jesus was king and a priest but that he would also suffer one day. Would the children dressed as wise men like to come forward now?

(Children dressed as wise men go to the front of the room / church and kneel before Mary and Joseph)

Grandad: Let's stand and sing together.

Exit Grandad and James

Carol: [We three Kings](#)

Enter Grandad and James

James: Is that the end of the story Grandad?

Grandad: Well it is and it isn't. I have told you how Jesus was born and what happened when he was born, but there is a lot more to tell you about his life and why he came.

James: Grandad.....I've been thinking.....isn't it amazing that God would trust an ordinary young woman like Mary to be the mother of His Son Jesus?

Grandad: It is amazing James.....but what is even more amazing is that God the Father sent His precious son Jesus to earth.

James: Why did He do that Grandad?

Grandad: God the Father sent Jesus to earth because He loves each one of us and wants to give us the gift of life.....

James: But I am alive now Grandad already.....

Grandad: The life God the Father wants to give you is eternal life James.....and that comes through a relationship with Him.....I am sure the Vicar will explain that to us if he turns up this evening.

James: Mmmm

(Vicar appears and stands in front of the puppet screen where he can talk with James and Grandad)

Grandad Oh hello Vicar, where have you been? James and I didn't know where you had got to so we have told everyone the Christmas story for you.

Vicar: Thank you very much.....I really appreciate that. You know it's very odd.....but someone locked me in the vestry. One minute I was filling in the service register and the next minute when I turned round the door was shut, and when I tried it.....it was locked.

Grandad: Really! That sounds a bit like something someone I know might do.

James: Oh... er... hello Mr Vicar.....we've been having such fun.....

Grandad: James....do you by any chance know anything about the Vicar being locked up in the vestry?

James: Oh.....I think it's time I disappeared and sorted out the presents I am giving everyone tomorrow before I have to answer any awkward questions. Goodbye everyone.....

Exit James

Grandad: James!

Exit Grandad

Vicar: Short talk on John 3:16 and prayers

Carol: [Christmas, it's Christmas](#)