

# The Nativity

## A short nativity in scripture in song

Although written specifically for LDS congregations, “The Nativity” is a nativity play appropriate for any Christian worship service. The text is based entirely on verses from the books of Matthew and Luke.

The program requires a narrator, a song leader, and a pianist or organist. Directions are given for the text and songs only. Actors, scenery, and costumes could be added as suggested by the text.

Two options from the LDS *Hymns* and *Children’s Songbook* are suggested for each song; many of these carols are widely available in other hymnals. Depending on the desired length of the program, one or all of the verses of the songs may be sung.

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Song “Joy to the World,” attr. George F. Handel, arr. Lowell Mason, or “The Nativity Song,” Patricia Kelsey Graham

Narrator Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise:...(Matt. 1:18)

In those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed...And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child (Luke 2:1, 3–5).

Song “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” English traditional, harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams or by Lewis H. Redner; or “Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful,” attr. John F. Wade

Narrator                   And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:6–7).

And Joseph called his name Jesus (Matt 1:25).

Song                        “Silent Night,” Franz Gruber, or  
“Away in a Manger,” melody by William J. Kirkpatrick, harm.  
Rosalee Elser

Narrator                   And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, “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. Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger” (Luke 2:8–12).

Song                        “*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*,” Richard S. Willis, or  
“*The First Nowell*,” English traditional carol

Narrator                   And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Luke 2:13–14).

Song                        “*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*,” Felix Mendelssohn, or  
“*While Shepherds Watched their Flocks*,” Yorkshire carol

Narrator                   And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, 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 hath made known unto us.”

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger (Luke 2:15–16).

Song                        “*Angels from the Realms of Glory (Angels We Have Heard on High)*,” French traditional carol, or  
“*Stars Were Gleaming (Infant Holy, Infant Lowly)*,” Polish carol

Narrator

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them (Luke 2:17–20).

Song

“Far, Far Away on Judea’s Plains,” John Menzies Macfarlane, or  
“Once in Royal David’s City,” Henry J. Gauntlett