

Christmas by The Book

By Sharon Kay Chatwell

- TYPE:** Traditional Christmas Skit for Older Children and Youth (10 – 18 yrs.)
- LENGTH:** 20 minutes (without the optional Christmas Carols)
- PARTS:** NARRATOR #1
NARRATOR #2
NARRATOR #3
MARY
JOSEPH
GABRIEL, The Angel
ELIZABETH
SHEPHERDS
MAGI (Wise Men)
- SYNOPSIS:** This skit tells the traditional Christmas Story, starting with the scriptures prophesying the coming of the Messiah and continuing through the birth of Jesus. Much of the narration and dialogue is taken directly from the Holy Scriptures; as such it represents the events of the first Christmas as taken from “The Book”: The Word of God – The HOLY BIBLE.
- SETTING:** Ancient Israel including Nazareth, Bethlehem, and the stable
- COSTUMES:** Should resemble costumes from ancient Israel. (Robes, large pieces of fabric tied at waist, sandals or bare feet, and pieces of fabric for head coverings.) Shepherds may have a shepherd’s crook. Kings may have crowns and gifts (gold, frankincense, and myrrh.)
- LIGHTS:** Lights and spotlights on stage.
- SOUND:** Narrators must be able to easily reach their microphone(s) without moving
- PROPS:** Manger
Gifts (representing gold, frankincense, and myrrh)
Baby Doll wrapped in Blanket (to represent Baby Jesus)
- SLIDES:** You may wish to project slides of various scripture verses, or song words
- STAGING:** Consider placing the stable and manger onstage from the beginning, as if foreshadowing the birth of Christ, which is foretold. Have a light or spotlight dedicated to it during the skit. Bring light up or down as desired.
- SONGS:** Suggested songs may be omitted, replaced or used as desired. Options include various choirs, instrumentals, solos, and congregational singing.

Christmas by The Book

A skit by Sharon Kay Chatwell

[As the skit opens, the stage is empty except for a stable and manger.]

[HOUSE LIGHTS DOWN. STAGE LIGHTS UP.]

[NARRATORS #1-3 ENTER and take positions, where they stay. They may be seated at STAGE LEFT, or offstage, if they may still be seen by the audience.]

[NOTE: Do NOT read the scripture references, which are listed in parentheses!]

Narrator #1: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **(Isaiah 9:6)**

Narrator #2: Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. **(Isaiah 9:7)**

Narrator #3: The words of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah, quoted here before you, ring down through the years (over 2000 of them) to us today. Who do they describe? Of whom do they speak? They tell of the Messiah; the Promised One; the Christ, who was to be the Savior of mankind.

Narrator #1: He is the One who was promised as early as the Garden of Eden; when God said that the "Seed of the Woman" would one day come and crush the head of the Serpent, who would only be able to strike at His heel.

Narrator #2: But there were other words as well. Words telling us how He would be born...

Narrator #3: Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. **(Isaiah 7:14)**

Narrator #2: And even where He would be born...

Narrator #1: But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel. **(Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:6)**

Narrator #2: That's enough of prophesy for now! We have met together to hear of the fulfillment of the prophesies; of the coming of the Messiah, The Promised One... The one who came all those years ago, on the very first Christmas!

Narrator #1: *(as if summing it all up...)* ...and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

(very excited and pointing to script!) Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ!

[Narrators #2 & 3 give Narrator #1 more High Fives, etc.]

Narrator #2: All of these things were written down in God's Word, the BIBLE, so that we can know that they all happened and that they are all true. And that is one of the reasons we are able to bring you... "Christmas by The Book."

[SPOTLIGHT UP ON MARY.]

[MARY STANDS at STAGE LEFT. GABRIEL ENTERS and addresses her.]

Narrator #1: In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

GABRIEL: Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.

Narrator #2: Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her...

GABRIEL: Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor 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: How will this be, since I am a virgin?

GABRIEL: 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: I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said.

[GABRIEL ENTERS. JOSEPH LIES DOWN to sleep.]

Narrator #1: But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said...

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.

[GABRIEL EXITS. MARY ENTERS and stands across stage from JOSEPH.]

Narrator #2: All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."

[JOSEPH crosses to MARY and brings her back with him to his original spot.]

Narrator #3: When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Narrator #1: In those days Caesar Augustus, who was the ruler in Rome, issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to his own town to register.

[JOSEPH and MARY cross to stable and manger.]

Narrator #2: So Joseph also 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. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

[MARY takes baby doll wrapped in cloths and places it in manger.]

Narrator #3: While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

[BREAK #3 with Optional Song.]

Song Suggestions include: *O, Little Town of Bethlehem*
 Away in a Manger
 O, Holy Night

[END of BREAK #3.]

[MARY and JOSEPH are at stable. SHEPHERDS ENTER at STAGE LEFT. GABRIEL ENTERS.]

Narrator #1: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, 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. But the angel said to them...

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 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.

Narrator #2: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

Narrator #3: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another...

SHEPHERD: Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.

[SHEPHERDS cross to Stable and Manger.]

Narrator #1: So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

[SHEPHERDS EXIT through the audience, if possible, while acting as if they are "spreading the word".]

Narrator #2: When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Narrator #3: The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

[BREAK #4 with Optional Songs.]

Song Suggestions include: *Angels We Have Heard on High*
 Do You Hear what I Hear?
 Angels from the Realms of Glory

[END of BREAK #4.]

[MARY and JOSEPH are at STAGE LEFT with baby doll representing Jesus. MAGI (WISE MEN) ENTER at STAGE RIGHT and speak to the audience.]

Narrator #1: After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked...

MAGI #1: "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?"

MAGI #2 We saw his star in the east...

MAGI #3 ...and have come to worship him."

Narrator #2: When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.

Narrator #3: "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'"

Narrator #1: Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

[MAGI (Wise Men) cross to STAGE LEFT and find MARY and JOSEPH.]

Narrator #2: After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

[MAGI (Wise Men) rejoice and present their gifts.]

Narrator #3: When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

[MAGI (Wise Men) EXIT by a different route than they came.]

Narrator #1: And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

[BREAK #5 with Optional Songs.]

Song Suggestions include: *We Three Kings*
 O, Come All Ye Faithful

[END of BREAK #5.]

[MARY and JOSEPH are at STAGE LEFT ASLEEP. GABRIEL ENTERS.]

Narrator #1: When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.

GABRIEL: Get up, take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.

[JOSEPH takes MARY and baby to far edge of stage and “hides” there.]

Narrator #2: So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

Narrator #3: After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said...

[GABRIEL ENTERS.]

GABRIEL: Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.

[GABRIEL EXITS.]

Narrator #1: So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth

[MARY and JOSEPH and baby EXIT.]

Narrator #2: So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

Narrator #3: We know the story. Most of us have heard it many times before. But it is as ageless as it is true. The Messiah who was spoken of in the prophecies had come. And the world would never be the same!

Narrator #1: This same Jesus was the one who would grow to be a man and eventually die on the cross to “save his people from their sins” just as the angel had foretold.

Narrator #2: And after He died on the cross, He rose from the dead on the third day, and later ascended into heaven. Proving (as Peter said) that “God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Narrator #3: This story of prophecies fulfilled is still there today in the Bible, for anyone to read; so that we may all know the truth of ... “*Christmas by The Book!*”

[ALL CAST assembles onstage.]

[Curtain Call.]

[BREAK #6 with optional songs.]

Suggested Songs include: *Silent Night*
 Joy to the World
 We Wish You A Merry Christmas!

[END of BREAK #6.]

[HOUSE LIGHTS UP. STAGE LIGHTS DOWN.]

THE END