

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS GIFT

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STORY OF THE PLAY

All the children in your church can participate in this play which explains the nativity in a simple, beautiful way. Two youngsters, Sam and Lori, have brought their young friend Terry to their church's Christmas pageant rehearsal. When they open a gift box which contains items associated with the nativity, an angel, a doll, a toy lamb, a shepherd's staff, and others, Sam and Lori explain to Terry that these are the best gifts to receive. Scripture readings and carols by the other children enhance the explanations of the nativity and add beauty to the performance. At the end, every child can enjoy a piece of birthday cake for Jesus.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(Flexible cast including 3 main speaking parts.)

LORI: The oldest, about 10-13 years old, attends church.

SAM: Her brother, about 9-10, and very enthusiastic.

TERRY: About 9-12 years old, doesn't attend church.

READERS, CHORUS: Any number; various ages.

Note: The roles of Terry, Sam, and Lori can be easily played by boys or girls by changing names and pronoun references. While the play is best performed with a larger group of 25 or more, it can be easily adapted to smaller groups, by having trios and solos in place of a choir, doubling up on Readers, etc.

Playing Time: About 30 minutes.

SETTING

The play is set in the wings of the stage where a Christmas program is practicing. The best way to stage the play is to divide the stage in half, using SL for Sam, Lori, and Terry, and the other half of the stage for the rest of the performers. An adult can be present to help cue the children.

PROPS

The play requires a large box wrapped in Christmas paper at SL. In the large box are six smaller boxes containing:

- 1) an angel (*tree-top ornament.*)
- 2) a doll with hay or straw in the box
- 3) a shepherd's staff (*can be made from cardboard.*)
- 4) a lamb (*can be a stuffed toy or a picture.*)
- 5) a small object wrapped in gold foil
- 6) a flashlight which is fastened to the bottom of the box and turned on

For the Young Children cards with letters B-A-B-Y; J-E-S-U-S, and also cards with the words love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

A birthday cake is also needed.

SONGS AND SCRIPTURES

Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION. Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. All songs are public domain and can be found in numerous hymn books and song books. The director can choose to do as many verses as desired of each number.

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(AT RISE: A few CHILDREN are waiting SR. Enter SAM, LORI, and TERRY, SL.)

LORI: So, what do you think you'll get for Christmas, Sam?

SAM: My friend got a pony once, but I don't think I'll get one.

LORI: You'll probably get something nice, though.

TERRY: *(Seeing present.)* Hey, what's that?

SAM: What a big present!

LORI: Who's it for?

TERRY: Let's go and see.

SAM: It's got my name on it.

LORI: Mine, too!

TERRY: Mine, too! It's got everybody's name on it.

LORI: So, let's open it. *(Opens box.)*

TERRY: Another box? Let me see it. *(Opens next box.)*
Oh, it's an angel. What kind of a Christmas present is that?

SAM: What do you mean?

TERRY: Well, what does an angel have to do with Christmas? Isn't Christmas Santa Claus and reindeer and "Ho! Ho! Ho!"?

LORI: Well, actually, Christmas started a long time before anyone ever dreamed up Santa Claus. It started about 2,000 years ago, when a young Jewish girl lived, named Mary. An angel came to her one day and told her she was going to have a very special baby - Jesus.

SAM: *(Seeing children SR.)* Hey, Lori, who are those kids?

LORI: They're the kids that are going to be in our church's Christmas program. They're here to practice.

READER 1: *(Moves CS and reads Luke 1:26-33.)* 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. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you!" Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

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READER 1: *(Continued.)* But the angel said to her, "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 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."

YOUNG CHILDREN: *(Move CS and hold up letters that spell out "BABY JESUS." Speaking one at a time.)*

B is for Baby, lying on the hay,

A is for Angels, announcing the day.

B is for Bethlehem, the town of His birth,

Y is for Yule, when we celebrate with mirth.

J is for Jesus, who left His heavenly home,

E is for Earth, where for a lifetime He did roam.

S is for Star that showed wise men the way,

U is for Unity, which we still have today.

S is for Savior, who came to set us free,

Son of God, Son of Man - He's the one for me.

LORI: See, Terry? That's just what I was telling you.

Angels are definitely a part of Christmas.

TERRY: So, that's how it is, huh?

SAM: *(Looking in big box.)* Look, here's another little box.

(Opens it.) It's a baby. Look, Terry, it's a baby for baby Jesus.

TERRY: How come there's all this hay in the box with him?

LORI: Shhh. Listen.

READER 2: *(Reads Luke 2:1,3-7.)* In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world ... and everyone went to his own town to register. 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. 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.

End of Freeview

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