

# AN EPIPHANY PAGEANT OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

This is a short pageant designed to be used during worship in late Advent, Christmas or early Epiphany. This pageant serves as the liturgy of the word during worship. Narrators read the story. Adults and children dress as the characters and come forward as their "part" in the story is read to form a tableau at the altar or on a stage. The only speaking parts for costumed characters are the two angels, Elizabeth and Mary.

## ***Call to Worship***

Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.

**All: Divine Wisdom was in the beginning with God.**

Leader: All things came into being through the Word, and without that Divine Wisdom, not one thing came into being.

**All: What has come into being in the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.**

Leader: And the Word became flesh and lived among us,

**All: and we have seen this glory, the glory as of a parent's only child, full of grace and truth.**

Hymn: UMH# 242 *Love Came Down at Christmas*

*Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine,  
Love was born at Christmas; stars and angels gave the sign.*

*Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine;  
worship we our Jesus, but where-with for sacred sign.*

*Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine;  
love to God and neighbor, love for plea and gift and sign.*

Narrator

*As the narrator reads, Zechariah comes forward Gabriel enters from the side.*

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah. His wife, Elizabeth was a descendant of Aaron. Both of them were righteous before God, but they had no children and they were getting on in years. When Zechariah was serving as priest, at the time of the incense offering, there appeared to him an angel. Zechariah was terrified and fear

overwhelmed him. The angel said to him:

Gabriel

Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife, Elizabeth will bear you a son and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth for he will be great in the divine truth. Even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit and he will turn many of the people of Israel to their God, to make ready a people prepared for the Holy One.

Narrator:

Zechariah was unable to believe this prophecy. Therefore, the angel removed Zechariah's power to speak. He returned home and in due time, Elizabeth became pregnant.

*Zechariah goes to the back of the Church – Gabriel exits to the side during the singing*

Hymn: UMH #218 *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear, vs. 4*

*For lo! The days are hastening on by prophets seen of old.  
When with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold  
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
and the whole world send back the song, which now the angels sing.*

Narrator:

*Mary comes forward and the Gabriel appears from the side . . .*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came to her and said,

Gabriel:

Greetings favored one The Holy One is with you.

Narrator:

But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her,

Gabriel:

Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, if you are willing, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his reign there will be no end.

Mary:

How can 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; therefore, the child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.

Mary :

Here I am, the servant of the Holy One; let it be with me according to your word.

Narrator:

Then the angel departed from her.

Hymn – *children only* – *Get Ready! Vs. 1 and 2*

*During the hymn, the angel returns to the side and Mary returns to the back of the Church down the side aisle*

Narrator:

*As the narrator reads, Joseph comes up the aisle and the 2<sup>nd</sup> angel appears from the side.*

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place this way. When his mother, Mary, had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was

found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband, Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he resolved to do this, an angel of the Holy One appeared to him in a dream and said,

2<sup>nd</sup> Angel :

Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name his Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Narrator:

All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by God through the prophet, "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means 'God with us.'" When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Holy One commanded him.

Hymn – children only – *Get Ready! vs. 3 and 4*

*During the hymn, the 2<sup>nd</sup> angel moves to the side and Joseph heads down the side aisle to the back.*

Narrator:

*As the narrator reads, Elizabeth and Mary come forward from the back to the steps.*

In those days, Mary went with haste to a Judean town in the hills where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child within her womb, John, leaped. Elizabeth was filled with Holy Spirit and exclaimed:

Elizabeth:

Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why has this happened to me that the mother of my Savior should come to me?

Narrator :

And Mary replied:

Mary :

My soul magnifies the Holy One and my Spirit rejoices in God my savior!

Narrator:

Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her home. And Elizabeth gave birth to John, who would be called the Baptizer.

Hymn – UMH #216 *Lo! How a Rose – vs. 1*

*During the hymn Mary returns to the back. Zechariah and Elizabeth remain near the pulpit.*

*Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!  
of Jesse's lineage coming, as those of old have sung.  
It came a flower bright, amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.*

Narrator:

*As narrator reads, Mary and Joseph head up the aisle – carrying a baby and place the baby in the manger and take their seats on either side of the manger.*

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.

He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her first born son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger because there was no place for them at the inn.

Hymn – TFWS # 2098 – *The Mama Mary Had a Baby Boy, vs. 1*

*The Mama Mary had a baby boy, the Mother Mary had a baby boy,  
the Mama Mary had a baby boy; and they say that his name is Jesus.  
He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.  
He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.  
Oh, yes! Believer! Oh, yes! Believer!*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.  
He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom*

Narrator:

*The shepherds and the animals come down the aisle – both Gabriel and 2<sup>nd</sup> angel and additional angels appear from the side and meet the shepherds and animals mid-aisle.*

In that region, there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night. Then an angel of the Holy One stood before them, and the glory of the Holy One shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them,

Gabriel:

Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Christ. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.

Narrator:

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying;

All Angels:

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among to all.

Hymn: TFWS # 2098 – *The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy, vs. 2*

*The angels sang when the baby was born, the angels sang when the baby was born.*

*The angels sang when the baby was born and they say that his name is Jesus.*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*Oh, yes! Believer! Oh, yes! Believer!*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom*

Narrator:

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place which the Holy One has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Hymn: TFWS # 2098 – *The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy, vs. 3*

*During the hymn, the Angels take their places next to Mary. The Shepherds and animals fill in beside Joseph.*

*The shepherds came where the baby was born, the shepherds came where the baby was born.*

*The shepherds came where the baby was born and they say that his name is Jesus.*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*Oh, yes! Believer! Oh, yes! Believer!*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom*

Narrator:

*As narrator reads, the Magi come down the aisle SLOWLY and MAJESTICALLY. They very slowly kneel on the steps before the manger and place their gifts on in front of the manger to the side of Mary. Then the Magi turn and sit on the step.*

In the time of King Herod after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, Magi from the East came to Jerusalem asking, "Where is the child who has been born King of the Jews? For we have observed his star and have come to pay him homage."

Then Herod sent them to Bethlehem saying, "Go and search diligently for the child and when you have found him, bring me word so that I might also go and pay him homage." When they heard the King, they set out, and there ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.

When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. They saw the child with Mary his mother and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. But having been warned against Herod in a dream, they did not tell Herod that they had found the child. They returned to their homes another way.

Hymn – Hymn: TFWS # 2098 – *The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy, vs. 4*

*The Magi came when the baby was born, the Magi came where the baby was born.*

*The Magi came where the baby was born and they say that his name is Jesus.*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*Oh, yes! Believer! Oh, yes! Believer!*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom*

Narrator:

*As the narrator reads, Mary and Joseph and the Baby come down the steps and meet Anna and Simeon where the chairs begin.*

The time came to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. His parents brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to God. Two prophets great in age, Anna and Simeon, had been waiting at the Temple for years to see God's salvation. When they saw the baby Jesus, Simeon took him in his arms. He and Anna praised God for the birth of the Savior and they began to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Israel.

*As the hymn begins, Mary takes the baby Jesus and with Joseph, moves back to the center of the altar area.*

Hymn: UMH #220 – *Angels from the Realms of Glory, vs. 4*

*Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear.*

*Suddenly our hope unending, in Creation shall appear.*

*Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the new born King.*

Narrator:

This is the nativity story. We pray that all who hear it will be filled with God's love, and will share that love with the world during this Epiphany season so that others may come to know Jesus, the light of the world.

Hymn: UMH#251 *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

*Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;  
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.*

*Down in a lowly manger, the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation, that blessed Christmas morn.*

*Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;  
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.*

During the Passing of the Peace, the Pageant Cast moves into the congregation.