

Be Born
IN US **Today**



A CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE



Notes for Leaders

Speaking Parts

There are six sections with a total of 71 lines that can be assigned to four or more children. One child should be assigned the part marked as “Mom” and another child the part marked as “Dad.” At least two additional children can play the parts of siblings. If there is a large number of children available for speaking parts, different children can be assigned to each of the six sections. There are also 12 Scripture readings (indicated by an **R** in the script), which can be read by one or more child(ren) or an adult. Longer readings can also be broken up to accommodate the number of parts needed. Children may also be assigned as “Leaders” (indicated by an **L** in the script) of the liturgy and prayers. Characters can be dressed in modern-day clothes. “Mom,” who is expecting a baby, can wear loose fitting clothing, if desired.

Children’s Songs

Songs by children are indicated in the script and include “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing “Joy to the World” and “Away in a Manger” (for youngest children). Additionally, children can be assigned verses for congregational hymns, if desired. All children with speaking and non-speaking parts should gather to sing in a designated area.

Centerpiece Display

A living room scene with a full-sized manger (*being built by the “Dad”*) serves as the set. This should include a Christmas tree, chairs and/or a sofa and coffee or end tables, if available. The manger should be in a prominent place in the living room scene. The manger should be filled with hay and/or blocks to make a platform for gifts to be placed and displayed for the congregation to see. A hammer for “Dad” is needed as he pretends to put the final touches on the manger. Baby shower gifts (see p. 4) needed for the centerpiece will be placed in the manger as indicated in the script.

The following “baby shower gifts” can be borrowed from church members ahead of time for use in this service.

- Gift box wrapped with baby shower wrapping paper.
- Basket with bubble bath, herbal tea bags and a mug (as a gift that might be given to pamper a new new mom)
- Night light
- Children’s Bible
- High chair (or a booster chair)
- Cross for hanging on a wall

Nativity Tableau

The script calls for costumed nativity characters including Mary, Joseph, an innkeeper, angels and shepherds. Instructions are included in the script as to when these characters should enter and exit. The nativity tableau is optional, but if using, another manger with a doll representing baby Jesus should be used. If another manger is not available, an area can be set up with hay or blankets for Mary and Joseph to sit on while holding a baby doll. The scene for the tableau can be set up on either side of the Living Room set as space allows. An alternative to a live tableau would be to project images of Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels and baby Jesus on a screen as indicated in the script.



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Complete Script

Pre-Service Music

As We Gather

As we prepare for worship, imagine how expectant parents, filled with questions and excitement, contemplate how a baby will change their lives. How does the birth of Jesus change our lives? Pray, "Come, Lord Jesus, be born in us today."

Processional HymnO Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him born the king of angels;
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Invocation and Call to Worship

(with selections from, Isaiah 9 and Luke 1)

- L** In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.
- L** To us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder.
- C** Come, Lord Jesus, be born in us today.
- L** His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- C** Come, Lord Jesus, be born in us today.
- L** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and of his kingdom there will be no end.
- C** Come, Lord Jesus, be born in us today.

Prayer of the Day

- Ⓐ Lord Jesus, ready our hearts and homes that we may receive you with the kind of joy and awe Mary, Joseph and the shepherds experienced at the time of your birth. Be born in us today, that we may leave here glorifying and praising you. Amen.

A Meditation

- Ⓐ Congratulations! You're expecting a baby—today! Many of you may be surprised by this news. But, didn't you come here today expecting to hear the birth announcement of the baby Jesus? Well, maybe you didn't expect him to actually be here in person. After all, Jesus was born some 2000 years ago, far away from here. You just came to remember the event with a joyful celebration. Right? Perhaps you even came expecting a chance to truly reflect upon and give thanks for the incredible sacrifice Jesus made for you when he died on a cross so long ago, and you look forward to someday living with him in heaven. But did you actually come expecting a baby to be born to you today? That changes everything. But it is indeed what you can and should expect. The birth of Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise to send a Savior—his own Son—to bless people of every time and every nation. And though his days on earth in human flesh were only a few years, He is with us still today. He is born to us today and every day, bringing renewal to our weariness; bringing light to our darkness; bringing his power to our weakness; bringing guidance for our questions and quandaries, and bringing salvation from every sin that holds us captive. Jesus is Immanuel—God With Us. Therefore, as the angel Gabriel told Mary, (*pointing to congregation*) you are highly favored. The Lord is with you. Expect him. Cherish him. Pray, "Jesus, be born—in us—today."

Be Born in Us Today ... Bringing Blessing

(Children and parents gather in family living room scene. Dad works on manger for church Christmas program. Baby items are scattered in room.)

- _____ 1. (Dad, hammering manger) There. The manger for the Sunday school Christmas program is all done.
- _____ 2. (Mom) Great, now you can get to work on the crib for our new baby.
- _____ 3. (Complaining) We might not get to be in the Christmas program this year because our baby brother could be born that day.
- _____ 4. Yeah. I was supposed to get the lead role this year but had to turn it down because Mom might have the baby that day.
- _____ 5. Our baby brother isn't even here yet and our plans are already changing because of him.
- _____ 6. (Dad) Having a baby will change things for our family, but he's going to be a blessing to us all, you'll see.
- _____ 7. (Mom) In fact, our Christmas baby can remind us of another baby who changed his family and brought blessing to us all.
- _____ 8. You mean baby Jesus! But how can our baby remind us of Jesus?
- _____ 9. (Dad, looking around at baby items) Hmm. I think maybe these baby shower gifts can help us explain. (*picking up unopened gift*) Let's start with this one that we haven't opened yet. It just came today.
- _____ 10. (Mom, taking gift from Dad) Ah, yes. You see, long ago, God promised to bless his people with a gift so amazing it would change their lives forever.
- _____ 11. (Dad) But before God revealed that gift to the world, an angel told a young girl named Mary about the special baby that would be born to her, bringing blessing for all people.
- _____ 12. Mary was a little worried when she first heard the news.
- Ⓐ The angel Gabriel was sent from God ... to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, from the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you! But she was greatly troubled at the saying ... and the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High ... and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you ... therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God." (Luke 1:26-35)
- _____ 13. When Mary's fiancé, Joseph, heard the news about Jesus, he was afraid and wanted out.

_____ 14. Joseph must have felt like I feel sometimes about having a new baby in the house. But an angel calmed Joseph down too.

Ⓜ “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:20-21)

_____ 15. *(Dad)* They didn’t feel prepared at all, but Mary and Joseph trusted that their baby was God’s gift of a Savior promised long ago.

_____ 16. Like our baby, the timing of Jesus’ birth didn’t seem convenient to his parents.

_____ 17. But God’s plan was right on schedule. Not like this shower gift that came late! God had said the Savior would be born in Bethlehem.

Ⓜ But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah ... from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. (Micah 5:2)

_____ 18. Oh yeah, and Mary and Joseph had to make a trip to Bethlehem just before Jesus was born. That must have been hard for them.

(Characters dressed as Mary and Joseph make their way from the back, going down the center aisle, stopping and sitting just offside of the family scene.)

Ⓜ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, who was with child. (Luke 2:1-5)

_____ 19. Mary and Joseph probably didn’t understand everything that was happening, but one thing is for sure. When Jesus was born, he brought blessings to them, and to the whole world!

_____ 20. *(Taking the gift)* I don’t know how our baby brother will change our family, but I’m trusting God that he will be a gift and a blessing.

_____ 21. But not quite the blessing baby Jesus is! *(Take gift and place in the manger)*

Song by Congregation.....Once He Came in Blessing

Once he came in blessing, all our sins redressing;
Came in likeness lowly, Son of God most holy;
Bore the cross to save us; hope and freedom gave us.

Come, then, O Lord Jesus, from our sins release us.
Keep our hearts believing, that we, grace receiving,
Ever may confess you till in heav’n we bless you.

Be Born in Us Today ... Bringing Renewal

_____ 22. *(Yawning)* I’m tired. I didn’t sleep well last night.

_____ 23. You’d better get used to it. When our baby brother is born, nobody is going to get any sleep around here.

_____ 24. *(Dad)* True, but he’ll eventually learn to sleep through the night.

_____ 25. *(Mom)* In the meantime, I will make good use of this shower gift. *(Picks up basket with bubble bath and herbal tea)* Some nice herbal tea and a bubble bath can give me some renewal when I get weary.

_____ 26. *(Dad, taking basket)* This gift can also remind us of how the baby born in Bethlehem is still with us today bringing renewal.

_____ 27. I’ll bet Mary was ready for a nice bubble bath when she got to Bethlehem.

_____ 28. Yeah, but there was no room in the inn, remember?

(Characters Mary and Joseph stand up. Innkeeper meets them, shaking his head and then pointing toward the manger offside of the family scene. Mary and Joseph move to the manger. Mary picks up doll from the manger.)



A CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE

This is a children's service by Sandi Geis that helps us to understand that Jesus is not only born in Bethlehem at Christmas. He is born in each one of us today. Dramas and recitations describe the life the little Lord Jesus gives to us, bringing blessing, renewal, light, power, guidance and salvation. The service is enlivened by prayers, Scripture readings and carols of the season, like "Away in a Manger," "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "What Child Is This," "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and "Joy to the World."