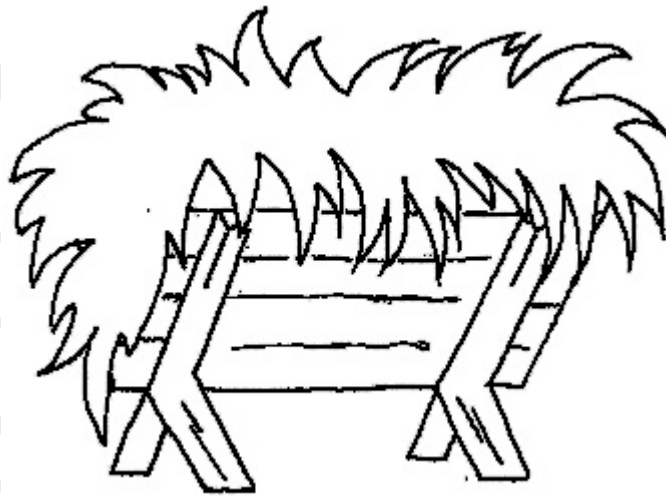


Manger Moments



*But Wait!
There's Myrrh!*

Manger Moments



*But Wait!
There's Myrrh!*



Manger Moments

... But Wait! There's Myrrh!

Where did Jesus' Story Begin?
Let's Peek at Miracle Moments.



Christmas is the Perfect Moment to
Celebrate Heaven's Perfect Gift.



The History of the World
Was Changed in a Moment

But Wait! There's Myrrh!



Manger Moments Index



Introduction and Index.....1-4
 Event At A Glance.....5
 Still Under Construction.....6-8
 Fearless Leader/Director.....9-10
 Christmas Music.....11-12
 Let's Start The Show.....13
 Props.....14-15
 Costumes.....16
 Publicity.....17
 Small Group Leaders.....18
 To Memorize Or Not To Memorize.....19
 Main Players..... 20

MANGER MOMENTS

Introduction.....21-27

ACT ONE: AT THE RIGHT TIME JESUS WAS BORN 27-31

Story Teller: When The Time Was Right.....28
 KINDERGARTEN: On The Road.....29
 GRADE ONE: I'm A Shepherd, You're A Shepherd.....30
 MONOLOGUE: When The Time Was Right.....31

ACT TWO: IT'S A BOY! 32-36

Story Teller: It's A Boy.....33
 GRADES THREE/FOUR: The Angels Smiled.....34
 GRADES FOUR/FIVE: A Stable Inn.....35
 MONOLOGUE: But Wait! There's Myrrh!.....36

ACT THREE: WE REMEMBER IT WELL! 37-43

Story Teller: Ah Yes, We Remember It Well.....38
 GRADES SIX-EIGHT: Ah Yes, We Remember It Well.....39-41
 MONOLOGUE: But Wait! There's Myrrh!.....42-43
 CONCLUSION.....44

AFTERGLOW PARTY 43-47



Manger Moments

But Wait! There's Myrrh!
Let's go on a Christmas Adventure!
*Step into **small moments** with Jesus.*

Easy To Prepare. Easy To Present.

Laugh, sing, and celebrate Jesus' birth.
Use simple lighting, props, costumes.

How Do We Do That?

1. **Time:** 45 minutes or less depending on program/music choices.
2. **Participants:** Children, teens, grownups.
3. **Presentation:** NO memorization, read segments.
4. **Music:** Special music as desired, Carols W/Audience.
5. **Party:** Feature an AFTERGLOW Party.



Adapt!

Consider group size and available talent.

Small church? Condense segments. Cut parts.

Add your own music with local church talent.

Large church? Include everyone!

Props, costumes, lighting, sound, party planners.

Make it fun for the whole crew!

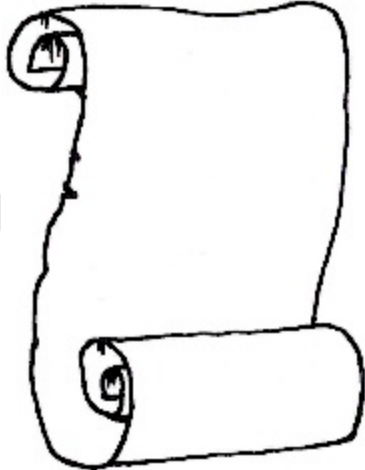
*These pages contain plans and script for a unique
All Church Program designed to change lives.*

Open Carefully!
Let Christmas Begin!



Manger Moments

But Wait! There's Myrrh!



INTRODUCTION

Story Teller

Preschool: *O What A Special Night*

ACT ONE

Story Teller: AT THE RIGHT TIME JESUS WAS BORN

Preschool/Kindergarten: *On The Road*

Grade One: *I'm a Shepherd, You're A Shepherd!*

All God's Children Are Shepherds

MONOLOGUE: *But Wait! There's Myrrh!*

SPECIAL MUSIC

AUDIENCE SINGS A CAROL

ACT TWO

Story Teller: IT'S A BOY!

Grades 2-3: *The Angels Smiled*

Grades 4-5: *A Stable Inn*

MONOLOGUE: *But Wait! There's Myrrh!*

SPECIAL MUSIC

AUDIENCE SINGS A CAROL

ACT THREE

Story Teller: AH, YES, WE REMEMBER IT WELL

Grades 6-8: *Wise Men*

Teens/Adults: MONOLOGUE: *But Wait! There's Myrrh!*

SPECIAL MUSIC

AUDIENCE SINGS A CAROL

CONCLUSION

CANDLE LIGHTING

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

PARTY: AFTERGLOW



Still Under Construction!

Answers To Questions

You Don't Want To Ask!

Thank You For Your Patience!

Keep It Simple!



WE HAVE A SMALL CHURCH. HOW MANY PEOPLE DO WE NEED?

Eliminate or combine segments. Small churches use the same people several times. Do not worry about suggested age groups or the number of speakers suggested.

Participants speak more than one time.

HOT TIP: Divide Master Copy segments on a table when it arrives. Decide what to keep, what to add, and what must be eliminated.

WE HAVE A LARGE CHURCH/SCHOOL. CAN WE INVOLVE OUR HUGE GANG?

There is more than enough material to involve everyone in your church or school. **Divide the tasks between many willing helpers.**

HOT TIP: Divide Master Copy segments on a table when it arrives. Add backstage artists, costume helpers, leaders, musicians, special music talent, party planners.

IS MUSIC AVAILABLE?

YES! "MANGER MOMENTS MELODIES"

Manger Moments is not a musical. We offer an optional, inexpensive music package consisting of 3 original songs. Purchase the music package separately: Double channel CD—sample voice tracks and performance tracks. Piano sheet music and lyric sheets.

Listen to the music at our web page: www.cemlife.com

OPTIONS: Order Music to be shipped or download CD and sheet music with lyric pages!

Hot Tip: Insert your own Christmas songs, special music, and Christmas Carols as desired. www.youtube.com videos with cute, sing along songs may be appropriate.

We suggest those titles in the music segment.



REHEARSAL?

You decide! No memorization is required so rehearsal can take place in small groups with one dress rehearsal.

Practice with care!

Hot Tip: Some churches/schools perform with NO REHEARSAL. We recommend at least one rehearsal if you want to sleep at night!

TIMING THE EVENT?

45-60 minutes. Timing depends on what is eliminated or added. It can be as short as 20 minutes. **Very flexible!**

Hot Tip: "Afterglow Party" time is not included.

CANDLE LIGHTING AND PARTY?

Include Christmas traditions that fit your local group. We suggest traditional candle lighting and a party but that may mean a short sermon by pastor, gifting, candy for children, etc.

You decide how to end the event!

Hot Tip: Include what makes Christmas feel like Christmas to your group.

SPECIFIC SPEAKING PARTS?

Do not write on the Master Copy. Make as many individual copies as needed from your copier. Use simple folders to give small group segments to each teacher/leader. **Small group leader shares.**

IMPORTANT NOTE!

When using the PDF option from our web site, print the Master Copy. The PDF cannot be printed on the computer multiple times. If desired, scan the program personally to create a WORD document. Insert names, take out what cannot be used, add fun traditions.

We give permission for your individual group to make copies. All others must purchase separately.



HOW WILL WE FEEL WHEN THIS IS DONE?

Happy! *Manger Moments* is divided into short segments performed by small groups of classes, friends and/or random folks. Once organized, the program comes together easily. At the end you will have *“done well, good and faithful servant”!*

REMEMBER!

**Keep it simple OR make it a grand event.
Use all available people. Any age!
Some folks can participate more than once.**

OUR TOLL FREE NUMBER IS 1.888.236.5433.

**If we don't answer,
it means we are talking to someone,
shipping, writing or in a meeting.
Maybe we are taking a nap.
(God is not finished with us yet.)**

LEAVE A VOICE MESSAGE AND PHONE NUMBER!

OR

EMAIL: dave@cemlife.com

OR

ellen@cemlife.com

Notes:





FEARLESS LEADER/DIRECTOR!

“The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; to be kind, but not weak; to be humble, but not timid.” ~ Jim Rohn



Create a unique memory in the best way, beginning to end.
Ask for help!

Leave the Master Copy unmarked. Print program segments and individual speaking parts separately.

Easy-Peasy!

NO MEMORIZATION!

Segments are age appropriate but flexible. When participants can read, speaking parts may be read. Consider including Sunday School classes, committees, small friend groups and willing individuals.

Lead Them!

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

Let **LEADERS Lead!** Small group leaders organize individual short segments complete with props and costumes.

Help as needed.

IS YOUR HEART READY?

Offer your effort to the Lord! For some people, church holiday programs comprise most if not all of their Christmas celebration.

Do it for those folks!



BABY STEPS

Are you thinking, “Why me? I cannot do this!” Dive into this Christmas presentation of Jesus' birth with enthusiasm.

As the song says, “Fear is a Liar.”



YOU CAN DO ANYTHING, BUT NOT EVERYTHING!

Trust your staff. Let THEM Lead! Small group leaders organize individual segments complete with props and costumes. *Surround yourself with the best people. Do not interfere unless needed.*

Delegate!

THREE P'S: POSITIVE, PATIENT, PERSISTENT

This Christmas event is worth extra effort in the middle of personal holiday preparations, parties and travel.

All things are difficult before they are easy.

FOURTH P: PLUG YOUR EARS!

If the Christmas Director's attitude is right, even the grouchiest saint responds cheerfully! **A sense of humor helps!**

"We can't do it."

"We never did it this way."

"No one wants to do it!"

"My back hurts."

Think of it this way: *"Today I was told I am Pretty.*

The full statement was actually,

'You are pretty annoying' but I only look at things positively!"

FIFTH P: PRAYERS GO UP. BLESSINGS COME DOWN!

God Is In Control. Take details before the Lord and then - Relax!

Do the 'Next Thing'.

SIXTH P: PREPARE FOR SUCCESS ~ ADAPT!

Do today's work well!

Print a separate Director's Copy for yourself. Mark areas requiring special attention on the Director's copy. **DO NOT write on this master copy!** Eliminate what cannot be used, divide or combine parts. Expand participation for large groups. Write personal notations. Make segment copies for speakers.

Assign small group practice to each leader.



Christmas Music

When Words Fail, Music Speaks.

*Coordinate music with music director, pianist,
organist, praise and worship group.
Choose Christmas Carols to sing with the audience.*

**Include Christmas Carol lyrics
in a printed program
OR project lyrics on screen.**

PURCHASE

"Manger Moments...But Wait !There's Myrrh!" **MELODIES'!**
ORDER SEPARATELY. Ship /Download~Your Choice!

HOT TIP: CLOSE ENCOUNTERS MINISTRIES offers three original songs by *Glory Sound Studios* and **Jonathan Miller!** Music package arrives with **Double Channel CD** for rehearsal and performance, **printed piano sheet music** and lyrics!

Christmas Carols

You can't sing 'em all! Choose a few favorite carols with the audience. Intersperse them throughout the program. **Tradition is Meaningful!**

The 'Add More' Option!

Talent! Choose talented people to sing solos, duets, trios, choir, praise and worship, beginning student instrumentals, hand bells, chimes, children's chorus, all instrumental. This is the perfect moment to let musicians shine!
Who will you choose?

*Enjoy Contemporary Christmas praise music.
Have fun choosing contemporary songs your group enjoys!*

HOT TIP: If your group of children and teens enjoy contemporary sing along songs available with video on www.youtube.com. Find your own online songs. Teach the songs in the weeks before the event.



Music On the Big Screen?

If you have the ability to teach songs and use video during the event, there are many options available.

Check out contemporary songs and videos from

www.youtube.com

ONLINE OPTION: PRESCHOOL SONG SUGGESTION

"O WHAT A SPECIAL NIGHT": 3:19

Celebrate the most exciting birthday in history with this cheerful, Christmas theme music track! Sing along as the animals in the manger give praise and thanks to the Lord for the birth of baby Jesus! This upbeat music video is a great way to present Christmas praise with preschool children! Youtube

Two options available. One is animation only.

One is filmed with a singer and motions.

MORE FUN SUGGESTIONS:

"IT WAS ON A STARRY NIGHT": 2:16

Offered on youtube by YOUTUBE KIDS.

"BORN IS THE KING": HILLSONG: 3:24

Special Talent Music Suggestions

"Mary Did You Know?"

"Light of The World" Lauren Daigle

Discover more TOP 100 CHRISTMAS SONGS FROM PRAISE CHARTS by searching Google.

Be surprised by new songs that fit perfectly with this event.

Need Piano sheet music? Check out www.musicnotes.com
Musicnotes offers PDF sheet music to many songs at a low price.

My Notes:



Let's Start The Show!

Bring this simple stage presentation to life with a minimum of props. Small groups carry personal props. Set the stage with inexpensive, easy-to-find items. Light the area dramatically. Keep It Simple!

Set Up

Existing Christmas trees, Nativity, lights, poinsettias and candles add to the atmosphere. Leave them in place.

Feature them in the background!

Staging

Bethlehem Stable. Add greenery, Wooden benches, brightly colored pillows, blankets, baskets. Items may be placed sparingly on stage in front of the existing decorations. Place a manger center stage.

Use what you have to create the feeling.

Seating: Everyone Gets To Watch the Show!

Reserve participant seating. Assign helpers to sit with children. Each small group gathers on stage separately to present their short segment.

Follow segment instructions.

Sound System

Place microphones on stage. Attach personal microphones (*as available*) to main speakers. This detail makes the difference between a frustrating 'hearing' experience and a delightful program. **Important: Speak up!**

Lighting

Create ambiance by placing small lights on the floor behind greenery and baskets. Lighting is important. **Create interesting lighting!**

“All the world's a stage and most of us are desperately unrehearsed.”



Props

Lighthearted images are terrific!

Enlarge our patterns or create your own images with your local art lovers. Duct tape Jumbo Wooden Craft Sticks (check Amazon, Dollar stores, and WalMart) to the back of each prop. Children carry their stable animals with craft sticks attached.

**FOLLOW INDIVIDUAL SEGMENT INSTRUCTIONS.
NOT EVERY GROUP WILL CARRY THIS TYPE OF PROP.**

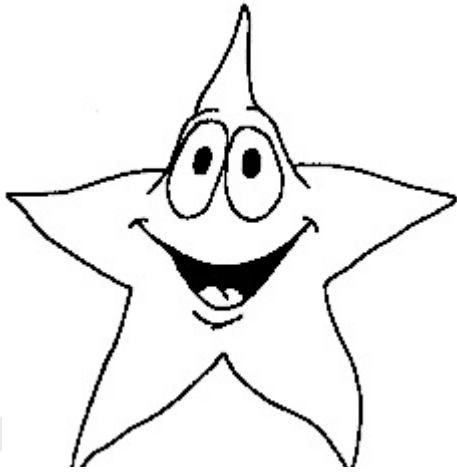


HOT TIPS: Any prop created on posterboard or cardboard is ready for 'prime time' when sprayed with brightly colored glitter. Spray glitter is less messy than glitter sprinkled with Elmer's glue.

Outline each 'prop on a stick' with black marker to stand out as children hold them.

We offer these prop suggestions for several groups. Choose what you wish to use. Enlarge our pattern, highlight with paint/marker or use the appropriately color posterboard found in Dollar Stores or craft stores.





Costumes

“When Given the Opportunity, Wear a Costume.”

Wear common Holy Land costumes. Nothing fancy.

Except Wise Men! They Dress fancy!

Follow directions in each small group segment.

Costuming a large group? Create simple Holy Land costumes using available materials. Ask each participant to provide their attire. Parents of young students may be willing to supply necessary costumes.

Wear robes, tunics, long t shirts belted at the waist with rope or men’s neck ties. Fabric wrapped around head and looped down the front, overabundance of jewelry (pins, bracelets, necklaces) on wise men. White angel t shirts, belts and tinsel halos.



HOT TIP: COSTUMES CAN BE ANYTHING AVAILABLE!

*Check www.orientaltrading.com
This company offers a full array of Holy Land costumes
at an inexpensive price.*

*KEYWORDS: Small Group Nativity Pageant Supplies,
Kid’s Plush Nativity Cow Costume, Nativity Pageant Party Pack.*



**Costuming is part of getting into character.
Your body soaks in what you’re wearing
and you “become” someone else.**

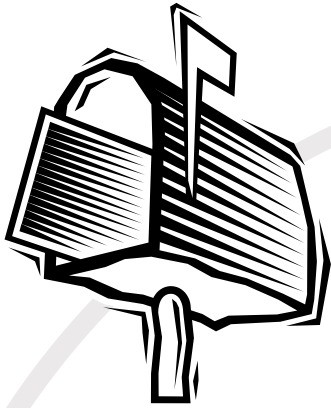


*Listen to your creative heart.
A team of 2 or more costumer volunteers is helpful.*



Publicity!

Just this once, Gossip is okay!



Announce "Manger Moments.....But Wait! There's Myrrh" in the newsletter, weekly worship bulletin and from the pulpit. Send 'take home' announcements with students and staff.

Bulletin and Newsletter

Announce in November and December newsletters. Let people know there will be a Christmas celebration including food following the program. **Tell Everyone!**

Local Newspaper

Don't Just Read The News, Make The News!
Talk to a news reporter and photographer.
Request a feature article.

Television and Radio

Television and Radio stations have free spots available as community service. Contact your local television/radio news room and request a short feature. **Try It!**

Social Networks!

Web Site - Face Book - Instagram - Twitter

Does your church/school have an online presence? This is the perfect opportunity to 'tell your world'. Take pictures, include a short description, dates, times and party plans! **Woo-Hoo!**

Christmas Card Invitations

Send Family Invitations.

Send real Christmas cards with invitations tucked inside. This is effective for non-involved families. **So sweet!**



Small Group Leaders!

*“Remember the difference between a boss and a leader;
A boss says ‘Go!’ but a leader says, ‘Let’s go!’”*

~ E.M. Kelly

Prepare Your Small Group!

Practice speaking parts, organize props and costumes for your group.

Memorization is not needed unless preferred.



Show Up With A Smile!

Dress in costume. Sit with your group in the designated area. Lead them on and off stage. Perform your speaking part with enthusiasm. Coach students quietly if they need help. Follow script details.

Relax!

*Stage fright is not uncommon!
Sometimes kids get scared too!*

Stay For the Party!

Enjoy the experience. Encourage your group with compliments.

Meet and greet family members.

Ask For Help!

The program comes together with little formal large group rehearsal. If helpers are needed, do not hesitate to ask. **The Director is Available.**

Enjoy The Experience!

This is a *‘once in a lifetime’* opportunity to touch the lives of children and grown ups. Enjoy your small part of the bigger picture. The Bethlehem Story is classic and life changing. **The Spiritual Experience is Amazing!**



To Memorize or Not to Memorize?

That Is The Question!

THE "No Memorization" VIBE!

"My memory is bad."

"How bad is it?"

"How bad is what?"

Some groups enjoy memorization. Others avoid it. Except for the youngest non readers, read speaking parts.

Memorization requires lead time and rehearsal.

To Memorize

Some groups love the process of rehearsal and memorization. If that is true in your situation, plan extra time to stage, adapt and memorize parts.

Consider longer lead time and more rehearsals.

Not To Memorize

This event is designed to be a full church, inter-generational experience. Base group organization on available small groups. Make up your own groups if you do not have classes. Ask children, friends, older adults who may not normally participate to join the fun.

The event is more enjoyable and casual if people relax without memorization.

The audience won't care.

Participants hold their printed parts and read. Practice in small group settings so everyone is familiar with their part. Read with confidence.

HOT TIP: Carry printed parts on stage. Print on brightly colored paper. EACH PRINTED PART MAY BE BACKED WITH a star, stable animal face, angel wing, etc. WITH GLITTER SPRAY....FACING THE AUDIENCE.

*Gather **once** to rehearse the full program.*



Main Players

*Have fun with folks who want to have fun.
Their enthusiasm spreads to the audience!*

Story Teller: Teen/adult, male or female

The **Story Teller** holds "Manger Moments" stage story together. Dress in **modern clothing**. Stand at one side of the stage to speak. Read the segments.

OPTION: Choose several Story Tellers (teen, adult)



Monologues: But Wait! There's Myrrh!

Special monologues: "*But Wait! There's Myrrh!*" Ask one or more teens and adults to present these short thoughts **OR** ask students within the age grouping of each act to participate.

OR, the Story Teller may speak.

Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus

Teens or Adults, Swaddled Doll/ Real Baby

Costumes: Holy Land, baby swaddling cloths

*Props: Manger, bench, blankets, greens, lantern,
light from behind shining upward.*

Stand/sit quietly as a small family center stage for the entire program. Actors have no speaking lines. Small groups come to the 'stable'.

Holy Land Costumes.



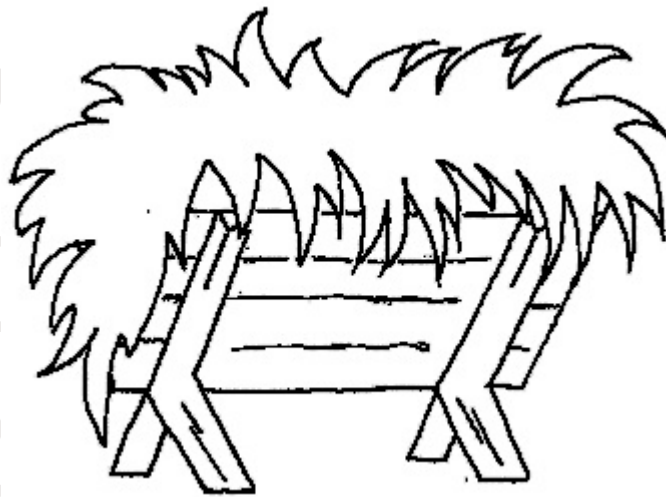
Teachers/Leaders and Parents

Some Teachers/Leaders/Parents have speaking parts. Some leaders quietly accompany their group and become part of on stage appearance.

Involve Parents with younger children.



Manger Moments



*But Wait!
There's Myrrh!*



PRELUDE

Church musicians (*organ/piano/keyboard*) play Christmas music as the audience gathers. Consider singing a few Christmas Praise and Worship songs with the audience.



PROCESSION

Background Christmas Music

Gather costumed participants in an outer room
Small groups walk casually to their reserved seats.

Mary, Joseph, Baby lead the procession
and take their quiet places center stage.

Teachers/leaders/helpers enter with small groups.
Walk along the center aisle.

Adjust the entrance as desired.
*Consider the shape and size of the room
and seating arrangements.*

*Think about photography
and video opportunities
for excited families.*



Mary, Joseph, Jesus

Costumed family is present on the decorated stable stage for the entire program.
Stand/sit silently while caring for the baby.



Small groups visit and share their “Manger Moments” as they stand/sit around the family. Smile and interact gently while each group visits. Remain silently in place.

Leave the stage just before Wise Men enter.
Walk together slowly back the center aisle.



Introduction: Story Teller

COSTUME: *The Story Teller dresses in modern clothing.*
STAND AT ONE SIDE OF THE STAGE.



PROPS

SCROLL: *Place the speaking parts in a rolled paper to resemble a recently discovered scroll.*

Read from a tattered paper rolled into a scroll tied with a ribbon or twine strung with colorful beads.

Make it look as old as possible.

Inside the scroll, tape your speaking parts and full program.

I uncovered this treasure. It's a story told simply and filled with important moments. It's the story of a Bethlehem night when God gave us His best gift: Jesus, born in a village stable to a young mother in very odd circumstances.

But Wait! There's Myrrh!

What we do with Jesus makes all the difference in the world. Let's call our time together "*Manger Moments*". We can hear the words, see the movie, read the gospels and still miss Jesus. This Christmas we won't miss Jesus.

But Wait! There's Myrrh!

Why do we say "*But Wait! There's Myrrh!*"? God is always thinking ahead. Each gift given to Jesus had a purpose. Myrrh was a warning that there will be much **MORE** to learn about Jesus during His time on earth. Myrrh represents tears, death, and comforting mourners. It was a hint of adventures to come.

But Wait! There's Myrrh!

The night God came to Bethlehem a priceless treasure came quietly and the world would never be the same.

But Wait! There's Myrrh!



Preschool: O What A Special Night!

*Costumes: Holy Land, white oversized t-shirts,
colorful scarf belts, sandals, bare feet, or socks.
Props: Poster Board Animals on Sticks.*

*Create animal stick images. Duct tape Jumbo Wooden
Craft Sticks to the back of each animal.
Each child carries their animal with craft stick attached.*

HOT TIP: Any prop created on posterboard or cardboard is ready for 'prime time' when sprayed with brightly colored glitter. Spray glitter is less messy than glitter sprinkled with Elmer's glue.

Outline each 'prop on a stick' with black marker to stand out as children hold them.



Enlarge our patterns, highlight with paint or use the appropriately color posterboard found in most Dollar Stores or craft stores.

*We offer these prop suggestions.
Choose what you wish to use.
Easy for preschool use!*



Leader: *(Lead children to center of stage)* It is a very special night in this stable. Do you know that a baby boy was born here? It's JESUS! Hurry children. Our job is to get all the animals safely into the stable. They are hungry and tired. We should sing a fun stable song to our animal friends. And while we are there we MUST meet Baby Jesus!

Gather Around Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Each child carries one animal (sheep, donkey or cow) on a stick, lifting it high so the audience can see.

When their animal is mentioned in the song, they shake their stick.

Sing to the Tune: "Baby Shark"

Baby Sheep, baa baa baa baa baa baa
Baby Sheep, baa baa baa baa baa baa
Baby sheep, baa baa baa baa baa baa
Baby sheep!

Baby Donkey, hee haw hee haw haw haw
Baby Donkey, hee haw hee haw haw haw
Baby Donkey, hee haw hee haw haw haw
Baby Donkey!

Baby Cow, moo moo moo moo moo moo
Baby Cow, moo moo moo moo moo moo
Baby Cow, moo moo moo moo moo moo
Baby Cow!

Safe at last, doo doo doo doo doo doo
Safe at last, doo doo doo doo doo doo
Safe at last, doo doo doo doo doo doo
Safe at last!

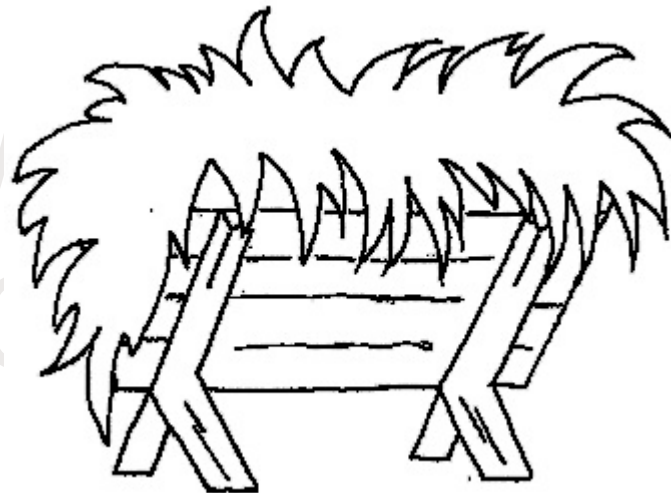
Baby sleeps, sh sh sh sh sh sh
Baby sleeps, sh sh sh sh sh sh
Baby sleeps, sh sh sh sh sh sh
Baby sleeps!

As the group returns to seats, they sing:

sh sh sh sh sh sh sh sh sh sh
sh sh sh sh sh sh sh sh sh sh
sh sh sh sh sh sh sh sh sh sh *(Big finish...SHUSH!)*



ACT ONE



PREVIEW ONLY
NO PURCHASE
PLEASE PURCHASE

At The Right Time
Jesus Was Born



Story Teller: When The Time Was Right



Paul wrote, "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Galatians 4:4-5)

Jesus was born when Roman invaders ruled Israel. Life was humble and hard. People lived in poverty because of unfair tax. Village homes were dark and small. Food was scarce. Living a faithful Jewish religious life of oppressive laws was challenging.

God could have waited for printing presses, radio, television, movies, and computers to announce His arrival in a really big, fireworks way. No one expected the Messiah that night. They should have. It's not like God didn't give them a 'head's up'. Isaiah (9:6,7), 500 years before, said, "For to us a child is born; to us a son is given. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

There was great excitement that their Messiah would come. Eventually. Roman rule that was hard and cruel made Israel hungry for their Messiah. After all, God promised His people a helper.

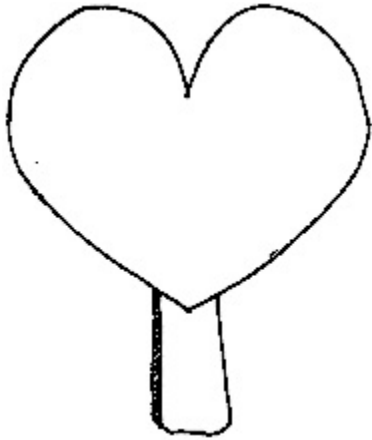
The people wanted a "flashy" Messiah. A king with a mean streak. A ruler who would kick the Romans out with their fancy sandals, shiny uniforms, and money grabbing ways.

They wanted God to seal Israel as a nation ruled by the God of Creation. They wanted a Messiah King RIGHT NOW! But God had a different plan. A quiet plan. A plan that included a baby.

Yes, God reminded His people of Isaiah's prophecy, "I am going to send my Son at just the right time. The government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

But Wait! There's Myrrh!





KINDERGARTEN: On The Road

Actors: Kindergarten. Add preschool children if desired.

Leaders assist with singing.

Costumes: Holy Land clothing

Props: Hearts on sticks

Gather around Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus.

Baby Jesus Song

(Tune: "Are You Sleeping Brother John")

Baby Jesus, Baby Jesus,
Far from home. Far from home.
Don't you know I love you?
Don't you know I love you?
Very much, very much.

Baby Jesus, Baby Jesus
Born to us, born to us.
Come let us adore Him, Come let us adore Him.
Joyously, joyously.

Baby Jesus, Baby Jesus
Born to us, born to us
Jesus came to save us, Jesus came to save us,
Amen. Amen.

**Stay in place while 'shepherds'
enter and speak.
Everyone exits when
Monologue Speaker exits.**



Grade One: I'm A Shepherd, You're A Shepherd, All God's Children Are Shepherds!



Actors: Grade One children

Costumes: Holy Land Shepherds

Props: Sheep on sticks

Grade One students enter and sit casually around the manger. They quietly 'baa' as they hold their sheep toward the audience.

STUDENT #1: I'm a shepherd!

STUDENT #2: You're a shepherd? Me too!

STUDENT #3: All God's children are shepherds!

STUDENT #4: We saw angels! They sang to us!

STUDENT #5: Angels were all around us.

STUDENT #6: Even our sheep were quiet to hear angels sing.

STUDENT #7: We came to the manger right away.

ALL SHEPHERDS: FOR UNTO US IS BORN THIS DAY, IN THE CITY OF DAVID, A SAVIOR WHO IS CHRIST THE LORD!

Students show off their sheep and quietly 'baa' as the leader speaks.

LEADER: The Shepherds of Bethlehem are not really glamorous. They are easy to take for granted. They're not interesting exotic wizards from a distant land. They are not powerful kings or evil rulers. They are ordinary, working folks. Sure, they claimed to see a choir of singing angels, but that is their only claim to fame, right?

The shepherds are a connection from Old Testament to New Testament to today. So when we hear one of the shepherds saying, "Let us go into Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place", we are still hearing the original shepherds retelling their story again and again. "The Messiah has come! We saw Him with our own eyes!"

**Stay in place while Monologue Speaker speaks.
Kindergarten and Grade One
exit when Monologue Speaker exits.**



MONOLOGUE: When The Time Was Right

Reader: One person (male or female)

Costume: Holy Land Traveling Clothes

Props: Printed script segment carried as a torn map

Enter From Rear, Stand in Aisle: Tired and bedraggled from a long journey, reading map:



Traveling alone. Bad idea. This old map is ripped. It shows some roads. There is a small path through Bethlehem and then on to Jerusalem. Watch out for Roman soldiers. They are everywhere these days; especially since people are traveling for the Roman census. Who cares how many people? Only those who want us to pay more taxes.

Those Roman military guys treat my people like dogs. But... their Roman roads help me travel. Finally, straight paths, strong enough for carts and animals and people. I met three kings in a caravan of camels from eastern lands. They said they 'saw a message about a new king in the stars'. Ha! Crazy people!

Walk to Stage: A baby boy was just born in a Bethlehem stable. Bethlehem children are singing to the baby. Shepherds tell their story of angels on a hillside and a beautiful angel choir. Yes, God had a quiet plan for Messiah when the fullness of time had come.

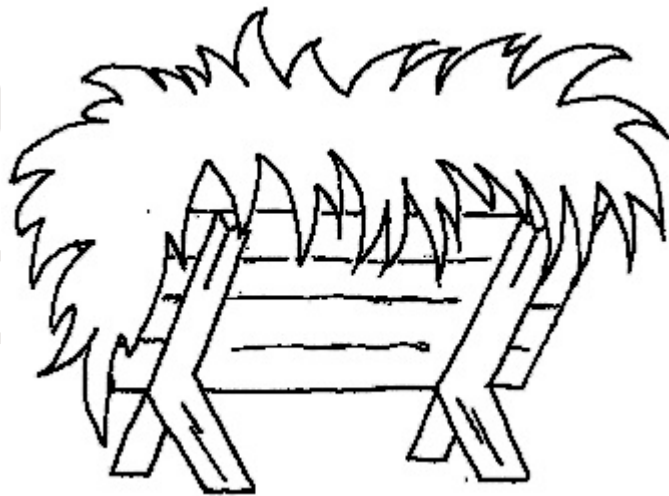
But Wait! There's Myrrh!

OPTION: SPECIAL MUSIC

AUDIENCE SINGS: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"



ACT TWO



...It's A Boy!



Story Teller: It's A Boy!



God sends hints that people in Bethlehem begin to understand. This is an amazing night--a night no one will forget. God's gift is a Savior to the world. His celebration is more than candles on a cake. He fills the sky with angels. They glow. They speak. They sing. Angels are a wonderful part of Jesus' story. We may meet a few sparkling angels.

Back in Bethlehem, things are hopping. Mary and Joseph finished their long trip to sign Joseph's name in the Roman census. How difficult that journey must have been. To add to their challenges, they had no place to stay. The baby was kicking. Mary knew the time had come for Jesus to be born. Behind one of the wooden doors had to be a small spot for them. They didn't lose hope.

Joseph knocked and an overworked, clueless innkeeper opened the door. His servants wished they had ten more spots for paying guests. Every corner was filled with snoring guests.

What will this innkeeper do after he opens the door?

First, let's peek at what Heaven's angels may have looked like on the shepherds' Bethlehem hillside. Imagine their shepherd fear and excitement all at the same time. Imagine bright angels all around you, lighting the sky and singing in the best choir ever created!

Then in a very special **Manger Moment** we meet the tender hearted innkeeper and his exhausted servants who opened his humble, private stable knowing it was not the best guest room in his house.

He gave all he had.

But Wait! There's Myrrh!



Grades Two and Three: The Angels Smiled

Actors: Grades Two and Three Students

Costumes: Angels

White robes or long white t shirts, glitter hair spray, gold/silver garland worn as halos and belts, bare feet, wings not needed but check Dollar Tree for "fairy wings", www.orientaltrading.com

Props: Make Large stick angels. Add glitter spray.



**Each student is dressed as an angel
and holds a flying angel on a stick.**

STUDENT #1: The Christmas angel comes your way
To bless you each and every day.

STUDENT #2: And comes to earth from Heaven above
To fill your heart with peace and love.

STUDENT #3: One night two thousand years ago,
A star bathes earth in Heaven's glow

STUDENT #4: And shepherds heard the angels' call
For peace on earth, good will to all.

STUDENT #5: The Christmas angel still imparts
This message to all faithful hearts.

STUDENT #6: To bless you and your loved ones dear
Day after day throughout the year.

A CHRISTMAS ANGEL

(TUNE: "If You're Happy and You Know It")

Oh, I wish I was an angel in the sky!
Oh, I wish I was an angel way up high!
I would sing the shepherds' song
And I'd fly high all around.
Oh, I wish I was an angel in the sky!

**STUDENTS LEAVE BY FLYING
BACK THROUGH THE AUDIENCE
WITH THEIR ANGELS.**



Grades 4-5: A Stable Inn

Actors: Grades 4-5 Students (One Innkeeper, servants)

Use the number of students available. Parts can be repeated by same children if there are only a few.

Costumes: Holy Land clothing

Props: Serving bowls, linens, brooms, buckets



Innkeeper: We have to check on the young couple in the stable. I haven't seen them since they arrived.

Servant #1: They are there, but....what's different?

Servant #2: It's a baby! They had a baby! In OUR stable!

Servant #3: *(Exhausted)* More work! Let's see what has to be done.

Innkeeper: Wait! Be quiet. Never wake a sleeping baby. Let's just look for now.

ALL ACTORS GATHER QUIETLY AROUND MARY, JOSEPH, BABY

Innkeeper: *(To a silent Joseph)* Shalom. I hope your accommodations are comfortable. Oh, never mind, Of course your accommodations are not comfortable. I'm sorry. I wish I could have given you a better place to rest and have your baby.

Servant #4: Please, sir, don't be upset. You gave all you had. It was a very creative idea to loan them the stable. It has fresh hay, a warm manger, NO PEOPLE!

Servant #5: You could have turned them away. I would have.

Servant #6: No you wouldn't. I saw you standing in the doorway when the baby was born. You have a tender heart.

Innkeeper: *(To a silent Mary)* When your husband told me your situation, I saw great fear in his eyes. I didn't have one single room to offer him. Even my own bed is taken by a traveler.

ALL ACTORS REMAIN IN PLACE DURING MONOLOGUE.



Monologue: But Wait! There's Myrrh!

Actor: One Speaker



But Wait! There's Myrrh! We interrupt this **Manger Moment** to focus on a weary innkeeper. This is the time of year he should be making money. He is probably regretting his decision to put off adding the extra guest rooms to his home.

Along come two young travelers. They are dusty, dirty, hungry, and what's worse, the young woman is having a baby. There is every reason to say "move along" like every other innkeeper in Bethlehem.

Joseph had heard "There is no room at the Inn" many times.

And YET...there is something about these two travelers. Maybe it's the desperation in their eyes. Maybe it's the thought of a baby being born in the street. Maybe it's the memory of his own children being born in comfort. Maybe it was knowing Joseph was a hometown boy. Whatever it was, in that moment, the man made a decision that has lasted through the ages. **And, we will never know his name.**

He said, "Yes, I will offer what I have. It's only an animal stable but it's quiet and private. Go there and I will bring food and water," Their eyes changed from fear to gratitude. The innkeeper had the ability to think and live beyond the "No". He didn't let limitations stop him.

He thought of creative options.

It's time to pause and thank God. Let's pray: "God, thank You for sending Emmanuel, God with us. Thank You for Christmas and for thinking beyond the "no". Please forgive our "no way" thinking. Help us trust You. Your Word says "Nothing is impossible with God". That night the impossible became possible in a tiny inn's only possibility, a stable with a manger. Amen."

OPTION: SPECIAL MUSIC SOLO

"Mary Did You Know" by Mark Lowry

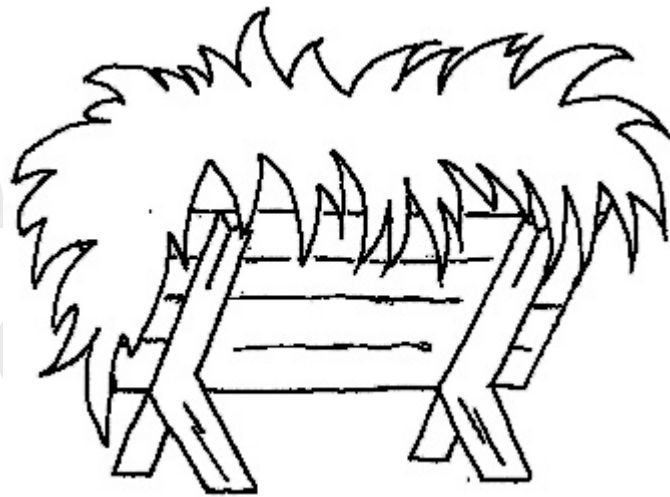
download sheet music: www.musicnotes.com

AUDIENCE SINGS: "Angels We Have Heard On High"

ALL INNKEEPER/STUDENTS LEAVE STAGE. JOSEPH, MARY, BABY LEAVE STAGE, WALKING SLOWLY BACK THE CENTER AISLE.



ACT THREE



PREVIEW ONLY
NO PURCHASE
PLEASE PURCHASE

Ah Yes,
We Remember It Well!



Story Teller: Ah Yes, We Remember It Well!



But wait! There's Myrrh! Really! Myrrh! I know. You have been waiting for this. You know what Myrrh is, don't you? There really was a gift of Myrrh given to Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. God never leaves out a detail.

The word "myrrh" means "bitter". It is a perfume, incense, and medicine from a small, thorny tree. Remember the thorns on Jesus' brow, the mixture of vinegar and myrrh at the Cross? (Mark 15:23) Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea brought a 100 pound mixture of myrrh and aloes to wrap Jesus' body. **It was their honor.**

Before that day, wise men, Magi from the East, brought gifts of gold, frankincense and MYRRH to a child and his family in Bethlehem. They prepared their gifts, followed a bright star, and never thought of turning back until they met the King of Kings. Their journey even included running away from a clever, evil ruler in Jerusalem. **Truly Wise Men!**

Did the Wise Men remember it well? Let's have a **Manger Moment** with the wise men and their traveling troop long after their return home to the Far East. The Magi are old men now but they still have that spark of heavenly adventure in them. **Sshh, they are coming.**



Grades 6-8: Ah Yes, We Remember It Well! + 3 Adult Men



Actors: 3 older men as wise men, students as traveling companions
Costumes: Robes, turbans, lots of jewelry around necks and rings on fingers. Traveling companions may dress in simple robes, sandals.
Props: 3 chairs covered in colorful draped blankets or sheets placed center stage..

**WISE MEN LEAD THE WAY ALONG CENTER AISLE.
TRAVELING COMPANIONS FOLLOW SLOWLY,
ASSISTING THE MEN TO SEATS ON STAGE.**

**THE MAGI ARE OLD MEN NOW AND ARE TRYING
TO REMEMBER THE DETAILS OF THEIR JOURNEY.
THEY TELL THEIR STORY AS BEST THEY CAN.**

**A FEW TRAVELERS SPEAK. OTHERS SIT AROUND THEM
ON THE FLOOR, LISTENING TO THEIR STORY.**

Traveler #1: (Seating Magi #1) Magi, sit here and rest. We are ready to hear your adventures in the land to the far west.

Magi #1: I need to rest my bones. My glory days as a king are far behind me but my adventure memories are strong.

Traveler #2: (Seating Magi #2) O wise king, do you remember the days of travel as well?

Magi #2: My brain is a little foggy. I think I remember most of it. It was quite an adventure. There was a star involved.

Traveler #3: (Seating Magi #3) And you, sir. Do you remember being with these two in the camel caravan?

Magi #3: I don't remember a thing. I slept most of the way. Remind me. Where did we go? Why did we go? When did we leave? How did I get here?



Traveler #4: You'll remember soon enough. You hold a special place in history. Even more than being wise or being kings from the East. God of Creation sent you on your journey with only a star to guide you and royal gifts for a baby king you didn't know. You gave gifts to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Traveler #5: Tell us your story! We want to hear what happened!

HOT TIP: Rhyming based on the old song, "I Remember It Well"

The song can be played quietly in background as actors read.

(Piano sheet music: www.musicnotes.com)

Magi #1: We saw His star. Amazing sight!

Magi #2: We saw His star? I thought it was light.

Magi #1: You saw His star. It shone that night.

Magi #2: O that's right. It was big and bright!

Magi #3: Ah, yes, I remember it well.

Magi #1: We knew His star led to the King.

Magi #2: I kind of doubted your crazy thing.

Magi #1: I told you what was in my heart.

Magi #2: I felt the same, He was king from the start.

Magi #3: Ah, yes, I remember it well.

Magi #1: The desert trip was hard and long.

Magi #2: Our camels' feet stayed firm and strong.

Magi #1: We followed His star across desert sand.

Magi #2: We were a group. A merry band.

Magi #3: Ah, yes, I remember it well.

Magi #1: First stop—Jerusalem, the nation's city.

Magi #2: That sly, clever ruler was not that witty.

Magi #1: He tried to make us spill the beans

Magi #2: To kill the King. Boy, he was mean!



Magi #3: Ah, yes, I remember it well.

Magi #1: We found the Child in Bethlehem!

Magi #2: Meek and mild.

Magi #1: That's what they say.

Magi #2: We gave our gifts without delay.

Magi #3: Ah, yes, I remember it well.

Magi #1: Gold and Myrrh and Frankincense.

Magi #2: Those costly gifts...no coincidence.

Magi #1: Gold for the King, Frankincense to worship

Magi #2: and Myrrh , for death, completed our trip.

Magi #1: Our Magi story had it's day.

We went home a different way
A Jerusalem ruler held no sway.
The Baby King would be okay.

Magi #2: The Star of Bethlehem was a miracle.

It shined across earth. It was lyrical.
Back to the East we traveled with pride.
Our adventure complete, we were still dignified.

Magi #3: Ah, yes, I remember it well.

Am I getting old? Because then I was bold.
My memory may fail with story and tale.
But God's truth is firmly in my mind.
The King of Kings came for all mankind.

My memories may blur,
With my friends I confer.

I think they agree,
"But Wait! There's Myrrh!"

**THE MAGI AND TRAVELING COMPANIONS
LEAVE THE STAGE AND WALK BACK
THE CENTER AISLE.**



Monologue: But Wait! There's Myrrh

*Speaker: Teen or adult. If desired use more than one speaker.
Two or more Speakers may take turns reading each paragraph.*

*Option: Leaders of each small group become speakers
standing along the center aisle.*

*Costume: Modern Clothing or Holy Land costumes
if the speaker is already in character.*

Props: Candles



But Wait! There's Myrrh! What **MORE** can there possibly be? Our *Manger Moments* began on a Bethlehem hillside with stars that were more than stars. They were angels! The "Morning Stars of Heaven"! The excitement of everyday shepherds was real. They left their sheep and ran to the village. They found Mary and Joseph and the swaddled baby lying in a Manger. Now that is a *Manger Moment*!

But Wait! MORE *Manger Moments* as Joseph and Mary are faced with an impossible situation: finding a quiet, private place to have a baby. A palace? A wealthy home? A guest room in an Inn? No, a tender hearted, overworked Innkeeper said "Yes" and offered all he had: A stable...but it had a **MANGER!** The perfect baby bed. And that is exactly where Jesus, the long awaited Messiah, Savior of the world, was born.

But Wait! MORE *Manger Moments* came when wise men, kings of the East, Magi, searched for the Christ child. They followed the light of an amazing star. They asked King Herod where He was. "Where is He who has been born king of the Jews? We saw His star when it rose and have come to worship him" Oops! Not happy news for a jealous, raging King. It was no accident that they ended up in Bethlehem.

But Wait! MORE *Manger Moments* when they found the baby Jesus and "bowed down and worshiped him". They opened their treasures and presented Him with treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.



But Wait! Jesus grew, preached, performed miracles, and went to the Cross. The stories shepherds, angels, wise men, innkeepers, Mary, Joseph, and so many more told when they got old and sat around campfires, changed lives.

But Wait! *Manger Moments* are still here today right in this room. We still run to Bethlehem with the shepherds. We still peek into the manger to see the baby with the Innkeeper. We still give our gifts like the wise men and worship the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Wonderful Counselor, Prince of Peace. Jesus was born as God's master plan of redemption for sin.

But Wait! God's plan was always **MORE**. Jesus' birth is a whole lot more than a *Manger Moment*. His birth, His life, His death, His resurrection show us how much God loves us and gives us forgiveness and grace.

But Wait! There's Myrrh!
Won't it be amazing to find out what comes next?
Merry Christmas!

OPTION: SPECIAL MUSIC

Suggestion: "O Holy Night"

AUDIENCE SINGS: "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"



Conclusion



This is the perfect time to have Joseph, Mary and Baby Jesus return to their places center stage.

Conclude the program with a traditional Candle Lighting Ceremony.



Sing several Christmas Carols.

“Silent Night”

“Away In A Manger”



Dismiss to attend
AFTERGLOW PARTY!





Afterglow Party

Assign party planning to one small group. This may be a few willing men and women or an adult Sunday School Class or women's group.

Offer delicious food, background Christmas music and casual fellowship.

Preparations Before Party Day

Menu

Plan the menu. A pleasant option may be to ask people to bring their favorite Christmas dessert to share. Provide a variety of beverages.

If this is a Sunday morning event, consider serving a Continental Breakfast complete with doughnuts, orange juice, coffee and tea.

Seating

Decide the best seating arrangement depending upon the size of the anticipated gathering. Position tables and chairs and serve buffet style with guests standing and moving around the room to chat.

Place a few chairs in small circles for small group conversation.

Music

Fill the room with Christmas music. This could be live music performed by local church musicians or favorite CD performances.



Centerpieces

Cover tables as desired. Feature Christmas centerpieces on each table. Because it is an "Afterglow Party", feature lots of white twinkle lights and large and small candles. Add Christmas items: Nativity pieces, mangers, poinsettias, glitter. Have fun decorating with what is available.

Preparations On Party Day

Decorate the serving table and guest tables. Plug in the coffee pot and put tea water on the stove to boil while the program is in progress. Set out desserts, cream and sugar. Make your favorite Christmas punch and place on a nearby serving table.

During The Party

Assign people serve food, pour beverages, refill cream and sugar as needed. Greet guests cordially as they come through the serving line. Move about the group to be sure everyone feels welcome. Find seats for those who may not be familiar with your church. Introduce people. Enjoy the program participants as they mingle with the guests.

After The Party

The party is not over until clean up is complete. Ask everyone to help with dishes, removing tables and chairs and sweeping the area clean.



*Go Home to Keep Christmas
With Your Families
Knowing you have been
Good and Faithful Servants!*

