

**The Nativity Pageant (Hickling).
December 9th 2001, 4pm – 5.30pm.**

Angel Gabriel	Barbara McEwen
Mary	Nicky Grayson
Elizabeth	Becky Malpas
Joseph	Tim McEwen
Centurions	Paul Frost
	Robert Collishaw, Oliver McEwen, Michael Parker.
Readings	Molly Collishaw
Innkeeper	Becky Malpas
Shepherds	Peter Vernon and helpers
King	Claire Hartland, Kate Collishaw, Charlie Parker with Sarah Hartland and Pollyanna Grayson
Herod	David Malpas
Priests	Andy Baker and John Scarborough
Choir	<i>(to lead all carol singing)</i>
Music	John Quine
Lighting & Sound	Chris White
Production	Jane Fraser, Barbara McEwen, Molly Collishaw

Act 1.

Starting at Clawson Lane Junction at 4pm, all characters assemble.

Scene: Nazareth.

Joseph at his carpenter's bench with Elizabeth some distance away, seated. Roman soldiers mingled with the crowd. All dressed in Eastern costume.

(Vivaldi Gloria plays.)

Mary appears and the angel Gabriel appears above and greets her:

Gabriel: Hail, O favoured one! (Mary is startled). Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God, behold, thou shalt bring forth a son, and he shall be called Jesus. He will be great, he will be called the son of the most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever and to his reign there shall be no end.

Mary: How can this be? I have no husband.

Gabriel: The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, the power of the most high will overshadow you, hence, the one that shall be born of thee, will be called holy, Son of God.

Mary: Behold, the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me as you have said.

(The angel Gabriel disappears and Mary runs to her cousin Elizabeth, to tell her the news and salutes her with a kiss.)

Mary: The angel Gabriel has visited me.

Elizabeth: Blessed art thou among women, what have I done to have the mother of my Lord come upon me.

Mary: O Elizabeth (*Choir then sings the Magnificat.*)

- 1 My soul doth magnify the Lord :
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
- 2 For he hath regarded :
the lowliness of his handmaiden.
- 3 For behold, from henceforth :
all generations shall call me blessed.
- 4 For he that is mighty hath magnified me :
and holy is his Name.
- 5 And his mercy is on them that fear him :
throughout all generations.
- 6 He hath shewed strength with his arm :
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
- 7 He hath put down the mighty from their seat :
and hath exalted the humble and meek.
- 8 He hath filled the hungry with good things :
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
- 9 He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel :
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.
Luke 1.46-55
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

(The angel Gabriel now appears to Joseph who is asleep.)

Gabriel: Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived within her is of the Holy Spirit and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.
(Joseph is aroused from his dream and is joined by Mary who is sitting by his carpenter's bench.)

At this point the Roman soldiers push through the crowd, members of the crowd heckle them. After a fanfare of trumpets the centurion reads the proclamation signed by Caesar Augustus.

Centurion: To the great and mighty Caesar Augustus, All Hail! Be it known that Caesar has decreed and has ordered his Lord Cyrenius to proclaim that all men shall be taxed. Ye are commanded therefore, every man, with his family, forthwith, to make journey to his own city; that everyone may be taxed according to his lineage and substance; and let no one withstand the word of the law. All Hail, Caesar!

Act 2.

The people of Nazareth then prepare for the journey to Bethlehem including Joseph and Mary (riding on a donkey), then shall follow in procession, the angels, the shepherds, the kings. Everyone sings as the procession moves to the Inn.

Little Donkey

Little donkey, little donkey,
On the dusty road,
Got to keep on plodding onwards
With your precious load.
Been a long time, little donkey,
Through the winter's night.
Don't give up now, little donkey,
Bethlehem's in sight.

Ring out those bells tonight,
Bethlehem, Bethlehem.
Follow that star tonight,
Bethlehem, Bethlehem
Little donkey, little donkey,
Had a heavy day.
Little donkey, carry Mary
Safely on her way.

Little donkey, carry Mary
Safely on her way.

O Little Town of Bethlehem.

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth;
for Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

Where children pure and happy
pray to the blessed child,
where misery cries out to thee,
Son of the mother mild;
where charity stands watching
and faith holds wide the door,
the dark night wakes, the glory breaks,
and Christmas comes once more.

O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

Act 2 ends with the arrival at the Inn.

Act 3.

Joseph knocks at the door of Malt House Farm, the Innkeeper appears at an upstairs window;

Joseph: Have you any room?

Innkeeper: *(shaking his head)* No, we are full up.

Joseph: We must find shelter somewhere, my wife is with child.

Innkeeper: All I can offer is the stable if you care to go in there.
(Joseph consults Mary and accepts.) The Innkeeper takes his lamp and leads Mary and Joseph towards the stable behind Malt House Farm. Mary and Joseph go up to the stable, Innkeeper stands with a lantern at the gate. Crowd and cast sing;

Silent night, holy night,
all is calm, all is bright;
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds first saw the sight:
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia:
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
radiance beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Everyone waits in silence. Sound of a baby crying comes from the stable.

Act 4.

Reader: Isaiah 9 v.6... Unto us a child is born, unto us a child is given and the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

The procession moves up to Harles Acres singing;

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.

'Fear not', said he (for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind);
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind.

'To you in David's town this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:

'The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.'

Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

'All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
good will henceforth from heaven to men
begin and never cease.'

The angel Gabriel appears to the shepherds, who are afraid and reassures them with the words:

Gabriel: Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you. Ye shall find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger.

The full complement of angels join the angel Gabriel saying “Glory to God in the Highest and on Earth Peace, good will towards men.” Choir and crowd follow singing;

Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim,
‘Christ is born in Bethlehem.’
Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark...

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of peace!
Hail, the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth.
Hark...

The angels withdraw.

Shepherds: *(one to another)* Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us.

Reader: (Luke 2 v. 16-20) And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger; and when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it, wondered at

these things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen as it was told unto them.

During the reading the shepherds proceed to the stable, the crowd stays where it is because they hear the voice of the first king. Kings ride down from Long Lane direction.

First King: Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East.

Act 5.

Spotlight on Herod and his priests.

Scene. Herod's throne, with the chief priests and scribes around him. The 3 kings halt on reaching Herod's throne and repeat:

Three Kings: Where is he that is born King of the Jews?

Herod standing, gathers his chief priests and scribes close to him and demands they find out where Christ should be born.

Herod: Where is it that he is to be born, the King of the Jews?

Priests: In Bethlehem of Judaea; for thus it is written by the prophets; and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel.

Herod: *(enquires of the wise men)* What time did the star appear? *And he sends them to Bethlehem saying* Go and search diligently for the young child and when you have found him bring me word again so that I may come and worship him also.

The kings leave the palace and move towards the stable leading the crowd who sing;

We three kings of Orient are,
bearing gifts we travel afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star:

O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

Born a king on Bethlehem plain,
gold I bring to crown him again:
King for ever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign.
O star of wonder, star of night, etc.

Frankincense for Jesus have I,
God on earth yet Priest on high;

prayer and praising all men raising:
worship is earth's reply.
O star of wonder, star of night, etc.

Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume
tells of his death and Calvary's gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in a stone-cold tomb.
O star of wonder, star of night, etc.

Glorious now, behold him arise,
King, and God, and sacrifice!
Heaven sings out "Alleluia",
"Alleluia" the earth replies.
O star of wonder, star of night, etc.

*When the procession reaches the Innkeeper at the farm gate the Kings go on to the stable,
the crowd waits;*

Innkeeper: Welcome! Join me and see more of this wonderful event. Let the children
come first and gather round the crib.
Innkeeper leads the children singing;

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

*The rest of the crowd follows. The children go into the stable and arrange themselves in
to the tableau. As the crowd come into the stable yard, the stable doors are closed. Quiet
organ playing.*

*The doors of the stable open and reveal the nativity tableau. The shepherds come in from
one side and present their gifts. The kings (on foot) come in from the other side and
present their gifts.*

Reader: (St. John 1. v.1 – 5)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The
same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him Him; and without

Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Carol: "O 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!

God of God,
Light of Light,
lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;
very God,
begotten, not created:
O come, let us, etc.

See how the shepherds
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:
O come, let us, etc.

Lo, star-led chieftains,
magi, Christ adoring,
offer him incense, gold, and myrrh;
we to the Christ-child
bring our hearts' oblations:
O come, let us, etc.

Child, for us sinners
poor and in the manger,
fain we embrace thee with love and awe;
who would not love thee,
loving us so dearly?
O come, let us, etc.

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above:
"Glory to God
in the highest:"
O come, let us, etc.

Prayers and the Blessing.

*Close with recording of Hallelujah chorus.
Church bells begin to ring.*