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| Black italic = Explanation and instructions | **VOICE 1** |
| Blue= The Story | **VOICE 2** |
| Red = Sounds and actions | **VOICE 3 (or 1)** |
| Green = Songs | **VOICE 4 (or 2)** |

***Welcome to the “JOIN IN AT HOME” NATIVITY!***

***We’re so glad you’ve joined us!***

*Like us, you might be feeling sad that our Christmas celebrations will be different this year, so we have planned this service to be a little like the Nativity service that usually happens in church on Christmas Eve.*

*We hope you and any children and family who are with you will join in just as enthusiastically as if we were all sitting in church! Listed below are some things to collect before the service to help you take part. If there are some you don’t have, don’t worry! There was a lot of “making do” on the first Christmas – the stable made do as a Maternity ward, and a cattle trough made do as a cot. Find what you can – and improvise the rest!*

*The really good news though is that God’s gift of his son, Jesus doesn’t change because we can’t celebrate as usual. Jesus knows that our lives are sometimes fun and happy, and sometimes hard and worrying. He is our friend, King and Saviour for ever – not just when we have that happy Christmas feeling!*

*Here are some items which you could use to take part as one of the characters. Do encourage grown ups to join in too; it is Christmas after all! Depending on how many characters you will have, try to find these things before we start (of course if more than one person wants to have the same part, that’s absolutely fine!)*

* *A blue item of clothing/fabric/towel etc. for Mary*
* *Some tinsel – for the angel*
* *A tea towel with a belt/cord or string to hold it in place for Joseph and the Shepherds*
* *A toy sheep and donkey (or any teddy/other animal who could play the part!)*
* *A shiny box or bauble for the Wise Kings*
* *A star ornament, or a torch for the star*
* *A doll (or teddy) to be Jesus and a box to lie the baby in.*

*We’ll be playing some verses from some well-known carols in our service, please sing along at home as much as you like! We will start with some Christmas music for a few minutes so that you can find any props you need…*

To start, we will sing a verse of “O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL” Let’s sing these words remembering that although we might be on our own in our homes, there are countless Christians all round the world singing too, praising God for the birth of Jesus.

*Each character has a line to say and an action, so do join in as they’re learning what to do and say, we will learn these as we tell the story. If you have room to go for a little walk**when there is a journey mentioned in the story, that’s great! If you don’t, just march on the spot!*

If you are going to be Mary in our Nativity play, see if you can learn these words and actions She says, “A baby? OK God!” (Make baby sign and then thumbs up)

The Angels words are, “Don’t be afraid, I bring good news” (Hands with fingers outstretched by face for, then either side.)

*Listen to the first part of the story.*

Nothing special was happening in Mary’s day. Everything was ordinary and normal, when suddenly an angel appeared to her. He said, “DON’T BE AFRAID! I BRING GOOD NEWS.”

“You’re going to have a baby, he’s going to be God’s son! He’ll be an amazing King, not just for now, but for ever”

Mary was very surprised and a bit confused too but she loved God and wanted to be part of his plan so she said, “A BABY? OK GOD!”

 Now we need Joseph, we often imagine Joseph with a long beard so he’s going to fiddle with his beard and be rather confused and say, “A BABY, THAT’S STRANGE” (hands in front, point in opposite directions.)

MARY was just getting used to taking part in God’s Christmas story when her husband Joseph heard about the baby.

A BABY, THAT’S STRANGE” (hands in front, point in opposite directions.)

*Just who was this baby, he wondered. But while Joseph was asleep one night, a bright light seemed to fill his dream! It was an angel who said, “DON’T BE AFRAID! I BRING GOOD NEWS” and then explained about God’s plan. It seemed that Joseph too was going to be part of God’s story too.*

He still didn’t quite understand and said A BABY, THAT’S STRANGE” but he decided to trust God whatever happened.

**Verse of ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID’S CITY**

So, Joseph and Mary started to get ready for the baby. There was lots to do. But when it was nearly time for the baby to be born, they had some news. The Roman rulers wanted to count how many people lived in their lands. Joseph and Mary would have to go all the way to Bethlehem because that’s where Joseph’s family came from! What a long way to go, especially when Mary’s baby was due any day.

Luckily, there was a donkey to help.

Donkeys make a HEE HAW sound! Maybe you can join in for the donkey on the journey if you’re not Mary or Joseph!

Mary, Joseph and the Donkey travelled to Bethlehem. It was a very long way.

Sing “LITTLE DONKEY”

Mary and Joseph agreed that they had walked so far that all they wanted now was a nice comfy bed for the night.

There were so many people in Bethlehem that Mary and Joseph were very worried that there were no rooms to stay in. They asked at every inn but the answer was always, “Sorry we’re full!”, Finally one kind innkeeper remembered a place that he had. It was only a little stable, a shed really where he kept his animals. He saw that Mary and Joseph might be glad of his little stable and he too wanted to be part God’s story, so he showed them where to go.

Baby Jesus was born there, and the new baby went to sleep in the place where the animals had their food.

Mary, pretend to rock the baby, and Joseph watch as we sing a Nativity song.

Song 2 verses of SILENT NIGHT

Now we need the angel again. Remember your words and actions, angels? , “Don’t be afraid, I bring good news” (Hands with fingers outstretched by face for, then either side.)

We also need the shepherds and sheep. The shepherds put one hand then the other on hips and said, ““OOOO, ARRRHH, THAT’S RIGHT BRIGHT!” (Hands in front, fingers apart) and the sheep probably made a lot of noise, saying “BAA, BAA” too. Help with the sheep noise if you’re not an angel or shepherd.

Some shepherds were out in the fields, looking after their sheep. As they were doing this angels appeared with a really bright light in the sky. The shepherds were very surprised indeed and they said*,* “OOOO, ARRRHH, THAT’S RIGHT BRIGHT! *The sheep said, “BAA, BAA”*

The bright light was the angels who said, “DON’T BE AFRAID! I BRING GOOD NEWS.” A very special baby has been born in Bethlehem. You can go and meet him! So, the shepherds and the sheep set off to walk to Bethlehem.

Sing 1st and last verses of WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED.

The shepherds got to the stable and found baby Jesus. They said , “OOOO, ARRRHH, THAT’S RIGHT BRIGHT” The sheep said, “BAA, BAA” They thought he was so amazing and brilliant that they decided to go and tell everyone they could find about the new baby.

Now, at last we come to the star! If you have a star shape or a torch, say the words, “TWINKLE, TWINKLE, TWINKLE, TWINKLE” and make star shapes in the air with your hand.

We also need one or more people to be the Wise Kings. You say, “FOLLOW THE STAR” and point to the sky.

When Jesus was born a bright star appeared. Its light seemed to brighten the whole sky. The star said,“TWINKLE, TWINKLE, TWINKLE, TWINKLE”

In a far off country some wise kings saw the star and said, “FOLLOW THE STAR” Their journey was a really, really long one but they didn’t need a signpost, they had the star to follow

The Wise Kings said*,* “FOLLOW THE STAR” and eventually they found Jesus when the star stopped moving over the place where Jesus was. They gave him some amazing presents: gold for a king, frankincense for a holy priest and myrrh for a saviour.

Sing TWINKLE, TWINKLE LITTLE STAR, (or WE THREE KINGS if Twinkle not available)

Add this verse if possible.

Twinkle, twinkle wise men came

Travelling across the plain

Following the star so bright

Watching for its shining light

Twinkle, twinkle wise men came

Here to share the new king’s reign.

*So many people had come to see this special baby. Can you remember what the characters said?*

Mary “A BABY? OK GOD”

Angel, “DON’T BE AFRAID! I BRING GOOD NEWS.”

Joseph, “A BABY? HOW STRANGE”

Donkey, “HEE HAW”

Shepherds, “OOOO, ARRRHH, THAT’S RIGHT BRIGHT!”

Sheep, “BAA, BAA”

Star, “TWINKLE, TWINKLE, TWINKLE, TWINKLE”

Wise Kings, ”FOLLOW THE STAR!”

QUICK THOUGHT FROM….

MESSY CHRISTMAS POEM (see next page)

Sing “AWAY IN A MANGER”

BLESSING

Invitation to other online events?

Christmas music- MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

