*A Christmas Celebration - by Robert Tewes*

*As the first song begins, all the children process to their places while they sing the following carol:*

 **Oh, Come, Little Children**

 (*as the dramatic music begins)*

Narrator: In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that a census was to take place

 throughout the whole Roman Empire. This happened when Quirinius was Governor

 of Syria.

*Governor Quirinius takes center stage and sings* **The Census Song**

Narrator: Near that same time, God sent the angel Gabriel to a girl who was promised in

marriage to a man named Joseph. Joseph was a descendant of King David.

The girl’s name was Mary.

*The angel Gabriel and the cast sing* **Be Not Afraid!**

Narrator: Mary was overcome with joy. She couldn’t believe the news she was just told.

 She sang with great joy:

 *Mary sings* **Mary’s Song of Praise**

Narrator: So after Mary learned this news, she and her husband got ready to travel far away to register in

the town of Joseph’s birth, Bethlehem. It was about a 125 mile journey from Nazareth in Galilee. What a trying journey it was, since Mary was pregnant and uncomfortable, and had to travel on a mule.

 Once they arrived in Bethlehem, Mary was close to being ready to give birth to Jesus.

 They knocked on the door of a hotel. The innkeeper answered the door.

Innkeeper: Hello. What do you need?

Joseph: My wife here, Mary, is about to give birth to our baby. Can we please book a room to sleep in, until we can get registered, and go back home to Galilee?

Innkeeper: Galilee? That’s a long way from here. You travelled all the way here with a pregnant woman?

Joseph: Yeah…she’s quite the trooper! So do you have any rooms available?

Innkeeper: Let me look….I’m sorry, but since the Governor declared this census was to take place,

 people have been pouring into this town. I won’t have a room until next Tuesday.

Joseph: Seriously. We’re exhausted! Is there any place that we can stay for a couple of nights?

Innkeeper: Well, I have a barn out back that protects our animals: donkeys, sheep and a couple of sparrows.

 You could stay there if you’d like.

Joseph: How much will it cost? (Joseph reaches in his back pocket for his wallet).

Innkeeper: I tell you what…In light of your predicament, I won’t charge you anything. I wish we had

 a nicer place to send you, but at least you’ll be protected from the weather.

Joseph: Thanks so much!

Narrator: So Mary and Joseph went to the stable located behind the Inn. It was a rustic barn.

 Animals were sleeping in the dark stable, and it smelled like hay and straw.

 Joseph and Mary laid down, after their long trip, and fell fast asleep.

 And then, suddenly, Mary said to Joseph:

Mary: Joseph! I think I’m going to deliver our baby!

Joseph: What? Here? Here in a Stable?!

Mary: Yes! I think I am about to give birth!

Narrator: Mary gave birth to her first son, wrapped him swaddling cloths, and laid him in one of the

 animals’ mangers.

 *The cast sings* **If I’d Known Then, What I Know Now**

Narrator: Meanwhile, there were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night

in their fields, as they often did, taking care of their flocks.

Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them.

They were terribly afraid.

The angel said,

Angel: Don’t be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people.

 This very day in David’s town—Bethlehem—your Savior was born—Christ the Lord!

 And this is what will prove it to you; You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a

 Manger.

Narrator: And suddenly, a great army of heaven’s angels appeared singing loud praises to God:

 *The angels sing to the Shepherds, the Shepherd Boy and the Shepherd Boy’s Dad,*

**Gloria in Excelsis Deo!**

Other Shepherds: Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, that the Lord has told us!

Narrator: So they hurried off and when they arrived in Bethlehem, and located the stable behind the Inn,

they opened the stable door, and there, right before them, they saw Mary and Joseph, and then they saw the baby, Jesus, who was lying in the manger.

Shepherds: It’s just like the angels said! They told us that the Savior of the world was born in a stable.

 They said we would find him in Bethlehem, lying in a manger.

 Sure enough! Here he is! Here you are! We’re so glad everyone is happy and healthy!

 Welcome, baby! Welcome, baby Jesus!

 *The entire cast joins in singing* **Finale**

**A Christmas Celebration – by Robert Tewes**

**Song Lyrics**

1. **Oh, Come, Little Children**

Oh, come, little children, Oh, come, one and all.

Oh, come, to the manger in Bethlehem’s stall

And see what the Father in heaven so true

Has done to prepare a bright Christmas for you.

1. **The Census Song**

 Quirinius: Hello, my subjects, my name is “Qui,” I guess you could say I’m a pretty Big Guy!

 I am the Governor of Syria and I’ve got a plan to get a proper count of all of you who

 live in my land. So pack all your bags up and saddle your mules!

 Come, now, one and all! You gotta follow my rules.

 You need to travel, now, to the place of your birth

 So we can count you, and tax you, and determine what you’re worth.

**All: We’ve got an Empire to build, we’ve got an Empire to build.**

 **We’re countin’ all the people so our plan can be fulfilled,**

 **You need to travel, now, to the place you were born,**

 **So we can count you, and tax you for a portion of your corn!**

 Quirinius: Good Morning, subjects, “Qui’s” the name, I seek Fame and Fortune, but mostly Fame!

 So as the Governor of Syria I’ve made up a plan: to get a proper count of all of you who

 live in my land. So pack all your bags up and saddle your mules!

 Come, now, one and all! You gotta follow my rules.

 You need to travel, now, to the place of your birth

 So we can count you, and tax you, and determine what you’re worth.

**All: We’ve got an Empire to build, we’ve got an Empire to build.**

 **We’re countin’ all the people so our plan can be fulfilled,**

 **You need to travel, now, to the place you were born,**

 **So we can count you, and tax you for a portion of your corn!**

Traveler 1: It’s a lot of fuss, without a Bus, travelling all the way to Bethlehem!

Traveler 2: Why don’t we just sign in on the Internet?

Traveler 3: Dude—we live in B.C. It hasn’t been invented yet!

 Quirinius: You need to pack all your bags up and saddle your mules!

 Come, now, one and all! You gotta follow my rules.

 You need to travel, now, to the place of your birth

 So we can count you, and tax you, and determine what you’re worth.

**All: We’ve got an Empire to build, we’ve got an Empire to build.**

 **We’re countin’ all the people so our plan can be fulfilled,**

 **You need to travel, now, to the place you were born,**

 **So we can count you, and tax you for a portion of your corn!**

Quirinius: It’s a brilliant plan! I’m glad I thought of it! (*sinister laugh*)

1. **Be Not Afraid!**

 Angel Gabriel: Be not afraid, Mary, don’t be alarmed!

 I’m sent here from God above, so you won’t be harmed.

 God has chosen you to fill a special role,

 To be the mother of God’s Son, who will make our world whole.

 **All: A great gift grows within you, a baby so small,**

 **Blessed be your Son, Jesus, the Savior of all!**

 **Blessed are you among women, Mary,**

 **You’re gonna be the Mother of God!**

1. **Mary’s Song of Praise**

I am so glad, I feel so blessed, I’m gonna be the Mother of Jesus!

I am so glad, I feel so blessed, I’m gonna be the handmaid of God!

The poor shall be rich, the weak shall be strong,

The hungry be fed with tasty things.

For God has remembered the promises of old,

And that’s why my soul can’t help but sing with gladness!

1. **If I’d Known Then What I Know Now**

**If I’d known then what I know now, you wouldn’t have had to sleep in a manger.**

**If I’d known then what I know now, I’d have certainly tried to keep you out of danger.**

**If I’d known then what I know now, I’d know you were the Son of God.**

**I’d give you my blankey, I’d give you my pillow,**

**My toys, my dolls, my cars, my things…**

**To help you sleep well, cause you’re the King of kings!**

**If I’d known then what I know now, you wouldn’t have had to sleep in a manger.**

**If I’d known then what I know now, I’d have certainly tried to keep you out of danger.**

**If I’d known then what I know now, I’d know you were the Son of God.**

**I’d make some room in the Inn for you.**

**I’d buy a brand new crib for you.**

**I’d sing sweet songs to lull you fast asleep,**

**And I would wipe your cheeks when you start to weep.**

**If I’d known then what I know now, you wouldn’t have had to sleep in a manger.**

**If I’d known then what I know now, I’d have certainly tried to keep you out of danger.**

**If I’d known then what I know now, I’d know you were the Son of God.**

1. **Gloria in Excelsis Deo**

**All: Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria to the King of kings!**

 **Gloria in excelsis Deo, in his small hand our salvation brings!**

Angel: Shepherd boy, wake up, and heed what we say!

 Tidings of great joy are coming your way!

 Born in a manger, ‘neath Bethlehem’s light,

 Jesus—the Savior—is born on this night!

**All: Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria to the King of kings!**

 **Gloria in excelsis Deo, in his small hand our salvation brings!**

Shepherd Boy: Daddy, wake up, now, and listen to them!

 We need to travel to Bethlehem.

 We need to see him, this babe in the hay.

 Wake up the others, we’re headin’ his way!

**All: Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria to the King of kings!**

 **Gloria in excelsis Deo, in his small hand our salvation brings!**

1. **Finale**

**All: Oh, kneel with the Shepherds in worshipful prayer,**

 **And join the dear angels who also are there.**

 **Sing “Glory to God in the heavens above,”**

 **And thank Him for Jesus, the gift of his love.**

 **Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria to the King of kings!**

 **Gloria in excelsis Deo, in his small hand our salvation brings!**

 **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**

 **Let earth receive its King!**

 **Let every heart prepare him room,**

 **And heaven and nature sing,**

 **And heaven and nature sing,**

 **And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

 **Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria to the King of kings!**

 **Gloria in excelsis Deo, in his small hand our salvation brings!**

 **Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria to the King of kings!**

 **Gloria in excelsis Deo, in his small hand our salvation brings!**