

CHRISTMAS SPIRT? LET'S HEAR IT!

by Tilda Balsley



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Christmas Spirit?
Let's Hear It!

A children's pageant in rhyme

by Tilda Balsley

CAST OF CHARACTERS

With Costume Suggestions

Speakers 1, 2, and 3 — Dressed in the same colors.

Star — A large cardboard star, foil covered or painted, with a hole cut out for the face.

Mary — Pretty head scarf, long skirt.

Joseph — Shawl on head, bathrobe (or carpenter's apron).

Innkeeper — Shawl on head, bathrobe.

Angels — White clothes or choir robe. Wings and/or halo are ideal. A sparkly garland circling the head may be used.

First Shepherd, Second Shepherd — Shawl on head, bathrobe.

Sheep — Hoodie covered with cotton balls. Attach with double-sided tape or glue.

First, Second, and Third Wise Man — Crowns are ideal. They don't need to be matching. May be made of cardboard with glitter, jewels, sequins, etc., glued on.

Mouse — Whiskers drawn on face, large round cardboard ears on headband.

Cow — Dressed in brown or black with white spots taped on and a tail (fringed at end if possible) tucked into waistband.

Camels — Two sofa pillows (preferably earth tones) tied onto the "back" of each camel. Can add tail as above and paper bag over head (cut out for the face).

PRODUCTION NOTES

Want a traditional Christmas pageant for your congregation's children that won't require multiple practices, elaborate costuming or sets, difficult music to learn, or hard feelings caused by "starring" roles? This is the play for you. It gets back to the basics, with appearances by Mary and Joseph, the innkeeper, stable animals, angels, shepherds, and wise men — because "the real Christmas story never gets old." The characters' lines rhyme to make it easier for children to learn and remember them. They don't merely recite what happened back then, but fast-forward to today with life applications for all. Each quatrain is interspersed with a verse from "Deck the Halls" with new lyrics. With one performance, all will see that the Christmas spirit is indeed alive and well.

Tips

- The elastic casting may accommodate a small or large group by expanding or doubling roles.
- Ask parents to help their child memorize his/her lines (with expression). Most children will have four lines to say.
- Include the words to the chorus sung by all the children to the tune of "Deck the Halls."
- Encourage parents to help with their child's costume, using the preceding suggestions. Simplicity can be charming and often humorous.

No set is needed.

1 *(As the play begins, all CHARACTERS are gathered On-Stage*
 2 *or at floor level, in front of the audience. SPEAKERS 1, 2, and*
 3 *3 gather around the microphone.)*

4 **SPEAKER 1:** The real Christmas story never gets old.
 5 Though we know it by heart, so often it's told.
 6 Sit back and enjoy as we make it unfold.

7 **SPEAKER 2:** Did I hear you correctly? What did you say?
 8 No twists or new spins in this year's Christmas play?
 9 We're acting it out in the very same way?

10 **SPEAKER 3:** Uh-oh, this play's going to be really boring.
 11 Look at those people. They're already snoring.
 12 A challenging audience! There's no ignoring.

13 **ALL:** *(Together, except for SPEAKERS 1, 2, and 3)*
 14 We agree. We don't want to just act it out.
 15 We'd rather *show* what this season's about.
 16 The spirit of Christmas is in us, no doubt.

17 **SPEAKER 1:** The spirit of Christmas? Then how will it go?
 18 You won't act it out? Hmmmm. I don't know.
 19 But if you are sure, let's get on with the show.
 20 *(SPEAKERS 1, 2, and 3 step away from the microphone and*
 21 *rejoin the line of children as STAR steps forward.)*

22 **STAR:** Let me be first — can you see in my glare?
 23 I'm the star, and I'm here to remind you out there.
 24 Your light will shine bright with the talents you share.
 25 So light up the whole world. Yes, shine everywhere!
 26 *(STAR rejoins line.)*

27 **ALL:** *(Singing to the tune of "Deck the Halls")*
 28 Listen to the Christmas chorus,
 29 Fa la la la la, la la la la.
 30 Hear the message each has for us,
 31 Fa la la la la, la la la la. *(MARY and JOSEPH step to the*
 32 *microphone.)*

33 **MARY:** When Gabriel told me whose mother I'd be,
 34 I couldn't believe it. Had God chosen me?
 35 But God knew my heart, and he knew I'd agree.
 36 My message is trusting in him. Don't you see?

37 **JOSEPH:** I'm Joseph, a carpenter. I learned firsthand
 38 When nothing is going the way that we planned,

1 And things happen that we don't understand,
 2 Our God is there always to give us a hand. (*MARY and*
 3 *JOSEPH rejoin the line.*)

4 ALL: (*Singing to the tune of "Deck the Halls"*)
 5 Listen to the Christmas chorus,
 6 Fa la la la la, la la la la.
 7 Hear the message each has for us,
 8 Fa la la la la, la la la la. (*INNKEEPER steps to the*
 9 *microphone.*)

10 INNKEEPER: Yes, I'm the innkeeper. I can't deny
 11 "No room at the inn" was my grumpy reply.
 12 Then I said, "Use my stable, it's warm and it's dry."
 13 You can always find some way to help if you try.
 14 (*INNKEEPER rejoins the line.*)

15 ALL: (*Singing to the tune of "Deck the Halls"*)
 16 Listen to the Christmas chorus,
 17 Fa la la la la, la la la la.
 18 Hear the message each has for us,
 19 Fa la la la la, la la la la. (*ANGELS step to the microphone.*)
 20 ANGELS: (*Together*) We sang to the shepherds, and they
 21 heard us say,
 22 "Go look for the baby. Go now, don't delay."
 23 Like us, spread the word. Show others the way.
 24 The good news of Jesus is needed today. (*ANGELS rejoin*
 25 *line.*)

26 ALL: (*Singing to the tune of "Deck the Halls"*)
 27 Listen to the Christmas chorus,
 28 Fa la la la la, la la la la.
 29 Hear the message each has for us,
 30 Fa la la la la, la la la la. (*FIRST SHEPHERD and SHEEP*
 31 *step to the microphone.*)

32 FIRST SHEPHERD: I care for my lambs, though it's rocky
 33 and steep.
 34 When the night sky is dark, and my flock is asleep,
 35 I guard against danger — a close watch I keep.
 36 God is our shepherd, and we are his sheep.
 37 SHEEP: (*Together*) You may have heard that sheep aren't too
 38 smart.

- 1 But in the cold winter, we have a warm heart.
 2 With our cozy wool, we do our small part.
 3 Baaaa! Baaaa! (*FIRST SHEPHERD and SHEEP rejoin line.*)
 4 ALL: (*Singing to the tune of "Deck the Halls"*)
 5 Listen to the Christmas chorus,
 6 Fa la la la la, la la la la.
 7 Hear the message each has for us,
 8 Fa la la la la, la la la la. (*MOUSE steps to the microphone.*)
 9 MOUSE: You may wonder, "What job can a tiny mouse do?"
 10 Well, you're never too little to help. Yes, it's true.
 11 I hid in the hay so I had a good view,
 12 And watched over Jesus all the night through. (*MOUSE*
 13 *rejoins line.*)
 14 ALL: (*Singing to the tune of "Deck the Halls"*)
 15 Listen to the Christmas chorus,
 16 Fa la la la la, la la la la.
 17 Hear the message each has for us,
 18 Fa la la la la, la la la la. (*COW steps to the microphone.*)
 19 COW: Whatever your talent, it's yours, so rejoice
 20 And use it to make the world nicer, your choice.
 21 Me? I sang lullabies with my sweet voice.
 22 Moooo! Moooo! (*COW rejoins line.*)
 23 ALL: (*Singing to the tune of "Deck the Halls"*)
 24 Listen to the Christmas chorus,
 25 Fa la la la la, la la la la.
 26 Hear the message each has for us,
 27 Fa la la la la, la la la la. (*FIRST, SECOND, and THIRD*
 28 *WISE MAN step to the microphone.*)
 29 FIRST WISE MAN: We wise men came, or three kings, as
 30 they say.
 31 We had a long trip from a land far away.
 32 We followed a star to where Jesus lay.
 33 Follow your heart, and you'll find him today.
 34 SECOND and THIRD WISE MAN: We asked one another,
 35 what gifts should we bring?
 36 Coins of gold, fancy robes, a crown, or a ring?
 37 All the riches we had weren't worth anything
 38 Compared to the value of this newborn King. (*FIRST,*



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