

THE LITTLE STAR: A CHRISTMAS FANTASY

by Georgene Meddows



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THE LITTLE STAR:
A CHRISTMAS FANTASY

BY
GEORGENE MEDDOWS

CAST OF CHARACTERS

The following scale is used in casting the play. Approximate age/grade may be used if departments are constructed differently.

Pre-School Department

3 to 5 years of age

Primary Department

1st through 3rd grade

Elementary Department

4th and 5th grade

Junior Department

6th through 8th grade

Senior Department

9th grade and up

NARRATOR

Boy or girl, Senior Department.
Must be able to read clearly and well.

STARLIGHTER

Girl or boy, Junior or Senior Department.
Must be able to memorize lines and speak clearly.

LITTLE STAR

Boy or girl, Junior Department. Same as for Starlighter.

CHOIR STARS

The remaining Junior and Senior Department.
No small children should be used unless penlights
are used instead of candles.

TALKING STARS

Girls and boys, Junior Department. Talking Stars sing
with the Choir Stars and have speaking parts.

MARY

Girl from the Primary Department. No spoken lines.

JOSEPH

Boy from the Primary Department. No spoken lines.

ANGELS

Girls and boys of the Pre-School and/or Primary
Departments. Angels have one line, spoken in unison.

SHEPHERDS

As many as desired, boys and girls, Elementary
Department. No spoken lines.

WISE MEN

Usually boys, though girls or mixed may be used,
Elementary Department. No spoken lines.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The Little Star: A Christmas Fantasy meets the needs of a small church with a limited Sunday School budget and enrollment. The cast may be primarily girls, and all age/grade departments have parts. The play gives a new framework to the traditional Christmas pageant, and favorite carols, which are public domain and may be found in most hymnals, can be used as suggested, or the director may insert alternative carols. "When Will I Get to Shine?" is an original song, created especially for the play. Musical prelude and postlude may be at the selection of the organist or music director.

Most of the costumes are standard Sunday School properties or may be improvised from sheets, pillowcases, bathrobes, scarves, etc. Props are kept to a minimum, and no scenery is needed. The play was designed to be performed in the chancel, though it may be produced successfully in the social hall. The play has one act, and no costume or set changes, and the playing time is approximately twenty minutes.

The director must have one word of caution: *The Little Star: A Christmas Fantasy* is performed as a candlelight play. Check local fire codes before plans are finalized. Some fire marshals will not allow candlelight services. In such cases, penlights inserted into cardboard tubes (leave an opening to turn penlight on) and painted to resemble candles will provide an acceptable substitute for candles.

If candles are to be used, they should have shields made of small, disposable aluminum pans (frozen pot-pie type) or foil shaped into shields. Stars should be an arm's length from each other. The Stars do not move around during the performance for additional safety.

COSTUMES

NARRATOR

Neat, clean Sunday School clothing

STARLIGHTER, CHOIR STARS, TALKING STARS

White robes are preferred. If not available, costumes may be improvised from white sheets, or Choir and other Stars may be attired in other similar-style clothing. Some uniformity should prevail.

MARY

Traditionally attired in a blue gown, white veil and a halo. Costume may be from Sunday School stock of costumes or be improvised from sheets, bathrobes, etc.

JOSEPH, SHEPHERDS

Biblical-style garments may be improvised from bathrobes, scarves, burlap fabric, etc.

ANGELS

White gowns, halos and optional wings for small Angels may be improvised by cutting armholes and head openings in old white pillowcases and tying with a white or decorative cord under the arms or at the waist. Halos may be silver or gold garlands pinned to the hair.

WISE MEN

Costumes may be improvised from items on hand, as above. Crowns may be made of painted or foil-covered cardboard. Sequins, glitter or old jewelry may be used to trim Wise Men's costumes.

SETTING

SCENERY: None. If performed in the chancel, Christmas decorations will probably be in place. Chancel steps will provide risers for Choir Stars. Risers may be used in other buildings. Narrator may read from lighted lectern or music stand used as a temporary podium.

PROPS

CANDLES: (Or penlights) One candle of uniform length and color for each: Starlighter, Little Star, Talking Stars, and Choir Stars. Use with foil shields.

INFANT: Doll wrapped in white cloth, a gold or silver garland taped to head for halo.

MANGER: May be improvised from a cardboard box or wooden crate.

WISE MEN'S GIFTS: May be decorated boxes, bottle covered with foil to resemble urn, gold foil-covered chocolate for gold coins or any props symbolic of the traditional gifts of gold, myrrh and frankincense.

SPOTLIGHT: To be used when the Little Star becomes the Star of Bethlehem. A dimmer, if available, may be used when Star fades at the end of the play.

The Little Star: A Christmas Fantasy
Songs and Hymns
(In order of appearance)

"Star Light, Star Bright"

Folk tune

Source Unknown (see page 14)

"When Will I Get to Shine?"

Georgene Meddows

Chris Noellert (see page 13)

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*

Adapted from *Plainsong*

Thomas Helmore, 1854

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*

Lewis Redner

Phillips Brooks, 1868

"What Star is This?"

Tune: "Greensleeves"

Georgene Meddows (see page 14)

"Hark, the Herald Angels Sing"*

Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

"We Three Kings"*

John H. Hopkins, 1891

"Silent Night"*

Joseph Mohr

Franz Gruber, 1818

"Morning Has Broken"*

Adapted from an old Gaelic melody

Eleanor Fairjeon, 1881

*May be found in most hymnals.

Time: Evening of the first Christmas

Note: Throughout the dialog, Little Star is referred to as "he."
If Little Star is played by a girl, the pronoun should be changed to "she."

(All lights are on. Prelude music. NARRATOR takes place at the lectern or podium, where there is a small light by which to read. Prelude music ends.)

NARRATOR: At the end of each day, when darkness falls, God sends the Starlighter to light the Stars in the sky. He knows we are not afraid of the dark as long as we have the Stars to guide us through the night. *(Lights are turned off. STARS enter from the chancel door or down the aisle if there is no door. Each carries an unlighted candle or penlight. STARLIGHTER enters last. STARS take places on the chancel steps, facing audience. STARS should be spaced an arm's length from each other for safety. No papers or song sheets are to be permitted if candles are used. Front row floor are TALKING STARS and LITTLE STAR to the right. STARS sing to tune of "Star Light, Star Bright," which appears on page 14. Singing a cappella, softly at first, then with increased volume as more STARS are lit. Song is repeated as many times as necessary for STARLIGHTER to light all candles, starting with back row and working forward, omitting LITTLE STAR, and taking position at right of LITTLE STAR.)*

STARS: *(Singing)* Star light, star bright,
first star I see tonight.
Wish I may, wish I might
Have the wish I wish tonight.

LITTLE STAR: *(Holding candle toward STARLIGHTER)*
Starlighter, you forgot me again.

STARLIGHTER: No, Little Star, I didn't forget. God doesn't want you lit just yet.

LITTLE STAR: Why not?

STARLIGHTER: I don't know. He hasn't told me.

LITTLE STAR: Just a little light? It would be better to have

- 1 a little light than to be dark all the time.
- 2 **STARLIGHTER:** You won't be dark all the time. You'll have
- 3 your chance to shine.
- 4 **LITTLE STAR:** God has forgotten me. He doesn't even
- 5 remember I'm here.
- 6 **STARLIGHTER:** God doesn't forget anything, or anyone.
- 7 **LITTLE STAR:** He's forgotten me.
- 8 **STARS:** (*Singing "When Will I Get to Shine?" which appears on*
- 9 *page 13.*) All the Stars that shine at night
- 10 Send to earth their lovely light;
- 11 Candles of God that shine so bright.
- 12 When will I get to shine?
- 13
- 14 Poor Little Star, dark in the sky,
- 15 Starlighter always passes him by.
- 16 Poor Little Star, we hear him cry,
- 17 When will I get to shine?
- 18
- 19 Little Star, you'll shine some night
- 20 With all the Stars that give their light;
- 21 You'll be a Star of pure delight.
- 22 When will I get to shine?
- 23 **NARRATOR:** Who could blame the Little Star for being
- 24 unhappy? While all his sky-mates were shining like
- 25 bright little lamps in the sky, he was dark. The other
- 26 Stars tried to comfort the Little Star.
- 27 **1st STAR:** Look at me, Little Star. I'm an old star. I've been
- 28 shining for billions of years. Maybe when it's time for
- 29 my light to go out, God will let you shine in my place.
- 30 **2nd STAR:** I'm only a million years old. I'm not a very big
- 31 star. When God was ready to have a new star, he had
- 32 Starlighter light me.
- 33 **3rd STAR:** Maybe God isn't ready to have a new star. There
- 34 are so many of us now that only he can count them.
- 35 **4th STAR:** God doesn't make Stars just for fun. We each do

- 1 something special.
- 2 1st STAR: Like me. I'm Sirius, and I'm the brightest Star in
- 3 the sky.
- 4 2nd STAR: I'm Polaris. Sailors call me the North Star, and I
- 5 guide them over the sea.
- 6 3rd STAR: I'm Alpha, and I'm the Star closest to earth — only
- 7 24 million-million miles away.
- 8 4th STAR: I'm Canis, the Dog Star. I'm the Star of summer.
- 9 LITTLE STAR: And I'm not the star of anything!
- 10 STARLIGHTER: I'm sure some day you'll have a special
- 11 purpose.
- 12 LITTLE STAR: I'll never have a purpose if you don't light
- 13 me.
- 14 STARLIGHTER: Don't be so impatient, Little Star. God has
- 15 his own reasons for doing things the way he does. We
- 16 shouldn't question his wisdom. We are all his children,
- 17 and he loves his children dearly.
- 18 LITTLE STAR: Not me! I'm just an orphan!
- 19 NARRATOR: The Little Star was so upset that instead of
- 20 waiting patiently, he asked God why he was not allowed
- 21 to shine like all the other Stars.
- 22 LITTLE STAR: God, am I important enough for you to listen
- 23 to me?
- 24 NARRATOR: God is always busy overseeing the wonders of
- 25 his universe and giving his loving care to his children
- 26 on earth, yet he is never too busy to listen to even the
- 27 smallest prayer. He listened to the Little Star. *(Do not use*
- 28 *"Voice of God." Read clearly, in a normal voice.)* "Yes, Little
- 29 Star," he said. "What do you want?"
- 30 LITTLE STAR: I want to ask, why can't I shine like all the
- 31 other stars?
- 32 NARRATOR: God said to the Little Star, "Because it's not yet
- 33 the time for you to shine. I am waiting for just the right
- 34 moment in time."
- 35 LITTLE STAR: *(Hopefully)* How long will I have to wait?

- 1 **NARRATOR:** God answered, "When the time is right."
- 2 **LITTLE STAR:** But I've waited so long. Please let me have
3 just a little light. Some day, I'll grow into a big bright
4 Star.
- 5 **NARRATOR:** Perhaps God was amused by the Little Star's
6 impatience. "Oh, Little Star," he said, "don't you believe
7 I have a plan for you?"
- 8 **LITTLE STAR:** No. I'll be dark forever.
- 9 **NARRATOR:** God answered the Little Star by saying, "No,
10 Little Star. Some day you will be one of the wonders of
11 the Universe. Until then, you must do as I say and
12 remain dark."
- 13 **LITTLE STAR:** Oh, Stardust!
- 14 **NARRATOR:** It happened that those days were very
15 unhappy times. As God looked down on his children on
16 Earth, he knew how sorrowful his people were. Not
17 everyone below was unhappy; the Romans were quite
18 pleased with themselves, for they ruled the world. The
19 Romans were cruel and arrogant. They tried to make
20 the people of conquered nations behave as Rome
21 wanted them to. God had no control over the Romans,
22 for they worshiped frightful false gods. Though God
23 could not change the Romans, he had promised the
24 people of Israel that he would send someone who would
25 show them the way to a better life. It would be God's
26 own Son. The people waited for the Savior. Even the
27 Stars in the sky waited for the Son of God.
- 28 **STARS:** *(Singing)* O come, O Come, Emmanuel,
29 And ransom captive Israel.
30 That mourns in lonely exile here
31 Until the Son of God appear;
32 Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
33 Shall ransom thee, O Israel.
- 34 **NARRATOR:** The Little Star did not join in watching for the
35 birth of Christ. He was too concerned with his own

1 problems. The Little Star was not selfish; he was
2 worried that he would never have a useful purpose. He
3 went to God a second time.

4 **LITTLE STAR:** Please tell me, when will I get to shine?

5 **NARRATOR:** The second time, God was very thoughtful. He
6 answered, "Soon, Little Star. Perhaps very soon."

7 **LITTLE STAR:** How soon? Oh, please tell me — how soon?

8 **NARRATOR:** God thought to himself a long while, and no
9 one is allowed to know God's thoughts. We must wait
10 until he reveals himself to us. Finally he said, "Little
11 Star, look down on the Earth. What do you see?"

12 **LITTLE STAR:** I see many unhappy people.

13 **NARRATOR:** God said, "Yes, Little Star. The people are
14 unhappy because they have done many bad things.
15 They have suffered for many years, and now they are
16 sorry for the things they've done. They are asking for
17 forgiveness." God was silent for a long time. Then he
18 said, "Little Star, look down again. Look on the road.
19 What do you see?" (*MARY and JOSEPH start from the back*
20 *of the church or hall, walking slowly down the aisle. They take*
21 *their place in front of the STARS, facing the audience.*)

22 **LITTLE STAR:** (*While MARY and JOSEPH are coming forward*) I
23 see a man and a woman. They are going to a little town.

24 **NARRATOR:** God asked the Little Star, "Do you know who
25 these people are?"

26 **LITTLE STAR:** No. They are very plain people. They are
27 going to a very plain little town.

28 **NARRATOR:** God said to the Little Star, "They are very
29 special people. They shall be the mother and father of
30 baby Jesus, and the town is Bethlehem. It is in
31 Bethlehem where the baby will be born."

32 **STARS:** (*Singing*) O Little town of Bethlehem,

33 How still we see thee lie.

34 Above the deep and dreamless sleep,

35 The silent stars go by.

- 1 Yet in thy dark streets shineth
 2 The everlasting light.
 3 The hopes and fears of all the years
 4 Are met in thee tonight. (*While STARS are singing,*
 5 *the stage manager places the manger containing the infant in*
 6 *front of MARY and JOSEPH.*)
- 7 **LITTLE STAR:** (*With a sigh*) Oh, it is all very wonderful, but I
 8 wish I could be bright enough to be one of the silent
 9 Stars going by.
- 10 **NARRATOR:** God was silent for a long time; so silent that
 11 the Stars held their breath; and for once, even the Little
 12 Star stopped asking why he could not shine. When God
 13 finally spoke, he said, "Starlighter, do you know what
 14 night this is?"
- 15 **STARLIGHTER:** I think this must be a very special night.
 16 This must be a very special time.
- 17 **NARRATOR:** God answered, "Yes, Starlighter. The baby
 18 born tonight and called Jesus must be an ordinary
 19 baby, but he will change the hearts of the people
 20 forever. I will give the earth a sign it will never forget —
 21 a star. The brightest star in the sky."
- 22 **1st STAR:** He must mean me! I'm Sirius, the brightest star in
 23 the sky.
- 24 **NARRATOR:** God said, "No, Sirius, not you."
- 25 **2nd STAR:** Me! Let it be me!
- 26 **3rd STAR:** Can I be that Star?
- 27 **4th STAR:** I can do whatever you want me to!
- 28 **NARRATOR:** God silenced the excited Stars. He said, "No, it
 29 is none of you."
- 30 **LITTLE STAR:** (*Sadly*) I know it isn't me. I would be so small
 31 even if I had a light. And God wants the brightest star.
- 32 **NARRATOR:** God told the Stars, "I have saved a special Star
 33 since the beginning of time for this night. The Star that
 34 shines for the birth of Jesus must be as new as the hopes of
 35 the world on this night. There is a special Star."

- 1 **LITTLE STAR:** But I'm the only Star that isn't shining. You
2 couldn't mean me!
- 3 **NARRATOR:** God answered, "Yes, Little Star. I've saved your
4 light to be the Star of Bethlehem, the Star which
5 announces the birth of Christ."
- 6 **LITTLE STAR:** But I'm so little. No one will notice me among
7 the other Stars in the sky.
- 8 **NARRATOR:** God told the Little Star, "You shall shine as a
9 beacon in the hearts of people for all time. Starlighter,
10 now is the time to light the Star of Bethlehem.
- 11 **STARLIGHTER:** It will be an honor. *(To LITTLE STAR)* You
12 see? I told you if you waited patiently, God would have
13 a special purpose for you. No Star was ever as special as
14 you shall be. *(STARLIGHTER lights the LITTLE STAR's*
15 *candle. At the same time, the spotlight is turned on to light the*
16 *LITTLE STAR. The other STARS gasp in awe of his*
17 *brightness.)*
- 18 **LITTLE STAR:** Look at me! Look at me!
- 19 **1st STAR:** Look at the Little Star now.
- 20 **2nd STAR:** He's beautiful!
- 21 **3rd STAR:** He's the brightest Star in the sky!
- 22 **4th STAR:** He's brighter than all of us shining together.
- 23 **LITTLE STAR:** *(With great satisfaction)* This is the proudest
24 night of my life!
- 25 **NARRATOR:** God said to the radiant, new Star, "You are the
26 brightest Star that has ever shone. Tonight all the world
27 is looking at you, though few people understand your
28 significance. Many years from now, people will still
29 remember the night they saw the wonderful, bright
30 Star shining over Bethlehem and know it was my sign
31 that the Savior was born."
- 32 **STARS:** *(Singing "What Star is This?" which appears on page 14.)*
33 What star is this, with beams so bright,
34 More lovely than the noonday light?
35 'Tis sent to announce a newborn King,

1 Glad tidings of our God to bring. (*When song is finished,*
 2 *ANGELS begin walking down the aisle two by two. When they*
 3 *reach the manger, they divide and take places on either side of*
 4 *JOSEPH and MARY, facing the audience.*)

5 **NARRATOR:** (*As ANGELS come forward*) There were
 6 shepherds near Bethlehem, and they saw the bright
 7 Star in the sky. They were frightened, and because God
 8 wanted all people to know only joy and peace on the
 9 night of the first Christmas, he sent his messengers, the
 10 angels, to speak to the shepherds and tell them the
 11 wonderful news.

12 **ANGELS:** (*Together*) Rejoice, I bring glad tidings. The Savior
 13 is born.

14 **NARRATOR:** The angels sang of peace and joy while the
 15 shepherds left their flocks alone on the hills near
 16 Bethlehem and went to see the baby. (*SHEPHERDS walk*
 17 *together down the aisle, bow before the manger, then take their*
 18 *places behind the ANGELS.*)

19 **STARS:** (*Singing as the SHEPHERDS come forward*)

20 Hark, the herald angels sing
 21 Glory to the newborn King.
 22 Peace on Earth, and mercy mild
 23 God and sinners reconciled.
 24 Joyful all ye nations rise,
 25 Join the triumph of the skies;
 26 With the angelic host proclaim
 27 Christ is born in Bethlehem;
 28 Hark, the herald angels sing
 29 Glory to the newborn King.

30 1st STAR: The angels called the little baby a King.

31 2nd STAR: But he was born in a stable and sleeps in a
 32 manger where animals eat hay.

33 3rd STAR: That couldn't be right!

34 4th STAR: A king should be born in a palace, and have a
 35 cradle of fine wood.

- 1 **NARRATOR:** God answered the Stars by saying, “Because
 2 the King of all people is born in a stable, he will always
 3 love the poor people. He will be a friend to the humble
 4 and sinful, love the lonely and slaves. But kings of the
 5 earth shall kneel before him.”
- 6 **1st STAR:** *(Looking down aisle)* Look! There are kings!
- 7 **2nd STAR:** I see them coming to Bethlehem!
- 8 **3rd STAR:** They are bringing the Baby the richest gifts —
 9 gold, myrrh, frankincense ...
- 10 **4th STAR:** And they are following the light of the Star of
 11 Bethlehem.
- 12 **STARS:** *(Singing)* We three kings of Orient are
 13 Bearing gifts, we traverse afar.
 14 Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
 15 Following yonder star.
 16 O, star of wonder, star of might;
 17 Star with royal beauty bright.
 18 Westward leading, still proceeding,
 19 Guide us to thy perfect light. *(During the song,*
 20 **WISE MEN** walk down the aisle, single file, carrying their
 21 gifts. They place the gifts before the manger, bow and take
 22 places to the right, behind the **ANGELS**.)
- 23 **LITTLE STAR:** I am an important star! The kings found the
 24 baby because of me!
- 25 **NARRATOR:** God told the Star of Bethlehem, “Yes, because of
 26 you. But don’t become vain with your own importance.
 27 Though they followed your light, you were but a
 28 guidepost to lead them to the baby. It is the Christ Child
 29 who is most important tonight — and forever.”
- 30 **LITTLE STAR:** *(Contrite)* I didn’t mean to be vain. All that has
 31 happened tonight makes me so happy, but I do not
 32 understand what it means.
- 33 **NARRATOR:** God answered the Star of Bethlehem by
 34 saying, “Look upon my servant. He is my chosen one; he
 35 is my beloved in whom my soul delights. I will put my

spirit upon him and he will judge nations. He will not fight, nor will he raise his voice. He will not crush the reed or quench the light of hope. He will end all conflict with his final victory and his name shall be Light of the World." (Matthew 12:18-21, may substitute King James or other version.)

LITTLE STAR: I do understand! He is hope and life for everyone! The baby shows God's love for everyone.

NARRATOR: God answered the Star of Bethlehem by saying, "You do understand. The baby Jesus is only the beginning of my promise to all people. He will grow up to be strong and pure, gentle and kind. People will follow him, then he will be betrayed; he will suffer and die a painful death. Then he will rise in glory and be King of all people who return his love. Then his kingdom will have no end."

LITTLE STAR: (Sadly) It is so much for one small baby.

NARRATOR: God answered, "He shall know my will when it is time. Now, let him sleep in his manger-cradle."

STARS: (Singing) 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,

Guiding star, lend thy light.

With the angels let us sing

Alleluia to our King.

Christ the Savior is born:

Christ the Savior is born.

(After "Silent Night," the spotlight dims and goes out. The **LITTLE STAR's** candle remains lit.)

LITTLE STAR: I'm fading!

1 **STARLIGHTER:** It's almost dawn. All Stars fade with the
2 sunlight.

3 **LITTLE STAR:** Now that I understand, please let me shine.
4 Let me shine to honor Jesus. Let me show all people the
5 way to him.

6 **NARRATOR:** God answered him by saying, "Your work is
7 done. He will bring people to himself by his words and
8 his love. You have done well, Star of Bethlehem."

9 **LITTLE STAR:** My light is gone. Will I ever shine again?

10 **NARRATOR:** God told him, "Not in this time. But the
11 memory of your light shall never fade as long as people
12 remember there was a Star shining over Bethlehem the
13 night the Savior was born. You shall shine in the hearts
14 of people as long as they love Jesus. And when his
15 kingdom is fulfilled, the Little Star shall shine again
16 with a glow that will light the universe with its glory."

17 **LITTLE STAR:** I'm glad I was there! I'm glad I was the Star
18 of Bethlehem!

19 **1st STAR:** I'm beginning to fade.

20 **2nd STAR:** It's almost morning.

21 **3rd STAR:** The sun is coming up.

22 **4th STAR:** It is a new day, and the sun is shining on a fresh,
23 new world!

24 **STARS:** (*Singing to tune of "Morning Has Broken," by Eleanor*
25 *Farjeon, available in most standard hymnals*)

26 Morning is breaking like the first morning,

27 Born like the new light Eden saw play

28 Praise with elation, praise this new morning,

29 God's re-creation of the new day.

30 (*During the second verse, STARS blow out candles one by one.*
31 *Lights are turned on.*)

32 This is the morning, time re-beginning,

33 World without ending now has begun.

34 Praise him with singing on this glad morning,

35 The newborn Savior smiles at the sun.



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