

Shepherds Go To Bethlehem

(Luke 2:8-20)

Two or three screens will have to be moved centre stage, with a step ladder hidden behind for the angel to go up! (and later, the kids can set up their nativity scene behind the screens too). Two shepherds on stage one on the left, one on the right, facing half in to talk to each other and half to the congregation. Shepherd 2 miming doing a head count, pointing to each sheep in turn

Shepherd 2: 83, 84, 85...

Shepherd 1: Finished the head count?

Shepherd 2: How can I count them properly if they won't stand still?!

Shepherd 1: Call yourself a professional! Get organised!

Shepherd 2: Is that number 86 or 87? They all look the same to me!

Shepherd 1: "Ample experience of shepherding" you said on your application...

Shepherd 2: Will you stop milling about! I don't know what's the matter with this lot tonight, they're so restless

Shepherd 1: Let me do it! 1, 2, 3, 4, 5....

Angel appears above middle screen as spot light is turned on, shepherds fall to their knees, turning away and covering their faces in fear

Shepherds: Aaah!!!

Angel: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Yes! All people, even you. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord!

Shepherd 1: *[putting hand up cautiously]* Um, excuse me your bright shineyness...Are you sure you've got the right address? It's just that we're um...we're just shepherds – *[pointing to Shepherd 2]* he's not even a very good shepherd! It wouldn't be the first time we've been delivered someone else's message by mistake...

Angel: *[checking note in hand]* To the shepherds watching their flock by night, first hill east of Bethlehem...that's you isn't it?

Shepherd 2: Er, yes...

Angel: There you go then! *[regaining composure]* God has chosen you to be among the first to see the new born king. Go see him for yourselves. He's your Saviour. And this will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger

Sudden burst of choral music representing host of angels: "Glory to God in the highest! And peace on earth, Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest! And peace on earth, Good will

towards men, towards men, goodwill towards men, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest!" etc etc (from Chorus 17, Handel's Messiah).

Spot light turned off, angel disappears. Shepherd1 jumps up, looks at Shepherd 2 still on his knees in a dazed state

Shepherd 1: Come on! Let's get to Bethlehem and see for ourselves this amazing thing the Lord has let us in on!

Shepherds leave by door at back of stage. A group of people are to sing "Silent Night". While this is going on kids need to sneak onto stage quietly and set up nativity scene behind screens. When they are sorted, need stage hands to move screens away. Shepherds re-enter church by side door and go back up the steps on to the stage when "Silent Night" finishes.

Shepherd 1: Look! Here he is, just as the angel said!

Shepherds fall on their knees again to worship at manger.

Shepherd 1: Thank you Lord for sending our Messiah, thank you Lord for sharing him with us, thank you Lord, thank you!

Shepherd 2: *[jumping up]* We can't keep this to ourselves, we should tell everyone!

Shepherd 1 is nodding in enthusiastic agreement. Shepherd 1 goes down stairs on the left, Shepherd 2 goes down stairs on the right, go down either aisle saying - in an excited manner- the following directly to individuals seated there:

Shepherd 1: Christ the Lord is born!

Shepherd 2: An angel came to us and said we would find baby Christ in a manger in Bethlehem and we did!

Shepherd 1: Good news for everyone! The Messiah is born! He is here with us now!

Shepherd 2: The Messiah is here!

Then Shepherds rush back up aisles and exit by the side door, saying on their way out:

Shepherd 1: Praise God!

Shepherd 2: Thank you Lord!

Shepherd 1: Thank you God!