

**THE JOURNEY**  
By David and Mary-Gwen Alston

**SCENE 1**

*(THIRD GRADE LADIES ENSEMBLE takes their places on the stairs.)*

**CHOIR:**    **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

O Come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns  
in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**CHOIR and CONGREGATION:**

O come, thou Day-spring from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing  
nigh; disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows  
put to flight. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come and open wide our heav'nly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

*(During third stanza, ENSEMBLE exits. MARY kneels behind bench  
on stage left. MOM, CHILD 1 and CHILD 2 take their places on  
stage right. When song ends, CHILD 1 and CHILD 2 pretending to  
play video games on a TV (turned away from the audience). DAD  
enters stage right.)*

**DAD:**        *(hanging up cell phone, putting on coat, and getting keys)* Sorry,  
Honey, that was work. I've got to go in.

**MOM:**        *(looking up from reading Christmas magazine)* But it's Christmas  
Eve. You'll miss the Christmas Eve service.

**DAD:**        Can't be helped, Honey. I'll try to get there as soon as I can.

*(DAD exits down center aisle to back row on stage right side.)*

**MOM:**        *(sighing and turning as DAD leaves)* OK, kids, it's time to get ready to  
go to the Christmas Eve Service.

**CHILD 1:**    *(big sigh)* Oh man, do we HAVE to go?

**MOM:** *(patient with children)* Yes, it's Christmas Eve. We always go to church.

**CHILD 2:** *(groaning and putting away game control)* Who says we have to go THIS time.

**MOM:** Your Father.

**CHILD 2:** *(sulking and sitting with MOM on couch)* But he went off to work!

**CHILD 1:** *(flops on couch beside MOM)* Yeah, it's SOOOO long sitting in church.

**MOM:** It's only an hour. And your Father will come if he can.

**CHILD 1:** An hour is SOOOO long to sit in one place.

*(CHILD 1, CHILD 2 and MOM freeze in their positions.)*

## SCENE 2

*(MARY slowly begins to stand up as JOSEPH enters stage left to assist her.)*

**JOSEPH:** How are you feeling?

**MARY:** OK.

**JOSEPH:** Good.

**MARY:** Anything wrong?

**JOSEPH:** Our town has received a proclamation, and we need to travel to Bethlehem to be counted for the census.

**MARY:** *(sitting on bench, exhausted)* Bethlehem? I'm not sure if it's wise for me to travel in my condition, Joseph.

**JOSEPH:** *(consoling MARY as she sits and then sitting on platform stair)* I know, but I'm afraid we have no choice. We'll pack well, and we'll take one of the donkeys for you to ride. It should only take 2 or 3 days to get there. The Lord will be with us.

*(JOSEPH and MARY freeze throughout the first stanza of O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM. As the piano plays, the K5 CLASS takes their places on the stairs.)*

**CHOIR: O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM**

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie; above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by: yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light; the hope and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

**CHOIR and CONGREGATION:**

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above, while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love. O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth! And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

*(During the third stanza, the **K5 CLASS** exits. **JOSEPH** and **MARY** move bench out of sight, then exit stage left. **MOM** stands behind the angled couch.)*

**SCENE 3**

**MOM:** Oh, wait! We can't take the van to church. I forgot this cold weather killed the battery, and your father took the truck.

**CHILD 1 and**

**CHILD 2:** *(cheering and "high fiving" each other)* All right! We can stay home.

**MOM:** We are only two blocks from church, you two.

**CHILD 2:** But it's FREEZING outside. I won't be able to bear it.

**MOM:** *(patiently and calmly)* We'll just have to dress warmly. A walk together as a family will be nice.

**CHILD 1:** Walk? *(rolling eyes and flopping back on couch)* This is SUCH an effort.

*(**MOM**, **CHILD 1**, and **CHILD 2** freeze.)*

#### SCENE 4

*(MARY, JOSEPH, and DONKEY begin walking from stage left.)*

**JOSEPH:** More than two full days to get here. I sure am tired! I can't believe that every inn we've checked is filled.

**MARY:** What about that one.

*(MARY points to an imaginary door near down stage left.)*

**JOSEPH:** I think it's our last hope for a bed.

*(JOSEPH knocks on wall and steps up to stage left. MARY and DONKEY follow. The INNKEEPER comes from up stage left to greet them at center stage.)*

**INNKEEPER:** *(grinding flour with her mortar and pestle)* Look, I am very sorry, but all of my rooms are taken due to the census.

**JOSEPH:** Are you sure there is nothing you can do? My wife is with child and is due any day.

**INNKEEPER:** *(pauses to think)* Well, there is the stable. It's not much; but it's dry, and the animals will help keep you warm. You can stay there if you wish.

**MARY:** You are very kind.

*(INNKEEPER leads the way to the stable at up center stage.)*

**JOSEPH:** Yes, thank you. *(To MARY)* El Shaddai has truly provided a roof to shelter us.

**INNKEEPER:** Well then, please make yourselves comfortable.

*(INNKEEPER exits stage left as JOSEPH helps MARY sit next to the manger. JOSEPH, MARY, and DONKEY freeze. The K4 CLASS takes their place on the stairs.)*

**CHOIR:** **AWAY IN A MANGER**

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

## **CHOIR and CONGREGATION:**

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes; I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray; bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

*(During the third stanza, the **STAR** and all the **ANGELS** (including K4) and take their places on stage out of sight. The **SHEPHERDS** and **SHEEP** take their places on down stage left. **MOM** places fabric box of winter clothing in front of couch on stage right.)*

## **SCENE 5**

*(After the song, **MOM**, **CHILD 1**, and **CHILD 2** begin putting on winter coats, mittens, hats and scarves during the dialog.)*

**MOM:** You know, I think I'll ask that new couple at church if they'd like to come back here after the service and celebrate with us this evening.

**CHILD 1:** What?

**CHILD 2:** Come here? Why can't they "celebrate" on their own?

**MOM:** *(talking to herself)* You know it's been years since we've had a carol sing. It might be fun to dig some old songs out.

**CHILD 1:** But, Mom, there's a Santa special on TV tonight that we wanted to watch.

**CHILD 2:** *(groaning)* This celebrating together stuff is sooooo lame.

*(**MOM**, **CHILD 1**, and **CHILD 2** exit stage right and join **DAD** on back row on stage right side.)*

## **SCENE 6**

*(As the family exits, the **ANGELS** move to surround the **SHEPHERDS** and **SHEEP** (K5 students). The **SHEPHERDS** cower in fear when they see the **ANGELS**.)*

**ANGEL 1:** Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.

**ANGEL 2:** Glory to God in the highest.

**ANGEL 3:** And on earth peace, goodwill to men!

**SHEPHERD 1:** Praise be to God for such joyous news.

**SHEPHERD 2:** We must quickly journey to Bethlehem and share in the wonder of this glorious occasion.

*(While the piano plays, the **SHEPHERDS** and **SHEEP** follow the **ANGELS** to the manger scene at up stage center and view from up stage left, facing the audience, as they freeze in place. The **ANGELS** remain on stage right and stage left while the **STAR** stands above the manger scene. The **MALE ENSEMBLE** (Third and Fourth Grade Young Men) takes their place on the stairs.)*

**CHOIR:** **HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING**

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies; with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

**CHOIR and CONGREGATION:**

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord! Late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb, Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity, pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings. Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die, born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

*(During the third stanza, the **ANGELS**, **SHEPHERDS**, **SHEEP**, and **MALE ENSEMBLE** exit while the **STAR** stands alone at down center*

*stage. JOSEPH and DONKEY place the benches at stage left and exit. MARY transforms the stable into a house.)*

## SCENE 7

*(After the song, MOM, CHILD 1, and CHILD 2 enter down the stage right aisle, and the kids notice the bright star in the sky. They all immediately stop to admire it. DAD arrives joining his family.)*

**CHILD 1:** Wow, look at that star.

**CHILD 2:** It's really bright.

**DAD:** Hey, I was able to fix the problem over the phone on my way in.

**MOM:** I'm so glad you made it!

**CHILD 1:** Whoa, check it out *(pointing to the star in the sky)!*

**CHILD 2:** Look, Dad, up there.

**CHILD 1:** I bet it's Santa on his way from the North Pole to bring us presents.

**CHILD 2:** I'm so excited, Mom. I just can't wait for what's going to happen tonight.

*(DAD, MOM, CHILD 1, and CHILD 2 kneel down staring up at the sky. While piano plays, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> GRADERS take their places on the stairs.)*

**CHOIR:** **SILENT NIGHT! HOLY NIGHT!**

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.

**CHOIR and CONGREGATION:**

Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, love's pure light radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night! Holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light; with the angels let us sing alleluia to our King; Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

*(While singing the third stanza, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> GRADERS exit. The STAR remains at down center stage.)*

## SCENE 8

*(After the song, the WISE MEN walk down the stage left aisle pointing to the STAR and carrying gifts.)*

**WISE MAN 1:** Look at the star. See how it shines brighter than all other stars.

**WISE MAN 2:** Let us follow this star, and prepare to meet the King of the Jews.

**WISE MAN 3:** We bring only the best gifts of frankincense, myrrh, and gold to give to our King.

**WISE MAN 1:** Quick we must hurry.

**MOM:** Quick, kids, we must hurry.

*(The WISE MEN enter the stage at down left and cross to up stage right to present their gifts. DAD, MOM, CHILD 1, and CHILD 2 enter behind the WISE MEN at down stage right and cross to sit at the benches on stage left. While piano plays and after the actors arrive on stage, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> GRADERS take their places on the stairs.)*

**CHOIR:** O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem. Come and behold him born the King of angels; O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

**CHOIR and CONGREGATION:**

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above; glory to God in the highest; O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning: Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n; Word of the Father, late in flesh appearing; O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

*(During the third stanza, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> GRADERS exit. The actors on stage adjust the benches, sit, and face each other.)*



## SCENE 9

*(MOM and CHILD 2 sit on the stage left bench with MOM up stage. DAD and CHILD 1 sit on the stage center bench facing MOM and CHILD 2. The benches are angled with DAD and MOM close together.)*

**CHILD 2:** Mom, I'm so glad we convinced you to walk to church tonight.

**MOM:** Oh, really?

**CHILD 1:** Yeah, we know it's hard to remember the real meaning of Christmas sometimes, especially when you're decorating the house and baking and wrapping presents for us.

**CHILD 2:** Dad, we all saw the beautiful stars tonight. They must have been really bright for the Wise Men to follow them all that way.

**DAD:** Well, they took two years to get there.

**CHILD 1:** Wow, and I didn't want to spend one hour to go to the service.

**DAD:** *(standing)* God's timing was perfect. Joseph and Mary received everything they needed to raise Jesus.

**MOM:** *(standing and moving to up stage right)* Yes, it's good to remember what Christmas is really about.

**CHILD 1:** *(standing and moving between DAD and MOM)* Say, Mom, do you think we can still invite that new couple over tonight?

**MOM:** I thought you wanted to watch that TV show?

**CHILD 1:** Nah, it was only a make believe story about Santa not something real like the Savior of the World.

**CHILD 2:** *(going to stand between CHILD 1 and MOM)* Mom, do you think you could keep them busy for awhile while we wrap up a present for them?

**CHILD 1:** Yeah, Dad! Just like the Wise Men! We could find something to give to them.

**DAD:** *(chuckling)* Well, the Wise Men gave presents to honor Jesus, and I guess we could, too.

**MOM:** A present?

**CHILD 1:** Would it be OK if we sang some carols, too?

**MOM:** My goodness! What's gotten into you two?

**CHILD 1 and**

**CHILD 2:** Come on, Mom. It's Christmas!

**MOM:** Oh, right. I forgot.

**DAD:** Wow, sounds like we need to get home.

**CHILD 1:** Yeah, let's go.

*(MOM smiles as DAD, MOM, CHILD 1, and CHILD 2 exit at down stage right. As the piano plays, the MALE ENSEMBLE takes their place.)*

**CHOIR:** **GOOD CHRISTIAN MEN, REJOICE**

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice; give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today; earth and heav'n before him bow, and he is in the manger now. Christ is born today! Christ is born is today!

**CHOIR and CONGREGATION:**

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice; now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this! He hath opened heaven's door, and man is blessed evermore. Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice; now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and calls you all to gain his everlasting hall. Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

*(During the third stanza the MALE ENSEMBLE, MARY, WISE MEN and STAR exit. DAD moves benches out of sight and stands at center stage. MOM, CHILD 1, and CHILD 2 stand up stage of the couch on stage right.)*

## **SCENE 10**

*(After the piano concludes, the VISITING MAN and VISITING LADY enter from down stage right.)*

**DAD:**           *(meeting visitors at down stage center)* Come in, Come in! Merry Christmas! Let me take your coats.

**VISITING MAN:** Thank you! Wow, it's cold outside, but it's nice in here, and is that bread I smell?

**CHILD 1:**    Yep! And there's a big pot of chili on the stove too!

**VISITING LADY:** *(to MOM)* Thank you so much for inviting us. We really don't know any people here.

**MOM:**       *(crossing to address VISITING LADY)* It's always so nice to fellowship with people who know and love the Lord like we do. Come on in to the dining room, and let's enjoy some food and fellowship together.

*(MOM, CHILD 1, VISITING LADY, VISITING MAN, and DAD begin walking to stage right)*

**CHILD 2:** *(cross to meet DAD at stage right)* Can we begin by singing Joy to the World?

**DAD:**        What a great idea!

*(DAD and CHILD 2 move to stage right. As the piano plays, all the students take their places on the stage.)*

**CHOIR:**     **JOY TO THE WORLD! THE LORD IS COME**

Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth receive her King; let every heart prepare him room, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

**CHOIR and CONGREGATION:**

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns: let men their songs employ; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

*THE END*