



Nativity



Scene 1

The cast enter, processing slowly.



SONG 1. THE BABY BORN IN BETHLEHEM

We'll tell the story of a baby born in Bethlehem
Far from the palaces and riches of Jerusalem
We'll tell the story of a baby born in Bethlehem
Born in a stable, laid in a manger
Son of God who came to save us all



Scene 2 - Nazareth

The Nazarene women, the shepherds and the Nazarene men all complain in turn about the work they do, each group claiming they work harder than anyone else. They all find that whistling helps the work go faster. In the last verse they settle their differences.

▶ SONG 2.

WHISTLE A TUNE AS YOU GO ALONG

(Chorus)

There's always too much work to do
But we've a way of sailing through
Working hard all day long
Make it easy with a song, a song
Whistle a tune as you go along (whistle)

(Women sing)

Up at dawn and kneading dough
Bread to make and clothes to sew
Sweeping, cooking, legs like lead
Work all day and late to bed

(Shepherds sing)

Go to bed? Well, lucky you
We keep watch at night-time too
Looking after all our sheep
Never get a chance to sleep

(Men sing)

Call to working? Look at me
Chopping down this massive tree
Back is breaking, out of puff
Your life's easy, my life's tough

(Peacemakers sing)

Keep the peace, you all work hard
In the forest, in the yard
In the house and on the hill
Just keep smiling if you will

(Chorus)

There's always too much work to do
But we've a way of sailing through
Working hard all day long
Make it easy with a song, a song
Whistle a tune as you go along (whistle)



Scene 3 - Nazareth

The soldiers arrive and read out the proclamation telling the Nazarenes to go to the place where they were born. The Nazarenes are loath to go, and the song implies their anti-Roman stance.

▶ SONG 3. UP TO BETHLEHEM WE'LL GO, GO, GO!

(Chorus)

The Romans came here many years ago
Togas on top and leather sandals below
They want to know how many they rule over, so
It's up to Bethlehem we go, go go

You can't stay at home, you can't say no
The Romans want to count the population, so
We'll let them put us into lines and count us row by row
But we don't want to go, no, we don't want to go

(Chorus)

The soldiers march up and the soldiers march down
They march through the country and they march through the town
Left, right, left, right, quick, quick, slow
But we don't want to go, no, we don't want to go

(Chorus)

We'll take a woolly blanket to keep us warm at night
We'll fold it very neatly and roll it up quite tight
We'll travel altogether it's safe like that you know
But we don't want to go, no, we don't want to go

(Chorus)



Scene 4 - On the road to Bethlehem

The Nazarenes roll up their blankets and get going, but they soon get tired and walk more and more slowly. Joseph and Mary are way behind at the back, and an angel comes and keeps them company. They all sleep at the end of the song.



SONG 4.

IT'S A LONG WAY TO BETHLEHEM

It's a long way to Bethlehem
It's a long, long way to Bethlehem
Why the Romans want to count us no-one knows
Just some crazy scheme of Caesar's I suppose
Now I've got blisters on my feet and pains in my little toes
It's a long, long way to Bethlehem

It's a long way to Bethlehem
It's a long, long way to Bethlehem
Have to sleep outside we couldn't find a bed
Oh so cold tonight, the stars above my head
I'd rather be at home asleep in my little bed
It's a long, long way to Bethlehem
It's a long, long way to Bethlehem



Scene 5 - Bethlehem

The people in Bethlehem are rushing around getting their spare rooms ready for the influx of visitors. By the end of the song, they are in twos and threes, each representing an 'inn'.



SONG 5.

BETHLEHEM IS WHIRLING TONIGHT!

Bethlehem is whirling tonight!
Bethlehem is swirling tonight!
There are visitors coming, the whole town is humming!
Bethlehem is whirling tonight!

Kneading bread, straining cheeses
Bethlehem, Bethlehem
Airing beds so no-one freezes
Bethlehem, Bethlehem

Can you feel it in the air?
A promise long forgotten
Will it happen here in Bethlehem?
In Bethlehem, tonight?

Bethlehem is whirling tonight!
Bethlehem is swirling tonight!
There are visitors coming, the whole town is humming!
Bethlehem is whirling tonight!

Bethlehem is whirling tonight!
Bethlehem is whirling tonight!



Scene 6 - Near Bethlehem

Joseph and Mary's donkey has been watching everyone rush around in Bethlehem, and he suggests that people should take a little more time to look after one another.

▶ SONG 6. THE DONKEY'S LAMENT

(Chorus)

Why does ev'rybody have to hurry?
 Why is ev'rybody rushing round?
 They run around in circles and they don't get anywhere
 Heehaw! Heehaw!

Why does ev'rybody have to hurry?
 Why is ev'rybody rushing round?
 Why don't they stop and stand and stare and care for each other?
 Heehaw!

They're all in a hurry and a scurry and a flurry
 They're red in the face and they've lost their place
 Give me time and I'll make up my mind
 Slow and steady wins the race
 'Cos it's no use rushing down the wrong road
 It may be a rough and long road
 Oh no, oh yeah

(Chorus)

Why does ev'rybody have to hurry?
 Why is ev'rybody rushing round?
 They run around in circles and they don't get anywhere
 Heehaw! Heehaw!

Why does ev'rybody have to hurry?
 Why is ev'rybody rushing round?
 Why don't they stop and stand and stare and care for each other?
 Sister and brother, care for each other
 Heehaw!



Scene 7 - Bethlehem

The Nazarenes arrive and the first group finds an inn to stay in. During the chorus, they wave the next group down the road. With more and more people arriving, they are all very squashed and the visitors can only just squeeze in. The third verse is sung staccato, as if they have no room to breathe. During the last 'No room' Joseph and Mary are turned away.

▶ SONG 7. NO ROOM! (THE SHUFFLE UP SONG)

We've got a bed so we're alright
We're gonna sleep here for the night
We've got a bed so we're alright
We're gonna sleep here for the night

(Chorus)
No room for any more
Go down the road yeah, yeah, yeah
Go down the road yeah, yeah, yeah
Go down the road and try another door
Shuffle-upple-upple-up a little bit
We'll squeeze them in for sure

We've got a floor so we're OK
We'll sleep here till break of day
We've got a floor so we're OK
We'll sleep here till break of day

(Chorus)

We've got a space a tiny bit
Very squashed only just fit
We've got a space a tiny bit
Very squashed only just fit

(Chorus)



Scene 8 - Bethlehem: The Stable

A kindly innkeeper shows Joseph and Mary to the stable. An angel brings the baby and lays it in the manger.



SONG 8.

RINGLE THE BELL

Ringle the bell and tapple the drum
Ringle the bell and tapple the drum
Ringle the bell and tapple the drum
Welcome to Bethlehem

Star shining down
Shining all around
Listen to the angels singing
Welcome to Bethlehem



Scene 9 - Bethlehem: The Stable

Groups of local visitors come and look at the baby Jesus lying in the manger.

▶ SONG 9. LOOK AT THE BABY

(Chorus)

Look at the baby lying in the manger
Look at the baby lying in the hay
Look at the star that has risen above us
Jesus is born, Jesus is born, Jesus is born today

Ring out the bells, tell the world he is here
Jesus our saviour is here
Born in a stable a light for the world
A day we'll remember for evermore

(Chorus)

Look at the baby lying in the manger
Look at the baby lying in the hay
Look at the star that has risen above us
Jesus is born, Jesus is born, Jesus is born today

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus is born
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus is born



Scene 10 - Hills near Bethlehem

The shepherds are visited by angels who announce the birth of Jesus. When the angels have gone, the shepherds rub their eyes in disbelief. The song tells the story of their decision to go, their presents, and their reactions to seeing the baby. It ends with the image of Jesus as Shepherd.

▶ SONG 10. SHEPHERDS, HUMBLE AND POOR

Were those angels shining?
Were those angels flying?
The sky was full of brilliant light
Hearts were thumping full of fright
God has sent a message for us
Shepherds humble and poor

You stay and guard the sheep
Mind you don't fall asleep
We must hurry to Bethlehem
We will take him a little lamb
We only wish we could take him more
But we're shepherds humble and poor

We're on the road to Bethlehem
We'll hurry all the way
We're looking for a manger and a baby born today
We're on the road to Bethlehem
We'll hurry all the way
We're looking for a manger and a baby born today

Shepherds hurry on your king is born today
Shepherds hurry on your king is born today
Your king is born today
Your king is born today

Look at the baby sleeping
Are we awake or dreaming
Don't make a sound we'll creep away
The Prince of Peace is born today
He'll be our King for evermore
He's our shepherd humble and poor



Scene 11 - The Star Appears

This could be used as a solo for the first king who sees the star.

▶ SONG 11. STAR IN THE SKY

(Chorus)

There's a star there in the sky
Star in the East and I wonder why
Star there in the sky a million miles away

When you look up in the sky
See the stars go floating by
You may ask the reason why
Why the stars are there and why we're here

(Chorus)

There's a star there in the sky
Star in the East and I wonder why
Star there in the sky a million miles away



Scene 12 - Somewhere on the kings' journey

The three kings meet and follow the star. When they ask a passing stranger where a new king has been born, they are directed towards Jerusalem and Herod's palace.

▶ SONG 12. FOLLOW THE STAR

Kings from afar saw a new star they'd never seen before
They unrolled their scrolls and papers, studied them some more
There was no doubt, no doubt at all, the star meant a king was born
So they found a present for him left the very next morn

(Chorus)

Follow the star, guide us to the king of kings
Star in the night shimmering bright
Three wise men travelling far

Dangerous days, dangerous ways, we must be brave and strong
We have courage for the star keeps shining all day long
On through the cold, on through the dark and on through the pouring rain
Crossing rivers, down darl valleys, over hill and plain

(Chorus)

Follow the star, guide us to the king of kings
Star in the night shimmering bright
Three wise men travelling far



Scene 13 - Jerusalem: Herod's Palace

Herod is thrown into a fury when he hears that a new king has been born. He stamps wildly about the stage barking out irrational orders. His servants try to follow his instructions, while the three kings stand and watch.

▶ SONG 13. I AM HEROD, I AM NUMBER ONE!

Look at Herod frowning
Now he's prowling up and down
He's simmering and boiling
What's he going to do now

(Chorus)

I am Herod, I am number one
The next King here will be my son
Go there! Leave that!
Bow down! Come back!
'Cos I'm number, 'cos I'm number, 'cos I'm number one!

I've got my beady eye on this throne
I made very good friends in Rome
I said I wanted to be king of Judaea
And Caesar he said "Yeah, yeah"
And Caesar he said "Yeah!"

(Chorus)

I'll send a fine gift to this lord
I'll send a messenger with a sword
When my soldier walks through the door
There'll be a prince no more, no more
There'll be a prince no more

(Chorus)



Scene 14 - Bethlehem: The Stable

The kings arrive at the stable and each presents his gift during the verse.



SONG 14. THE KINGS' GIFTS

(Chorus)

Three kings riding by
Following a star so high
Three kings from afar
Following a star

Tell me what are the gifts they bring?
One brings gold to crown a king
One brings incense to drift to the sky
One brings myrrh to breathe with a sigh

(Chorus)

Three kings riding by
Following a star so high
Three kings from afar
Following a star



Scene 15 - Finale

The final tableau is there, with all the characters celebrating.

▶ SONG 15. HALLELUJAH! CHRIST IS BORN TODAY!

Come and see a stable bare
Ev'ryone is welcome here
Jesus has come to us on earth
Old and young and rich and poor
Step inside the open door
While we celebrate his birth

(Chorus)

Sing Hallelujah! The king is born
Hallelujah! The king is born
The Son of God will live forever
Teaching us to serve each other
Hallelujah! Christ is born today!
Hallelujah! Christ is born today!

Hear the words from Bethlehem
Peace on earth, goodwill to men
Jesus has come to us on earth
He's the light, the truth, the way
Join us on this special day
While we celebrate his birth

(Chorus)

Sing Hallelujah! The king is born
Hallelujah! The king is born
The Son of God will live forever
Teaching us to serve each other
Hallelujah! Christ is born today!
Hallelujah! Christ is born today!