

The Road to Bethlehem

Christmas Musical Script

“But without faith it is impossible to please God:
for he that comes to God must believe that he is,
and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Hebrews 11:6

Script by Dave Therit

For Catawba Springs Christian Church

Song List

The Road to Bethlehem – Cantata book published by Lorenz

Cast List

Narrator 1, Narrator 2

The Road to Bethlehem

Choir: The Road to Bethlehem (p.4)

Narrator 1

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

Narrator 2

How can we measure the vastness of Christ's condescension from heaven to earth? Or how can we comprehend the infinite one - the Lord of all - becoming an infant? Many books and songs have been written on reflections such as these to put into words the wonder of his birth.

Narrator 1

And still the Scriptures present the birth of Christ in these words, so plain and humble and few: "And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Of this we can only say, his nativity is marvelous in our sight!

Narrator 2

As we travel The Road to Bethlehem today to see Jesus, let us first prepare our hearts with humility. For God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. As the prophet Isaiah proclaimed, "Make straight ... a highway for our God!"

Choir: A Highway for Our God (p.16)

Narrator 1

Seven hundred years before Jesus' birth, Isaiah the prophet revealed much about the Messiah to come when he foretold of his essence and nature. He would be a man, and yet, much more than a man.

Narrator 2

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government shall be upon His shoulder. And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

Narrator 1

For centuries, the faithful of Israel would wait and long for that which God had promised, watching, and praying for the coming of the Messiah.

Choir: Come, Messiah! (p.27)

Narrator 1

The long humble road from Heaven to Bethlehem, and the shame-filled path to the cross – Christ traveled for you and me. As we now read aloud to you several related Bible passages, please take notice of the following things that are so very important:

Narrator 2

The love of God, the holy and humble nature of his Son, and the guiding, comforting presence of the Holy Spirit. And as you listen, be sure to note Joseph and Mary’s humble obedience to their most holy calling.

Narrator 1

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

Narrator 2

“Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God ... made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Narrator 1

"When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'"

Narrator 2

And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God... Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."

Narrator 1

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

Choir: Holy Child of Bethlehem (p.35)

Narrator 1

On the night of his birth, when the angelic hymn had ceased and the light of the angels' presence had faded from the sky, the shepherds were alone.

Narrator 2

But the message remained with them. The sign given to them by the angel would lead them to the Infant Christ - up the terraced height to Bethlehem to a lowly stable where the baby Jesus was lying in a manger just as they were told.

Narrator 1

How fitting that lowly shepherds were the first to receive the heavenly announcement of Christ's birth. The powerful and proud of this world would hardly have followed such a sign, except to destroy the child. But shepherds, humble shepherds - went with haste - and followed the sign.

Choir: Shepherds in the Field (p.46)

Narrator 1

The hush of wondering expectancy fell on all who saw the baby Jesus. It seems so strange that the salvation of the world should hang on such a slender thread as the feeble throb of an infant's heart - with no better shelter than a stable, no other cradle than a manger, and King Herod soon plotting how he might rid himself of this potential challenger to his throne.

Narrator 2

Yet there the baby Jesus lay, asleep in a manger. He had come to do his Father's will and all the forces of evil could not thwart his Father's plan. And still is it ever so. On a heartbeat hangs the slender thread of each of our lives, with no visible outward means to ward off danger, no safe house of comfort, no rest of ease. And still, the Lord "gives his beloved sleep!"

Choir: Shepherd's Cradle Song (p.58)

Narrator 1

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him."

Narrator 2

At Christmas time we often send and receive cards and messages bearing the words: "Wise Men Still Seek Him." And it is true, for the wise of heart do seek him still.

Narrator 1

But as a seeker in the 21st Century, how and where do you find him? Without God's help we would be adrift in uncharted and dangerously dark waters. But he has provided a way for us that is very near to each of us.

Narrator 2

In Romans chapter 10, we learn that it is by faith, and not works, that we find him. For, as the passage explains, no one by

their own efforts could ascend into heaven and bring Christ down from above or go down into the abyss and bring him up again from the dead.

Narrator 1

The point that is made is this: it was of God's working and not our own that Christ came into the world to suffer and die and rise again to save sinners.

Narrator 2

In humility then, we must put aside our so-called works of righteousness for they are not sufficient to bring us to Christ, or to bring him to us.

Choir: The Journey (p.68)

Narrator 1

He "came to us, Christ, the glory of God's face."

Narrator 2

Today we cannot see him with our eyes as he was seen during his earthly ministry. But we can see him and know him through the word of faith that brings him near to the searching heart. Listen to these words that follow from where we left off earlier, in Romans chapter 10.

Narrator 1

"The word is near unto you, even in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation ... For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Narrator 2

How wonderful when the word of faith penetrates to the heart and then proceeds from the mouth in confession as one calls upon the name of the Lord and is saved. That is when we truly see Jesus, and a new life is begun.

Narrator 1

Our salvation is the reason for Christmas! The very meaning of Jesus' name is Savior. And he is God's gift to us.

Narrator 2

It is for this reason we celebrate Christ's birth and take great delight in the many good traditions of Christmas: the reading of the Christmas Story, the singing of the Christmas songs and carols and the giving of presents, year after year, no matter our age.

Narrator 1

The Road to Bethlehem is about Jesus' birth. Yet as we have seen, it foreshadows so much more. For in Bethlehem, where we marvel at Christ's nativity, our thoughts are drawn to God's great work of redemption.

Narrator 2

Looking out across the hills of Judea from Bethlehem, we catch glimpses of Jerusalem and of that which is to come - the glory of his cross - and beyond his cross to the glory of his resurrection and exultation. All are part of God's amazing plan of Redemption.

Narrator 1

It is our hope that your heart has been touched by God's Spirit today while on our journey to see the Savior, Christ the Lord. If you know the Lord, we trust that you have been blessed - and challenged. What a blessing that we can call Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord.

Narrator 2

And what a challenge to us to know that as Lord, he calls us daily to give him first place in our hearts and lives. It is for our good and for his glory that we yield our hearts day-by-day to the Lord of all.

Narrator 1

There may be someone here whose heart has been opened today to the truth of the gospel of Christ, and you yearn to know him. If you would like to talk with one of us, it would be our privilege to be of help to you at the end of this service.

Narrator 2

It has been a joy for us to open the Scriptures and to sing songs of praise to our God on this Christmas journey with you. With this final song, we want to wish all of you, a very joyful, and Merry Christmas! We are so grateful that you came and joined with us today on "The Road to Bethlehem."

Narrator 1

"A Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord." Glory to God in the highest! Gloria in Excelsis Deo!

Choir: Christ is Born in Bethlehem (p.78)