



(simplified for fewer singers)

Simplified for fewer singers, this adaptation is narrated by Joseph & Mary and tells the Christmas story through six angel visitations recorded in Scripture. 35 minutes/7 songs. Includes three 4-part arrangements (which can be performed by an ensemble) + 4 solos.

[Performance suggestions: Designate a spot to the left or right of the choir from which Joseph and Mary will tell their story in-between the songs. Ideally, a single spotlight should frame them during their parts and dissolve when the music begins for the next piece. Joseph and Mary are wearing nondescript black outfits. Mary is no longer pregnant. The idea is for Joseph and Mary to be in a "timeless" state. Indeed, they're looking back from heaven, reminiscing about the events of Christmas.

Feel free to invite your congregation to sing along with "Manger Medley" and "A Christmas Medley" by printing the words in your bulletin, projecting them on the screen, or using the downloadable video track with lyrics.

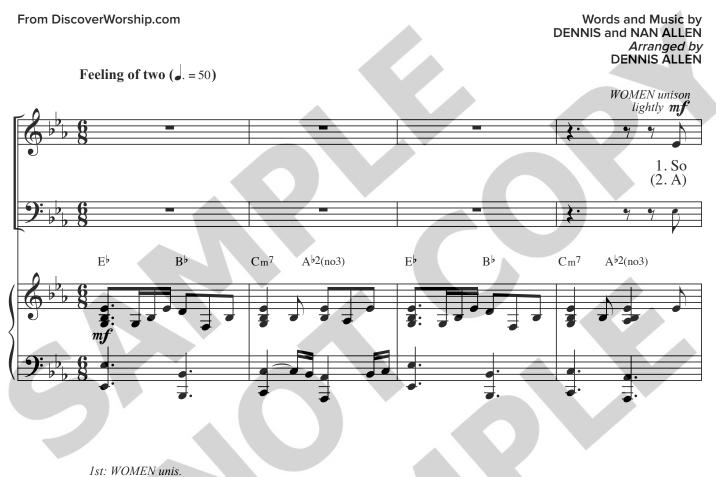
Original narration copyright © 2019 Belden Music Publishing Company, Inc.



Born This Night

with

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing







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SCRIPT:

CHOIR SINGS: "Born This Night" arranged by Dennis Allen

Joseph: [Formally] My name is Joseph. My family line stretches back to King David.

Mary: [Approachably] My name is Mary. My family also stretches back to King David.

<u>Joseph</u>: [Joseph reaches over, smiles, and takes Mary's hand in his.] And so, it was decided that we should be betrothed...

<u>Mary</u>: [*Whispers an aside to the audience*] That means we were promised to one another in marriage. [*Play this comedically and wait for the laugh.*]

<u>Joseph</u>: [*Wistfully*] I spent the months of our engagement preparing a new home for my new bride.

Once I had finished, we were planning to celebrate the marriage feast with our friends and family. [Sadly] But that was not to be...

Mary: It all started with my cousin, Elizabeth. She and her husband, Zechariah, were as old as the hills. Zechariah was serving his shift as a temple priest when—we could hardly believe it—the angel Gabriel—THE ANGEL GABRIEL! —appeared to him, telling him that he and Elizabeth were going to have a son who would be the forerunner of the Messiah!

<u>Joseph</u>: [With a slight laugh] Well, old Zech was rightfully skeptical since, well, since he and Lizzie were as old as the hills. [Looking at Mary] Is it disrespectful to say that someone is "as old as the hills"? I mean, hills are beautiful, right?

[Looks back at audience] Well, the angel Gabriel was so put off by Zechariah's skepticism that he struck him mute.

<u>Mary</u>: [Whispers an aside to the audience] That means he couldn't talk. [Play this comedically and wait for the laugh.]

I would have loved to have seen Zechariah when he came out of the Temple—trying to explain to everyone what happened—WITHOUT USING WORDS! His voice did return, the day they dedicated his son, John, in the Temple!

<u>Joseph:</u> Just like God did with Abraham and Sarah, the LORD brought life out of a barren womb to keep his promises to his people.

CHOIR SINGS: "O Come O Come Emmanuel" arranged by Jason Webb

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

From the Worship Today[®] volume: **Redeemer, Come**

Text: Latin Hymn, Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710 translated by John M. Neale, stanzas 1 and 2 Henry S. Coffin, stanzas 3 and 4

Music adapted from Plainsong by Thomas Helmore





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<u>Joseph</u>: Little did we know that Mary and I would be drawn into Zechariah and Elizabeth's story....

<u>Mary</u>: [*Incredulously*] A few months after the angel appeared to Zechariah, he visited ME! (Not Zechariah, but the angel!)

He (the angel, not Zechariah) started by calling me "highly favored" — $\underline{\text{that}}$ was a little unsettling.

Then he told me to "fear not," which of course, made me even more afraid. And then, and then... [she chokes up slightly but recovers], the angel told me that I was pregnant. ME, A VIRGIN!

Joseph: [Whispers to the side] That means that she, well you know...

<u>Mary</u>: [elbows Joseph] They know what that means!

[Redirects toward audience] Anyway, the angel told me that my cousin Elizabeth was already six months along. We hurried to their home in the hill country of Judea. The instant I greeted Elizabeth; her baby leaped in her womb! The Holy Spirit overflowed in her, and she prayed the most wonderful blessing over me and my baby.

[Wondrously] In that moment, I was overwhelmed with joy and burst into song. God was fulfilling his promise to Israel, to the world...and he chose Elizabeth and me to play our parts.

CHOIR SINGS: "My Soul Magnifies the Lord" arranged by Russell Mauldin

My Soul Magnifies the Lord

(Mary's Solo) Words and Music by From the Worship Today^X volume: LOWELL ALEXANDEŘ He Is the Light of the World Arranged by RUSSELL MAULDIŇ Tenderly = 70**SOLO** mp My F♭M⁷ $E^{b}m^{7}$ Absus Ab soul mag-ni fies the Lord, D^{\flat} $E^{\downarrow}m^{11}$ D♭/F $G^{\flat 2}/B^{\flat}$ Gb/Bb Gb/Bb Absus



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(simplified for fewer singers)

<u>Joseph</u>: [*Earnestly*] Mary, I just couldn't believe that you were pregnant...especially since you were engaged...engaged to ME. So, I had decided to end our engagement quietly.

But then, the angel of the Lord appeared a third time—this time to me in a dream.

Mary: And he told you what I told you. [a little hurt...] Why didn't you believe me?

<u>Joseph</u>: Oh, after that I believed...BELIEVE YOU ME...I believed! But the timing was really bad.

The very week the baby was due, we were required by imperial decree to register for the Roman census in our family's ancestral home, Bethlehem. But we lived in Nazareth, about ninety miles north. So, we had to make our way south along the flatlands of the Jordan River, then west over the hills surrounding Jerusalem, and finally southwest to Bethlehem.

<u>Mary:</u> By the time we got to town, it was late, and the inns were full. We were grateful just to find the corner of a stable.

And that's where my son, God's Son, was born. There wasn't a crib, so we wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in a feed trough, a manger.

CHOIR SINGS: "What Child Is This?" arranged by England/Groeneveld

What Child Is This?

From DiscoverWorship.com









Christmas, Night of Angels! (Simple) - 28















(simplified for fewer singers)

Joseph: This story has even more angels—this time, in a field outside of Bethlehem...

The angels appeared to a band of shepherds who were taking care of their flocks...the same lambs that are used in the Temple sacrifices in Jerusalem.

<u>Mary</u>: [*Clearly incredulous*] An angel spoke directly to the men, telling them that tonight was the night the Messiah would be born.

Suddenly, the skies were filled with the hosts of heaven, who were praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven" and "Peace on earth to those on whom God's favor rests."

The angel commanded them to find the baby. They'd know he was the one because [with recognition] he'd be wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a feed trough, a manger.

<u>Joseph</u>: And so, our little stable was visited by a group of awestruck shepherds coming to worship our newborn lamb.

CHOIR SINGS: "Manger Medley"* arranged by Russell Mauldin

Manger Medley

From the Worship Today® volume: Arranged by Jesus Is Emmanuel RUSSELL MAULDIN Legato = 82 E♭M⁷ E♭+ A7 F6/G Cm/E Gm/E Fm/A G/F $E M^7$ Eb+ Cm/E mp "Silent Night! Holy Night" (Mohr/Grüber) 10 Christ the F^6/G A (69) Dm^7 Gm/E mp Sav - ior is Christ. the Say - ior is born! F7 Gm/E B♭/F Gm/F Gm mp



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Christmas, Night of Angels!

(simplified for fewer singers)

<u>Joseph</u>: But the shepherds weren't the only ones looking for Jesus.

Wise men from the east followed a new star in the sky they believed would lead them to a new king. When they stopped in Jerusalem and asked King Herod where they might find the baby, things got nasty.

Herod instructed the magi to find the child and report back to him so that he could [with air quotes] "come and worship" himself. Right...

<u>Mary</u>: Well, the star led them right to us. The magi brought gifts of gold and incense and perfume.

But rather than going back to Jerusalem, an angel warned them in a dream to return to their home a different way.

<u>Joseph</u>: After they departed, an angel of the Lord appeared to me...AGAIN...and told us to flee to Egypt so that we'd be safe. We left immediately and stayed there until Herod finally died.

But in the meantime, the king was beside himself with rage. Fearing that a new king would take his throne, Herod issued an order to kill all the boys in the region age two years and younger.

<u>Mary:</u> Like those first tumultuous days, the next three decades were full of fear and confusion as well as miracles and wonder.

I treasured all these things in my heart. When I looked back, after Jesus' resurrection, I realized that all the prophecies, the angel visitations, the worshiping shepherds and wise men—all these things, as miraculous as they were—weren't THE story of Christmas.

Joseph: The REAL story is that God so loved the whole world

<u>Mary</u>: ...from the lowliest shepherd to the most powerful tyrant

<u>Joseph</u>: that God sent his one and only Son

Mary: ...born as a helpless baby to an unmarried virgin

Joseph: that whoever believes in who he is and what he's done

Mary: ...that he lived the life we should have lived and died the death we should have died

Christmas, Night of Angels!

(simplified for fewer singers)

<u>Joseph</u>: Will not perish because of their rebellion against God; but will receive God's gift of everlasting life.

Mary: My son, Jesus, adopted Joseph and me into his Father's family. And he invites each one of you into his family by trusting him as Savior, as Messiah!

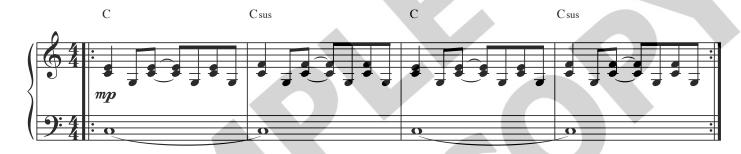
CHOIR SINGS: "Our King Has Come" arranged by Jonathan Allen

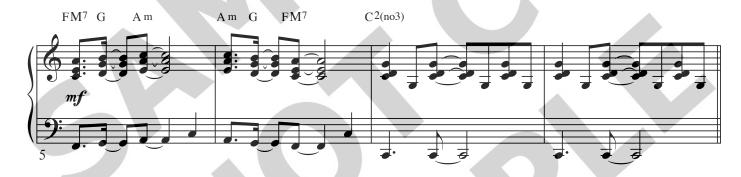
Our King Has Come

From DiscoverWorship.com

Words and Music by JONATHAN ALLEN and ALEX HARVEY Arranged by JONATHAN ALLEN

With joy, energy (= 120)











Christmas, Night of Angels! (Simple) - 45

























Christmas, Night of Angels!

(simplified for fewer singers)

<u>Joseph</u>: The Christmas Story isn't, well, just a story... I guess you <u>could</u> hear the good news from all those angels and just walk away, unchanged...but why would you want to?

Mary: Jesus changed my life forever, and he can change your life now, and for eternity...

<u>Joseph</u>: Would you consider joining us in worshiping God's Son this Christmas?

CHOIR SINGS: "A Christmas Medley"* arranged by Jeff Lippencott

*Downloadable video track available

A Christmas Medley

Arranged by **JEFF LIPPENCOTT** Worshipful = 96 ВЬ F/A C/G A7/C# $\mathbf{B} \flat$ F/C C Dm"O Come, All Ye Faithful" (John F. Wade; trans. Frederick Oakeley) CHOIR mp O faith ful, joy - ful and tri all come, ye mp F C/F C/F Bb/F O O Beth le phant; come ye, come. ye to um C Dm^7 G/B Dm⁷ C/E C/G G Dm

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Christmas, Night of Angels! (Simple) - 59









Christmas, Night of Angels! (Simple) - 62





Christmas, Night of Angels! (Simple) - 64



Christmas, Night of Angels! (Simple) - 65