

Stories By the Well—A Christmas Eve Drama

Full Script

BY REIN SELLES

Before the Service—Foyer

Market Stall Keepers

The market will take place in the foyer with one or more people assigned to each stall.

- Basket Stall
- Bakery Stall (Samples)
- Pottery Stall
- Meat Stall (Sample)
- Water Stall (Girls)

The Market Stall Keepers' goal is to welcome visitors into their town and, when asked, speak about the things they sell. That means they might need to do a bit of research about basketmaking, baking, pottery, and meat smoking.

Prepare bite-sized samples for the meat and bread stalls. Place them on trays so they are easy to offer. Invite people to sample the items. Even though they're not historically accurate, gloves need to be worn by those serving and preparing the food.

Stalls should be spaced throughout the room to avoid bunching of visitors and to allow room for passing.

The Service

Prelude: "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" arr. McMichael

The market closes during the prelude. People are encouraged to enter the worship space and find a seat.

The girls of the well enter, miming welcome to one another and sitting around the "green space" next to the well. Activities might include washing clothes, sewing, etc.

Daniella enters from stage left with her doll and sits on the rock. As she begins to sing, the girls of the well join her to admire the doll.

Song: "Imagine" Getty, LUYH 72

During the song, Luke and the boys move the market material out of the way and then wait by the door. Johan, the liturgist, steps to the lectern.

Welcome by Liturgist

Hear the prophecy of Isaiah:

"The people who are now living in darkness will
see a great light

They are now living in a very dark land.

But a light will shine on them."

—Isaiah 9:2, NIV

Welcome, and thank you for taking the time to join us, whether you are visitors, friends, family, or regular attenders. We are blessed by your presence and hope you will be blessed in return.

Prayer

Please pray with me:

Saving God, who walked this earth
in Eden and by Galilee,
we praise you for your everlasting love,
enduring patience,
and for the greatest gift of all,
the possibility of salvation
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

—John Birch, FaithandWorship.com

Song: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" Wade, LUYH 76, GtG 133, PsH 340

During the last verse, the boys of the market enter with Luke at the stage left entry door. Luke mimes his need for water. The boys point to the well and bring him to the sitting area left of the well. Luke is carrying a bundle along with a staff. The youngest boys begin to "investigate" what Luke is carrying in his bag. Johan returns to the lectern.

Liturgist:

In today's technological society, if you need an answer to a question, the internet can provide an overwhelming amount of information. If you go back two thousand years, however, research methods were more direct.

During Luke's time, rumors and stories about the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ had already circulated widely thanks to the work of the apostles and the believers present at the resurrection. But there's a problem for those needing more information: how do you know what is true and what is false?

The gospel writer Luke, a trained physician and sometimes companion of the apostle Paul, set out on behalf of his friend Theophilus to research and learn about Jesus. Luke wrote:

Project Luke 1:1-4 on screen and play a pre-recording of Luke reading the passage.

"Many people have attempted to write about the things that have taken place among us. Reports of these things were handed down to us. There were people who saw these things for themselves from the beginning. They saw them and then passed the word on. With this in mind, I myself have carefully looked into everything from the beginning. So, I also decided to write down an orderly report of exactly what happened. I am doing this for you, most excellent Theophilus. I want you to know that the things you have been taught are true"

—Luke 1:1-4, NIV

SCENE 1: A SAVIOR IS PROMISED TO A YOUNG WOMAN

Luke (*seated*): Thank you all for helping me find my way. It has been a long journey.

Yosef: Where have you been?

Luke: My travels have taken me to many places in Israel. I am thirsty but without a means to draw water. Would one of you bring me some water?

Andrew and Bar walk to the children at the well and mime Luke's request. After searching, one girl finds a bowl and fills it with water from the well. They take it back to Luke.

Two young girls (one carrying a container for water and the other a doll made of cloth scraps) enter from stage right and walk toward the well.

Eliaana: Oh, I hate doing this every morning!

Daniella: It's not so bad. We get to see our friends.

Eliaana: Where is your water jar?

Daniella: This morning I got a surprise. My mom gave me this baby doll and told me I could skip my chores and play with my friends at the well.

Eliana: Lucky you! The only surprises I get are more chores.

The girls approach the well. Daniella starts toward the top of the well.

Eliana: Be careful! The well is crumbling at the top. We have been warned to stay at the bottom.

Daniella sits near the bottom and waits for Eliana to finish drawing water. Two boys, Kefir and Hansel, run in from backstage (right) playing tag.

Kefir: You're it—I got you last!

Hansel: Did not—besides, I got you now!

They run onto the stage. While Eliana pushes one boy out of Daniella's way, her doll ends up in the well by accident.

Daniella: My doll! What is my mommy going to say?

Luke, sitting nearby, has watched the children's activity and comes to help and comfort Daniella.

Luke: Here now, little one. All is not lost.

Luke takes his walking stick lying nearby and fishes the doll from the water.

Luke: The baby has had its bath; now we need something to dry her off.

Luke takes a portion of his cloak, tears it off and folds it around the doll, giving it back to Daniella. He takes her back with him to his seat. The other children follow.

Chana: Who are you, mister?

Luke: My name is Luke, and I am a doctor.

All of the children start to describe their health complaints.

Andrew: Can you look at my arm? I fell yesterday.

Luke (laughing): You all look fine to me!

Bar: What are you doing here?

Luke: I am on my way home. I have been investigating the life of the Messiah, Jesus Christ."

Children: Oh, we've heard of him!

Joshua: My parents told me that the Messiah hasn't come yet.

Luke: Well, from what I learned, God moved the whole world to bring about the birth of his son. The promise of his birth came to a young woman named Mary through an angel!

Children: Ooooh, angels! Tell us, tell us what happened!

The children settle down to listen (facing Luke).

Luke: In the sixth month . . .

Luke continues to read Luke 1:26–38 as the words appear on the screen.

Lighting dims so the screen becomes the focus instead of the actors.

26 ...after Elizabeth had become pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee. 27 He was sent to a virgin. The girl was engaged to a man named Joseph. He came from the family line of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 The angel greeted her and said, "The Lord has blessed you in a special way. He is with you."

29 Mary was very upset because of his words. She wondered what kind of greeting this could be. 30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary. God is very pleased with you. 31 You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You must call him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king like his father David of long ago. 33 The Son of the Most High God will rule forever over his people. They are from the family line of Jacob. That kingdom will never end."

34 "How can this happen?" Mary asked the angel. "I am a virgin."

35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come to you. The power of the Most High God will cover you. So the holy one that is born will be called the Son of God. 36 Your relative Elizabeth will have a child even though she is old. People thought she could not have children. But she has been pregnant for six months now. 37 That's because what God says will always come true."

38 "I serve the Lord," Mary answered. "May it happen to me just as you said it would." Then the angel left her.

—Luke 1:26–38, NIV

Lights come back up.

Aliza (*dismissively*): These are all things that seem impossible to me.

Luke: But our God can do the impossible!

Ilona (*dreamily*): Elizabeth must have been so happy to hear she would have a baby!

Aliza (*more thoughtfully*): Mother to the Son of God! Do you think Mary was happy or really scared?

Luke: I think it is like holding your breath when something exciting is going to happen, then when it does, you can't help but let it out and rejoice!

All the children hold and then let out their breath together.

Song: "Hark, the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes!" Doddridge, LUYH 60, PsH 335

SCENE 2: A ROYAL BIRTH—BUT IN A STABLE

Yosef: Where was the Messiah born? If this baby is our King, were there castles and soldiers and lots of gifts?"

Luke: God's ways are not our ways. As promised in the book of Isaiah, the Savior would be born in Bethlehem. God moved the head of the Roman Empire to bring that about.

Maaike: What did the Caesar do?

Luke: In those days, Caesar Augustus made a law...

Luke continues to read Luke 2:1–7 as the words appear on the screen and an instrumental "Away in a Manger" North American, LUYH 86, GtG 114/115, plays softly.

1 ...It required that a list be made of everyone in the whole Roman world. 2 It was the first time a list was made of the people while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 Everyone went to their own town to be listed.

4 So Joseph went also. He went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea. That is where Bethlehem, the town of David, was. Joseph went there because he belonged to the family line of David. 5 He went there with Mary to be listed. Mary was engaged to him. She was expecting a baby. 6 While Joseph and Mary were there, the time came for the child to be born. 7 She gave birth to her first baby. It was a boy. She wrapped him in large strips of cloth. Then she placed him in a manger. That's because there was no guest room where they could stay.

—Luke 2:1–7

Maaïke (*with disgust*): A manger? Our Messiah was born in a manger in a *stable*?

Children comment to each other.

Andrew: Hey, that sounds like my house!

Luke: Not what you thought would be fitting for a king? Yet God was fulfilling promises made to Israel through the prophets of old. What you might find interesting is whom God sent to announce the Christ's birth and which citizens were chosen to receive it.

Sarai: That would be an honor. God must have chosen only the best people for that.

Luke: It was shepherds.

Children comment to each other about how dirty, smelly, and disgusting shepherds are.

Yosef: Hey, that's what I help with at home!

Luke: Now imagine not just one angel, but a whole group of them.

Sarai: I'd probably faint! (*pretends to faint*)

Luke: There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby. . .

Luke continues to read Luke 2:8–20 as the words appear on the screen.

8 ...It was night, and they were taking care of their sheep. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them. And the glory of the Lord shone around them. They were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news. It will bring great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 Here is how you will know I am telling you the truth. You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a large group of angels from heaven also appeared. They were praising God. They said,

14 "May glory be given to God in the highest heaven! And may peace be given to those he is pleased with on earth!"

15 The angels left and went into heaven. Then the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem. Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby. The baby was lying in the manger. 17 After the shepherds had seen him, they told everyone. They reported what the angel had said about this child. 18 All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary kept all these things like a secret treasure in her heart. She thought about them over and over. 20 The shepherds returned. They gave glory and praise to God. Everything they had seen and heard was just as they had been told.

—Luke 2:8–20, NIV

Song: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" Wesley, LUYH 80, GtG 119, PsH 345

SCENE 3: A MESSIAH FOR ALL

Eliaana: What was God thinking to send angels to shepherds!

Luke: I think he wants us to think of Jesus as a Messiah for all people.

Daniella: What about me? I'm not Jewish. Was the savior born for me?

Luke: Maybe I can explain that with the help of a fellow gospel writer and apostle, Matthew. Matthew told of kings, or Magi, who came in search of a new King.

Children: They were looking for Jesus!

Luke continues to read Matthew 2:1–12 as the words appear on the screen.

Luke:

1 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea. This happened while Herod was king of Judea. After Jesus' birth, Wise Men from the east came to Jerusalem. 2 They asked, "Where is the child who has been born to be king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose. Now we have come to worship him."

3 When King Herod heard about it, he was very upset. Everyone in Jerusalem was troubled too. 4 So Herod called together all the chief priests of the people. He also called the teachers of the law. He asked them where the Messiah was going to be born. 5 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied. "This is what the prophet has written. He said,

6 "'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are certainly not the least important among the towns of Judah.
A ruler will come out of you.
He will rule my people Israel like a shepherd.'" (Micah 5:2)

7 Then Herod secretly called for the Wise Men. He found out from them exactly when the star had appeared. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem. He said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report it to me. Then I can go and worship him too."

9 After the Wise Men had listened to the king, they went on their way. The star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them. It finally stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. 11 The Wise Men went to the house. There they saw the child with his mother Mary. They bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures. They gave him gold, frankincense and myrrh. 12 But God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they returned to their country on a different road.

—Matthew 2:1–12, NIV

Song: "Joy to the World" Watts, LUYH 92, GtG 124/266, PsH 337

SCENE 4: CHRIST AT THE WELL WITH LIVING WATER

Luke (to Daniella): So you see—the kings represented nations outside of Israel who also come to worship and be received by a new king.

Daniella: He was born for all of us!

Luke: That's right! Children, thank you for the water you shared with me. Your well reminds me that Jesus also stopped at a well.

Children: Tell us! Tell us about it!

Luke: Jesus came to a town in Samaria called Sychar. . . .

Luke continues to read John 4:5–14 as the words appear on the screen.

5 ...It was near the piece of land Jacob had given his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from the journey. So he sat down by the well. It was about noon.

7 A woman from Samaria came to get some water. Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" 8 His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew. I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" She said this because Jews don't have anything to do with Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered her, "You do not know what God's gift is. And you do not know who is asking you for a drink. If you did, you would have asked him. He would have given you living water."

11 "Sir," the woman said, "you don't have anything to get water with. The well is deep. Where can you get this living water? 12 Our father Jacob gave us the well. He drank from it himself. So did his sons and his livestock. Are you more important than he is?"

13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. 14 But anyone who drinks the water I give them will never be thirsty. In fact, the water I give them will become a spring of water in him. It will flow up into eternal life".

—John 4:5–14, NIV

Choir: "Come to the Water" Foley, arr. Hasseler

SCENE 5: DANIELLA'S BLESSING

Aliza: I'd like that kind of water too.

Luke (*standing*): Remember the stories and believe that a king was born for all of you, and he died and rose again to free you from your sins and take you to his eternal home."

Aliza: Will Jesus come again?

Luke: He said he would. But you must wait.

Children begin to drift away, market children to the left and others to the right.

Daniella: The cloth—you need to take the cloth back!

Luke: Keep it, child, as a gift and remember this day. And receive this blessing:

"May grace be given to everyone
who loves our Lord Jesus Christ
with a love that will never die."

—Ephesians 6:24, NIV

Parent: Daniella, where are you? Come home now.

Luke leaves via stage left with market children.

The children of the well take their containers and rush home via stage right.

Daniella: Mom, guess what? I met a doctor!

WE ARE STILL WAITING FOR THE MESSIAH

Luke reads Acts 1:1–11 as the words appear on the screen.

Luke *(to the audience):*

1 Theophilus, I wrote about Jesus in my earlier book. I wrote about all he did and taught 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven. Before Jesus left, he gave orders to the apostles he had chosen. He did this through the Holy Spirit. 3 After his suffering and death, he appeared to them. In many ways he proved that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of 40 days. During that time he spoke about God's kingdom. 4 One day Jesus was eating with them. He gave them a command. "Do not leave Jerusalem," he said. "Wait for the gift my Father promised. You have heard me talk about it. 5 John baptized with water. But in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

6 Then the apostles gathered around Jesus and asked him a question. "Lord," they said, "are you going to give the kingdom back to Israel now?"

7 He said to them, "You should not be concerned about times or dates. The Father has set them by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will tell people about me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria. And you will even tell people about me from one end of the earth to the other."

9 After Jesus said this, he was taken up to heaven. They watched until a cloud hid him from their sight.

10 While he was going up, they kept on looking at the sky. Suddenly two men dressed in white clothing stood beside them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking at the sky? Jesus has been taken away from you into heaven. But he will come back in the same way you saw him go".

—Acts 1:1–11, NIV

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Invitation to Return for Christmas Day

Blessing

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all". Amen.

—2 Corinthians 13:14

Candle Lighting with "Silent Night! Holy Night" Mohr, LUYH 85, GtG 122, PsH 344

After the song, candles should be blown out and deposited in boxes at the exit doors.

Actors move to the foyer, where they wish people a blessed Christmas as they exit the sanctuary.