



Tour Guide Script

**A Ministry of
East Pointe Church**

Walk Through Bethlehem

East Pointe Church

Role: Beginning Host
Gender: Male or Female
Age: 18 & Up
Special Note: Ability to memorize an extensive monologue

Host

(Calls group together and assembles them inside the hallway.)

Hello, my name is _____. I am your host for this trip back in history, to that very first Christmas. You will travel through according to your enrollment, so please give me your census cards now. Stay with your guide and keep your group together.

Host

(Begin speaking when the entire group is gathered in the hallway and the sanctuary door is closed)

Bethlehem was five miles south of Jerusalem, on the road to Hebron and Egypt. On the south side of the city was a steep valley that dropped down to the Dead Sea, some 15 miles away. The pastureland around the city would have been used for grazing, and hillside caves were often used for stables. Most of the activity went on in the market. This was where the people bought or traded goods, hired workers, and heard news from other cities. The market was also the best place to catch up on the local gossip. (Open the door and take the group outside.)

(Speaking while walking to guide station.)

About three hundred people lived in the city during this period, but there were many more there that night. Back, during the time of the birth of Christ, Caesar Augustus declared that all the world should be registered and taxed, everyone in his own city. You, being from the house and lineage of David, have come to Bethlehem, which is the city of David. You will need some help to get into the city.

(Calls to the guide.) John (Hannah)! You're on your way into Bethlehem? (Guide nods.) Will you be so kind as to take these people with you? They've come from a very far away place and need someone to show them around Bethlehem.

Guide

I will gladly take them through the city, but ... (Looks at group skeptically) do they have their census cards, and enough for the tax?

Host

Yes, here are the cards, and they each have a shekel. (To group) You may keep the change... if there is any.

Guide

Alright, come with me. (Starts walking; asks a member of the group...) Where are you from anyway? (Waits for a response.)

That must be a far-away place. I've never heard of it. I'll say that you're part of my family. It will be easier to get you in that way. It's good that you have these Phoenician shekels. That is the only thing the tax collector will accept, and we must all pay our taxes to enter the city. Here we are.

Role: Tax Collector
Gender: Male
Age: 18 & Up
Special Note: Demanding

Gate

Role: Roman Soldiers
Gender: Male
Age: 18 & Up
Special Note: Intimidating
Demeanor

Roman Soldier

Don't try to enter the city without stopping here. All must pay the tax and register.

Tax Collector

(With false good cheer) Welcome, in the name of Caesar Augustus. Your cards, please. (Guide hands over the cards.) How many in your family? Have you any slaves or animals? All must pay the tax.

Guide

There are ____ of us. None are slaves, and as you can see, we have no animals.

Roman Soldier

(Stepping in from the gate, he points to a guest.) That one looks like a slave.

Guide

He's not.

Tax Collector

Very well. The tax for each of you is one shekel.

Guide

(A bit annoyed, but still controlled) I was told that Rome required a half-shekel.

Tax Collector

(Smiling broadly) Ah, but there are other concerns. The taxes must be counted and sorted and delivered to Caesar. And surely, I must live on something. (Frowning) Can you not pay?

Guide

(Staring at the coins) I was saving a half-shekel to offer to God.

Tax Collector

God will wait. Caesar requires what is his NOW, but if you must be persuaded...

(Roman Guard steps forward, looking stern.)

Guide

(Steps back to confer with group.) Friends, I think I've made a mistake. If we do not pay, we will be arrested. I think it would be better to pay him the money and give our service to God.

(Steps back to table.) We shall pay the tax. (Hands the coins to tax collector.)

Tax Collector

(Smiling and counting coins) I thought you would. Welcome to Bethlehem. (Nods at Guard, and laughs, loudly.)

Roman Guard

(Sneering) You may enter the city, Jews. Move along!

Fish Seller

Role: Fish Seller Gender: Male or Female Age: 18 & Up Special Note: Content/Confident
--

Guide – after walking into the city

It has been like this since I was born. The Romans take all that we have, while traitors like that pick up the scraps they leave behind... (Looks toward market.) Here's the market.

Guide at Fish

Those fish look good.

Fish Seller

They are!

I have smoked fish and salted fish; brought here from the Sea of Galilee.

Guide

Sea of Galilee? Is Jonas still fishing around there?

Fish Seller

He is, and he has a son now, Simon. The boy was with him when he brought this load, earlier. Fine family, and very fine fish.

Guide

Too bad I don't have any extra money. Shalom!

Role: Trader
Gender: Male or Female
Age: 10 & Up
Special Note: Spouse or
Guardian/Child Pairing

Trader

Role: Daniel
Gender: Male
Age: 30 & Up
Special Note: Spouse or
Guardian/Child Pairing

Trader

(Go to the tour guide in the walkway and stage whisper) Do you want to make some money?

Guide

Pardon me?

Trader

I have a friend that can help.

Guide

(Suspicious) How?

Trader

Come with me, he can tell you himself. (Takes guide to Trader booth.)

Daniel, I've found someone who's in need of a denarii or two.

Daniel

Hello friend. I'm in the business of buying and selling. One man's trash is another's treasure. Do you have anything to s...

Guide

I know you. Your family owns a lot of land, wheat fields, mostly. Shouldn't you be threshing grain right now?

Daniel

I used to do that. Now I hire people to do it. Do you need a job for a few days?

Guide

Well, right now, I'm trying to find a place for these good people to stay. I'll come back and talk to you later.

Daniel

Come back when you're able. Somebody has to separate the wheat from the chaff. It's not going to be me. Shalom.

Guide

Shalom. I'll see you later, Daniel.

Fruit Shop

Role: Fruit Seller Gender: Male or Female Age: 16 & Up Special Note: Proud & Hopeful

Fruit Seller

Shalom, friends! How about something in case you get hungry? A fine apple perhaps?

Guide

Everything looks good, but no thank you.

Fruit Seller

The finest since the Garden of Eden!

Guide

That's some claim. I guess the harvest was good this year.

Fruit Seller

It was excellent. Thirty, sixty, even a hundred times what was planted. Why, we might even have enough to pay our taxes, and feed our families, as well!

Guide

Not if the tax collector at the gate hears about it.

Fruit Seller

(Laughing) I know what you mean. But a harvest like this is enough to give us hope. Perhaps God has seen that we have been punished enough with these Romans. Maybe he will send our Deliverer, soon.

Guide

I pray for that every day, friend. Shalom!

Salt Shop

Role: Salt Seller Gender: Male or Female Age: 16 & Up Special Note: Jovial Salesperson

Salt Seller

Salt for sale! Salt for blessing, salt for home! (Seeing guide) You, sir (ma'am). Salt for you?

Guide

What do you have to offer?

Salt Seller

Salts for all your needs! (Pointing to salts on the table) Salt for seasoning, salt for gifts, salt to cleanse your wounds. There is none finer!

Guide

And what about this, in this dish? (Almost touches the sacrificial salt.)

Salt Seller

(Takes the dish, so he (she) can't touch it.) Just the thing for a righteous person! Consecrated salt for temple offerings, mined from the coast of Phoenicia.

Guide

How much?

Salt Seller

Only a denarius, and sure to bring a blessing!

Guide

For a day's wage, it should bring more than that! Ask the tax collector at the gate. I think he can better afford, and use, such a blessing.

(Guide and group walk on, as Salt Seller says...) Shalom.

Brass/Metal Shop

Role: Brass Worker Gender: Male Age: 18 & Up Special Note: Belligerent

Brass/Metal worker

Fine brass and gold! Fine brass and gold! You, sir (ma'am)! How about a fine tray to give as a gift?

Guide

Sorry, not today.

Brass/Metal worker

Then how about a lamp stand? The light always shines more brightly on a fine lamp stand.

Guide

Perhaps another time. Shalom.

Brass/Metal worker

Fine! Hide your light under a basket for all I care!

Basket Shop

Role: Basket Weaver Gender: Female Age: 18 & Up Special Note: Proud/Sincere
--

Guide at Baskets

Shalom. What beautiful baskets you have.

Basket Weaver

Thank you, traveler. We have baskets for all your needs. (Displaying baskets) Why, just this morning a woman passed by, and asked if we had one she could use to carry a newborn in. She was very near her time.

Guide

That doesn't sound very comfortable for the baby.

Basket weaver

It was good enough for Moses, and he became the leader of all of Israel. It should be good enough for a carpenter's child.

Guide

I guess it should at that. Shalom. (Moves to Weaver's and Dyer's shop.)

Weaver and Dyer Shop

Role: Weaver 1 & 2, Dyer Gender: Female Age: 16 & Up Special Note: Chatty Busybodies

Guide

Oh, this looks like a weaver's shop.

Weaver 1 (To crowd) Come on in; see our wares. Are you interested in any cloth? Maybe you need some cloth dyed. Look at these bold colors...

Dyer (Rushing in from outside of the shop, immediately takes the attention of the weavers)
(Guide tries to get their attention during the following, but they ignore the guide.)

Did you hear about that couple we saw yesterday? The woman was ready to have a baby! Phoebe just told me that they're staying in a stable. She also said that the woman "claims" to be a virgin.

Weaver 2

How ridiculous!

Weaver 1

(Thoughtfully) Maybe.

Weaver 2

I don't often believe what Phoebe says. She's always gossiping about something.

Weaver 1

Still, I'd like to believe it. Isaiah the prophet said that the Messiah would be born of a virgin.

Dyer and Weaver 2

Messiah?

Guide

(Sarcastically) I guess they are too busy to help us. I think we should keep moving.

Bread Shop

Role: Bread Seller Gender: Female Age: 18 & Up Special Note: Warm/Inviting

Bread Seller

Bread! Fresh and delicious! Bread! (Grabs tour guide by sleeve, as he (she) passes.) Sir (ma'am), you look hungry. Why not buy some of my bread. Fresh to the touch, savory to taste, filling to the stomach. Mark my words, good bread is the only food you'll ever need!

Guide

But does the Torah not say, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God?"

Bread Seller

(Skeptically) Maybe, but the scriptures do little to fill an empty belly, and the bread from heaven stopped long ago.

Guide

Then why not watch and pray that it may come again?

Bread Seller

But I make my living selling bread! If bread came down from heaven, where would that leave me?

Guide

Full, good merchant. (Bread Seller looks puzzled.) Peace be with you. (Guide walks on.)

Role: Wine Seller 1
Gender: Female
Age: 20 & up
Special Note: Frustrated
Guardian/Child pairing

Wine Shop

Role: Wine Seller 2
Gender: Female
Age: 8 & up
Special Note: Frightened,
Defensive - Guardian/Child
pairing

Wine

(The wine sellers are wiping the floor and tables as the group approaches. #1 is speaking sharply to #2.)

Wine Seller 1

Really, I don't know how you could be so foolish!

Wine Seller 2

But I poured the wine into the skins just like you told me...

Wine Seller 1

Those were old skins! You don't pour new wine into old skins. They'll burst! Everyone knows that! Just look at this mess... (Sees group.) Oh, shalom friends.

Guide

Shalom. Is everything all right?

Wine Seller 1

A small accident...

Wine Seller 2

It could happen to anyone!

Wine Seller 1

...But please come back later. We have the finest wines in all of Israel!

Guide

Later, then. Shalom.

Role: Phoebe
Gender: Female
Age: 18 & up
Special Note: Town Gossip - must possess awareness of surroundings and have lots of mobility

Phoebe

Phoebe

(Will be here most of the time. Phoebe will be wandering around the city looking for congestion. If she sees a group that needs to slow down because it's getting too close to the one in front of it, she moves in. Comes up to the guide to take a good look)

Hi John (Hannah)! I almost didn't recognize you at first. How long has it been since I've seen you?
(Notices the group.)

Guide

Well, Hello Phoebe. It has been a long time. I just got back into the city. How've you been?

Phoebe

Oh, I can't complain. Who are these (hesitates to find an adjective) *fine* people you are with.

Guide

They're some friends I met outside the gate. I'm trying to help them find lodging. Do you know of any place?

Phoebe

Oh, dear me, no. The city is so full one can hardly walk at a quick pace without bumping into someone. I don't know anyone with an extra room, or even floor space. I'm sorry. Why there's even a couple staying in a stable.

Guide

I wonder if there's any more room there.

(During the next speech, guide tries to get a word in, but can't.)

Phoebe

I don't know if you want to do that. There's something pretty strange going on out there. I saw them when they were in town. You won't believe what I overheard them talking about. The couple is betrothed, but not yet married and the woman looked like she was ready to give birth any minute. I thought they were of pretty low moral character, and then I heard her say something about this being God's child. This woman actually claims to be a virgin! Oh, and I almost forgot the best part. They said an angel came and talked to both of them. Now, I think they are just plain crazy. I would stay away from the stable, if I were you.

Guide

We'll take that under advisement. It was nice talking to you.

Phoebe

Yes, nice seeing you again.

Guide

That was Phoebe all right; she hasn't changed a bit.

Oil and Lamp Shop

Role: Lamp Bride Gender: Female Age: 16 & up Special Note: Young, Excitedly Expectant

Oil and Lamp

(As the tour group approaches the oil shop a woman leaves the counter in a hurry, and bumps into the tour guide, spilling the oil [water] in her container.)

Woman

Oh! Your pardon, sir (ma'am). I didn't see you!

Guide

Peace to you. Where are you going in such a hurry with your oil?

Woman

To my house, to wait for my groom. He has been building our home for a long time, and soon he will come for me. I must have oil to keep my lamp burning, and be ready for him, should he come at midnight.

Guide

Then you do not know when the groom will come?

Woman

It is our custom. I will not know when all has been completed, and my beloved could come at any time. Only the groom's father can say when the time is right. When the father speaks, the groom will come, and I must be ready. I must have oil for the lamps, if he should come tonight.

Guide

Then God bless you as you wait faithfully.

Woman

Shalom. God bless you in your travels.

(Hurries back to oil seller, gets oil, and waits for next tour group.)

Guide

(To group) Now, there is a wise young woman.

Synagogue

Role: Priest Gender: Male Age: 30 & up Special Note: Commanding Presence
--

Guide at Synagogue

You know, we've heard many troubling things tonight, as well as all this talk about a virgin birth. Let's see if the Priest has anything to say about all this. (At the entrance) We're in luck, it looks like there is a prayer meeting just about to start. Come on in quietly, so we can hear.

Priest

(As tour group enters) I say to you all, take heart. True the Romans are cruel oppressors, but One is coming, our Messiah. As David wrote long ago:

(Reads from scroll, *Psalms 110:2*)

"The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."

And we who live here are blessed above all others, for we may actually see His coming. Listen to the prophet Micah:

(Reads from scroll: *Micah 5:2*)

"But thou, Bethlehem, Ephrath, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Pray with me now, that he will send the Messiah, soon.

(Priest and extras bow in prayer, as tour group exits.)

Jewish Home

Role: Dinah
Gender: Female
Age: 30 & up
Special Note: Friendly
& Overwhelmed

Guide at Jewish Home

(To group) Ah, this is the home of my friends, Dinah and Andrew. (To Dinah) Shalom!
It's nice to see you, again.

Dinah

(Very busy with kids running around.) Shalom, it's nice to see you again, John (Hannah). I wish I could stop and talk, but I have a house full of family coming in any minute.

Guide

That's the case throughout the town. Do you know any place where these good people could stay tonight?

Dinah

No, I wish I did. I might go there myself. (Chuckles.) I hope you find some place. Shalom.

Guide

Shalom. I'll talk to you again, soon.

Spice Shop

Role: Spice Seller Gender: Female Age: 18 & up Special Note: Wise, Contemplative
--

Spice Seller

Spices, we have the finest. You, sir (ma'am), are you interested in any spices today?

Guide

No, I'm sorry...

Spice Seller

I have all the spices you would need in your home. Look here, I have spices to preserve food, (Points out a few jars.) These are to make incense. (Points to another jar.) That's myrrh, a sweet fragrance to carry family and friends to the Lord. It is used for burial. Have you a need for any? An ill one, perhaps?

Guide

Praise God, all of my family is well. I doubt that we could afford this, anyway.

Spice Seller

That seems true of most people in Bethlehem. Only kings and wealthy nobles can afford to spend so much on one fated to die.

Guide

Then why did you buy it?

Spice Seller

Perhaps I thought that, if I prepared for a king, then a king would come someday. Sounds foolish, doesn't it?

Guide

Not at all. We should all be prepared for the True King, when He appears. Shalom, friend!

Spice Seller

Shalom, travelers.

Inn

Role: Innkeeper
Gender: Male
Age: 30 & up
Special Note: Surly,
Dismissive

Inn

(Innkeeper walks out, as group approaches.)

Guide

Are you the innkeeper?

Innkeeper

(Angrily) I am, and I have no room for any of you! Move on!

Role: Innkeeper's Wife
Gender: Female
Age: 30 & up
Special Note: Kind,
Apologetic

Guide

Move on? Is this how you show hospitality to strangers?

(Innkeeper's wife comes out.)

Innkeeper

My house is full of strangers. Two families in each room, and still more come for the census. Why, if I had not given my stable to that young couple, I could have charged five shekels for it!

Innkeeper's Wife

But we had to. The woman was so near her time... I'm sorry, we have no room. I hope you can find shelter, somewhere.

Innkeeper

(To wife) Come in, we have work to do. (Both go back in, busying themselves.)

Guide

(To group) I am sorry, friends. It seems that you won't be staying indoors tonight, but I'll try to find something for you.

Pottery Shop

Role: Potter
Gender: Male or Female
Age: 18 & up
Special Note: Infectiously Positive

Potter

(As the group approaches, potter is working busily. He (she) smiles a lot, and sings, hums, or whistles, to show his (her) happiness. He (she) greets them heartily, as they approach.)

Shalom, friends! How is your evening?

Guide

No better for meeting the innkeeper, I'm afraid.

Potter

(Laughing) Yes, he is a surly one. I don't think he likes people or his work!

Guide

I would guess that you don't have that problem.

Potter

Never! I love people, and as for my work... Well, who could have better? My work is the closest to God's on earth!

Guide

How is that?

Potter

As God took the dust of the earth to make Adam, I take the dust and make things. I mix it and mold it, shaping it with my very hands. Sometimes I make toys that bring laughter to children, or jars for keeping grain or water. And, sometimes, I make something special. Then I put it in the fire to test and harden it. Sometimes, the clay cracks. But if the clay is good, and I have done my work well, out comes a vessel fit to serve a king!

Guide

Then may God bless your work... and thank you for lifting my spirits.

Potter

That, too, is God's work. Shalom, good friends!

Guide

Shalom!

The Well

Role: Woman at the Well Gender: Female Age: 18 & up Special Note: Devoted, Servant
--

Guide at Well

Shalom! Can you offer a weary traveler a drink!

Woman

(Handing guide a small cup) A quick one, sir (ma'am). I must be off soon. I am bringing water to a family in a stable at the edge of town. The woman has just given birth and can't come, and her husband won't leave her or the child.

Guide

Won't leave to get water? I've never heard of such a thing!

Woman

Neither have I, but this child is special. Even his crying gives me a feeling of peace and hope. I didn't want to leave, but someone had to bring the water.

Guide

(Handing the cup back) Then, I won't keep you. Thank you for your kindness to me and the child. Shalom!

Woman

Shalom.

Carpenter Shop

Role: Carpenter Gender: Male Age: 18 & up Special Note: Busy, a bit gruff
--

Guide at Carpenter shop

(Approaches counter; Carpenter is busy working.)

You seem very busy, friend.

Carpenter

(Looks up, as though startled.) What? Oh, yes, too busy! People need plows and yokes for their fields, and door frames to keep out the cold. There's so much to do this time of year. And then, there are the Romans...

Guide

What do the Romans want?

Carpenter

Crosses to line the road between Bethlehem and Jerusalem. They call it justice, but what they really want is to keep the people in line. They would crucify an innocent as quickly as a murderer if they thought it would keep the peace. And while they force me to make their crosses, the people in need must wait. (Pauses) I have heard that there is a young carpenter and his wife in town. Perhaps he will join me in my work. Then, the people would have what they need.

Guide

If we see him, we shall send him your way. Shalom.

Carpenter

Shalom, and thanks.

Role: Roman Guard
Gender: Male
Age: 20 & up
Special Note: Intimidating,
Abrasive

Blacksmith Shop

Role: Blacksmith
Gender: Male
Age: 16 & up
Special Note: Hardworking,
Confident

Blacksmith

(Loudly, as group passes) Plows sharpened! Horseshoes made! (to group) Come in, my friends. Warm yourselves by the fire and look around.

Guide

Thank you. How is business tonight?

Blacksmith

Business is great! For weeks now, travelers have been passing through. So many broken shoes and harnesses. So many opportunities to be of service.

Roman Guard

Out of my way!

(To blacksmith) You there, do you have those nails ready?

Blacksmith

Tomorrow, Centurion. They will be ready first thing tomorrow, as promised.

Roman Guard

See that they are. The trial starts first thing in the morning. We'll be needing those nails by noon.

Blacksmith

They'll be ready! (Moves off to stoke the fire.)

Roman Guard

And the rest of you, move along! (Guard stomps off.)

Guide

Yes, Centurion.

(To group) Come, my friends, we don't want to linger here.

Role: Jacob
Gender: Male
Age: 16 & Up
Special Note: Quiet

Tanner Shop

Role: Eli
Gender: Male
Age: 18 & up
Special Note: Bold, Questioning

Guide

Greetings, friend tanners. (Tanner #1 is working on skin.)

Tanner #1 (Jacob)

(A bit somberly) Shalom, travelers.

(To Tanner #2) Eli, we have customers.

(Tanner #2 steps up from back. Tanner #1 takes his work to the back. The two carefully avoid touching.)

Tanner # 2 (Eli)

Shalom, friends! What can I show you?

Guide

We were just looking. But couldn't your friend have shown us your wares?

Tanner #2 (Eli)

Alas, Jacob has been skinning all day, and is unclean.

Guide

Ah, I see.

Tanner #2 (Eli)

The law is sometimes a bitter thing. Jacob loves his father with all his heart and honored him by taking on his work. Yet each day, his work defiles him, and his neighbors and priest walk away from him.

Guide

But if he washes and goes through purification, will he not be clean again?

Tanner # 2 (Eli)

He will... only to be unclean again and again. I do not mean to question God, but would it not be better to wash once for the Lord and then be clean forever?

Guide

That would be wonderful... Have faith in God, Eli. In His time, He will show us all the way that is best. Shalom.

Tanners

Shalom, friends!

Camel Stall

Role: Servant
Gender: Male or Female
Age: 18 & Up
Special Note: Friendly
***Close to animals**

Servant at Camel Stall

(Optional, skip if there is a group close behind.)

Shalom, travelers.

Guide

Shalom, friend. That is a fine animal.

Servant

About average, I suppose, but it sold for a fine price.

Guide

Sold to whom?

Servant

A buyer for some wealthy men from the East. He could have bought better animals, elsewhere, but they wanted animals raised in Israel. He said that some day they hoped to come to visit, and wanted animals familiar with the land.

Guide

How strange. I wonder why they want to come.

Servant

The buyer didn't know, and neither do I. The only thing I know for sure is that these men have more wealth than wisdom. After all, what could bring wise men to this barren land?

Guide

I sometimes wonder that myself. Shalom, friend.

Servant

Shalom.

Role: Animal Seller 1
Gender: Male or Female
Age: 18 & up
Special Note: Cheerfully
Motivated

Animal Seller

Role: Animal Seller 2
Gender: Male or Female
Age: 18 & up
Special Note: Judgmental &
Corrective
***Both sellers near animals.**

Animal Seller

(Animal sellers are talking with a shepherd. As the group approaches, one animal seller looks up and addresses them.)

Seller 1

Shalom! Are you looking for a temple offering? We have only the finest. Animals without blemish, guaranteed!

Guide

We are just passing by.

Seller 1

Then don't let God pass you by! Only 10 denarii for a fine offering...

Seller 2

(Angrily) 10 denarii! He (she) would not make that in two weeks! These are poor travelers, not rich merchants. Gouger!

Seller 1

Gouger? The Torah clearly says that innocent blood must be shed for the forgiveness of sins, to bring atonement with God. A mere 10 denarii...

Seller 2

(Cutting him off) The prophet also said, *"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."* If God were to come to you this very night and ask, "Where was your mercy?" How would you answer Him?

Seller 1

(Pauses a moment, then answers contritely to the guide.) The price is too high. Come back tomorrow, and I will have a better offering at a fair price.

Guide

I thank you, but if you would show mercy, can you tell me where I might find lodging for my friends? The inn is full, and they have no place to stay.

Role: Angel
Gender: Male
Age: 16 & up
Special Note: Angelic presence

Shepherds/Angel

Role: Shepherds 1, 2, & 3
Gender: Male
Age: 12 & up
Special Note: Welcoming,
Ecstatic

Shepherd 1

I can help. My friends and I are staying in the fields. There is no house, but we have food to share, and a fire for warmth.

Guide

Thank you. Shall we go? (Motions for group to follow shepherd then follows group out to the field.)

Shepherds/Angel

(Shepherd from Animal Seller leads group past animal pens, toward the shepherds around the fire.)

Shepherd 1

My friends and I are grazing the flocks over here, though we have them penned in for the night. (Gestures toward other shepherds.) There are my friends now. (Waves to others who wave back, and come over.) These folks have traveled from a great distance. May they spend the night with us?

Shepherd 2

Welcome. We have little enough, but will gladly share all that we do have. Let's gather around the fire against the cold.

(Shepherds lead the group to a small camp area. As the group arrives, the angel turns on the light, and steps out to greet them.)

(The shepherds and guide drop to their knees, frightened.)

Angel

"...Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." (Pause, shepherds get up, start approaching angel. Angel steps back.) *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."* (Angel walks back through the light, turns it off and goes behind the wall.)

Shepherd 1

(Still a little shaky) Tell me you saw that, too. I wasn't dreaming, was I?

Shepherd 2

If you were, so was I!

Shepherd 3

That was real! It was a real angel sent from God! Come on! I know the place the angel spoke about. Let's go see our Savior!

(Motions for other shepherds and group to follow and leads them to the manger.)

Manger

Role: Mary & Joseph
Gender: Female & Male respectively
Age: 18 & up
Special Note: Overjoyed, Husband/Wife team preferred, willing to sing

Mary

Welcome, friends. Come see our baby.

Joseph

Yes, you see He's not just Mary's and mine. He was born for all of us.

(The shepherds and the tour guide lead the group in the chorus of "Oh Come All Ye Faithful" – "Oh come let us adore Him, Oh come let us adore Him, Oh come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!")

Guide

(Excitedly, to the shepherds) We must spread the word. Go tell everyone you see that the Messiah has come.

Shepherds

(Excitedly, each one saying a different line all at the same time.)

Yes, yes, we'll wake them up, if we have to. Let's go! (To group) Everyone should spread this news wherever they go! (Shepherds run back to their stations.)

Guide

(To group) I have to go now. I know you will be taken care of. Don't forget to spread the word! Shalom!

(Goes back to city and exits out the cast entrance, back to the guide station.)

End Host

Role: End Host
Gender: Male
Age: 20 & up
Special Note: ability to memorize a monologue and relay a Gospel message

Host (at the stable)

Look how excited they are! And they don't even know the whole story. Imagine how they would react if they knew what would happen when this baby grew up? Please, follow me.

End of Tour Script

Host in Transit to Cross

(Lead the guests from the stable toward the Ending Host stall.)

The excitement at the manger was just the beginning! Come with me, and I'll tell you the rest of the story!

Once inside the Ending Host Stall

The life of Jesus, this same Jesus born in Bethlehem, was the most remarkable life ever lived. When he was about 30, Jesus began a ministry that changed the world. He performed miracles that had never been seen. When Jesus spoke, blind people received their sight, lame people walked, people with diseases were healed... and in at least three cases, people who had died were brought back to life. The Scriptures had prophesied that a Messiah would do such things, and Jesus fulfilled every prophecy.

His teachings were unforgettable. People saw that Jesus was the *Bread of Life*, the *Light of the World*, and the *Great Shepherd*. His message belonged in *new wine skins*, it was like the *salt of the earth*, and it was far *more valuable than silver or gold*. It was like *water that forever quenched* a spiritual thirst. In a world controlled by violence and force, Jesus set people free on the inside! Roman soldiers became believers, as did Jewish priests and teachers.

Thousands believed Jesus to be the Messiah while He was alive, and millions upon millions have believed Jesus to be the Savior of the world since that time.

None of it would have happened, of course, if it hadn't been for Bethlehem.
But even Bethlehem wouldn't have mattered, if it hadn't been for the cross.

About 33 years after Jesus was born, He was crucified in Jerusalem, only five miles away from His birthplace. His death was special. It wasn't a simple matter of an execution, it was God's plan of substitution. Jesus died on the cross for you, and for me. He was the last blood sacrifice God would ever accept for the payment of sin.

But even the cross is not the end of the story. On the next Sunday morning, on the very first Easter, Jesus was raised to life! Now Jesus waits for word from the Father about His return to earth. He is like a *groom, coming for his bride...* and Jesus will come again!

Jesus is the ultimate Christmas gift. He still offers eternal life, and abundant life. He offers life with a purpose, and joy. It all comes through knowing Jesus, personally, as Savior and Lord. That relationship has changed my life. We pray it has changed your life.

At this time I would like to lead you in a prayer. If you would like to accept Jesus as your Savior, then I encourage you to pray, in your heart, along with me:

"Dear Lord Jesus... I know that I'm a sinner... and I don't deserve to spend eternity with You... but I believe that You are the Son of God... and You came to earth to die for my sins... I believe You were buried and rose again... Please forgive me and wash my sins away... I turn from my sins and invite You to come into my heart and life... I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior... In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

If you prayed that prayer **for the first time**, would you mind raising your hand?

(Count the number of hands raised and record them for each group)

It's important to remember that the words of that prayer don't save you. The Bible teaches that salvation comes from believing in your heart that Jesus is the Son of God and that He died for you.

We all want to thank you for coming to "Walk Through Bethlehem." If you have any questions about what it means to be born again there are people right over there who would love to answer your questions or pray with you. They would be happy to show you, from the Bible, how you can know for sure if you died today, you would have a home eternally in heaven. For our other family and friends, we have refreshments available in the gymnasium for your enjoyment.

Thank you again for coming ... Merry Christmas! ... and "Shalom!"