

# “TELL ME AGAIN ABOUT BETHLEHEM”

Children love to hear the details of the day or night they were born, or when they came into their family by adoption. This worship service takes a two-pronged approach to the telling of the story of Jesus' birth. FIRST, it peeks in on Jesus and Mary with the young Jesus asking his mother to tell him again about Bethlehem. SECOND, it takes us to the present day where our children are asking their families to tell them again about Bethlehem as well. May the God who brought so much joy to the earth that first Christmas bless your church family with the message of hope and salvation through the use of this worship service.

**EDITING:** All materials in this worship service have been carefully edited by a former WELS educator.

**AGE LEVEL:** This worship service will work well with any size group, preschool through eighth grade.

**PROCESSIONAL:** A very different processional has been written into this worship service. Its use, of course, is optional. In keeping with the theme, the names and birthdates of all participating children are read as the children enter the church. This is done without the children's prior knowledge.

**NARRATION AND SPEAKERS:** There are four main speaking parts: Jesus, Mary, Narration and Recitation. The parts of Jesus and Mary may be recited by individuals or small groups of children. When Mary speaks you have an option of her telling the story word for word from the NIV or she may read the ALTERNATE sections, which place the NIV in the first person as if she were telling it today. The Narration may be spoken by a student or adult, depending on the size of your group. The Recitation parts are always scripture references.

(**SUGGESTION:** When this program was originally presented, a young lady from the congregation was selected to dress up as Mary and a young boy as Jesus. They positioned themselves in the center front of the church throughout the service. This makes an ideal visual aid.)

**CONGREGATION RESPONSE:** There are also several responses by the congregation in this service. After each section is completed, the students recite a poem to the parents and the parents respond. Be certain these are clearly printed in your worship service program.

**SONGS:** You will find three songs chosen and written especially for this service. The sheet music is found in the Teacher Score and an orchestrated version is available on CD in high and low voice range. All other songs suggested in the worship service should be easy to find in your church hymnbook or other general songbooks.

**SPECIAL THANKS:** First, a very special thank you for the time and dedication put into the writing of this service by Rev. George Ferch of Carmel, Indiana. We would also like to thank Doris Guggisberg for allowing us to use the "Christmas Bells" song. Doris has written a number of children's songs and musicals. Once again Mr. Charles Cushinery has helped greatly with his artistic arranging and recorded accompaniments, along with soloist Kelly Lacroff. We are also very appreciative for the work of Mr. Arlyn Boll who has again faithfully edited this material.

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# Tell Me Again About Bethlehem

*A Christmas Tradition in Scripture and Carol Based on Luke 2:1-20*

*“So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.” Luke 1:35*

## **Pre-Service Music / Lighting of Advent Candles**

**Processional:** This special processional has been kept a secret from the children. There is no singing, only soft keyboard music playing of the theme song. The children quietly proceed into the church and take their places...however...while they are doing this, two narrators positioned at the pulpit and lectern are taking turns reading the names and birthdates of each child participating in the service. If you only have a small school or Sunday School group participating you could also include the hospital, city and state of their birth, and even perhaps their baptism date. This quiet processional will set the tone for the entire service and the children will be thrilled to hear their names and birthdates mentioned.

**Congregation & Children sing after list is complete:** *“On Christmas Night All Christians Sing”*

## **Responsive Psalm selections:**

M: (Psalm 9:1) I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart;

**C: I will tell of all your wonders.**

M: (Psalm 40:5) Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you;

**C: Were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.**

M: (Psalm 66:16) Come and listen, all you who fear God;

**C: Let me tell you what he has done for me.**

M: (Psalm 78:3,4) I will utter hidden things, things from of old – what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us.

**C: We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation.**

M: (Psalm 78:6) So the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born,

**C: And they in turn would tell their children.**

**Christmas Prayer:** Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that light, we may also behold him in all his glory in the life to come; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen**

**Pastor:** Many children love to hear the details about the day or night they were born, or when they came into their family through adoption. They never tire of hearing the story. Truth be told, parents never tire telling it.

Imagine the child Jesus coming to Mary time and again with the same request. Picture little Jesus climbing up on his young mother's knee. Jesus snuggles close to hear Mary's beating heart, lifts his face toward hers, and asks, “Tell me again about the night I was born. Momma, tell me again about Bethlehem.”

Neither Mary nor we ever grow tired of telling it. Like little Jesus we love to hear it time and again. We gather together at Christmas to do just that.

Look! Listen! Learn! as we peek in on Mary and Jesus, and eavesdrop on their Christmas story time.

**All Children: “Tell Me Again about Bethlehem”**

REFRAIN

Somebody tell me the story.  
Somebody tell me again.  
Somebody take me back long, long ago,  
To the stable in old Bethlehem.

1. I love to hear about Bethle’em, of all the towns so small.  
I love to hear how the rooms were all full, leaving only a dark cattle stall.

REFRAIN

2. I love to hear about angels, filling the sky up above  
I love to hear how they told the good news of God’s peace and His wonderful love.

REFRAIN

3. I love to hear about shepherds, warmed by the campfire glow.  
I love to hear how they left all their sheep and rushed down to the stable below.

REFRAIN

4. I love to hear about Jesus; lying asleep on the hay.  
I love to hear how the crude manger bed was his cradle that first Christmas Day.

REFRAIN

## Part 1: Tell Me Again About Bethlehem

**Jesus:** *Momma, tell me again about Bethlehem,  
And my Heavenly Father above.  
Where did he send me into your world,  
To be the Gift of his love?*

**Mary:** Luke 2 1-3. In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the whole Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register.

Luke 2:4,5. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he was of the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

{ALTERNATE IN MARY’S OWN WORDS: So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he was of the house and line of David. He and I went there to register. We were pledged to be married and we were expecting you, Jesus.}

**Narration:** Small towns often put up a sign to let people know someone famous had been born there. God put up a sign before Jesus was born. God tells us through the prophet Micah that he chose this small town in Judah for the birthplace of his Son.

**Recitation:** Micah 5:2. But you, Bethlehem Ephratha, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.

**All Children:** Won't you tell us again about Bethlehem,  
(to cong.) And our Heavenly Father above.  
Where Mary gave birth to that baby so dear,  
Where God gave us his present of love.

**Congregation:** Listen, dear children, the story's the same,  
(to children) It never grows tired or worn.  
God planned it of old, He mapped it out well,  
'Twas Bethl'em where Jesus was born.

**Congregation Song:** *"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*

## Part 6: The Tellers and the Hearers

**Jesus:** *Momma, tell me again about Bethlehem,  
And what other people thought.  
What happened then inside of their hearts,  
By the news the shepherds brought?*

**Mary:** Luke 2:18. And all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

**Narration:** Let us now go to others with the good news of Jesus' birth, life and death that we might show everyone what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.

**Recitation:** Matthew 28:18, 19. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

**Narration:** Thank you Mary, Jesus, prophets, and angels for telling us again the Christmas Story. It is a story for every day not just one day. It is a story of love given, love received and love shared. God has given his love to us in Jesus. Now we go and give Jesus' love to others.

**Recitation:** Acts 4:20. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.

**Congregation:** *"Apostles' Creed"*

**Children:** Now what can we do with this story so dear,  
(to cong.) And how can we play out our parts?  
It's a message that's meant for good folk everywhere  
It's a story that burns in our hearts.

**Congregation:** Listen dear children, the story we tell  
(to children) And was told since the words first were penned,  
Is a message of grace, mercy, joy, love and hope;  
A message that will never end.

And so to the next generation we tell  
The same story again and again,  
That began on a quiet night long, long ago  
In a town that was named Bethlehem.

**All Children:** *"I Love to Tell the Story"*

**Blessing:** Pastor

**Recessional Everyone:** *"Go, Tell It on the Mountain"*

# Tell Me Again About Bethlehem

Words & Music by Reynold R. Kremer  
Arranged by Charles Cushinery

Chord progression: D7, G, G, Am, D, G, Am, D, G

9 Some-bo - dy tell me the sto - ry \_\_\_\_\_ some-bo - dy tell me a - gain. \_\_\_\_\_

17 Some-bo - dy take me back long, long a - go to the sta - ble in old Beth - le - hem. \_\_\_\_\_

*Fine*

25 D G D

1. I love to hear a - bout Beth - l'em \_\_\_\_\_ of all the towns one so  
 2. I love to hear a - bout an - gels \_\_\_\_\_ Fill - ing the sky up a -  
 3. I love to hear a - bout shep - herds \_\_\_\_\_ Warmed by the camp - fi - re  
 4. I love to hear a - bout Je - sus \_\_\_\_\_ Ly - ing a - sleep on the

Pno.

31 G Em Am B7

small \_\_\_\_\_ I love to hear how the rooms were all  
 bove. \_\_\_\_\_ I love to hear how they told the good  
 glow. \_\_\_\_\_ I love to hear how they left all their  
 hay. \_\_\_\_\_ I love to hear how the crude man - ger

Pno.

36 Em Am7 A7 D D7

full, leav - ing on - ly a dark cat - tle stall. \_\_\_\_\_  
 news Of God's peace and His won - der - ful love. \_\_\_\_\_  
 sheep And rushed down to the sta - ble be - low. \_\_\_\_\_  
 bed Was his crad - le that first Christ - mas day. \_\_\_\_\_

Pno.

*Repeat Chorus After Verse 4 to Fine*