

AN EXTRAORDINARY CHRISTMAS

with All We Can

[This script mentions a number of 'stage directions', many of which would only be possible in person, but if you are meeting on a video conferencing platform, you may be able to think creatively about how to interpret the stage directions to suit your context.]

In addition, all of the Narrator parts are available as a video, which you may wish to use and just pause at the appropriate moments, in order to play out the scenes with the other characters].

You might like to begin with a Christmas carol / hymn.

The Narrator is sitting comfortably in a Christmassy-scene, perhaps in a Christmas jumper, near a Christmas tree, presents and maybe a mug of cocoa. An oversized book is used to 'read' the story from.

Narrator: Oh, hello. I didn't see you there. I am so excited about Christmas! I've only got a couple more presents to buy and then I am ready. Have you bought all your presents yet? You've still got time, so don't worry.

This really is such a special time of the year. What's your favourite part?

I will let you in to a secret. My favourite part is when I switch the Christmas tree lights on for the first time.

[OR add in your own favourite part of Christmas if you'd like to].

One thing I always do at Christmas is read the story of the First Christmas. Do you want to join me? Ok, get cosy and let's begin...

The very first Christmas begins with a young woman called Mary receiving some rather surprising news.

SCENE 1 - Mary and the Angel

[If you are doing this via video conferencing, you may wish to highlight or spotlight the videos for Mary and the Angel. You could do this for each of the scene below. If you are doing it in person, then follow the stage directions].

Mary is pretending to be asleep. Enter the Angel.

Angel: Greetings, Mary! *(Mary doesn't stir.)*

Angel: *(Coughing and speaking louder)* I said, greetings, Mary!

Mary: *(A startled scream)* Who are you?

Angel: Do not be afraid! God has sent me. He is really pleased with you and has chosen you to give birth to His Son.

Mary: Am I dreaming?

Angel: No. You will give birth to God's son and he will be great. You will call him Jesus.

Mary: But this is impossible.

Angel: The Holy Spirit will make it possible. The baby you will have is the Son of God.

Mary: Wow. This is incredible. *(kneeling down)* I am the Lord's servant. Let it be as you have said.

Narrator: Then the angel left followed by a swarm of busy bees.

Angel and Mary: *(together, incredulous)* Busy bees!

Narrator: Wait, that's not right. How's that got in here. That's extraordinary. *(grabs a pencil and crosses it out).*

Right, where were we...

Mary was engaged to get married to a man called Joseph. He was a good man and decided that he would quietly end the engagement because he had found out that Mary was pregnant.

God had other plans...

SCENE 2 – Joseph and the Angel

Joseph is sleeping but restlessly

Joseph: *(talking to himself as he tries to sleep)* Mary, I can't marry you. I'm sorry...

Angel: Greetings, Joseph!

Joseph: *(screaming)* You scared me! Who are you?

Angel: Don't be afraid. You need to still make Mary your wife. The child she is carrying is God's own Son. You are going to name him Jesus and he is going to save people from their sins.

Joseph: *(rubbing his eyes)* I must be dreaming.

Angel: No. *(shrugging shoulders)* I'm not sure why everyone keeps thinking that. When you wake up in the morning, you will go and take Mary to Bethlehem.

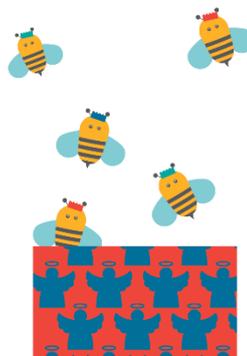
Joseph lies back down

Narrator: The angel left followed by a flock of chirpy chicks. Wait, what?

Joseph and Angel: *(incredulous)* Chirpy chicks!

Narrator: That's not right.

(flicks through the pages, turning the book over to check it is the right story)



How strange. How extraordinary. Let me just change that...

(edits the page)

Then the angel left Joseph.

SCENE 3 – Travelling to Bethlehem (Mary, Joseph, Donkey)

Narrator: Joseph did as the angel had told him.

Mary (visibly pregnant) and Joseph begin walking across the set / across their video screens.

Narrator: He gathered Mary, who was now heavily pregnant, and they set off to Bethlehem where they needed to go to register for the census. They travelled on Joseph's trusty bike...



Mary, Joseph and Donkey: *(incredulous, directly to the camera)* Bike?

Narrator: Now wait a minute, this is getting ridiculous. Joseph's donkey! Not bike! *(edits the book, shaking their head and muttering, 'Extraordinary' under their breath).*

Mary: *(rubbing her belly)* Joseph, how much longer do we have?

Joseph: Not too much further.

Mary: Good. I think this baby will be here very soon.

SCENE 4 – Bethlehem (Joseph, Mary and Innkeepers)

Narrator: They arrived safely in Bethlehem and began to search for somewhere to sleep.

(Joseph knocks on each door whilst Mary grows increasingly weary.)

Joseph: Have you got any room?

Innkeeper 1: *(shaking head)* No.

Joseph: Have you got any room?

Innkeeper 2: *(shaking head)* No.

Joseph: Have you got any room?

Innkeeper 3: *(shaking head)* No.

Joseph turns to leave

Well, it's not really a room but I have got a stable you could use.

Mary and Joseph: We'll take it!

Narrator: Mary gave birth to Jesus and wrapped him in cloths then laid him in a manger.

SCENE 5 – Shepherds (Shepherds, sheep and angels)

Narrator: While all this was happening, some shepherds were looking after their sheep in a field nearby.

Enter the shepherds with their sheep. Settle them down for the night. The Angel appears suddenly

Shepherds: (terrified) Ahhhh!

Angel: Do not be afraid!

(*aside*) This is becoming a habit now.

(*to the shepherds*) I bring you good news that will bring joy to all people.

The shepherds all breathe a sigh of relief and murmur their excitement.

Shepherd 1: Go on then, tell us the good news.

Shepherds: Yes, tell us the good news.

Angel: Today, in Bethlehem, a saviour has been born. He is the Messiah, the Lord. You will find him in a stable, wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

A great company of angels appear. The shepherds are amazed.

Angels: Glory to God in the highest and peace to all people on earth.

Narrator: The Shepherds were amazed and excited.

Shepherd 2: Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened.

Narrator: The shepherds gathered their sheep and headed to Bethlehem to find the stable covered in solar panels...

Shepherds and Angels: (*incredulous, looking at the camera*) Solar panels!

Narrator: (*despairing*) I know, I know. (*scribbles over text in book*).

The shepherds gathered their sheep and headed to Bethlehem to find the stable the angel had told them about.

Exit shepherds, sheep and angels. The shepherds and sheep make their way to Mary and Joseph and bow down when they see the baby. They settle in to the stable to be near Jesus.



SCENE 6 – Wise men (Wise men, Star, Mary, Joseph)

Narrator: Wise Men from the East had been following a star which lead them to the stable in Bethlehem.

They had followed the star so that they could come and worship the Messiah.

Wise Men enter pointing to the star they are following (could be a child but doesn't have to be). As the Wise Men enter and see Jesus they bow down.

Narrator: They brought gifts for Jesus.

Wise man 1: *(presenting the gift)* I bring you gold.

Wise man 2: *(presenting the gift)* I bring you frankincense.

Wise man 3: *(presenting the gift)* I bring you potatoes.

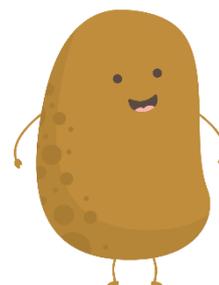
All: *(incredulous)* Potatoes!

Narrator: *(shaking head)* Try that again.

Wise man 3: *(presenting the gift)* I bring you myrrh.

All: That's better!

Narrator: Mary and Joseph received the gifts and guests with hearts full of joy while the saviour of the world, God's own Son, slept peacefully in the manger. What an extraordinary first Christmas!



CONCLUSION

Narrator (or could be a different person – possibly a minister or the local All We Can church rep):

What a brilliant reminder of that extraordinary first Christmas and the gift the world received when Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth as a baby.

But did you notice all the problems with the story? Busy bees? Chirpy chicks? A bike instead of donkey? Solar panels? Wise men bringing potatoes as their gift? That would certainly be extraordinary if that were the case.

But all of those things mentioned are in fact extraordinary in their own way. They are examples of the brilliant work All We Can's partners are doing in some of the world's poorest communities. From bikes which allow young girls to get to school and pursue their dreams to busy bees which provide income for families and an alternative for poor farmers.

These are extraordinary things. This Christmas, join us and buy an extraordinary gift to support the work of All We Can.

[You might like to finish with a carol or Christmas song].

