

The ABC's of Christmas

Family Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025

PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

O Tannenbaum

Trad., arr. Vince Guaraldi

What Child Is This?

Trad., arr. Vince Guaraldi

Christmas Time is Here

Trad., arr. Vince Guaraldi

WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Welcome, friends, to Christmas at Glebe-St. James! We meet tonight on the land of the Algonquin, and we thank them for caring for this land, its plants and animals.

I invite you to listen to the story of the birth of Jesus as told through the Christmas ABC's. You'll need to pay close attention. Every time that I say the word "Shepherds," the Shepherds will hold up their signs and say "Let's go see!" Every time I say the word "Angel," the angels will hold up their signs and shout, "Hallelujah! And every time I say the words "Wise Ones," the Wise Ones will hold up their signs and say, "Look, a star!" Are you ready to begin?

A IS FOR ANGEL

The ANGEL Gabriel began the story by telling Mary.

READING Luke 1:28-33

"Good morning! You're beautiful with God's beauty. Beautiful inside and out! God be with you...Mary, you have nothing to fear. God has a surprise for you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son and call his name Jesus."

B IS FOR BETHLEHEM

B is for Bethlehem, where our story takes place. People traveled from far and wide to get to Bethlehem, which was not a very big village.

C IS FOR CENSUS

C is for Census, which means an official counting of all the people. The reason so many people came to Bethlehem.

D IS FOR DONKEY

A donkey carried the family on their long journey. Mary and Joseph had to travel 107 miles along the Jordan River to get from Nazaeth to Bethlehem. That's a pretty long journey.

E IS FOR EXHAUSTED

E is for Exhausted. That's how everyone must have felt when they arrived. It would take about 36 hours of walking to go that far. That's three days in a row of doing nothing but walking.

HYMN O Little Town of Bethlehem {Verses 1 & 2}

VU 64

O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth.

F IS FOR FAMILY

F is for Family. Mary and Joseph and their new baby Jesus created a new family, one that would bless the whole world.

READING Luke 2:5-8

While they were there, the time came for Mary to give birth. She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for him in the hostel.

G IS FOR THE GOOD NEWS

This is what the ANGELS said:

READING Luke 2:10-14

There were SHEPHERDS camping in the neighbourhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's ANGEL stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. The SHEPHERDS were terrified. The ANGEL said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody worldwide: A Saviour has just been born in David's town, a Saviour who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket lying in a manger."

HYMN Hark the Herald Angels Sing (Verses 1 & 3) VU 48

Hark! the herald angels sing,
'Glory to the newborn King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!'
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem!'
Hark! the herald angels sing,
'Glory to the newborn King!'

Hail, the heavenborn Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
'Glory to the newborn King!'

H IS FOR HOPE

Now we light the Advent candle of Hope. Hope is knowing that good news is coming, even when things look bleak. Jesus is the source of our hope.

I IS FOR IMAGINE

I is for Imagine. If we close our eyes and imagine the scene, we can see the beauty and wonder of the ANGELS proclaiming good news to all men and women. We can see the SHEPHERDS, first terrified, but then overcome with joy as they hear the good news. If we try even harder, we can imagine a world where God's peace reigns, where there is no war or hunger. And if we can imagine it, we can do it with God's help.

J IS FOR JOY

J is for joy, Now we light the Advent candle of joy. Joy is a kind of happiness that comes from God. It cannot be dampened, and is always shared. The birth of Jesus gives us joy.

HYMN Joy to the World (Verses 1 & 4)

VU 59

Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

He rules the earth with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

K IS FOR KING

K is for King. Though Jesus would be King, he was not the kind of King people were used to. Most kings were born in palaces, surrounded by servants. He was born in a stable, surrounded by dirty, smelly SHEPHERDS. Most kings rule with power and fear. Jesus rules with mercy and love.

L IS FOR LOST

L is for Lost. When Jesus grew up, he told a lot of stories, and three of them were about lost things that were found. He loved to find lost things, and when you are with Jesus, you will never be lost. He is the good SHEPHERD, who does anything to find his lost sheep.

L IS ALSO FOR LOVE

L is also for Love. Now we light the Advent candle of Love, Jesus summarized his ministry by saying “Love God...” and “Love your neighbour as yourself.”

M IS FOR MANGER

M is for Manger. A manger is usually used to hold food for animals, but this time it held the baby because he had no crib.

HYMN Away in the Manger (*Verses 1 & 2*)

VU 69

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

N IS FOR NOEL

N if for Noel. Noel is another word for Christmas. It means new birth, and that's what happened in our story. That's what happens every year at Christmas time. That's what happens every time we decide to follow Jesus – he is born anew in us.

O IS FOR OFFERING

O is for Offering. The WISE ONES gave gifts to the baby, and we can offer our gifts every day. We give our time, our talents, and our treasure to God, and pray that as a Church, we are good stewards of all that is entrusted to us. So we share our gifts now.

OFFERING HYMN Go, Tell It On the Mountain (*Verse 1 & 2*)

VU 43

Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere.
Go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light.

Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere.
Go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.

The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Saviour's birth!

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere.
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

P IS FOR PEACE

P is for Peace. Now we light the Advent candle of peace. Jesus is the Prince of Peace and is the source of the kind of peace that surpasses all understanding.

Q IS FOR QUIET

Q is for Quiet. We begin a time of prayer in quiet, allowing God to speak to us, and joyful when the quiet is broken by small voices.

R IS FOR REVEALED

R is Revealed. Revealed means "showing us something that was once hidden." God has revealed to us what love looks like by giving us Jesus. Jesus is love, and reveals to us the way to love another.

S IS FOR STAR

One special star guided WISE ONES to come to see the baby. They were mysterious, and they lived far away, but they brought gifts to Jesus because they know that he would grow up to be a King.

READING Matthew 2:9-11

Instructed by the king, they set off. Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves. They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time! They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother. Overcome, they knelt and worshipped him. Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

T IS FOR TABLE

When Jesus grew up he invited all to his table. He gave his friends bread and wine, and told them to remember him always.

U IS FOR UNITY

U is for Unity. When we gather to eat and drink, we are one family. Just as many grains of wheat come together to form bread. We, who are many people, come together to be the body of Christ.

V IS FOR VULNERABLE

V is for vulnerable. Vulnerable means, “able to be hurt.” Every baby is very vulnerable, and so are we when we love one another. God became vulnerable when Jesus was born, and we are called to be vulnerable when we love our brothers and sisters.

W IS FOR WONDER

W is for wonder. Like the WISE ONES, we stand in awe and wonder of the newborn King.

X IS FOR CHRIST

X is for Christ. X is the Greek letter Chi, the first letter in the word “Christ.” The X is one of the most ancient symbols of Christianity. People have been using the letter X to stand for Jesus Christ for centuries. And now we light the Christ candle, symbolizing the coming light into the world. Jesus is born.

Y IS FOR YOU

Y is for You. You ANGELS. You WISE ONES. You SHEPHERDS. You sons and daughters. You mothers and fathers. You friends and strangers. You are all here to worship and celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Z IS FOR ZEAL

Z is for Zeal. Let your zeal for Christ burn brightly. As these lights are passed out, know that the light of God burns much, much brighter. Though these lights will die out, the light of God is steady, and will burn forever.

Distribution of Glow Sticks

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight:
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Hallelujah,
Christ the Saviour is born. Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

End of Worship - Beginning of Service



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