



Mennonite
Church
Canada

Resource Centre

From our Churches

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Born to ... You **Christmas Eve Service**

Prelude

Welcome

Tonight we will hear the familiar story as told in Luke's gospel. But we will hear it through an individual who once knew the story, but had forgotten it. The story will come to us in monologue form and be coupled together with carols that will help us better understand the story. And it will also challenge us to live what it means - now.

Prayer

Hymns

172 HWB – O come, o come Immanuel
191 HWB - O Little Town of Bethlehem #191

Scene 1 – A Night Alone

(Actor enters stage from side and puts letters/parcel down on the kitchen table. After putting down his computer bag as well, he starts opening Christmas cards and reading aloud some of the writing.)

Happy Holidays....

Peace on Earth... Love Uncle Jim, Aunt Kathy...

Wishing you a joyful holiday season...

And I wonder what this is.... *(looks at the return address on the parcel)* It's from Larry...
(Opens the parcel and pulls out a Calgary Flames hockey jersey. He reads the note)

Hey Bro, got this real cheap because of the lock-out....Merry Christmas. *(shakes head)*
What a guy...

(Opens another card and is reflecting out loud.)

Maybe I should have gone home....

going to miss everyone together....

Whole table full of food.... *(smiling)* the laughs...

But I can't just run home all the time...I have my own life, too...

(pause - exits stage)

Hymns

195 HWB – It came upon a midnight clear

211 HWB – Lo, how a rose e'er blooming

Scene II – A Discovery

(Comes back on stage wearing the Flames jersey, sits down in the chair to watch a little T.V.)

...wonder what's on Christmas Eve? *(Turns on TV)*

World Jr's?....tomorrow, I think.

(Flips through a couple of shows (all 3 seconds of each - all recorded ahead of time. Finally settles on Fireplace channel.)

Fireplace channel! Can't go wrong with the Fireplace...

(Silence/pondering)

Is this what people do Christmas Eve ... wait for Boxing Day?

(After a little while he gets up and goes to a box of Christmas things that he has near the bookshelf....starts rummaging through it...pulls out a little reindeer, a snowflake...looking at them...hangs another thing up....then pulls out a little Gideons Bible...)

Didn't know I still had this? Gideon's Bible.

(Steps away from the box a little....opens the Bible)

Presented to Steven Wiebe...Grade 5.

(Freezes. Following conversation is mic'd in the background – reflects the conversation of years ago.

(Gideon Man) What's your name, son?

(Young Boy) Steven Wiebe.

(Gideon Man) This book is the word of God, Steven. I hope you enjoy reading it and I hope you discover God's will for your life.

(Young Boy) Thank you. *(Short pause, then excited.)* Hey Mom, look what they gave us at school today! The man said it is the word of God!

(Mom) Oh, it's a Bible. Won't your Grandma be proud.

(Young Boy) I'm going to read the whole thing.

(Pause – then actor moves to chair and starts reading it)

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.

(Young Boy joins Steve and reads together - with Steve fading out)

So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

(Young Boy only) Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring YOU good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to YOU this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

(Pauses. Steve looks up for a minute – and speaks)

...I bring You good tidings....for there is 'Born To YOU'....this day....born to... you...

(Silence)

(Exits stage)

Hymns

201 HWB – Hark, the herald angels sing
197 HWB – Angels we have heard on high

Scene 3 – A Companion

(Steve comes back on stage, takes his laptop and goes to the chair to write on his blog. Below is all voice-recorded ahead of time and played back as he is typing.)

It's Christmas Eve and this post in my *Adventures with Steve* blog is going to be a little different than those past. I don't have any pictures to post of any great hikes done recently, nor any opinions on any restaurants. I just want to say a little about a discovery I made this evening.

I decided to spend Christmas in Calgary this year. It was an attempt to make this place feel more like home. I didn't realize how much I would miss being home. I didn't realize how lonely it would be.

But loneliness can be a gateway to discovery, and it was for me tonight. Tonight, when I was looking for a few more Christmas decorations I came across a Gideon's Bible that I received as a child.

I thought that, given the evening, I should find the Christmas story and read it. I was not prepared for what happened. If you know the story, you'll remember that angels visit shepherds and say, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy... born to you this day in the city of David, a Saviour..."

And you know how it is when words just jump out at you sometimes? "Born to you", just hit me. It doesn't say, "Born this day, or even born to humankind this day, it says, "born to YOU" this day.

Born to you... I have never thought about it like that. I have always thought that God does God's thing in the world and I do mine. We kind of stay out of each other's way.

But then I read this. It's personal, it's relational. Born to you... What do you do when someone gives you a gift? You have to respond. I feel like I have been given a gift... How do I respond?

As much as I will miss the family gatherings this Christmas, the \$5 gift exchange and the ugliest sweater contest, I feel as though I have been given a gift tonight. Companionship. "Born to you this day".

(Pause)

I have a feeling that 2013 is going to be an interesting year. Merry Christmas everyone!

(Exits stage)

Hymns

215 HWB – What child is this

Closing – based on 1 John

Hymn

193 HWB – Silent night, holy night (with candlelighting)

Postlude