

## A Christmas Celebration

Written on November 13, 1941

### Cast

MOTHER OF ALL ANGELS	white garment
ANGEL	white garment
ANGEL CHILDREN	white garments
ADAM	brown garment
EVE	yellow garment
LORD OF THE MINERALS	
LORD OF RESISTANCE	
FOUR WHITE FIGURES	white garments
FIVE BROWN FIGURES	brown garments
THREE SHEPHERDS	
THREE KINGS	
MARY	red garment, blue shawl
JOSEPH	brown garment

*All participants, players and non-players gather in the chapel.*

*On the stage on the right is a Christmas tree. Only the three uppermost red candles are burning. The thirty white candles have not yet been lit. A few candles spread around in the chapel space are burning. A lantern hangs in the centre, lighting Adam and Eve in Paradise.*

*Everyone should be actively participating, no-one should merely be audience. In the middle of the chapel a passage should be left free from the back curtain to the stage.*

*Children and adults stand on both sides, angels and non-angels, players and non-players, are completely mixed together.*

*[A bell sounds faintly]*

ALL [*sing*]: Now all of us are coming forth,  
And the Christ Child are greeting.  
From far and near we gather here,  
Quietly waiting.

Our hearts are clear.  
Nighttime will soon be gone.

The earthly night now passes by,  
Set free from Heaven is the light  
Which we want to await.  
In stillness and  
In piety  
Are we prepared for the new day.

Break forth, O day, and make us bright,  
And give us of your spirit's source,  
And let us make our home in you.  
We are here joined  
In the new light  
Which through Heaven is now breaking.

*[MOTHER OF ALL ANGELS, the ANGEL, ALL OTHER ANGELS and ANGEL CHILDREN now step beneath the lantern.]*

ANGEL: When from Heaven falls the snow,  
The Christ Child comes to us below.  
Our hearts are singing once again  
All their refrains,  
And all the world sings with us.

Day has broken from the night  
And every space is filled with light,  
All the trees are shining bright.  
The shadow flees  
Which lay heavy on our hearts.  
All the stars are now in song,  
And through the widths they sound along,  
Over which we angels step.  
The bells ring forth,  
The Christ Child gives the organ tone.

[The ANGELS remain as they are]

ALL PARTICIPANTS [sing]: Sound out now, O organ tone,  
Swing us up where you have gone  
And let us remain with You.  
You lovely Light  
And beautiful sound,  
You are sung by all the world around.

MOTHER OF ALL ANGELS [going to centre stage]: In this dark night,  
When Earth awakes,  
The hearts of men should not be asleep.  
The starry boat,  
Filled with the bread,  
In the haven its long journey ends.  
Men on the shore  
Stand and implore:  
'O ship, upon us your gift bestow.'  
It now comes up  
And by us moors,  
Its freight will be our redeeming Life.

ALL PARTICIPANTS [sing]: O starry boat, give your dear freight  
To us, so that our hearts may wake  
And their true ways may find.  
We give you thanks  
For journey long,  
Which you accomplished for our sake.

[ALL ANGELS step back to the participants.

LORD OF THE MINERALS with ADAM and EVE  
on right and left step onto the stage.]

Lord of the Minerals  
Adam x Eve x Tree x  
x x x  
Front of stage

ADAM: Adam I once was named  
When the Paradise of Eden  
Was homeland and divine.

EVE: Eve is my picture-name  
From the times of Paradise,  
Joined to Spirit, filled with God.

ADAM: Yet the Tree which once did bloom  
Is now bare and without fruit.  
Eve, are you yourself still cursed?

EVE: And the gate of Paradise,  
Which once for all did open stand,  
Is that still to you unknown?

An ANGEL from the crowd of participants:  
Eve, is the apple already ripe?  
[EVE bows her head.]

ANOTHER ANGEL: Adam, has the gate been opened?  
[ADAM bows his head.]

LORD OF THE MINERALS: For many thousands of years  
Adam and Eve have journeyed with me.  
Borne their children,  
Tilled their fields,  
Conspired with stone,  
Felled the trees,  
Ploughed the earth,  
Watched over their flocks,  
Bent their backs,  
Hewn into cliffs,  
Braved the storms,  
Resisted the earth,  
And erected houses  
In every land.

[While LORD OF THE MINERALS is speaking,  
angels' voices sound from among the participants.]

ANGELS: Yes, so it was.  
Listen! Listen!  
Yes, so it was.

LORD OF RESISTANCE [coming out from the participants]:  
Adam, you forsook Paradise

And Earth became your dwelling-place.  
 Eve, you forgot the Garden of Eden  
 And the world became your abode.  
 Now I ask you:  
 Where is the River Pishon?  
 Where is the River Gihon?  
 Where are the waters of Hiddekel?  
 Where did the flooding Euphrates remain?

EVE: Adam, do you know?

ADAM: Eve, do you know?

*[FOUR WHITE FIGURES come forward  
 from the crowd onto the stage.]*

FIRST WHITE FIGURE: I am Abraham's sacrifice.

SECOND WHITE FIGURE: I am Isaac's faithfulness.

THIRD WHITE FIGURE: I am Jacob's strength.

FOURTH WHITE FIGURE: I am Joseph's devotion.

EVE: Abraham's sacrifice is Pishon

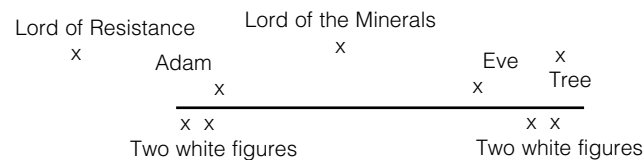
And

Isaac's faithfulness is Gihon.

ADAM: Jacob's strength is Hiddekel

And

Joseph's devotion the River Euphrates.



LORD OF RESISTANCE: Adam and Eve, where is the Tree  
 Of Wisdom which you betrayed?  
 Adam and Eve, where is the Tree  
 Of Becoming which you laid waste?  
*[FIVE BROWN FIGURES come forward  
 from the crowd.]*

FIRST BROWN FIGURE: I am the need of ploughing.

SECOND BROWN FIGURE: I am the might of giving birth.

THIRD BROWN FIGURE: I am the sweat of labour.

FOURTH BROWN FIGURE: I am the burden of harvesting.

FIFTH BROWN FIGURE: I am the power of change.

*[Two of the FIVE BROWN FIGURES stand  
 on the right side, the other three on the left side,  
 beside the corresponding figures clothed in white.]*

LORD OF THE MINERALS:

Abraham's sacrifice, Isaac's faithfulness,  
 Jacob's strength and Joseph's dignity,  
 Step up here and shine upon us.

*[One after another the FOUR WHITE FIGURES  
 go to the tree, each lighting a candle, before returning  
 to their places.]*

LORD OF THE MINERALS:

Need and might,  
 Sweat and burden,  
 Power of change,  
 Step forward.

Can you shine?

Burn in love?

And also call

Yourselves by name?

Can you all your works release

Free from sacrifice

Into Eve's lap and Adam's Strength?

FIRST BROWN FIGURE: For need, a light.

SECOND BROWN FIGURE: For might, a light.

THIRD BROWN FIGURE: For sweat, a candle.

FOURTH BROWN FIGURE: For burdens, a candle.

FIFTH BROWN FIGURE: And two for the power of change.

*[The FIVE BROWN FIGURES go to the tree,  
 light six candles, then return to their places.]*

LORD OF THE MINERALS: Shining candles

Lighten the darkness of the tree.

The sufferings of Adam and Eve

Dispel the darkness of space.  
 Toil and burden  
 Become light and love,  
 Rest and repose.

ANGELS [*from the crowd*]: Adam, look up!

Eve, raise your eyes!

OTHER ANGELS: Adam, listen!

Eve, can you hear it?

PARTICIPANTS [*sing*]:

From deepest grounds of olden times  
 The shepherds are now drawing near,  
 To find above our world the star.  
 With hearts devout  
 And full of love,  
 That he may shine on them his light.

From the bright widths of space afar  
 The three kings are stepping forward,  
 Bearing their gifts with all their faith;  
 Feeling wisdom,  
 Wanting to build,  
 That all the world may be redeemed.

[*During the song, LORD OF RESISTANCE, FOUR WHITE FIGURES and FIVE BROWN FIGURES disappear into the crowd.*

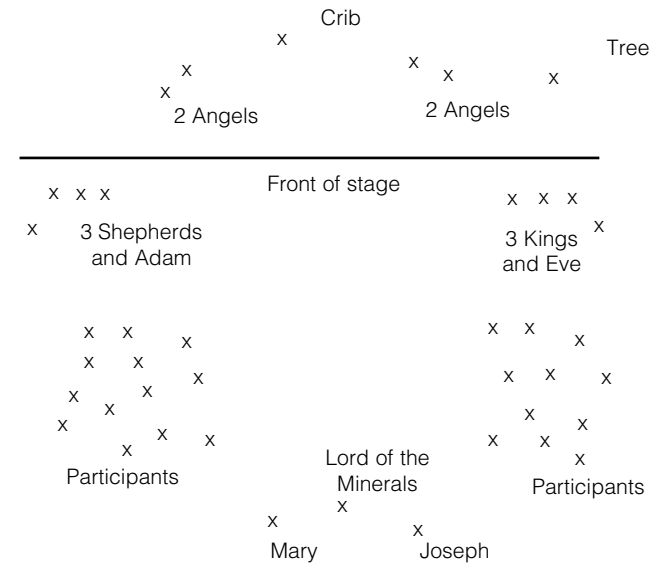
*Everything is in movement, and out of the movement the THREE SHEPHERDS and the THREE KINGS emerge to the front of the stage, the SHEPHERDS on the left, the KINGS on the right side.]*

LORD OF THE MINERALS:

Adam and Eve, your hour has come,  
 Your twofold burden has gone.  
 Three Kings, three Shepherds are waiting here  
 To attain your place on Earth.

Receive them as your children true  
 And feel the love they have for you.

[*EVE goes to the Three Kings. ADAM goes to the Three Shepherds. The LORD OF THE MINERALS comes through the midst of the participants to fetch JOSEPH and MARY,*



*while two ANGELS carry the crib into the middle of the stage and two other ANGELS bring up a stool.]*

MARY: Dear Joseph, let us wander,  
 Take your staff into your hand,  
 That faithfully with all the others,  
 We journey to the promised land.  
 Take with you both ox and ass  
 That upon our further road  
 Man and beast may be united  
 And nourished by the selfsame bread.

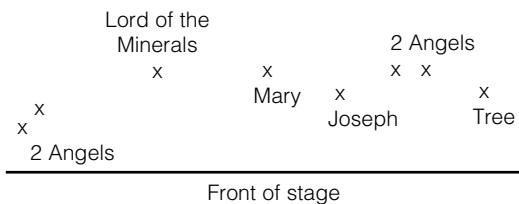
JOSEPH: Dear wife, O Mary mine,  
 Go forth upon light feet

Into the Christmas night  
 And all the angels greet.  
 Take the path of suffering  
 And fill it with your goodness,  
 That the world's most lovely bloom  
 Turn to flower and blossom full.

*[MARY and JOSEPH walk hand-in-hand  
 with LORD OF THE MINERALS through  
 the middle to the stage. The THREE KINGS bow.  
 The THREE SHEPHERDS bow. ADAM and EVE  
 stand still, as if uninvolved. The LORD OF THE  
 MINERALS leads MARY and JOSEPH onto stage,  
 in front of the crib.]*

LORD OF THE MINERALS: Enter now into this stall,  
 The manger is prepared.  
 The stars are shining over all,  
 Heaven's bell rings out.  
 It sounds and chimes and sings  
 The song you may now hear,  
 Which comes down from stars above  
 And bears our Saviour dear.

*[LORD OF THE MINERALS steps aside  
 to the left. The four ANGELS light four  
 further candles on the Christmas tree  
 and return to their places.]*



MARY: How lonely is it here,  
 The world lies all in quiet.

JOSEPH: The roundel of clear stars  
 Is opening the gate.

MARY: I am no more than ear  
 Hearing the cosmic words.

JOSEPH: I feel myself in song  
 The light does now appear.

AN ANGEL CHILD *[moving beside Mary]*:  
 Come, you angels all  
 Here into our stall.

THE OTHER ANGELS *[come on stage, sing, raising their arms  
 during the song]*:

In the deepest night  
 A star is awake.  
 We angels greet Him,  
 We angels love Him.  
 We angels are light  
 In His shining Light.

MOTHER OF ALL ANGELS *[goes behind the crib, sings]*:  
 There is flower springing ...

ADAM *[in front of stage, to Eve]*:  
 Have you seen the radiance?  
 The gate is full of light.  
 Heaven's blessings fall like dew,  
 The Tree of Sorrow breaks.

EVE *[in front of stage, to Adam]*: The apple is fulfilled,  
 And the fruit is chosen.  
 A little Child is born,  
 And Paradise unsealed.

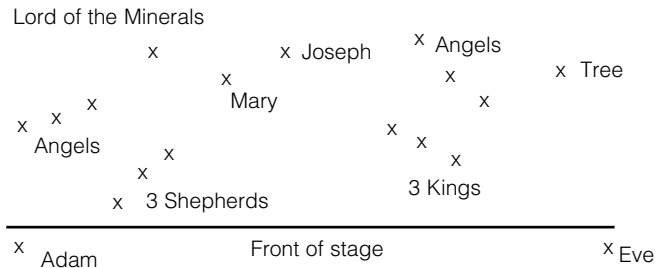
*[EVE goes on to stage with the KINGS, and ADAM  
 with the SHEPHERDS. The THREE SHEPHERDS  
 step towards the tree, light three candles]*

THREE SHEPHERDS: The light of love  
 Shines in the night.  
 The power of faith  
 Has healing brought.

[THREE KINGS go with EVE to the tree,  
light three candles.]

THREE KINGS: The light of wisdom  
Greets our gleaming star,  
Brave devotedness  
The Christ Child holds dear.

[SHEPHERDS and KINGS remain on stage,  
the arrangement is roughly as follows.]



LORD OF THE MINERALS [*sings*]: Psallite unigenito,  
Christo, dei filio.  
Psallite redemptori,  
Domino puerulo,  
Iacenti in praesepio.

[LORD OF THE MINERALS kneels down,  
and with him ALL ANGELS, SHEPHERDS,  
KINGS, ADAM, EVE and even JOSEPH.]

ALL PARTICIPANTS [*as far as they feel ready, sing*]:

Before the crib we kneel  
And Him we rock and swing,  
The child that shall us heal  
And to us blessing bring:  
Sweet Jesukin, Sweet Jesukin!

[ALL rise. SHEPHERDS, ADAM and ANGELS on that  
side bow three times before the crib before going from  
the stage to the opposite side before the participants.]

SHEPHERDS, ADAM and ANGELS: Now is the Child born  
As promised unto us,  
His heart is bright with light  
And radiant is His face.

[KINGS, EVE and their ANGELS bow  
three times and go from the stage to  
the participants opposite.]

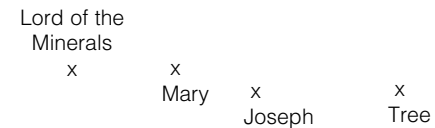
KINGS, EVE and ANGELS: We have welcomed the Child,  
And give thanks to our Star,  
The world's guilt is atoned,  
And Love becomes our Lord.

[MOTHER OF ALL ANGELS goes to the tree  
and lights the remaining candles. It must now  
be quite bright.]

ANGEL [*goes beneath the lantern*]:

All who received the song  
And sang His high refrains  
Are praised before God's throne.  
Therefore we sing again,  
And in our heart let sound  
All the bells of Christmastide.

[Only following are left on the stage.]



ALL [*sing two verses of the song*]:

A Child is born in Bethlehem ...

[During the second verse ALL PARTICIPANTS  
bow to the crib and greet it.]

MOTHER OF ALL ANGELS [*goes to the front centre of the stage*]:

In your hearts has been born a Light  
To lighten you all through the year.

May it be the Star of your choice,  
May it be the Guide of your throng.  
May it give you Comfort and Peace  
In the space of your earthly house,  
Until you yourselves are redeemed  
And lighting the Tree of the World.

[*MOTHER OF ALL ANGELS steps aside, MARY rises.*]

ALL [*sing*]: We have all travelled from afar  
The dear Christ Child here to receive.  
The Christ Child can now be beheld!  
The manger is  
With Him arrayed,  
Light shines upon the earthly world.