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Foreword

Charles Dickens' 19th-century English story, *A Christmas Carol*, is revered throughout the world. Its central character is Ebenezer Scrooge, a shrewd and hard-working businessman who becomes so obsessed with money that he has no room in his heart for humanity.

*A Christmas Carol: Scrooge in Bethlehem* is a delightful adaptation of Dickens' tale. In our story, Scrooge is the Bethlehem Innkeeper who refuses shelter to Mary and Joseph on that first Christmas night. His front desk clerk, Bob Cratchit, comes to their aid while Scrooge sleeps alone in his dark room in the inn. When God sends an angel with the Light of Salvation to Scrooge, the wretched man is forced to search his soul. Gradually he realizes that he has traded his soul for money. His final redemption reflects the promise of salvation for all, both poor and rich, in the birth of Emmanuel, God with us.

Recommended for grades K-8 and approximately 20 minutes long, *A Christmas Carol: Scrooge in Bethlehem* is great for children's choirs, Christian schools or Sunday schools. This charming program features a rich tapestry of seasonal scripture and English carols and hymns, interwoven with Dickens' classic tale. The staging can be as simple or complex as you desire, and the dialog is minimal and quickly prepared.

The cast size is flexible and easily expands to accommodate both small and large groups. For example, you can employ one angel or three, and one reader or as many as five, in speaking roles. You can add non-speaking roles for shepherds, guests in the inn, and manger animals. Fully-orchestrated recordings are also available.

May the spirit of Christmas shine in your heart now and always, and may God bless us, everyone!

Anna Laura Page and Jean Anne Shafferman
Overture:
O Little Town Of Bethlehem
Choir / Opt. Keyboard Only

(During Overture, Narrator and Reader take their places. Choir enters singing [optional: keyboard only on Overture]. Mrs. Cratchit and Tiny Tim move to their room; Mr. Cratchit, Mary and Joseph move to front desk. Scrooge moves to his room, sits at his desk, and begins to count his money.)

**Moderato (d = ca. 108)**

**VOICE**

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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.
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*Traditional Surrey village ballad; Words by Phillips Brooks (1835–1893).*
**Good Clerk Cratchit**

**Choir**

**READER (opt. Reader 2):** The people who stumble in darkness will see a great light. The day is coming when God will humble every proud person who worships gold and silver. And, in that day, a man will cast away his treasures and worship God alone. Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. (Isaiah 9: 2; 2: 5, 7-8, 12, 20)

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**VOICES**

(\( \frac{1}{4} \) = ca. 92)

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**mf**

**Good Clerk Cratchit looked around on that Christmas evening:**

But there were no rooms to spare, and the night was freezing!

Then he called his wife to him, and their poor son.

Ti-ny Tim, "Help me make a room for them,"

on that Christmas evening.

**NARRATOR:** (As music continues) Cratchit and his family led Mary and Joseph to the stable behind the inn. They made Mary as comfortable as possible, with the gentle animals nearby for warmth. (As Choir continues, the Cratchits move to their room, where Mrs. Cratchit sits with Tiny Tim on her lap. Scrooge moves to his bed and begins to sleep.)

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*O COME, O COME, EMANUEL: Melody adapted from plainsong by Thomas Helmore (1811–1890).

**GOOD KING WENCESLAS; Melody from Piae Cantiones, 1582; Words by Jean Anne Shafferman.