

Strange Places

A Christmas Pageant

written by Charles Miller and Eleanor Daley

<<http://www.alliancemusic.com/people/details.cfm?iPeopleID=4>>

Presented in worship at Dunbar Heights, December 18th, 2011

- Narration You, O Bethlehem, Ephrathat, who are little to be
among the clans of Judah...
But as often it is, the dream was more their dream than God's. For
God's dreams are often different, and always larger than ours. Yet
God worked through their dream and gave it new shape, making it
God's own.
- Choirs Stables and mangers, in very strange places is God to be found.
A town on a hillside of little importance,
lacking the status large cities have,
Bethlehem, Bethlehem, least within Judah,
who would have dreamed what you'd become?
Midst sleeping creatures in dark foreign setting,
first newborn baby in cold of night.
Worn, weary parents, tired by the journey, alone without comfort,
alone receive life.
Seen by shepherds, not people who matter, on straw,
not satin in cattle trough. One of true greatness in form of weakness,
as ev'ry person, He entered our midst.
- Narration In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of
Galilee named, Nazareth...
And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to
me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.
- Solo
Mary But is it so? Can it be true? The time so strange?
I thought I knew the way to go, the things to do.
Surprised, afraid, I once was sure, I can't explain, it's all too new.
No rush of wings, but more than real, a word so clear: "I've chosen
you."
- Solo
Joseph Joseph, beloved, what do I say? How can I speak how can I tell you?
But it is so, it is too true, and still so strange.
I thought I knew the things to do,
I can't explain, it's all too new, yet doubts assail,
and struggle comes when angels leave the way with you.

Narration Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way...
he resolved to divorce her quietly.

Solo Friends think me a fool, that's how I appear, they silently laugh,
Joseph behind me they jeer, but what has she said, God's will for her life!
I find myself caught between anger and dread!
Words! They're nothing but words! But whose words should I hear?
Yet, never I've known a woman so strong, such love and such trust,
with her I belong. I want to believe, but how to believe?
Too much and too far, is it better I leave?

Narration But as he considered this, behold an angel of the Lord...and he will
save his people from their sins.

Solo A voice in the night, a voice like the wind,
Joseph In the brightness of day, it still echoes within. More than a dream,
it challenged my fear, and dared that I trust in God's ways now and
here!
Words! They're nothing but words, but whose words should I hear?
Words sounding round, words of my belov'd, thoughts of myself,
a dream from my God. Yet words are a way God's purpose grows
clear.
The voice of my God is the one I should hear.
Words! They're more than just words,
the sense of my God has come clearer today,
the dream given words want to show me the way,
the words of my God are the ones I'll obey. I'll stay!

Narration All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the
prophet...
...And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord and
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."
...In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus...
to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with Child.

Choirs One, two, three, four...
Don't interrupt, I'm losing my place, so many people without a face,
they are all just numbers taking up space.
Never ask questions, just do my job,
counting the number of this poor mob, helping the Romans better to
rob!
Back in their hometowns all must come, in dark of night, in heat of
sun,
at Caesar's orders like the sound of a drum.
Whatever their wealth or poverty, good health or infirmity.
Forc'd to make their journey by the census decree!
So many people, such an amount, columns of num'ral's steadily

Choirs

One, two, three, four...

Don't interrupt, I'm losing my place, so many people without a face,
they are all just numbers taking up space.

Never ask questions, just do my job,

counting the number of this poor mob, helping the Romans better to
rob!

Back in their hometowns all must come, in dark of night, in heat of
sun,

at Caesar's orders like the sound of a drum.

Whatever their wealth or poverty, good health or infirmity.

Forc'd to make their journey by the census decree!

So many people, such an amount, columns of num' rals steadily
mount,

but in case you may just wonder, if I've made a counting blunder,
tho' they've each assigned a number, **NOBODY COUNTS!**

Narration

While they were there, the time came for her to be delivered,...
because there was no room for them in the inn.

And in that regions, there were shepherds...

Choirs

Twinkle and shine, flash and fly, stars and planets, comets passing
by,

you never can tell what you'll see in the sky.

A man with a sword, two long-handl'd cups,

these things I see when I look up, a river of light, the Milky Way,
it's there in the night and hides in the day.

Clouds of grey, often white, grow purple and red,

when closer to night I go to my bed, just over my head is a magical
place,

God made it that way, it's more than just space.

In darkness of sky, bright angels appear'd,

caught shepherds off guard with startling word,

things great and things deep, things old and things new,

I've learn'd from the sky and so can you.

Solos
Wisemen
and Choirs

A seed in the soil, a hope in the earth, they seek for the light,
for the dawning to start, that dawn is our dream, with creation
remade,
just ways, peace and love in all people displayed.
We hunger'd for one who could show us the way,
the dreams we should dream, the steps we should take.
Across days and dunes we travell'd the earth,
at times oh so sure, and then without mirth.
And just when we thought perhaps we were wrong, we lifted our
eyes,
our hearts filled with song, a star never seen, one so bright and so
bold,
a sign to our minds of news being told.
That light we pursued, the path that it led,
the vision it gave to small baby's bed.
But more than a babe, a promise to come, a life to be lived,
the long-needed one.
But always there are the ones who won't see,
the prisoners of fear, pride, greed, jealousy,
the people who choke, discredit, defame; the person and name,
the name of another way.
A seed in the soil, a hope for the heart, they seek the light,
for the dawning to start, that dawn is our dream, creation remade,
just ways, peace and love in all people display'd
in stable-born child is another way.

Choirs

Stable and mangers, in very strange places is God to be found.
A town on a hillside of little importance,
lacking the status that large cities have,
Bethlehem, Bethlehem, least within Judah,
who would have dream'd what you'd become?
In very strange places is God to be found.