**Christmas Participation Story**

Group one: Shepherds “Yo, Sheep!”

Group two: Sheep “Baa!”

Group three: Night Silent night, holy night (sung w/piano accompany)

Group four: Angel Hallelujah! Hallelujah! (sung w/organ accompany)

All Good news “Yes!” (with fist pump)

All Great Joy Shouts

All Baby “Ahhh”

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***O Come All Ye Faithful*** *(refrain only) – bring up sheep and stuffed animals to the stage*

The Story:

Long ago in a country far away from this one, there were ***shepherds…***

watching over their ***sheep…***

by ***night****.*

Being good ***shepherds…***

they protected their ***sheep,***

made sure they had food to eat and water to drink, and gathered them together at ***night…***

for protection. The ***shepherds…***

were listening to the soft sounds of the ***sheep…***

as they quieted down to go to sleep. The dark sky was full of shimmering stars that ***night.***

And then..all sound stopped and an ***angel…***

appeared to them. They were bathed in light, almost as if they glowed from within. The **shepherds…**

were frightened and so were the ***sheep.***

The ***angel…***

spoke to them. “Don’t be afraid. I have some ***good news…***

to share. My ***good news…***

will bring ***great joy…***

to all people. The ***good news…***

is this: this very day in David’s town, a ***baby…***

was born. And this ***baby…***

is your savior—Christ the Lord.”

***Hark the Herald Angels Sing*** *(verse 1) –bring the angels up to the stage*

The ***shepherds…***

were amazed and so were the ***sheep***.

What they thought was going to be like every other evening had turned into a holy ***night***.

The ***angel…***

told them to go into Bethlehem where they would find the ***baby***.

Then the sky was filled with ***angels…***

singing praises to God, proclaiming the ***good news…***

with ***great joy…***

then they were gone. The ***shepherds…***

looked at each other and at the ***sheep***.

They said, “We should go to Bethlehem and see the ***baby…***,”

***O Little Town of Bethlehem*** *(verse 1) – bring up Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus*

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the ***baby…***

lying in a manger. When the ***shepherds…***

saw him, they told Mary and Joseph what the ***angel…***

had told them about the ***baby***.

And that they had come to see the ***good news…***

for themselves so that they could share the ***great joy***.

Everyone who heard what the ***shepherds…***

said was amazed. Mary listened to all that was said and treasured it in her heart. The ***shepherds…***

went back into the hills to their ***sheep…***

singing praises to God for all they had heard and seen. It had been just as the ***angel…***

had told them. They had knelt before the ***baby…***

received the ***good news…***

felt the ***great joy***…

and when they were finally settled down, turned to each other and proclaimed, “What a ***night***!”

***Away in a Manger*** *(verse 1)*

**The Christmas Participation Story was created by Paul Osborne, a retired church educator living in Atlanta. (adapted by Rev. Kathy Pittenger)**