

Walking Guide

The Bremen Christian Community has committed itself to a monumental project each year of portraying our understanding of the Holy Night to many visitors. If we truly tried to analyze it, we'd probably conclude what we do is impossible. However, each year committed people do their part and it all seems to fall together with the strength and protection of our Lord. God has so abundantly blessed us with this opportunity to be used by Him to bring the real meaning of Christmas alive!

We consider each position in the Holy Walk vitally important. We are committed to make each role and responsibility of a Walking Guide, Villager, or Biblical Character, a real and meaningful Christmas experience for those who come to participate. Our enthusiasm as a cast hinges on our willingness to truly get into our character role to lead and respond with groups through, hopefully, one of the most memorable times they (or we) will have.

As a Walking Guide, you will be involved with all the various stops along the way. You will make sure the holy story will build to the climax.

It is important that we be alert and "on top" of the situation at all times. Walking Guides will space their groups within the journey so they can experience each stop to its fullness. Walking Guides and villagers will interact and draw in our guests through conversation on subjects appropriate of the times. (We will not bring into conversation such things as "designer clothing," "Wal-Mart specials," etc. And we will not acknowledge the same from our guest.) We will keep it strictly Biblical.

We will remember some people may have waited two hours or more for a chance to experience the Holy Walk and we want them to get all they can from it. We have to continually remind ourselves although we have heard all these lines "hundreds" of times, it seems, it is the first time for each group.

We ask that each of you memorize--not exact words, but--the essence of the script to eliminate stumbling through cards. You are free to ad-lib as needed, that adds reality. Being armed with background information enables you to "add to" the suggested script--and makes it a more comfortable experience for you, too. For Walking Guides, the invitation at the Cross for guests to begin their own relationship with Jesus is very important and should not be eliminated. We may be just planting seeds for the Lord and have no idea who will harvest them. This whole passion play is to bring glory to GOD and not ourselves! PRAISE GOD!! SO LET'S GET EXCITED AND BE INSTRUMENTS IN GOD'S HANDS!!!

NAMES & CITIES SUGGESTIONS

NAMES: (MEN) Jacob, James, Isaac, Absalom, Timothy, John, Matthew, Mathais, Joshua, Thomas, Jeremiah, Micah, Jonas, Ezra, Daniel, Moab, Hosea, Abraham, Ezekiel, Obediah, Zachariah, Ananais, Etc.

NAMES: (WOMEN) Haggar, Sarah, Ruth, Hannah, Joanna, Miriam, Naomi, Deborah, Abigail, Esther, Elizabeth, Anna, Martha, Lois, Eunice, Sapphire, Orpha, Rachael, Dinag, Lydia, Phoebe, Deliah, Eve, Dorcas, Drusilla, Aquilla, Priscilla, Salome, Julia, Delilah, or any that may meet your fancy.

CITY SUGGESTION:

HEBRON: (Friendship) 20 miles south of Jerusalem in the highlands. A city assigned to the Levites—stone built--unwalled--burial place of Abraham and Sarah.

JERICHO: (His sweet smell) A fortified City, 8 miles north of the Dead Sea in the western edge of the Jordan valley, 17 miles NE of Jerusalem. The oldest city in Palestine; it has a tropical climate. The ascent to Bethlehem is over 3,000 feet.

PHILLIPI: Founded by Alexander the Great's father, Phillip the Great. Nearby are gold and silver mines. It is 110 miles north of Jerusalem.

CAESAREA: (The city of Caesarea) Coastal city on the Mediterranean sea.

Capital of Roman Province built by Herod the Great. A celebrated trading center and seaport. 80 miles from Bethlehem

JERUSALEM: (Possession of Peace) Capital city, a walled city, 2,000 feet above sea level, 6-7 miles north of Bethlehem, surrounded by mountains.

NAZARETH: (Branch Town) Hometown of Jesus in Lower Galilee, 88 miles north of Jerusalem, 350 feet above sea level, atop a steep mound of earth.

TID-BIT INFORMATION

(In 1988, Dr. Gerber of Bethel College was invited to speak on the way Bethlehem might have been on the night of Christ's Birth.)

WHAT WE'D SEE AROUND BETHLEHEM:

Small village, 5-6 miles south of Jerusalem. The land is hilly- a lot like southern Indiana. Just east of Bethlehem you can see the white and chalky Wilderness of Judea. Most people enter Bethlehem from Jerusalem on a narrowing winding road. There would be no public transportation, although some people had burros. Most people walked. Trades routes skirted Bethlehem- not going through.

ALONG THE ROAD:

You would see olives, figs, (not as many olive trees) and lots of grapes on the terraced hillsides.

Grain - barley and wheat, (No corn in the 1st century) in the valley.

Fruit trees would be cherries, apricots, pears, and such.

No citrus fruit or bananas around Bethlehem. These came from Jericho or along the Mediterranean Sea in the Jordan Valley near Joppa.

Trees are scrubby and there are not many palm trees - oak, cedar, olive, myrtle are some.

Lots of stones- stone walls, fences, and whatever they could use stones for.

We'd pass Rachel's Tomb (wife of Jacob- who dies in childbirth)

The Herodium would be visible from Bethlehem (5 miles southeast of Bethlehem). King Herod the Great had one hill piled on top on another hill, by slave labor, and created a palace, more like a city, for his personal retreat.

We would see very few horses, but lots of sheep and goats. Few camels- a bit far north for these.

CLIMATE:

May-October: It never rains

November-April: Anything can happen.

*December-March: The rainy season (22"/year, cloudy, foggy)

It can snow in Bethlehem, but it is a bit unusual. Temperature can be 25-75 degrees. A Homseen is a hot wind in the desert.

CENSUS:

The Romans started the census system shortly before Jesus' birth. They required registration every 14 years. People were required to return to the place of their birth to get their property registered so Rome would know how much tax would be charged.

JEWISH MARKETPLACE:

Narrow streets, noisy, aggressive sellers, smelly Bartering is the way to buy, don't walk up and pay the first price. Start unusually low—even walk away before you buy.

Food in the marketplace—most food comes in from the local area. Spices, citrus fruit are shipped in and more expensive.

Have olive oil from lamps, cooking, and medicine, bread, vegetables, and fruit.

People carrying lots of things—on their back or head.

Carts, 2 wheeled and poles dragging on the ground are other modes of transportation.

WEIGHTS: In Old Testament times people bought either by exchanging goods or by paying an agreed weight of silver or gold. Shekel is a weight, not a unit of currency. If anyone should confuse you in your bartering you can always say you don't understand and go to your way of understanding.

Biblical term Biblical Equivalent Approx. Modern Equivalents

Talent 3,000 shekels 66 lb.

Mina 1/60 talent, 50 shekels 1.6 lb.

Shekel .4 oz

Pound (litra) 7.5 lb.

Talent 125 litra 88 lb.

Homer donkey load 48.5 gallons

Omer 3.5 pints

Koros 114 gallons

Bushel 8 quarts

Bath 38.5 pints liquid

Measure 9 gallons

MEASUREMENT OF LENGTH: Units of measurement were derived from the human body.

cubit- distance between elbow to the fingertips

span - length of outstretched hand from thumb to little finger

palm - width of hand at the base of the four fingers

digit - one finger

fathom - length of outstretched arms

Long distance journeys were usually measured in time, such as "3 day journey"

Area was much less precise, such as acre (jugum)—how much a pair of oxen could plow in a day, or according to how much seed could be planted.

COINS OF THE TIMES:

Roman coins- silver denarius (plural is denarii) was wages for one day of labor.

Greek coins- drachma is about the same as denarius Double drachma was used for paying Temple tax (No temple in Bethlehem) so this is why they would need money changers.

Jewish coins- Lepta (Translated same as mite) is small value (fraction of a penny), It would take about 80 lepta to equal 1 denarius.

Shekel- is an Old Testament term and it is possible to be used as a weight of silver or gold.

SOME HELPS IN BARTERING:

For a basket- the family starts with 30 lepta- seller says 2 denarii and finalizes at 70 lepta or so. (Baskets would be fairly cheap because basket weaving would not be considered highly skilled labor.)

Sandals would require more skill so may sell for 2 denarii or 1 denarius, 40 lepta.

Food grown locally may be fairly cheap. Bread is cheap.

Consider how long and skilled an item requires and barter accordingly.

Bowls and pottery could probably be more expensive.

Barter grains in terms of bushels.

CUSTOMS:

Business such as property transfers, marriages, etc. were transacted at the village gate. Elders sat on benches there.

Women didn't have equal rights- only in work. They worked in fields alongside men, (could be shepherds along with children). Women and girls were not forbidden in synagogue, but were held to the back.

Houses were small but always had a guest room, even tents had guest rooms. Animals are often housed under or near the house. Often goats and sheep came into the city at night.

Food being eaten- stew pot may contain barley, lentils, vegetables, goat or lamb, very little beef and absolutely NO pork. Would have fruit, eggs, and lots of cheese.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

SYNAGOGUE: is a place of learning. Scribes are experts of law and instruct in the synagogue. Priests serve in the temple only and there is no temple in Bethlehem. Prophets are most common in OT times.

ROMAN SOLDIERS: would be intolerant of the fanatical Jew, but tolerant of the quiet Jew. Soldiers can compel anyone to carry their burden for 1 mile.

WISEMEN: were probably astrologers (Magi) who studied the stars. They were probably people employed in the court of the king to interpret dreams, etc. No Biblical proof there were kings or that there were 3 of them. We seem to relate this to the three gifts.

BEGGARS: there could be lots of them on the streets.

TRAVELING: one could possibly travel 15 miles on a good day. Never travel on the Sabbath. Roads from Jericho to Jerusalem were very treacherous, steep and narrow with lots of places for robbers to hide. One would be coming from a tropical to a temperate climate. Bethlehem roads were wider and safer.

Script

“Shalom! This means Hello, Good-bye, and God’s Peace with You. You will be hearing that a lot tonight. I am _____ (name) of _____ (City) and you are my family. (If you are a woman guide you can say this- “My husband , _____, of the family of David, has fallen ill and I am here to fulfill his duty to take his family back to place of his birth, to be counted and taxed as decreed by Caesar Augustus.) Pick an adult (Preferably a male) to carry the lantern at the back of the family to keep us together and light the way.

NOTE: the soldier will give you the number of your family. You will be asked many times the number in your family.

STATION ONE – MAP:

As you show your family the Holy Land map. Show where your family comes from. Also tell your family occupation and facts of the town that you chose to hail from. Talk about your route to Bethlehem. It has taken us nearly _____ days to get here to Jerusalem and should get to Bethlehem tonight. We must not tarry; we must arrive in Bethlehem tonight. (To figure out the time it took to get to Bethlehem figure your family could walk up to 15 miles a day on good days.) Remember, you are of the family of _____ and there are _____ of us. Come family, stay close and we will be on our way.

STATION TWO (MARY AND JOSEPH):

The message here is Mary and Joseph are traveling to Bethlehem yet tonight and she is “with child”.

Example.

JOSEPH: Shalom. Come, warm yourself by the fire.

GUIDE: Shalom. That is very kind of you. I am _____ from _____ and this is my family. We are on our way to Bethlehem.

JOSEPH: And we are too. I am Joseph and this is my wife, Mary. We are from Nazareth. We have stopped to rest awhile. This has been a hard journey for my wife- she is with child. We are going on not Bethlehem yet tonight to find lodging.

GUIDE: Your wife must be very weary. We intend to go into Bethlehem yet tonight, too. Our journey cannot be far. Perhaps we will see you at the Inn. Take care, my friends. Shalom.

*** Do not stay here too long, we do not want our guests to get in a conversation with Mary regarding the “Virgin Birth”, etc. Use a “donkey” conversation if conversation starts that way and then be on your way.

OPTIONAL STOP (ON THE ROAD BEFORE SHEPHERDS):

You do not want to take your group too far if there is a group at the shepherds. We do not want to be “involved” with the angels until it is their time. A good “gimmick” here is to walk back in the middle of your group to talk and this causes them to turn to you and away from what is going on ahead with the angels. Some background info could be used here.

“This road is very dark. I am afraid there may be robbers and thieves along here. Let us stay very close. Before dark, did you happen to notice their vineyards of grapes on the hillside? (You can compare the crops with yours back home., etc.) I am not sure we can see Rachel’s grave, Jacob’s beloved wife, as we pass by, it is so dark.

You know we are going to have to think about replenishing our supplies. Maybe we could replace that broken jug you broke at the river. Rachael (name one of the guests). And Joshua (guest), you could probably use some sandals, if we like what we see. ETC. (This sort of prepares them to get involved in the village.)

RACHEL’S TOMB

(Based on Genesis 35:16-20) *You will see a pillar which is Rachel’s Tomb, on the outskirts of Bethlehem. Rachel was Jacob’s second wife, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, who died giving birth to Benjamin.*

STATION THREE (SHEPHERDS AND ANGELS):

The message (the theme of the evening—to hear the announcement and find the Savior) is given here. Stop long enough to hear the trumpet, the angel announcement, and angels sing. Then listen to the Shepherds plan to go immediately to Bethlehem to find this Baby. On approaching, the Guide should position him/herself so the trumpeter can see the GUIDE’S lantern swing (a signal to the trumpeter to begin playing.).

SHEPHERDS: Shalom, Travelers. Come, share our fire. It is a cold night.

GUIDE: Shalom and thank you. Can you tell us how far it is to Bethlehem?

SHEPHERDS: It is just over those hills. Not far.

GUIDE: (Be swinging your lantern) Do you know if the Bethlehem Inn is still there?

TRUMPET SOUNDS, ANGEL SPEAKS, ANGELS SING

SHEPHERDS: (All speaking at once) Let us go and see if we can find the Savior that the angels sang about. (Relate a feeling of astonishment and wonder with guests and shepherds—can be involved with all the shepherds and confusion.)

WHERE DAVID FOUGHT GOLIATH *When you need to fill some time and have to wait somewhere, you might look out to the west and say that 15 miles that way is where David fought Goliath. Ask the children what they know about that story. They fought in the Valley of Elah, which is 15 miles west of Bethlehem.*

OPTIONAL STOP (ON ROAD BEFORE REGISTRATION-COUNTING TENT):

If another family is waiting outside or has just gone into the tent you may want to use some more background information and talk with your family.

GUIDE: Remember family, that all of Palestine is under Roman Rule. We may not be very welcomed in the village by the Roman soldiers. Do as they say, remember your family name and where you are from. Children, remember, the soldiers will not hurt you. Do not be afraid. We are family and we will protect each other. We will try to do as they say.

STATION FOUR (REGISTRATION TENT):

Soldiers may stop you outside of the tent and harass your family. Soldiers will direct this station—Guide responds. When you enter the tent go to the far side and stand at the exit door. (You should do this at each tent you enter on the journey. Besides making it easier to lead your group out, it also gives you a position to see ahead and how better to space your group.).

SOLDIERS: Halt!... Who goes here!

GUIDE: (Answer accordingly.)

You will be asked to register your family. You will write your Biblical name and the number in your family—in Roman numerals—on the scroll. This is where your family is being counted so Caesar can levy future taxes.

Outside you may have to linger a while until your group gets back together. Sometimes the soldiers detain some family members for a bit. If your family is worried just tell them not to worry because when the soldiers think about having to feed them, they may release them.

ROMAN NUMERALS

1...I 4...IV 7...VII 10...X 20...XX 40...XL 50...L

2...II 5...V 8...VIII 11...XI 25...XXV 49...XLIX 100...C

3...III 6...VI 9...IX 12...XII 30...XXX

OPTIONAL STOP: This message may be given anytime before you get into the village.

GUIDE: Remember the villagers will probably be very anxious to sell their wares, since they must pay their taxes, too. We need some supplies. Matthew (a guest) you have a keen mind. Please help barter and get some grain for our journey home. Also, we must be sure that we have enough money to pay our taxes. It would probably be a good idea if we would ask the vendors to hold our choices until the morning and we can pick them up before we leave. Just tell them to hold for the family of _____.

****ALSO, there will be a boy with a goat walking back and forth between the Registration Tent and the Fishermen—if you are waiting because another group is talking to the fisherman, you can try to buy the goat from the boy (the price will always be too high—do not buy the goat); if the fisherman do not have a group, just walk past the boy.*****

STATION SIX (FISHERMEN):

GUIDE AND FISHERMEN will exchange greetings and **FISHERMEN** will engage the guests in conversation.

GUIDE may have to help if you have a quiet group—enough to get them started. Admire the catch, ask appropriate questions, etc. The **FISHERMEN** like to tell **BIG** fish stories and strange things that have happened while they were fishing. **GUIDE** needs to watch forward and move the group when the family ahead leaves the Inn.

STATION FIVE (THE INN):

GUIDE: (at the Bethlehem Inn sign) I see the Inn is just ahead. Let us get shelter for the night. It looks like it might be crowded. Let's get our children up in front and perhaps they will take pity on us and make room for our family; better yet, why don't some of our children go up and knock on the door and ask if they have room for our family?

INNKEEPER: here he gives the message that he has no room—he's even turned away a young couple and she was "with child". He said that he suggested that the couple should try the stable on the other side of town. He also tells us to go there too.

GUIDE: You argue and plead—but to no avail.

Come family. If there is no room for us perhaps, we can find something in the village, and maybe we can even get our taxes paid tonight so we can get an early start tomorrow. We may have to go to the stables too.

JUST OUTSIDE THE HOUSE OF BENJAMIN

(A member of the House of Benjamin will be shaking a rug or tending the fire, etc. and that person happens to hear that the family was turned away from the Inn)

MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF BENJAMIN: Did I hear that there is no room for you in the Inn? Oh, it's such a cold night, I wish we could offer you a place to stay, but we are full here in the House of Benjamin, too. But you could at least come inside and warm yourself. (If there is time and the previous family is already out you could take them in; if more time is needed you could explain the Mezuzah box right outside the door of the House of Benjamin. The Mezuzah is a little box that was placed on the door post of every Jewish home. It contained a small scroll that was inscribed with the Shema. The Shema is the first great law of the Hebrews, and it taught them how to think about God. "The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength."

Deut. 6:4-5) This lesson had to be learned by all Jewish boys before they could go to school. The Mezuzah containing the Shema was touched each time someone went in or out of the house to remind them of the great law.)

STATION SEVEN (HOUSE OF BENJAMIN):

This is a house of refuge—a good Jewish family—they will be very hospitable to your family. They interact with your family, try to engage the children in a game, ask you to stay and eat with them, etc. This is a good traffic flow regulator—watch ahead—or a soldier may order you to move on. In fact, move on ANYTIME a soldier asks you to move. You do not need to act pleased, but they are watching ahead and controlling traffic.

GUIDE: Shalom, thank you for inviting us into your home. We have been travelling for ____ days and my family is very tired. What are you fixing? It smells so good.

SHEPHERD'S WIFE: We are fixing lamb stew. We will be eating as soon as my husband, a shepherd, gets home. You are welcome to stay and eat with us.

GUIDE: Your husband? Is he one of the shepherds just north of here? We saw him and he has a story to tell you! Ad lib

STATION EIGHT (IN THE VILLAGE):

The Village is the biggest area the tour goes through and is very important in giving our guests “the experience” of the Holy Night encounter. Interaction between Guides/Village People/Guests is very important. It is the difference between boredom and enthusiasm. Work hard to get your family involved, Use your background information. There will be four stops in the village as you work your way through in zig zag fashion—at each stop there will be two shops with the two shop families interacting (1. Ruth's Produce & Bethlehem's Baskets 2. Ezra's Sandals & Woodworking 3. Martha's Meats & Paul's Mill 4. Lydia's Cloth & Daniel's Pottery).

One thing you need to mention to the family is that a *denarius* is a wage for one day's labor and that 80 *lepta* would make about one *denarius*. This may make them more confident to get in and barter. Both GUIDE and VILLAGER should study the background examples on money and measurements so they will know what to expect.

The soldiers will “help” you move from one stop to another. Please follow their lead. Some things you can say in the village.

GUIDE: Refer to your family by biblical names and ask for help in selecting items. At the rugs you might ask your family how many need a sleeping pallet or mat because you will have to sleep on the ground tonight. At the sandal maker you might ask your daughter, Rebecca if she wants to check out the sandals. Since hers are worn out from the trip.

Ask Dorcas if she thinks one of the baskets would be big enough to carry your wheat home.

Ask Rachael about a new water jug since she broke yours down by the river yesterday.

Ask Joshua to check out the sandals...Benjamin the wood products, etc.

Other questions you might ask the VILLAGERS:

Where do you get your wool?

What do you use to get that beautiful color of dye?

Do you have any figs, pomegranates, olives today?

Is your wood, wheat, produced from this area?

We heard angels on the hillside who sang of a Savior being born here. Have you heard anything about this?

(This could be a good topic of conversation, but of course do not let the Roman soldiers hear us speak of this—they would be upset!)

*******BETWEEN THE LAST BOOTH AND THE HOLDING TENT******* Children will be playing a Jewish game. There is often a wait here because you are waiting for the soldiers to take you into the Holding Tent, so use the opportunity to ask the children how to play the game, Ad lib.

STATION NINE (HOLDING TENT):

More than one family group will probably be here at a time. The SOLDIERS will “direct” the activity here. Although SOLDIERS will demand quiet here, it seems natural that families would want to converse. If GUIDES can initiate and control the conversation in a Biblical context it could take some pressure off the SOLDIERS and make the wait less stressful. Always be prepared to be reprimanded by the SOLDIERS and if you see the situation is “out of hand” then obey the SOLDIERS. Attempt to keep your family “under control”. If you see any of “your” children-frightened you might suggest to their parents, they could take the child around the tax tent and meet the group when you come out.

STATION TEN (TAX TENT):

The SOLDIERS will be “in charge” here and you will be directed to do what you need to do. GUIDE will speak only when spoken to inside this tent. A family member may be put in the stocks or knee before the Publican. Once the Publican levies the tax and tells your family what you owe, you go forward and pay what is “required”. Be sure to have coins to pay taxes at the table. Go quickly. Also, they will be stamping your scroll. *Coins are picked up at The Pines if the GUIDES need them.

GATHER TOGETHER STOP (JUST BEFORE THE SYNAGOGUE):

You will need this stop to “collect and redirect” your group. They will be quite “hyper”. When all get out of the tax tent you might just wait quietly a minute until they realize you want to speak—then speak quietly and calmly.

GUIDE: Family, what a relief! We have paid our taxes and we have enough money to purchase supplies when we go back home. Please put your scroll away. We do not need them anymore tonight. I see a synagogue ahead. I think perhaps we should try to stop in and listen as the Rabbi reads and teaches. Occasionally women are allowed in the synagogue—perhaps we will be welcome tonight. Remember, women and girls, we must stand in the back and the men will do the talking.

TAXES: Jesus was born into the most heavily taxed nation the world has ever known. The religious taxes alone were more than any modern economy could bear. After paying their “church dues” you would think the Jews would not have anything left for the Government. The Greeks, and the Syrians after them, took for themselves 1/3 of the produce of the land and ½ of the fruit of the trees. Herod also taxed the Jews. Rome had to have its cut too. There was a Roman water, city, meat, salt, road, house tax, and a frontier tax (tax on goods passing through a city or town). Roman taxes were harvested by “tax gatherers” or publicans.

STATION ELEVEN (LION OF JUDAH SYNAGOGUE):

A SCRIBE will welcome you inside. Go to the exit door. Occasional they will blow on the ram’s horn to announce the approaching Sabbath. SCRIBES will say the following and hopefully the men of your family will respond. Give them time—if no one does then the GUIDE may answer. Sometimes you may think this is a lot of conversation, but it is enough of a diversion to calm the family down and prepare them for the rest of the journey.

SCRIBE: Shalom. Welcome to our Synagogue—the Lion of Judah. Scribe will ask a few questions. We want you to know about our synagogue. It is a community meeting place, a place of teaching and house of prayer and worship, and sometimes used as a court of law. We have _____ here practicing his Hebrew letters in the sand. What have you written _____? Boy responds, “The Holy One.” Note: Young boys are not always available—especially at late hours. You will notice we have a seven candle Menorah, representing the seven days of creation, on the ark behind the veil. The Torah is kept in the ark when it is not being used and the setup is such that when you look across the Menorah you are looking in the direction of Jerusalem. _____ will you read to us from the Torah? It would be appropriate for us all to offer a word of praise to the LORD before you continue your journey. Will everyone please say together “PRAISE BE TO GOD” or “HEAR O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD”. We wish you well as you go on your journey. Shalom.

The SCRIBES will be watching ahead to the groups at the stable and release your group accordingly.

BETWEEN THE SYNAGOGUE AND MANGER:

You need this space to allow your family to prepare themselves to approach the manger. It is a beautiful scene. Make sure they all see it. Note the serene calming effect has on the group. If you choose to speak it could be something to impress upon them the sacredness of the moment.

GUIDE: I would like to pause here just a moment in this calm and peaceful setting and consider where we have been tonight. We have heard the message on the hillside of the coming of a Savior. We have traveled through the village with all its noise excitement and harassment. And now we come to this spot and we can look ahead and see the Star, the Baby—God’s Promise. Our life can be a lot like this moment as we get closer to our Lord, we can feel that Peace...Come, let us go to the manger.

STATION TWELVE (THE MANGER):

Place yourself at the north (right) side of the stable so you can see ahead and know when to go to the WISE MEN. Make sure that children are up in front so they can see. Your group may stand quietly, or you may start them singing “Away in the Manger” or “Silent Night”. You may want to repeat John 3:16 or speak briefly of the ways God tried to get our attention and finally sent His Son to show us the Way. When you leave the manger be sure that the group ahead has gone on and the WISE MEN have time to go “back” so they can turn and come from the “east” again. Gather the children in front again because we want them to interact with the WISE MEN.

STATION THIRTEEN (THE WISE MEN):

GUIDE: Shalom

WISE MEN: Shalom. We have been traveling for a long distance. We are seeking a Babe who is born that will be the king of the Jews. Have you seen any such Baby? (Hopefully, the children will respond—encourage them. This may require added lines.)

WISE MEN: We know that it has been prophesied that out of Bethlehem will come a Savior. We saw a brilliant start and have taken it as a sign. We have come to Bethlehem to worship Him.

GUIDE: I see you have gifts.

WISE MEN: We have brought gold for His glory, Frankincense for the fragrance of His life and sweet-smelling myrrh. Come, our journey has been long and dangerous, and we must find the King, Shalom.

STATION FOURTEEN (THE CROSS/EMPTY TOMB/JOHN):

JOHN: Good evening, Friends!

My name is John, I was one of the first followers of Jesus. I lived with him for over three years. During that time I listened to him teach, preach, heal the sick, and raise the dead.

I also saw him mocked, beaten, crucified, and buried. Three days later he rose from that tomb.

Just before I saw him ascend to his father in heaven, he told me and the others gathered to tell the world that he, the Son of God, had come to earth as a human with a mission to die for sin.

Tonight you have experienced Jesus' story, and now I have a very important question: Do you believe in this Jesus?

If so, and if you haven't already done so, would you like to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord? If you do, please pray with me:

Lord Jesus,

I believe you are the Son of God who died for my sins.

Please forgive my sins and empower me to live my life as a thank you to you.

Amen

If you prayed that prayer, your guide will share more helpful information about the Lord Jesus Christ and your decision as you continue your Holy Walk.

Shalom

STATION FIFTEEN (TABLE OUTSIDE HOSPITALITY TENT):

This is your opportunity to share out of character. On the table will be a cross and a basket of scrolls called "Next Steps on Your Journey with Jesus." Here are possible options for sharing:

**Reiterate aspects of the gospel shared by John*

**Talk about how the gospel has impacted your life*

**Encourage your group to share the gospel if they already know Jesus*

**In someone accepted Christ, encourage them to take a scroll "Next Steps on your Journey with Jesus."*

As you finish, you will invite the group to enter the Hospitality Tent for hot chocolate and cookies and encourage them to fill out a comment card.

Say Shalom and Merry Christmas. Thank you for being a part of my family.

PRAISE THE LORD! YOU MADE IT!! SHALOM!!! THANK YOU!!!!