

38th Annual Return to Bethlehem



In its 38th year, ABCCM's Return to Bethlehem is the longest running Nativity production in North Carolina. It is our gift to your church and the community. Groce United Methodist has once again opened their doors – and hearts for us. Return to Bethlehem is a re-creation of the Bethlehem marketplace as it might have been one day, long ago when a Child was born in a stable behind a crowded and busy inn. In groups of seven, visitors walk through the streets of Bethlehem and overhear conversations of the townspeople while experiencing ancient sights, sounds and smells. The set, props, costumes, live animals, Roman soldiers, and shopkeepers help convey the story of that most important night over two thousand years ago - a story that all hearts then and now long to hear ... the story that actually came true.

20 20th St. Asheville, NC 28806
(828) 259-5300 | (828) 259-5323 (F)
www.abccm.org

Holy Family

The Holy family is the central part of Return to Bethlehem. Mary, Joseph, and a baby between birth and four months old in the quiet of the manger. The audience will travel twenty minutes through the noise of Bethlehem's streets and will end at the manger pondering the ultimate story that came true. Holy Families will have 90 minute slots and their own trustworthy attendant for costume and/or help holding the baby, in a separate room. Baby feeding time, bottled water, or other help will also be discretely provided during performance. This is a great memory for the parents and the child. If only one parent can attend, we will have a Joseph or Mary available to stand in.



Chloe & Brendon Radar, who play Mary & Joseph, hold their one-week old daughter Olivia.

We Need Your Help

Volunteer actors needed! We're looking for all ages of adults and teens to take short, one to four line parts. Volunteers may also serve in non-acting roles.

Costumes provided and food for all involved each day. On-site childcare is also provided. Included in this packet is the "Cast Sign Up" sheet that can be copied, completed, and fax/scan/emailed. Or the volunteer can contact Pam Barbee at pam.barbee@abccm.org or (828) 259-5300 ext. 1618.

Musical Performances

Share your church's musical talents! An Advent medley of Christmas songs and/or hymns help guests wait and prepare for their walk through Bethlehem. Ask your church's music ministry members, teens needing performance practice, or adults who still love to play or sing. All sets are 30 - 60 minutes.

Actors

Costumes provided; costumers will help you. Catered food provided with sandwiches, hot soup, dessert, snacks, and water. Water and mints will be discretely taken to actors during the performance as well. This is a great way to act out faith and build fellowship among Sunday School classes, small groups, Bible studies, civic organization, and neighbors. Speaking parts are brief one to four lines. Many family and couple roles are available. All ages are needed. Children are very welcomed, but they need to enjoy being in character through a three hour shift with brief breaks permitted. Enjoyable roles include but are not limited to shopkeepers of various types, woodworkers, Roman guards, Jewish prisoners, small animal handlers, temple children, women at a well, and more.

Return to Bethlehem

"A Journey of the Heart"

Participant Sign-Up Sheet

Each Christmas season, ABCCM presents **Return to Bethlehem**, a live drama depicting Bethlehem as it might have been at the time of Jesus' birth. This is a special thank you gift from ABCCM to our community. Bethlehem comes to life because of talented, dedicated volunteers - like you - who make it happen.

We invite you to join the ABCCM family in our "*Journey of the Heart*."

Name _____ Church _____
Address _____ City _____ zip _____
Phone ☐ Cell ☐ home ☐ work _____ Phone ☐ Cell ☐ home ☐ work _____
Email _____

Cast Opportunities

There are a variety of speaking and non-speaking parts for people of all ages. We attempt to cast families together where appropriate, but those spaces are limited. Children must be mature enough to realize the importance of remaining in character throughout the performance. The following information will aid with casting:

☐ Female ☐ Male If male, check if you have a beard ☐ Age _____ Are you participating as a family? Yes ☐ No ☐
(Please write name, age and character on the back of this sheet for each person.)

Have you participated before? ☐ Yes ☐ No What part did you play? _____

I'm new and would like a speaking part ☐ non-speaking part ☐

Please check ALL the days & times that you would be available to participate. Newcomers especially should attend a **rehearsal** on

Wednesday, December 6th 6 pm at Groce United Methodist Church, 954 Tunnel Rd. Charter Hall

You will receive a script and confirmation of your performance times in the mail. All participants will enjoy catered snacks and drinks every performance day.

Shift Times: (including before shift snack and costuming)

Thursday, Dec.7	<input type="checkbox"/> 5:30 - 8:30 pm	
Friday, Dec.8	<input type="checkbox"/> 5:30 - 8:30 pm	
Saturday, Dec.9	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:30 - 5:30 pm	<input type="checkbox"/> 5:00 - 8:30 pm
Sunday, Dec. 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:30 - 4:00 pm	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:30 - 6:30 pm

We stop receiving the public at 8:30 (or when corresponding Hebrew family names are given). Cast times are scheduled 'til 9:00 in case there are large crowds in which case the cast might stay later than 8:30.

I am willing to work:

One shift on all 4 days ☐ One shift on 3 days ☐ One shift on 2 days ☐

I will work more than one shift a day, if necessary ☐

I will work in more than one position, if necessary ☐

I am at your disposal all weekend ☐

Babysitting for small children during your performance time will be available, if needed. Please call Pam Barbee at 398-6618 if you will need this service.

Holy Families

The performance requires 15 Holy Families. **Holy Families** with babies, birth to three months at the time of the performance, for **60- or 90-minute shifts (indoors)**. If you can be a Holy Family, or can suggest friends with a new baby, please call Pam Barbee at (828) 398-6618

Musicians/Entertainers

Performers provide holiday music, hymns, soft instrumentals, duet, quartet, acapella, etc. for a 30-minute set in the church sanctuary to set the mood while people await their journey through Bethlehem. To arrange for a performance time, call Rev. Caleb Bradshaw at (828) 398-6836.

Support Personnel

There are a variety of needs for people who want to help, but prefer not to perform. These include set preparation, breakdown and clean up; cast support (costumes, food, clean up) animal care, etc. If you would like to help, call Rev. Caleb Bradshaw at (828) 398-6836.

Sign up online at www.abccm.org/return-to-bethlehem

Copy this form & distribute to friends in your church/community.

Please complete this form and return as soon as possible - no later than

November 6th to: Rev. Caleb Bradshaw ABCCM, 20 20th Street, Asheville, NC 28806

Or scan and email to caleb.bradshaw@abccm.org Thank you!



Return to Bethlehem

A Journey of the Heart

December 7th - 10th

Holy Families are needed



Joseph, Mary, and Baby Jesus in the manger have the most powerful Gospel impact on the audience.

Who: Babies up to 3 months old, mom and dad or a stand-in Joseph or Mary if either is not always available during 90 -minute shift.

Where: Indoor setting, costume and personal costume and baby helper in private dressing room with additional childcare while performing.

Other Features: catered food, drinks, and snacks for all!

Groce United Methodist Church, 954 Tunnel Road, Asheville, NC

To sign up for a day and time, visit
www.abccm.org/return-to-bethlehem

or contact: Rev. Caleb Bradshaw at

caleb.bradshaw@abccm.org or

828-398-6836

Presented as a Gift to the Community by



Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry