

ALL YEAR LONG

NARRATION

Song: *Carol Medley*

Song: *Just Another Christmas*

It's Christmas, and how we love the old carols that have been handed down from generation to generation. The familiar words and melodies have become woven into the very tapestry of the season right along with the tinsel and lights and the wrapping of gifts. *[music begins]* But Christmas is so much more than just traditions, and the story is not *how* we celebrate but *whom* we celebrate: God himself, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

Song: *The Good, Good News*

For two thousand years, God has been inviting us into the Christmas story. He longs for us to come and encounter Christ in an intimate, up-close way. And while the call is extended to everyone, from the very beginning, the invitation has always been personal. *[music begins]* The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary with a promise. Joseph was awakened from a dream. And, to some lowly shepherds living on a hillside keeping watch over their sheep, the call came in spectacular fashion: First one angel and then a host of heaven's angels proclaiming the good, good news of the gospel. Christ has come!

Song: *More than Enough*

When we picture the scene that took place that night in Bethlehem, it's easy to wonder why God chose such simple surroundings for a Savior to be born. Jesus deserved a throne but instead slept in a manger. Swaddling clothes seemed a poor substitute for the kingly robe that should have wrapped his tiny body, and a stable seemed inadequate to welcome someone of such stature. But when God looked down on all that was unfolding, he saw something completely different. He saw his only begotten Son, come to seek and to save a world that needed redeeming. *[music begins]* What we see as simple, God sees as everything it needed to be. The perfect gift to an imperfect people—and it was more than enough.

Song: *Shatter the Night* (no narration)

Song: *Somewhere in the Mystery*

[narration begins at bar 3 of intro] And so we come once again to the story, longing for a new perspective on what is familiar; searching for a fresh understanding of who God is and why his love for us is so unrelenting. And, somewhere in the mystery of what cannot be understood or explained, we celebrate the wonder of Christmas.

Song: *All Year Long*

In just a few short days, once again the tree will come down, the lights will be packed away, and the carols will be silenced for yet another year. After all, seasons come and seasons go. *[music begins]* But the good news of the gospel is that the Christ of Christmas came to be and longs to be the Christ of all year long.

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