

## **The ABC of Christmas**

(Preached by Cheryl Williams at Footscray Baptist Church December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 –Luke 1 & 2)

In our service we have had and will have a number of readings that tell the story of the first Christmas. I thought perhaps I could simplify them for you and give you the ABC of Christmas.

A is for Angels, one appeared to Mary telling her what was to happen, others appeared to the shepherds on the hills telling them of Jesus' birth.

B is for Bethlehem, the town Joseph was from and needed to go to to be counted in a census and of course B is for a Baby, the focus of our celebration.

C is for the Census, the counting of the people that was taking place and of course for the Camels who accompanied the Wise Men.

D is for Donkey who travelled with Mary and Joseph carrying their stuff and maybe Mary for a bit, as they travelled about 110km to Bethlehem.

E is for Elizabeth, Mary's cousin where Mary stayed for a few months before Jesus was born.

F is for Frankincense, one of the gifts the wise men brought to Jesus. Frankincense is a fragrance from a tree that grew in Arabia and Palestine. It was often used in the temple, so it made sense for them to bring such a gift to the Messiah.

G is for Gifts, one of which was Gold. Gold was very valuable and the sort of gift one would bring to a King.

H is for Hope. Jesus is the source of hope, hope that peace will reign, and everyone can live together in harmony.

I is for Inn Keeper. All the motels were booked out when Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem, but an Innkeeper looked upon them with kindness and gave them a room out the back in which to stay.

J is for Joseph, the one whom God entrusted to bring Jesus up. And of course it is for Jesus, the main part of the story.

K is for King Herod, who was threatened by another King arriving and tried very hard to get rid of Jesus our King.

L is for Love, Jesus reminded us that loving God and loving our neighbour will make the world go round.

M is for Mary who laid the baby in a Manger, which is where the animals normally had their food, because there was no crib for Jesus.

N is for Nazareth, is the town where Mary and Joseph lived and where Jesus would grow up.

O is for Oxen, another word for cattle, who were present when Jesus was born.

P is for Peace, we call Jesus the Prince of Peace.

Q is for Queues, Bethlehem was full of people who had to be there to be counted, they must have queued up for food, for somewhere to stay, to be counted.

R is for Rejoicing, this is what the angels, the shepherds and Wise Men who went away rejoicing after seeing baby Jesus and it is what we do too.

S is for shepherds and their sheep who were startled by the angels, but who quickly did as they suggested and ran down the hills to Bethlehem to see Jesus. And it is for a star that guided the Wise Men to the place Jesus was.

T is for Tidings, an old-fashioned word that means 'good news', which the birth of Jesus was and is for people everywhere.

U is for Universal, this event is for the whole world, Jesus comes to be with and help everyone.

V is for Visitors – Jesus had many- shepherds and sheep and then three Magi or Wise Men or Kings.

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W is for the Wise Men who came from Persia following a star they had seen in the sky, which they knew meant something important was happening.  
X is for Xmas – or the first letter of the word Christ in the Greek alphabet, it looks like a X in our English alphabet.  
Y is for You, this event is for you and you and you.  
Z is for Zechariah, the father of John who prepared the way for Jesus.