

## GUESS WHAT, JOSEPH?

by STEPHEN D. LARSON

**GENRE:** Drama

**SYNOPSIS:** Mary visits Joseph at his workshop to tell him she's had an unusual visitor who imparted some wonderful—yet unsettling—news.

**DIRECTOR'S TIP:** In this script, as in "A Conversation with Her Son," the author sets the stage with a narrator. The narrator sets the tone—in this case, he or she gives us historical background. We find out about the time period, the political atmosphere, and the impending census. All of that informs what will take place in this simple carpenter's shop. The trick with directing the rest of this script is that it's a story the audience already knows. So the key is to make it fresh and to find something in the script that will be new to the audience. We're not rewriting history—we're looking at it from a new angle to learn something deeper from it than we already have.

**TIME:** Over 5 minutes

**CAST BREAKDOWN:** 2

**TOPIC:** Christmas, Biblical Times

**SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Luke 1:26-38

**CHURCH YEAR SEASON:** Christmas

**SUGGESTED USE:** Worship Service, companion piece with What Child Is This? and A Conversation with Her Son.

**CHARACTERS:**

MARY and JOSEPH, the parents of Jesus  
NARRATOR

**PROPS:** Tools, workbench, wood, etc., as one would find in a first-century carpenter's workshop; head cloth for Joseph to give to Mary

**COSTUMES:** First-century peasant costumes

**SOUND:** Two wireless microphones

**LIGHTING:** General stage lighting

**SETTING:** Joseph's carpentry workshop

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## GUESS WHAT, JOSEPH? *by Stephen D. Larson*

*At the opening, JOSEPH, a carpenter of Nazareth circa 0 AD, is busy in his workshop planing some wood. He is an ordinary man, plain of speech and appearance.*

**NARRATOR:** This is Nazareth, a frontier town on the southern border of Galilee. The year is long ago. Herod is King in Judea; Augustus is ruler of the great Roman Empire. Roman steel has brought a certain measure of security, if not freedom, in its many conquered lands. And now Caesar wants to see just how many people he rules . . . and can collect taxes from. So a census is being called. But our story begins here, in a simple carpenter's shop.

*MARY enters hesitantly. She is much younger than JOSEPH, a teenager, in fact. She starts to speak, then turns to leave. She stops and comes back, standing several feet away.*

**MARY:** Hello, Joseph.

*JOSEPH turns, surprised to see her, but pleased.*

**JOSEPH:** Mary!

**MARY:** You're busy. I'll come back later.

**JOSEPH:** No, no. Please, come in. It's good to see you. Although I must admit that I'm surprised. I don't remember the last time you came.

**MARY:** I've never been here before.

**JOSEPH:** That would explain it.

**MARY:** *(Looking around)* It's a very nice shop. I like the smell of wood.

**JOSEPH:** So do I. Ever since I was a boy in my father's shop. Someday, our son will be toddling around here, learning the trade as I did.

**MARY:** Joseph . . .

**JOSEPH:** Actually, I'm glad you came. I have something for you.

**MARY:** For me?

*JOSEPH goes to a work bench and picks up a cloth of the type women use to cover their heads. It is simple, with a few bands of color, just the sort of thing a carpenter's wife might wear.*

**JOSEPH:** I was in the market and saw this. I thought you might like it.

**MARY:** It's very nice. Thank you.