

# O Little Town

Christmas Eve 2021



Let's read the Christmas story as told by Luke and Matthew.

And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. – Luke 2:1 KJ21



That might be the most relatable verse in the Bible!

You see, the Christmas story *is* a reality, but gets a bit *blurred* by fantasy *and* the fact it occurred in what we assume is an unrelatable 'long ago' and 'far away' – you know, when “decrees” went out from Caesar Augustus.



So how do *you* picture Caesar Augustus?



He was a real guy. Here's one of his many statues, though it doesn't do justice to his sandy hair and grey-green eyes – which we know he had, not only from ancient historians, but also microscopic paint pigments on some of the statues.



Greek and Roman statues *weren't* white. That's Caesar's chest plate as it looks *now*, and how it looked 2,000 years ago. Their statues were like our wax figures.



So now, using facial recognition AI and Photoshop, the statues can be “painted” with hyper-realistic skin, hair, and eyes. Here's Caesar Augustus. Who knew he was Scandinavian? I think I went to school with that guy. And we still use his name – each time we refer to the month of August (named in his honor).



His main residence was excavated, preserved, and opened to the public nine years ago. That's one room in what is *literally* 'Caesar's palace'. And thus, with the stirring of a mouse, here's Augustus in his living room. Looks like he's about to send out a decree!



So maybe – *realistically* – it wasn't all that long ago and far away.

It came to pass near Bethlehem, in “those days,” *but* it could've come to pass just last year, right near here. So, let's read the Christmas story as told by Luke *Knutzen* and Matthew *Kristiansen*.

And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree [mandate] from Caesar Augustus [President Biden] that all the world [states and counties] should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius [Inslee] was governor of Syria [Washington State].) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph [Jacobson] also went up from Galilee [the County of King] out of the city of Nazareth [Newcastle] into Judea [the valley of Skagit], unto the City of David [Vander-King] which is called Bethlehem [Burlington] (because [Joseph] was of the house [homestead] and lineage [trust fund] of David) [so he went] to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, who was *great* with child. And so it was that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes [T-shirts] and laid Him in a manger [tool box, in a utility shed, out behind Hugo Helmer], because there was no room for them in the [Holiday] inn [Express]. And there were in the same country [county] shepherds [dairy farmers] abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock [Holsteins] by night. And lo, [in Bow] the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you *good tidings of great joy*, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes [T-shirts], lying in a manger [tool box]." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" And it came to pass, when the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds [old Swedes] said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem [Burlington] and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, *and the Babe* lying in a manger [tool box, in a utility shed, out behind Hugo Helmer]. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds [dairymen]. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds [farmers] returned [to Bow], glorifying and praising God – Luke 2:1-20 KJ21

Now [after] Jesus was born in Bethlehem [Burlington] of Judea [Washington] in the days of Herod [Patty] the king [Senator], behold, there came wise men [seminary professors] from the East [eastern Washington] to Jerusalem [Olympia], saying, "Where is He that is born King [Senator] of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East [Moses Lake] and have come to worship Him." When Herod [Patty] the king [Senator] had heard these things, he [she] was troubled, and all Jerusalem [Olympia] with him [her]. And when he [she] had gathered all the chief priests [rabbis] and scribes [religious scholars] of the people together, he [she] demanded of *them* where Christ should be born. And they said unto him [her], "In Bethlehem [Burlington] of Judea [Washington], for thus it is written by the prophet: 'And thou, Bethlehem [O Burlington], in the land [valley] of Judah [Skagit], art *not* the least among the princes [rulers] of Judah [Washington]; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule My people Israel.'" Then Herod [Patty], when he [she] had privately called the wise men [sage professors], inquired of them diligently what *time* the star appeared. And he [she] sent them to Bethlehem [Burlington] and said, "Go and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also." When they had heard the king [Senator], they departed; and lo, the star which they saw in the East [eastern Washington] went before them [out of Burlington] until it came and stood over where the young Child was [in Marysville ... where else?]. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. – Matthew 2:1-11 KJ21