

The Glory of Christmas

Experience the Season

Optional Drama and Production Notes by Lorie Marsh

CHARACTERS:

Grandma, Grandson: Todd (about 17), 2 Granddaughters: Emma (15) and Lucy (8)

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Set: The family is in a home set (homey, eat-in kitchen table). Grandma could be wearing an apron. It's as if they are inviting us into their kitchen while they are making Christmas cookies. The table has chairs around it and in the center we see various cookie ingredients: flour, salt, a recipe book propped up, etc. There is an oven that is used to put in and remove cookie sheets with cookies. As the first song begins, the kids come into the scene as Grandma enters with a cookie sheet of Christmas cookies and kids take off their coats, hang them up and sit down at the table. Grandma puts some cookies on a plate and joins the kids at the table. They talk and laugh and eat cookies during the first song and proceed to make cookies throughout the program. On the counter is a big "boom box."

Note: Throughout the musical, the choir should be lighted whenever they sing.

SONG: "This Is the Season *with* We Wish You a Merry Christmas"

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Staging: I suggest you have the choir enter on the intro to the song. The rest of the choir and characters can move into place. If lack of space prevents this, you can have them in place at the beginning of the song and bring the narrators in during the song intro.

Lighting: The lights are on the choir and the characters are in the set, and not lit until they get ready to speak. At this point, the lights can dim on the choir, but not go out completely.

GRANDMA: *(to audience)* **Oh, hello! Come on in! The *more* the merrier! We're so glad you are here to join us. I'm Lois Campbell and these are my beautiful grandchildren, Todd, Emma and that's little Lucy over there. They're here this afternoon for our annual *baking of the Christmas cookies!* It's just one of our traditions . . . we have a lot of those around here. We've been doing this one every year since their daddy was a little boy. Pass me that spatula there, Todd.**

LUCY: **Are we going to listen to Christmas music, Grandma?**

GRANDMA: **Well, of *course* we are! It just wouldn't be *Christmas* without *Christmas* music, now would it? Baking cookies with you and listening to our favorite Christmas songs is part of what makes Christmas so *special*. In fact, I have some of the *best* songs right there in my CD player on the counter. Tell you what — Emma, why don't you stir this up for me and Lucy you can push that big button right there on top of that CD player — yes, that's it! (*Music starts*) What we need around here is a little Christmas — right here in this very kitchen!**

SONG: “We Need a Little Christmas *with* The Christmas Waltz”

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Staging/Lighting: During the song, the characters can move around the set and stage, decorating the tree, putting up some garland on the fireplace, etc. stringing lights, doing a little dancing together, etc. Lights on choir and characters during the song.

(Lights up on kitchen.)

LUCY: **That's fun music Grandma! Makes me feel like *dancing*.**

GRANDMA: **Oh, child, it does, it *does*. (*Music starts*) Makes me feel like it too! Back when I was young we used to call that “*cuttin' a rug*.” Come here, let me show you the way we *used to do it*. (*they dance along for a brief time until lights fade*) (*Music starts*)**

SONG: “A 50’s Christmas! *includes* Jingle Bell Rock and Blue Christmas”

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Staging/Lighting: Take the lights down on the kitchen scene and up on the stage. This song affords a great opportunity to use groups from your church! Perhaps your senior group could dress up in poodle skirts and 50’s outfits and decorate the tree, drink hot chocolate, open gifts, and maybe do the jitter-bug. They’d have a “blast!” Another option would be to use your youth choir, youth group and/or single’s group! Another fun idea might be to mix the group and feature a set of dancers from each age group, kind of “dance-off” idea. The lights would be soft on the choir and feature the dance scene — but don’t forget to make the whole stage blue on “Blue Christmas!” At the end of the song have the “dancers” leave and bring the lights back up on the kitchen.

(Lights up on kitchen.)

EMMA: **What’re we going to make next, Grandma?**

GRANDMA: **Hmmm, let’s see** *(she flips through the cookbook)*. **Oh! Here’s one of the best! Remember this? Irish Christmas Shortbread? It’s one of the traditional Christmas specialties in Ireland and Scotland. This particular recipe has been passed down through our family for generations and generations! Now it’s time to pass it on to you!**

(Lights fade on kitchen) (Music starts)

SONG: “Sing We Now! *includes* O Come, Emmanuel and God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Staging/Lighting: A praise dance group would be wonderful on this song using colorful ribbons and flowing pieces of fabric or use Celtic dancers dressed in Celtic costumes. You might check with a local dance studio to see if they have a group to perform during this number if you don’t have a group available. The lights should be soft on the stage, illuminating the dancers and choir and down on the kitchen. They could start by coming down the aisles and end up on the stage. Dancers exit at end of scene and lights come up on the kitchen.

(Lights up on kitchen.)

TODD: **I didn’t know we were Irish, Grandma.**

GRANDMA: **Oh, yes. Your granddaddy’s family came all the way from *Ballintra, Ireland*, to America! This recipe is one of the few things they were able to bring with them on the ship, along with some other good recipes, the traditions and music from their motherland, and the love they held in their hearts for each other and their Lord Jesus. They raised their boys here in America and they went off, as children do, chasing their fortunes and leaving their parents behind. They were happy for their boys, and the opportunities they found here in America, but there were times when they were lonely for the friends and family they’d left behind. But, God is good, and He helped them through those lonely days. I remember a story Great Grandmother used to tell about the first Christmas after Great Granddaddy died when she had to face Christmas alone. God gave her a very special gift that year. *(Lights fade in kitchen) (Music starts)***

SONG: “Merry Christmas with Love *with* Away In A Manger”

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Staging/Lighting: If you are able, you might consider video taping a dramatization of this song and playing it during the song. However, if this is not possible or you cannot use your screens, I suggest that you dramatize this song in a simple way, on the opposite end of the stage, with perhaps a small side table beside an overstuffed chair, a free-standing doorframe and door and a group of carolers (these may be children if you choose to use your children’s choir on the opening “Away In a Manger” segment). Perhaps the carolers might bring along a big basket covered with a colorful “Christmassy” cloth that contains a few gifts that she can take out and put on — gloves, a matching scarf, earmuffs, slippers, a Bible or book, etc! The song could end with her sitting down in her chair, smiling, and still wearing the hat, gloves and scarf. You might also consider having her add a coat and boots, put some items into the basket (as if she has decided to do the same for someone else), and leave the house, turning and locking the door behind her, and exit the stage.

Lighting: the lights should be up on the scene and soft on the children’s choir and then adult choir and down on the kitchen.

(Lights up on kitchen.)

EMMA: **I wish we could have known Great Grandmother and Great Granddaddy.**

TODD: **Yeah, but at least we get to eat their *cookies!* I love them!**

LUCY: **Me, too! I'm glad she brought them all the way from Ireland.**

TODD: **She didn't bring the *cookies*, Lucy, she brought the *recipe*. Families do things like that; they pass important things down from generation to generation. It's one of the great things about being in a family.**

EMMA: **This is my favorite thing that we do together as a family, Grandma. Baking cookies every year and singing Christmas carols.**

GRANDMA: **Mine too, pumpkin. I love to sing along whenever I hear those Christmas carols! (*Music starts*)**

Minister of Music invites the congregation to stand and sing along.

“Christmas Praise! *includes* O Come All Ye Faithful, Joy to the World, Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, Angles from the Realms of Glory, and Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Staging/Lights: Bring the lights down in the kitchen during this song or leave them up and have the characters sing-along. During this song, you can have the group from the scene in “A 50's Christmas” back in (this time dressed in Christmas sweaters and black pants), coming down the aisles and participate in the audience sing-along! The lights need to be up full on audience, choir, and stage. You might print the words in a bulletin or use your screens if they don't interfere with your Christmas set and decorations. Just make sure, if the audience is reading, that you allow them enough light to do so!

Minister of Music seats the congregation.

(Lights up on kitchen.)

LUCY: **My favorite thing is when we read the Christmas story together. I love to imagine the angels and what the Baby Jesus must have looked like.**

GRANDMA: **Oh my! We haven't done that yet this year, have we? Well, we can fix that right now while these cookies bake! Todd, bring me my Bible from that table over there. Telling the story about how Jesus came to earth the most important part of celebrating Christmas! Here, Lucy, why don't you start – start right here in Luke, chapter two . . .**

(Reading from a Bible.)

LUCY: **“And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered . . . and all went to be registered, everyone into his own city.**

(Reading from a Bible.)

TODD: **And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his espoused wife, being 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 first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” *(Luke 2: 1-7) (Lights fade on kitchen.) (Music starts)*

SONG: “O Holy Night!”

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Staging/Lighting: Begin to build the nativity scene during this song by bringing in Mary, Joseph and the Baby. Place them on the stage side opposite the kitchen and light them very softly. Mary and Joseph can interact with the child during the song. You may have to put a couple of angels in for Lucy.

(Music starts)

SONG: “What Did You Say Was the Baby’s Name? *with* Listen to the Angels Singing”

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Staging/Lighting: Segue directly into “What Did You Say Was the Baby’s Name?” Bring the lights down on the nativity to give the cast a break, but keep them in place. Bring the lights back up on the kitchen following the song.

EMMA: “And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into Heaven, the shepherds said one to another, ‘Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is 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.” *(Luke 2: 15-16)*

LUCY: I love that part of the story . . . when everybody stands around the little Baby in the manger and worships Him. I bet He was really, really cute.

TODD: Yeah, well there was a lot more to it than that, Lucy. Remember, that little Baby didn’t stay a baby for long — He grew up just like us . . . well, except there was no X-Box or Play-Station back then.

LUCY: Did He have to go to school like we do?

EMMA: Of course he did, and I bet He had to do chores and clean up his room just like us. Just because He was the Son of God didn’t mean He didn’t have to do all the regular things any other little boy had to do.

LUCY: But, He *was* special . . . He was God’s Son. How come somebody else didn’t make his bed and take out the trash for Him?

GRANDMA: The Bible says that Jesus came to seek and to save those who are lost. Even as a little boy, Jesus, knew that He had a purpose and that was to do the will of His Father. He came to earth to do a job that nobody else could do . . . to give His very own life to pay for all of our sins. He

**was the only one who could do it because He didn't have any sin . . .
He was spotless . . . the spotless Lamb of God.
And you know the best part, Lucy? One day not just the shepherds
and wise men will bow and worship Jesus, but every knee will bow . . .
every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God
the Father! They will all bow and behold the Lamb of God! (*Lights
fade in kitchen.*)
(*Music starts*)**

SONG: "Behold the Lamb"

PRODUCTION NOTE:

(Staging/Lighting: Bring the lights up slowly on Mary and Joseph and the child, as if we are re-entering the scene. Bring in the shepherds and wisemen and have them kneel at the manger – then add people from various ethnic groups in world costumes as well as folks of varying age from your congregation, dressed in their occupational clothes. They should come from different parts of the auditorium, and kneel at the manger. Scatter them throughout the song, as if they are, one by one, responding to the invitation to come and behold. Lights should be soft on the choir. Use a soft wide spot to illuminate the manger area and worshippers. Lower the light on the kitchen cast through this song. Have the worshipping group and nativity cast exit once the light is lowered.

(Lights up on kitchen.)

GRANDMA: Well, we're almost done here, but before we pop that last batch in the oven there is one more thing I want to share with you this Christmas. In some ways the Christmas story is like making Irish shortbread!

KIDS: What? That's silly, Grandma, what do you mean? (*etc.*)

GRANDMA: (*laughing*) Well, it's not *quite* as crazy as you might think! Take a look at these ingredients on the table. None of them by themselves *taste* very good, certainly not like a cookie! That flour there . . . not too tasty . . . and the salt? How 'bout a teaspoon of that on your tongue, Lucy?

LUCY: **Yuck! *Grandma!***

GRANDMA: *(laughing)* **The sugar? Butter? Baking soda? They are all *part* of the cookie, but are not a cookie. They're all part of a bigger plan . . . a recipe. In the same way, God followed a very special plan, a *recipe* if you will, to give us our Savior, Jesus. His recipe called for a prophecy about the coming Messiah, an angel visit to a young girl, a sleepy group of sheep-herders on a hillside, one large angel choir, and a manger box stuffed with hay. It also called for something quite *unusual* . . . it required one spotless, perfect Lamb to willingly give up His own life, to be the perfect, final sacrifice for the sins of every man, woman and child who would choose to receive Him. And that, my darlings, is the best recipe of all in my book! There's more . . . so much more! You see, Jesus didn't *stay* dead; instead, He rose again in victory! Jesus lives! And He lives in you and me and in all who will receive Him! That's the real reason we sing songs and decorate and celebrate at Christmas! Because *Jesus lives!* *(Lights fade on kitchen.)*
*(Music starts)***

SONG: "He Lives"

After the song, the pastor can come up and give an invitation. After the invitation, you may want to have the choir sing the reprise of "What Did You Say Was the Baby's Name? *with* Listen to the Angels Singing." The characters can leave the kitchen during this song.

ALTERNATE ENDING:

SONG: “Behold the Lamb”

LUCY: I’m so glad that we can worship Jesus too, Grandma! Even though we can’t see Him with our eyes, I can see Him with my heart. I know He is here this Christmas!

GRANDMA: Yes, my darling, Lucy, He *is* here! God sent Jesus as a little baby in the manger because He loves you so much! Jesus grew up and then chose to die so you, Todd, Emma and I can know God and be forgiven for all the wrong things we have ever done! Remember, Jesus rose from the grave and is alive *right now*! Because He came, died and rose again, you and I can live forever in heaven with Him! He lives forever and ever! And *that* is the true story of Christmas!

SONG: “He Lives”