

# JOYFUL AND TRIUMPHANT

## Production Notes

By

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### A Beginning Word

The following production notes contain ideas and suggestions for you and your production team. They are designed to serve as a guide for you, but you, yourself, are in charge. You know your church, its capabilities, and its limitations. It will be your job to take these ideas and adapt them to your setting.

We want to encourage you, for we believe that we have created a musical with a message as big as the whole world - big enough to reach out to every person in your congregation and your community! You don't have to add a lot of trimmings and extras to make it powerful. The One about whom it is written will do that all by Himself.

Even so, we do want to encourage you to bring your own creativity, as well as the unique talents and gifts of your co-workers, to your production of *Joyful and Triumphant*. Whether you are simply a worship leader in charge of a small choir or a production technician with all the bells and whistles at your command, we believe that God will bless you as you use your gifts to bring the good news of Christmas to your church and your community!

### The Theme

Jesus came into this imperfect world for real people everywhere - people "who laugh and cry and hope and dream." He came to bring love, salvation, and healing. He came not only for those whose hearts were turned toward him, but also for those whose hearts were turned against him.

### The Cast

Adult choir, soloists, and narrators are the principal players in *Joyful and Triumphant*.

A children's choir could be added on certain songs should you desire. There are also opportunities for simple choreography.

### Costumes

The only dramatic story line in the musical is the good news of Christmas itself: that God gave the gift of his own Son to all the people of this world, so that they might be saved.

For this reason, you may choose to have choir members:

- 1) Wear their own “Christmas best,” or;
- 2) Choose a Christmas color scheme (say red, green, and black) and have them dress in some combination of those three colors, or;
- 3) Because of the musical’s emphasis on the international church, have them dress in costumes with an international flavor.

### **Narrators/Worship Leaders**

Narrations propel the musical from one section to another, illuminating the meaning of each section, and setting the stage for upcoming changes in the mood of the music and its lyrics.

Two narrators are to be used, preferably one male and one female. If, however, your best interpretive readers are of the same sex, I encourage you to use your strongest readers.

Almost all of the dialogue has been underscored by an orchestra on the accompaniment tracks. It will be helpful to rehearse the narrations with these pre-recorded underscores for the sake of smooth timing and transitions.

Narrators should have adequately lighted podiums situated side-by-side, preferably at stage left. *Note:* Narrators need not memorize their lines, but should have read them many times, and be thoroughly familiar with them.

### **Song-by-song Staging Suggestions**

#### **1) “O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL”** (*with “Joyful and Triumphant”*)

Singer: Child soloist (*Note:* If you do not have a child who sings well enough for a solo, a children’s choir, or a woman soloist could do this very nicely.)

Set-up: House lights down. Have child soloist waiting in place, center stage, in blackout.

Directions: Leave house lights down during orchestral intro until the two measures before the child’s solo. During those two measures slowly bring a spot up on child soloist who stands alone at center stage. Soloist should remain in the spotlight throughout his/her solo.

#### **2) “JOYFUL AND TRIUMPHANT”**

Singers: Choir (in groupings that appear to be “families”, groups of friends, couples, etc.)

Set-up: Bring lights to full up at opening drum roll. Have choir enter enthusiastically from sides and rear of auditorium, singing joyfully and worshipfully as they proceed forward.

Directions: If possible, spotlight singers as they move through the church. Choir members arrive on stage and take their places on risers at approximately the beginning of the first chorus. Lights up. Choir engages audience in this call to worship.

“Tips” on “JOYFUL AND TRIUMPHANT” entry:

- You may choose to use the split accompaniment track containing both orchestration *and* vocals to boost the volume of your own choir vocals during their entrance.
- Or you may choose to use a “partial choir entry.” In a partial choir entry, part of the choir is in place on stage while the rest of the choir is entering. If you use the partial choir entry, I suggest that the on-stage choir would stand in blackout during the child solo on Song 1 (“O Come All Ye Faithful”). Then lights would come up to reveal the on-stage part of the choir in place while the rest of the choir processes up the aisle(s) to join them. (The benefit of this staging is that there is a strong vocal presence on stage while the remainder of the choir makes a dramatic entry through the audience.)

### 3) “PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME”

Singers: Choir

Set-up: Lights down on narrators, up on choir; Choir-to-audience, face-to-face.

Directions: In full light, the choir sings directly to audience members, tenderly delivering the theme of the musical: that Jesus was born into the world to bring hope, salvation, and healing to ordinary people like each of us, people who laugh and cry and hope and dream.

“Tip” on Mood and Message of “PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME”: This song should be a person-to-person love letter delivered from the heart of each choir member to the heart of each audience member. No extra blocking or choreography required.

### 4) “EVERYBODY’S KING”

Singers: Choir

Set-up and Directions: See ideas below

Possibilities: Choreography or Media

Ideas: “Everybody’s King” is a song that makes a strong backdrop for either choreography or media enhancement. Two different ideas are included below.

Choreography:

- Simple Choreography: During choruses 3 and 4 of “Everybody’s King” have children come out in costume and create an International Costume Parade; Or have children create flags from different lands and parade with them.
- Create a media presentation by putting together slides or movies of Mission Trips taken by people in your church in which people of different nationalities are laughing together, worshipping together, and fellowshiping together. Use with all choruses or the last two choruses of “Everybody’s King.”

**5) “JOY TO THE WORLD” MEDLEY** (“Joy to the World!” *with* “Angels from the Realms of Glory” *and* “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing”)

Singers: Choir and Congregation

Set-up: Lights down on narrators and up on choir and worship leader. Even though these words are well known to most people, you may wish to print lyrics in your bulletin and/or have them projected on a screen. Your worship leader may wish to issue a simple invitation such as the following: “Will you join me now in singing?” during the audience participation section of the music.

Directions: Choir and congregation join in singing “Angels We Have Heard on High” and “Angels from the Realms of Glory”

**6) “WHEN LOVE CAME DOWN”**

Singers: Choir

Set-up: Lights down on narrators and up on choir

Directions: Choir sings “When Love Came Down”

On the last verse choir members may choose to join hands and lift them all together on these lines:

“Join your hands, lift them high  
For this gift of life  
When love came down, at Christmas time  
When love came down, at Christmas time.”

## 7) “I HELD THE KING OF KINGS”

Singer: Soloist (Mary, mother of Jesus)

Set-up: The soloist who sings Mary’s song has made her way from the choir and is waiting at a downstage mike. She can either be in costume or not. (This song could have been sung close to the time of her son’s birth or it could have been a reflection many years later.) Lights down on narrators and spot up on “Mary.”

Directions: Mary sings.

## 8) “CANDLES OF CHRISTMAS” (Candle Lighting Ceremony)

Singer: Choir

Set-up: Each person in the church will have been handed a candle on the way into the service. Lights down on narrators and dim on choir.

Directions: During verse one, choir members spread the light of their own candles from one to the other. In verse two, a select number of choir members (depending on the size of the church) begin to light candles at the end of each row of seats in the congregation and the flames are passed down each row until every candle is lit. Candles may remain burning during the final Christmas carols.

## 9) CHRISTMAS MEDLEY (“Joyful and Triumphant” *with* “O Come All Ye Faithful”)

Singer: Choir