

ADVENT CHANCEL DRAMA

Characters:

PASTOR DEAN	Himself
PASTOR DICK	Himself
PASTOR JAY	Himself
PASTOR JONATHAN	Himself
PASTOR LEISA	Herself
PASTOR TIM	Himself
FATHER TOM	Himself

(Chairs arranged in two rows, 4 in back and 3 in front, facing out toward the congregation. Sign on microphone stand lists the name of the class. Table beside microphone with a pen and name tags. People arrive for a ‘Pastor’s Conference’ on ‘Leading Today’s People.’)

FATHER TOM: *(Walking up to sign, looking at it, and then finding a chair)* **Ah. Looks like this is it. ‘Leading Today’s People.’** *(Looks at table with pen and labels. Fills out a name tag and puts it on.)* **Hmm.**

(Tim and Leisa walking up together.)

PASTOR TIM: **Look, Leisa. Here it is.**

PASTOR LEISA: **I certainly hope they have some good ideas.**

PASTOR TIM: **Me too, I can use help!** *(Leisa looks at the congregation and nods in a ‘yes’ sign)*

PASTOR LEISA: *(As Tim is trying to pass the sign up table and sit down)* **Tim. Did you see what these directions say. You’re supposed to put on a name tag.** *(Fills one out and hands it to him. They sit down)*

(Jay Arriving)

PASTOR JAY: *(Seeing people in chairs and asking Father Tom)* **Hi there, is this ‘Leading Today’s People?’**

FATHER TOM: **I think so. If you notice, the sign on the table asks us to fill out a name tag.** *(Jay fills in a name tag and puts it on.)*

PASTOR DEAN: *(Arriving, reaching down to fill in a name tag.)* **Hi Folks. Looks like others are here to learn too.**

(Dick and Jonathan arrive)

PASTOR DICK: **Here it is, Jonathan; ‘Leading Today’s People.’**

PASTOR JONATHAN: We were running late, but it looks like the teacher isn't here yet.

(As Jonathan is sitting down)

PASTOR DICK: Hey Jonathan. You're supposed to put on a name tag. Do you want me to bring you one?

PASTOR JONATHAN: No thanks, Dick, I don't believe in those things. You can wear mine if you want.

(Bringing a name tag to Jonathan anyway. Then Dick sits next to him)

PASTOR DICK: Here, Jonathan, put this on. How will the rest of the people know who you are?

PASTOR JONATHAN: Looks like we're the last ones. Seven chairs, and we're students 6 and 7.

PASTOR DICK: That sounds familiar, Jonathan.

PASTOR JONATHAN: Hmm.

JAY: *(To Tom)* Why are you here?

(Gradually, as each person speaks, chairs are moved into a semi-circle for discussion among the pastors. Chairs still face out toward the congregation.)

TOM: Well, I'm the priest and pastor of St. Michael Catholic Church, but sometimes I feel like I'm not sure I know what I'm doing.

JAY: Really?

DEAN: I'm the priest at St. Batholomew and I know I can use some direction.

TOM: I'm supposed to lead people of our parish in doing God's work. But... (pause) ... I don't know. I'm not sure if the people always know what it means to be God's children, never mind Catholic. And, ... (pause) ... I'm not sure if I know where I'm supposed to be leading.

TIM: I Hear that!

LEISA: There's just so much pulling our people in so many directions. Its like they remember that being a Christian means following Jesus in faith and righteousness. . .

JAY: But, all the other busy-ness and activities are pulling God's people away from lives where God is first?

TIM: It's like they are sheep, and sometimes even though they have a shepherd they won't follow.

DICK: Yes, and we're supposed to be able to lead people for the Lord, toward faith, toward love, toward righteousness, toward God's church, away from all these outside attractions.

TIM: I need *help!* (*Leisa looks at the congregation and shakes her head in a 'yes' sign*)

JONATHAN: Do you ever feel like those *Shepherds* on the Christmas Eve?

JAY: What do you mean?

JONATHAN: I'm here for insight too. I'm not always sure what I am doing as a Christian Pastor and leader. But, sometimes I feel like those shepherd on Christmas thought they knew what was going on. They thought they were caring for sheep. They thought they would lead, and the sheep would follow. They didn't realize something big was about to happen. They didn't realize **THEY** were the sheep, so God sent some messengers or angels who **Shepherded** the shepherds to Bethlehem.

DICK: They really didn't have any idea what was going on, did they?

DEAN: I guess not.

TOM: They thought they were the shepherds, but . . . maybe they were sheep needing leading.

JONATHAN: Baaaaaaaaaaaa

DICK: Jonathan, I know you come to me at times, not sure where or how to lead. But, you know I don't have the answers either.

TOM: So, how can we lead people toward God when life and this world seems to pull them away from God? How can **WE** lead if we aren't sure where **WE** are going?

LEISA: Maybe we need to act like . . . well, . . . not just shepherds, but let people know we're sheep too. We are pulled in lots of directions by busy lives and temptations. We are pulled away from God. And we need leading too.

TIM: Maybe, instead of shepherds, sometimes our people need WISE MEN.

JAY: What do you mean?

TIM: I'm not sure the wise men knew where they were going.

DICK: They were following the star, but they didn't know where the star was going, so how could they know where they were going.

TIM: They probably couldn't even always see the star they were following.

LEISA: Well, Tim, how could they see the star if it was day time, or if it was cloudy at night?

TIM: But, they kept following the light and direction of the star, and they ended up at Bethlehem . . . (Pause) . . . at the Savior.

TOM: So, for pastors who need help Leading today's people . . .

JAY: And for today's people who need leading . . .

DEAN: For people who forget about God.

DICK: And, for today's *pastors* who need leading toward God themselves.

TIM: Right, keep your eyes on the light. Keep your eyes on Jesus.

JONATHAN: We can see Jesus love in His coming from heaven to this world. What *service!*

LEISA: We can see His love and obedience as He sacrificed His life for us on the cross. What a gift!

JAY: We can see His directions as he teaches to 'Love one another as I have loved you.'

DEAN: I need direction.

TIM: That's right. Jesus is not leading us to focus on the possessions and activities of this life. He leads us to focus on our Creator, on our Savior, on our Comforter. Jesus is leading us to focus on God.

TOM: So, if we focus on Jesus, and if we are trusting and following His life, even if we don't know where *we* are going, JESUS knows. We can follow HIM, and try to help our people follow Him as well.

TIM: Looks like we're back in Bethlehem at the stable with the Shepherds.

(Pause)

JONATHAN: *(Looking at his watch)* Man, where's the teacher. I've got places to be.

JAY: Me too!

DEAN: It's late!

LEISA: I think I've learned something today.

JAY: Class is over.

JONATHAN: I'm out of here.

DICK: Following *JESUS*, Jonathan. Following *JESUS*!

(ALL GET UP AND LEAVE)

THE FIRST LESSON Genesis 3:9-15, 17-19**Page 5***(The curse from sin and promise of a Savior)***Read by Pastor Tim Carrick**

⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

¹⁰ He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

¹¹ And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

¹² The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." . . .

¹⁷ To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

THE SECOND LESSON Genesis 22:15-18**Page 32***(Abraham 's willingness to give His son for God is praised as faith which will bless all peoples!)***Read by Pastor Leisa Carrick**

¹⁵ The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time ¹⁶ and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, ¹⁸ and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

THE THIRD LESSON Isaiah 9:2, 6-7**Page 1072***(God's kingdom comes as a child is born)***Read by Father Tom Brundage**

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. . .

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

THE FOURTH LESSON Isaiah 11:1-9**Page 1076***(A shoot of Jesse shall bring the kingdom of God.)***Read by Pastor Richard Allen**

¹ A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
² The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD - ³ and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; ⁴ but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. ⁵Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. ⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

THE FIFTH LESSON Luke 1:26-35, 38

Page 1588

(The angel Gabriel appears to Mary)

Read by Pastor Jonathan Rockey

²⁶In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

³⁰But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. ³¹You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

³⁴"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. . .

³⁸"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

THE SIXTH LESSON Luke 2:1-7

Page 1590

(Jesus is born in Bethlehem)

Read by Pastor Jay Spoonheim

¹In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)
³And everyone went to his own town to register.

⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

THE SEVENTH LESSON**Luke 2:8-16****Page 1591***(When Jesus is born, the angels appear to shepherds)* **Read by Pastor Tim Carrick**

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

THE EIGHTH LESSON**Matthew 2:1-12****Page 1514***(Magi come from the East to worship the king.)* **Read by Pastor Leisa Carrick**

¹After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."

⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." ⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

THE NINTH LESSON**John 1:1-14****Page 1644***(The Word of God made flesh appears among us)* **Read by Father Tom Brundage**

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning.

³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸He himself was not the

light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.