

A Christmas Play

by Terry L. Hanna

Scene One: The scene is set in a small town in the mountains. People are running around dressing their store fronts and homes for the celebration of Christmas. Expectations are high. The mood is joyful. White lights cover the buildings. Green boughs with red bows wind around street lamps. Visitors wearing pajamas are coming to ride the Polar Express train. The smell of cookies drift out of coffee shops. The sound of carols fill the air. And a prayer is heard in heaven: *“Dear Lord, all I want for Christmas is my family surrounding me, joy found in simple traditions, and peace in my heart.”*

Scene Two: The main street is closed for the Christmas parade. Floats and bands and mini coopers drive through town handing out candy to children lining the street. Shopping for gift giving and parties are in full swing. Story tellers and cantatas are enjoyed. The atmosphere is a little chaotic. Then a beautiful snow stops the action. And as families sit around a warm fire and watch the big, white flakes fall, we hear these words from heaven: *“Dear child, all I want from you this Christmas is to accept the life you have been given, to love the people along your path, and to trust me, even in the most impossible situations.”*

Scene three: Church bells are ringing, calling people to worship. It is Christmas Eve. The waiting is over. Candles are lit and lifted high into the darkness. Songs are sung, “Joy to the world, the Lord has come.” A story is told- a story of a star shining bright, a manger humbly waiting, a baby being born, a promise freely given. It is a story of what happened some two thousand years ago in the small town of Bethlehem, but it is also a story of what is happening right now, right here in our own small town. For *“A virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel- which means 'God with us'”* (Matthew 1: 23) And in their worship the people claim that God is still with us, continually working in and through us, transforming us and the world we live in.

Last scene: An usher walks up the side isle of the church and hands the pastor a note that had been put in the offering plate. The pastor reads the note. It says, *“I have nothing to offer today but the hope for a better tomorrow.”* The end!