

# HEAVENLY HAROLD



*Sunday School Christmas Program*  
*Meet an older couple who welcome a mysterious stranger*  
*(Could he be an angel?)*  
*into their lonely home on Christmas Eve.*

# HEAVENLY HAROLD



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# HEAVENLY HAROLD



**HEAVENLY HAROLD** is an easy-to-prepare Sunday School Christmas Celebration. Feature children, teens and grown ups in separate small groups where they create a warm family celebration of Christmas. No memorization!

**HEAVENLY HAROLD** is rehearsed during Sunday School time by separate small groups under the leadership of their teachers. Gather the whole group for a final dress rehearsal and this Christmas program is set to go.

**HEAVENLY HAROLD** is a forty-five minute presentation sprinkled with humor, inspiration and the re-telling of the night Jesus was born. An older couple welcomes a mysterious stranger into their lonely home on Christmas Eve. And his name is "Harold". The audience knows Harold is an angel even though the couple has no idea.

**HEAVENLY HAROLD** audience sings Christmas Carols. Add a few special musical numbers by individuals or ensembles to complete the musical portion of the program.

**HEAVENLY HAROLD** concludes with a gathering for fellowship and food called CELEBRATE THE SEASON.

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## THE STORY...



Grammy Lou and Papa Grant are quietly celebrating Christmas Eve alone. This older Christian couple has a large family living far away. None of their children or grandchildren are able to come home for Christmas.

When Harold, a mysterious visitor, asks for a bit of warmth from the chill of the winter night and a cup of tea, they invite him into their home as a friend. They are then treated to surprise visits from Christmas carolers to church children. Even their grown up children and young grandchildren arrive to complete the

happy holiday. Grammy and Papa experience true love and the acceptance all people desire on this most wonderful day and it is all because they have entertained an "Angel Unaware".

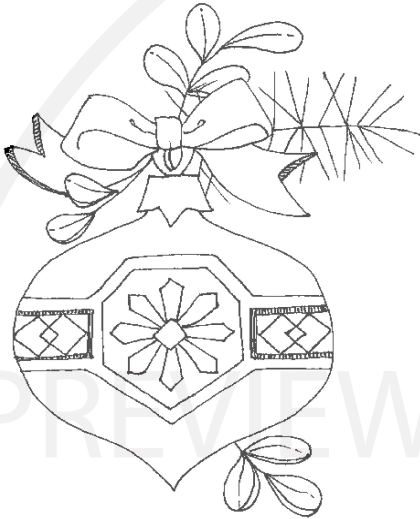
The Bethlehem story is central to the visit of each group represented by members of your Sunday School and small groups. The story of Jesus is told by each group adding their specific portion of the Christmas story.

Lou and Grant invite everyone to stay for a gigantic, old fashioned Christmas celebration. Mysterious Harold, who has been observing the activity with satisfaction, has disappeared much to the disappointment of the family. It is only at this point that our hosts realize they have been visited by an angel!





# CHRISTMAS DIRECTOR BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING!



*So you are the blessed person who has agreed to organize the small groups in your church into a holiday team of Christmas presenters. Trust me, you will survive and thrive as you meet the challenge of preparing an exciting, meaningful Christmas program for your church.*

Mold a variety of small groups into a well organized team. Make copies and assign individual program sections to Sunday School classes, church committees, groups of friends and individuals who agree to become part of the "Heavenly Harold" event.

Follow our easy directions. Ask small group leaders to organize their group complete with appropriate props or costumes suggested for their segment. Be prepared to help teachers/leaders but for the most part they should be able to handle their material. No memorization is necessary unless desired. The quality of the presentation will not be affected by the presence of scripts.

For some church members, programs presented by your local church comprise most, if not all, of their Christmas celebration. Do it for those folks!

It is very possible that as you read this you are thinking, "Why me? I cannot do this!" Put those feelings aside and dive into this charming presentation of Christmas as seen through the eyes of a lonely couple who want to worship the Birth of Christ with their nearest and dearest loved ones. May your holiday be blessed by this special touch that reminds everyone how much Christmas means to believers and how much the Bethlehem story can change lives.



**DELEGATE.** Sunday School teachers and small group leaders prepare their small groups for the program. Teachers will also be involved with speaking parts. Trust the staff to carry out their tasks. Never apologize when asking people to help. They will be blessed by their gift of time.

**PRACTICE A POSITIVE APPROACH.** Christmas is always busy but also exciting and meaningful. It is worth extra effort in the midst of personal family preparations and travel. Simple preparations will be appreciated by everyone. Statements like, *"We can't do it"*, *"We never did it this way"* or *"No one wants to do it"*, have no place in this exciting event. If the Christmas Director's attitude is right, even the grouchiest saint responds cheerfully!

**PRAY!** Pray for the staff, students and set-up. Take details before the Lord and then-RELAX! God is in control. You carry out the tasks at hand.

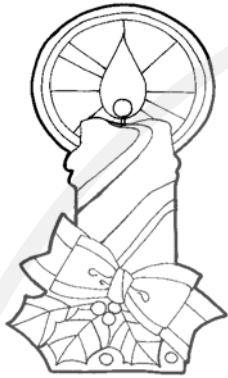
**PLAN!** Read this workbook. Make a personal copy and mark areas requiring special attention. List details you will handle personally. Give teachers and participants copies of their segments. It is a nice organizational touch to place each small group segment in a colorful folder.

**PREPARE!** Hopefully you have ordered **HEAVENLY HAROLD** with more than one month lead time. Copy materials for individual classes and assign responsibility for small group practice to each teacher. Some churches enjoy memorization and others avoid it. Except for the youngest non readers, it is possible to read all parts. If you desire memorization, lead time must be longer and more intensive rehearsal is essential.

**THIS IS AN ALL CHURCH PRODUCTION!  
INVOLVE ADULTS AS READERS, MUSICIANS AND LEADERS.  
ADAPT PROGRAM TO AVAILABLE PARTICIPANTS.**



# ADAPTING "HEAVENLY HAROLD" TO FIT YOUR CHURCH



*Preview specific small group segments and adapt the program to fit your local church needs. **HEAVENLY HAROLD** is designed to last forty five minutes to one hour, depending upon the time required for special music inserted as desired. **CELEBRATE THE SEASON** Party is not included in this time frame.*

## SMALL CHURCH

If your church is small (10-20 participants), consider removing segments requiring more people than available. Combine speaking parts so fewer people are needed. For combined age group classes, eliminate one presentation and feature the vignette you like best. Or, use the same students to present several sections. Grown ups are crucial to the small church presentation. Ask a variety of adults to participate.

## MEDIUM CHURCH

Adaptations take the form of personal preference. Choose segments you personally like best and eliminate the rest. The goal is to tell the Christmas story so don't leave out important story details! Or, present the program as written.

## LARGE CHURCH

Organize speakers, snack makers, servers, prop masters, sound and lighting staff and others who can make the program exciting. Use as many people as possible.

## CELEBRATE THE SEASON PARTY

Ask one Adult Sunday School class or the Women's Group or a group of friends to take complete responsibility for the party. They decorate, plan and prepare food and arrange clean up.



# CHRISTMAS MUSIC!



*Coordinate music with the church music director, organist and pianist. Each Christmas Carol is sung by the entire gathering. Include hymn book pages in a printed program or use a projection system for the audience.*

## CAROLS

Traditional Christmas Carols are suggested throughout the program. Change the carols to reflect personal favorites of your local congregation. If your Sunday School has an established Sunday School Opening, practice carols for three to four weeks prior to performance so children will be familiar with tunes and words.

## SPECIAL MUSIC

Sprinkle special music throughout the event. Feature local church and community talent. These musical options are NOT in the existing program and may be inserted where desired.

VOCAL SOLO  
VOCAL GROUP (Duet-Trio-Quartet)  
CHILDREN/ADULT CHOIR  
INSTRUMENTAL SOLO  
INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE  
HANDBELL/CHIME CHOIR





## STAGE AND PROPS



**HEAVENLY HAROLD** is a unique presentation featuring the Bethlehem Story as its centerpiece. Each small group carries their personal props on and off stage as needed.

**SET UP.** The church sanctuary will be decorated for Christmas. Christmas trees, Nativity scenes, twinkle lights, poinsettias, candles and other displays add to the festive atmosphere. Leave all items in place.

**STAGE.** Activity takes place in a humble living room. Arrange several comfortable chairs (3), end table with lamp, comfortable decorative items to make the living room look cozy. (Baskets, quilt, dog, pillows). An existing Christmas tree on stage can be incorporated into the scene by arranging the props around it.

**SEATING.** Reserve seating for classes and teachers before the audience enters the area. Rope off saved rows. Assign assistants to sit with younger children during the program.

**SOUND SYSTEM.** Use the existing sound system to its' best advantage. Place one or more microphones within easy reach. Students must be heard clearly. It will make the difference between a frustrating experience and a delightful event. Do not neglect this detail.

**LIGHTING.** Turn off normal lighting and overhead sanctuary lights. Light Christmas trees, candles and other mood lighting. Light a table lamp in the living room scene. Add spot lights on the floor if desired.



## CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES



**HEAVENLY HAROLD** requires a variety of simple costumes. Follow the directions in each segment for the best results. Most participants wear their own clothing including coats and hats.

### GRAMMY LOU AND PAPA GRANT

Choose an adult man and woman. If young, age them with wigs, glasses and dated clothing. If older, the couple may decide what to wear and how to act older.

The older couple is the glue that holds the program together. Very little rehearsal is required because these two characters introduce each small group with short introductory remarks.

### HEAVENLY HAROLD

This is our Angel in disguise who listens to the couple discuss their Christmas longings. With the help of the Lord, Harold quietly makes it happen. A male of any age can portray Heavenly Harold. A teen girl may fit the part well. Have fun with the angel character. Harold speaks and then hovers near the activity, watching the pleasure of each participant. Choose one of the following costume options to create a mysterious character:

**#1:** Dress Harold in old, tattered clothing. He could resemble a homeless person in desperate need of help. Place a large feather in his hat or pin on the sleeve of his coat.

**#2:** If choosing a younger person, dress him/her in an oversized sweatshirt, baggy jeans, tennis shoes and backward baseball cap with a large feather.

**#3:** Harold may appear as a mysterious detective wearing a long trench coat and fedora hat. Place a large feather in the fedora.



## CHILD USHERS

*Consider using a few students as ushers who hand out programs and seat people before the performance.*



Place children at each door and coach them to say, "Welcome to 'Heavenly Harold'. May I show you to your seat?" Or, "Where would you like to sit?" It is an added personal touch that is much appreciated by older members of the audience.

Meet with the chosen ushers before program day to explain how to be an usher, especially if young children are asked to participate in this special assignment. Assign each person a specific door and greeting.



After the program, ask participants to remain in costume at **CELEBRATE THE SEASON** Party. They may serve beverages, greet guests and wander through the area while people eat and talk.



# PUBLICITY

*Publicize HEAVENLY HAROLD through all normal church communication channels. Announce it in the church newsletter, the weekly worship bulletin and from the pulpit.*



## CHURCH BULLETIN AND NEWSLETTER

Inform the congregation about this special Christmas event. Print an announcement in November and December newsletters. If you plan the special **CELEBRATE THE SEASON** Party, let the people know there will be enjoyable Christian fellowship including food following the program.

## LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Inform the community about this special Christmas event. Include an announcement along with other church holiday programming. Talk to a newspaper reporter and photographer to see if a feature article is possible.

## TELEVISION AND RADIO

Consider advertising the event on your local cable advertising channel. Check it out! It may be one more avenue of great publicity!

## INVITATIONS

Inform non attenders of this special Christmas event. Send family invitations home with students. This is effective for families who send their children to your Sunday School but are not involved. Use real Christmas cards with invitations tucked inside!



# TEACHERS!

## PRAY! PREPARE! PRESENT!

ADAPT THIS PROGRAM TO FIT THE NEEDS OF YOUR GROUP



### INVOLVE STUDENTS

If you have more students than speaking parts, divide the existing parts so more people can be involved. If you have less students than parts, ask the available people to say two or three parts. Assign specific jobs of holding visuals, carrying props and assisting younger children.

### HIGHLIGHT INDIVIDUAL PARTS

Will your students memorize their speaking parts or read them? All students can memorize scripture verses and say the verse in unison. If your students read their parts, back individual copies with colorful paper and/or Christmas shapes. Performance copies must remain clean.

### PRACTICE WITH YOUR CLASS

Rehearse during Sunday School in the weeks before the program. Use the first few minutes of class time to practice and discuss costuming and props. Assign specific tasks and remind them often. Adapt the segment to fit your small group. Make changes as needed.

### COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS

Let parents know when to have their children at formal rehearsals and the performance. Invite them to attend and be sure they know what props or costuming their child needs. Collect props and store them in the classroom before performance day.

**THE CHRISTMAS DIRECTOR APPRECIATES YOUR LEADERSHIP!**





## SHOW UP WITH A SMILE AND HELPFUL ATTITUDE!

Meet your class for the Processional. Dress in appropriate costumes in a back room, line up according to specific instructions and enter the sanctuary as directed. Sit with your class in the designated area. Lead them on and off stage. Perform your own speaking part with enthusiasm. Coach students quietly if they have problems speaking their parts. Stage fright is not uncommon!

## AFTER THE PROGRAM

Plan to stay for **CELEBRATE THE SEASON** Party. Collect props and program materials before your students attend the party. Ask students who are in costume to remain as they are for the gathering. Mingle with party goers and enjoy the experience with your students and their families.

## IF YOU NEED HELP

The Christmas Director is available if you need help but you will be responsible to have your students ready to participate. The program will come together at the last moment with little formal large group rehearsal.

## ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to touch the lives of children and adults. Take time to enjoy your small part of the bigger picture. The Jesus Story is classic and life changing. The spiritual experience lasts for eternity!



# HEAVENLY HAROLD AT A GLANCE

*All Christmas Carols are sung by audience and participants.  
Insert your own local special musical numbers as desired.  
Change Carols as desired.*



## PRELUDE/PROCESSION

CHRISTMAS DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION  
"We Wish You A Merry Christmas"

## HAROLD SHOWS UP

Adult Carolers  
"It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"

## NURSERY AND PRESCHOOL CLASS

THE BABY IS BORN!  
"Away In A Manger"

## KINDERGARTEN

RING THOSE BELLS!  
"Go Tell It On The Mountain"

## GRADES ONE AND TWO

LIGHT UP THE WORLD!  
"Angels We Have Heard On High"

## GRADES THREE AND FOUR

THE STORY'S IN THE BOOK!  
"Silent Night"



**GRADES FIVE AND SIX**  
HAPPY, HAPPY, JOY, JOY!  
"Joy To The World"

**GRADES SEVEN-NINE**  
RUMORS OF ANGELS  
"Hark The Herald Angels Sing"

**GRADES TEN-TWELVE**  
THE PRESENCE OF PRESENTS

**OLD FRIENDS**  
GOTTA FLY!

**YOUNG COUPLES WITH CHILDREN**  
WE'RE HOME!

**CONCLUSION**  
CHRISTMAS CAROL MEDLEY  
CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY

**CELEBRATE THE SEASON PARTY!**





## HEAVENLY HAROLD

ALL PARTICIPANTS ENTER THE SANCTUARY  
AS A CHRISTMAS PRELUDE IS PLAYED BY  
CHURCH MUSICIANS.

### CHRISTMAS DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

*(From the center of the empty stage)* Come and meet two dear friends of mine. They have lived in our town many years. In fact, I cannot remember a time without them in our church. They are getting along in years and they spend more time in their comfortable living room in a tiny house just around the corner from our church.

**INTRODUCE GRAMMY LOU:** This is Grammy Lou. *(Grammy Lou enters and makes her way slowly and painfully to her chair.)* This is the first Christmas none of her children are able to visit. You know how it goes. The weather is bad, the children are busy and the boss won't give time off.

Lou loves Jesus. She taught my Sunday School Nursery class. She took her turn teaching elementary kids and I got her again in third grade. That's the year our class dressed as angels for the Christmas pageant. She carefully arranged her little angels on a tippy platform that fell apart during the performance. There were angels "flying" all over the place! We laughed, the audience laughed and Christmas pageants have never been that much fun since.

It was about the time I got to Junior High that Lou taught our seventh grade class. Come to think of it, just about everything I know about Jesus I learned from Grammy Lou. I sure do love her.



**INTRODUCE PAPA GRANT:** Here comes Papa Grant. (*Papa Grant enters slowly, turns on a light, pats Grammy Lou on the shoulder and sits down to read the newspaper.*) What a guy! He can laugh louder and longer than anyone I know.

One Christmas the guys here at church were installing a huge Christmas star on the steeple. There was Papa Grant hanging higher than the rest of them! And that was after he retired from the railroad.

That guy can pray too! One year our church was threatened by financial ruin. Papa Grant organized 24 hour prayer watches until the crisis passed. We're still here! God answered those prayers.

Sigh! They are alone this Christmas. I wish we could help them. Maybe some of you can visit and....I know....let's cheer them up by singing "We Wish You A Merry Christmas". Maybe they will hear us if we sing with love in our hearts.

**SING WITH AUDIENCE: (No instruments needed)**

**WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS.  
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS.  
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**CHRISTMAS DIRECTOR LEAVES THE STAGE.**





## HAROLD SHOWS UP

**CHARACTERS:** GRAMMY LOU, PAPA GRANT, HAROLD, ADULT CAROLERS  
*Scripts may be held on laps, behind newspapers or in an open Bible.*



GRAMMY: Papa, do you hear the singing? There must be Christmas Carolers down the street. Quick! Look out the door.

PAPA: Now Lou, stay calm. I'll open the door. You wrap up in the afghan. No chills tonight, deary. This is Christmas and we are going to celebrate Jesus' Birthday happy (*shaking finger at her*) ...and healthy!

(*Look in the distance*) Appears there are a few folks down at Burke's house. It's snowing hard. I suppose they'll make their way up the street. Whoa Nellie! What have we here? (*Shouting*) Hey fella!!! Come in here! Yeah, you! I won't hurt you. Come in here a minute and get warm.

### **PAPA HOLDS ONTO AN OBVIOUSLY COLD STRANGER AS HE STUMBLES INTO THE LIVING ROOM.**

GRAMMY: Oh gracious mercy, Papa! What have you done? Who is this? Dear Lord, keep us safe!

PAPA: It's okay, deary. This man appears bewildered by the storm. He just needs a touch of warmth on this cold Christmas Eve. Where are you headed, young fella?

HAROLD: Thank you for your kindness, sir. If I can have a cup of hot tea, I'll won't bother you. If that's too much, let me stand and look at your Christmas tree. I have important business in your neighborhood this evening.



# Heavenly Harold

PAPA: Sit! Christmas Eve business should wait until the day after Christmas. We have a bit of leftover chicken and a cup of hot chocolate. We are not expecting guests this night and we always enjoy a bit of friendly conversation.

**HAROLD SETTLES INTO A CHAIR.**

**ADULT CHRISTMAS CAROLERS ENTER DRESSED  
IN WARM COATS, HATS, MITTENS AND SCARVES.**

**CAROLERS GREET THE COUPLE CHEERFULLY AND SING A CHRISTMAS CAROL.  
"It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"**

GRAMMY: What a wonderful surprise! I see you over there, Tommy. I remember you when you were in my Sunday School class. My but you have grown—and to think you have children of your own.

PAPA: *(Ushering them off stage. Calling after them....)* Be sure to stop over at Bert's house. She could use a little Christmas cheeriness. She's getting older you know and can't get out much now that she's alone.

**CAROLERS WALK BACK THE CENTER AISLE  
SINGING THE SAME CAROL AS THEY LEAVE.**



## NURSERY AND PRESCHOOL CLASS THE BABY IS BORN!

Teacher and students are dressed in coats, hats, mittens and scarves.



PAPA: Forgive me, sir. What was your name?

HAROLD: You can call me Harold, just Harold. Yes, that's what I like best....Harold.

GRAMMY: Do you know Jesus, Harold?

HAROLD: Let's not talk about me. I'm just a stranger who will come and go. Let's talk about you. What are your Christmas plans?

PAPA: We wanted to see our grand babies but our daughter called when the storm blew through. She's afraid to drive in the drifts.

GRAMMY: I miss seeing their little faces. I put candy canes on the tree for them too. Christmas isn't the same without a little one in the house. They remind me of Baby Jesus in the manger.

HAROLD: *(Thoughtfully)* So...you would like to see the little ones, huh? *(Looking up)* I think that can be arranged.

### **KNOCK ON THE DOOR. PAPA ANSWERS.**

PAPA: Lou! Look here, it's *(insert teacher name)* and all the little ones. They have come to see their old Grammy and Papa after all.

GRAMMY: Oh thank you, Lord. I'm so happy they came. Come in. Come in and hug me, precious Christmas children!

**NURSERY/PRESCHOOL CLASS ENTER WITH THEIR TEACHER.  
EACH CHILD CARRIES A BABY DOLL WRAPPED IN A BLANKET.  
DRESS EACH CHILD IN THEIR FAVORITE PAJAMAS AND SLIPPERS.**



TEACHER: Merry Christmas Mom and Dad! I got the car moving through the snow after all. We couldn't miss Christmas Eve. It's late but the children want to sing their Christmas song to you. They have been practicing for weeks!

**CHILDREN SING "AWAY IN THE MANGER" TO GRAMMY AND PAPA.**

*Away In the manger, no crib for a bed.  
The little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay.  
The Little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.*

*(To the children....)* On the night Jesus was born in the stable in Bethlehem, His mother wrapped Him in soft cloths and placed Him in a small manger where animals ate their food. Baby Jesus didn't care. He was cozy and warm just like you feel with your favorite blanket at home.

GRAMMY: How sweet. I think I'm going to cry. Wasn't that sweet Harold? Harold? Are you crying too?

HAROLD: *(Sniffling)* That song brings back sweet memories. Did you know the night Jesus was born was crisp and clear? The blanket Mary carried from Nazareth was soft and dove gray. That little boy's eyes were bright and smiling even then. I must admit, he did cry...especially when He was hungry.

Ahem! Well, none of that now. Yes, I was deeply touched by your little grandchildren and their Christmas song.

TEACHER: The children are getting sleepy. Since they have their favorite blankets and baby dolls, could we sleep in the bedroom at the top of the stairs? Then we'll be here for the big Christmas breakfast.

PAPA: It's a good thing that old room is so big. There are plenty of old quilts to spread on the floor. And get the fluffy pillows from the closet. Good night, children. We are so glad you came to see us and sing your song. There will be candy canes in the morning!

CHILDREN: Yea! Merry Christmas Grammy and Papa!

**CHILDREN AND TEACHER LEAVE THE STAGE TOGETHER,  
WAVING AND HUGGING GRANDPARENTS AS THEY GO.**



# KINDERGARTEN RING THOSE BELLS!

**GRAMMY LOU AND PAPA GRANT FALL ASLEEP IN THEIR CHAIRS.  
HAROLD ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE IN A CONFIDENTIAL TONE.**



HAROLD: Look at them. It's a good thing they are resting because they are about to receive a rush of Christmas love not seen since the First Christmas Night. And I ought to know, I was there!

By the way, it is true you can call me Harold but perhaps you know me better by my full name, (*Bowing...*) I am HARK, THE HERALD ANGEL. Nice to meet cha'!

(*PACING...*) Let see. How can we do this so Lou and Grant are not suspicious of their visitors? Maybe if they think they are dreaming they won't suspect the Christmas surprises I have planned for them.

**HAROLD WAVES HIS HAND OVER THE SLEEPING COUPLE,  
SMILES AND NODS TO THE AUDIENCE.**

Yes, that will do nicely. Now, let's get on with the show!

**GRAMMY AND PAPA WAKE UP AS THE CHILDREN ARRIVE ON STAGE.  
CHILDREN ARE DRESSED IN COATS AND HATS.  
THEY CARRY BELLS OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES.**

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER: Come in, children. Grammy and Papa have been sleeping but I bet we can wake them up with some amazing bell ringing!

**CONGREGATION AND CHILDREN SING: "GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN"  
CHILDREN ACCOMPANY ORGAN/PIANO WITH THE RINGING OF BELLS**





# Heavenly Harold

GRAMMY: Wow, that was amazing! Loud, but amazing! I love the sound of bells at Christmas. Do you remember when we rode in a one horse open sleigh? We went to church that beautiful Christmas Eve the year before we were married. I can still hear those jingle bells.

PAPA: Hitching up that cranky horse was no small job. He wanted to stay in his warm stable. I wonder if the animals in the Bethlehem stable thought it strange to have a human family sleeping with them the night Jesus was born.

HAROLD: As I recall, the stable animals were only thinking of their next meal. I had to push that stubborn donkey out of the way so I could fit in the corner. The Village Inn was comfortable as I recall. The Innkeeper seemed a little rushed. He waved Mary and Joseph toward the cave and collected his money.

## KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS LEAVE THE STAGE.

**WALK TO THE BACK OF THE ROOM AND EXIT RINGING THE BELLS.**

GRAMMY: I'm so sleepy. I think I'll close my eyes for a few moments.

PAPA: *(Yawning)* Me too. Harold, we're not very gracious hosts. There's food in the frig and there's a pillow on the shelf. Maybe you would enjoy a nap.



# GRADES ONE AND TWO LIGHT UP THE WORLD



HAROLD TO THE AUDIENCE: Over two thousand years ago a Baby Boy was born in ancient Judea. His birth and life was destined to affect countless millions of people.

The time for His birth was just right. Roman roads were built in the civilized world to carry the feet of His messengers. The Greek language was almost universal for the proclamation of His message. His people were poor and down trodden by the conquering Roman Empire.

In the heart of every man, woman and child was a cry for deliverance. And so He came, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, God becoming Man for all mankind.

GRADE ONE-TWO TEACHER: *(From the audience)* Harold, are you ready for us? We want to visit Grammy and Papa too! My kids want to "light up" the world with the message of the birth of Jesus.

HAROLD: I almost forgot you. I was lost in thought. Come on in. Grammy, Papa....you have guests. Wake up!

**STUDENTS ENTER WEARING THEIR CHRISTMAS BEST,  
HALOS AND CARRY LIGHTED FLASHLIGHTS.**

*(Make halos from Christmas garland/tinsel. Tape two ends together in a circle and lay gently in the hair of each student.)*



## STUDENTS AND AUDIENCE SING "ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH"

Students shine their bright flashlights all around the darkened room.

Use as many students as available for speaking parts.  
If there are only two or three children, divide the parts  
between them. If there are more, assign accordingly.  
No memorization. They may read their short parts.

STUDENT #1: There were shepherds in a field just outside Bethlehem.

STUDENT #2: All of a sudden there was a great light!

STUDENT #3: You mean like my flashlight?

HAROLD: No! Much better than a flashlight! The shepherds looked up and there were angels all around them. It was quite impressive I might add. We practiced for weeks and everyone wore their best gown—even me!

STUDENT #4: You wore a dress?!?

HAROLD: We like to call them ROBES. Mine was blue and hung to about here (*gesturing...*) Oh, never mind. Trust me, the message was what was important.

STUDENT #5: The head angel said, "Don't be afraid! I bring you the best news every and it is for everyone. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born tonight in Bethlehem. How will you recognize Him? You will find a baby wrapped in a blanket, lying in a manger."



# Heavenly Harold

HAROLD: Very good. Suddenly Head Angel was joined by hundreds, no-thousands, no-millions of other angels. They were standing shoulder to shoulder, the armies of heaven, praising God.

TEACHER: We know what they said! Let's tell him, class.

IN UNISON: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth for all those pleasing Him."

HAROLD: You know this story as good as I do. Why, someone might think you were actually there the night Jesus was born.

STUDENT #6: Harold, it sounds like YOU were there the night Jesus was born!

HAROLD: SSSHHHH! Get moving you little rug rats. You're going to spoil everything.

**STUDENTS LEAVE THE STAGE TOGETHER.**



# GRADES THREE AND FOUR THE STORY'S IN THE BOOK!



GRADES 3-4 ENTER WEARING THEIR CHRISTMAS BEST AND CARRYING BIBLES. THE GROUP SITS ON THE FLOOR SURROUNDING THE COUPLE. HAROLD STANDS IN ONE CORNER WATCHING AND NODDING APPROVAL.

Use as many students as available  
for speaking parts.

If there are only two or three students,  
divide the parts between them.

If there are more, split parts  
so everyone has something to say.

GRAMMY: I hear that knock on my door. Come in. You can practice your Christmas parts in my living room just as well as anywhere. I am proud of the way you read God's Word for yourselves.

TEACHER: God comes to us in the strangest places. You and I would not have brought Jesus into the world by God's way. I would have picked an important city for a Baby King to be born, like Jerusalem. God's choice? Crowded little Bethlehem of Judea.

STUDENT #1: I never would choose a dirty stable with horses and cows and donkeys and sheep all over the place. Jesus deserved the best doctors and nurses in town or at least the Holiday Inn Express.





STUDENT #2: Luke 2:15 says after the angels went back to heaven, the shepherds were on the move. "When this great army of angels had returned again to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, 'Come on! Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this wonderful thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.'"

STUDENT #3: Luke 2:16 says "They ran to the village and found their way to Mary and Joseph. And there was the Baby, lying in the manger."

STUDENT #4: Barns are messy. I wish Jesus had been placed in a homemade cradle with silky sheets and a tiny white pillow. Did you know a manger is where animals eat their food? Yuck!

HAROLD: It wasn't so bad. There was a hotel owner in Bethlehem. He was good at his job but his hotel was small. Bethlehem was overflowing with tourists. Everyone was ordered to go to their hometowns to register their names on a list. It was the law. No one was happy about it. The hotel guy must have said a hundred times, "I should have put that extra room out back like I wanted to last year."

TEACHER: But he hadn't so there he was, too many tourists and too little space. He saw the girl was about to have her baby and he gave the young couple the best spot he could think of. The stable was better than the crowded courtyard. I'm sure Mary and Joseph were glad to have the privacy.

HAROLD: And the stable came with a serving girl, hot water, clean cloths and a baby bed. Well, almost a baby bed. It was a feeding trough for animals and it was a perfect fit for a newborn baby.



STUDENT #5: I like the song we are going to sing for the Christmas program. It sounds like a lullaby. If we sing it quietly, maybe the audience will understand how important that Silent Night was.

**CONGREGATION AND STUDENTS SING  
"SILENT NIGHT" TOGETHER.**

TEACHER: That was beautiful. I will be so proud of you at the Christmas program this year. Look, Grammy has fallen asleep. Let's tiptoe out as quietly as we can.

STUDENTS: (*Whispering together...*) Goodbye Harold!

HAROLD: (*Whispering...*) Remember kids, the miracle of the manger is that God got a voice all people understand. Forevermore, when anyone looks at the Bethlehem manger, they shall say, "God is like that". Goodbye gang. It was really nice to meet you!



# GRADES FIVE AND SIX HAPPY, HAPPY, JOY, JOY!

STUDENTS ENTER WEARING HATS, MITTENS, SCARFS  
AND WINTER COATS.



Use as many students as available  
for speaking parts.

If there are only two or three students, divide  
the parts between them.

If there are more, split parts  
so everyone has something to say.

PAPA: I don't know why I am so sleepy. People  
come and go and yet I feel like I am dreaming.  
The music sounds beautiful but far away.

HAROLD: *(To the audience)* We all agree that you and I would have  
chosen a grander place for the birth of Jesus God did it God's way  
and for God's own reasons.

TEACHER *(Peeking around the corner)* Hey, Harold! Is it safe to come  
in? We were hoping to sing to Grammy and Papa before the storm  
gets worse.

HAROLD: Sure! Come on in.

STUDENTS ENTER WITH TEACHER

STUDENT #1: As I was saying, I think we should discuss the whole  
concept of a loving God providing a sacrificial lamb for sinful people  
of earth.



ALL STUDENTS: Bor-ing!

STUDENT #2: Come on. I don't even understand what you are talking about. Keep it simple. When Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph were the happiest people on earth. None of the Bethlehem tourists guessed that God's plan was coming alive. No one dreamed the Savior God promised had been born right there, in town!

STUDENT #3: Only Joseph and Mary knew God's secret. And they were poor, young and clueless!

STUDENT #4: I love it that God did not send the Messiah to the smartest people.

STUDENT #5: Or the richest or the most powerful or to the most religious people! Jesus was born in a humble cave, not inside a warm palace, and yet...the joy from that baby's birthday has been the good news that everyone has longed to hear.

STUDENT #6: Look! Grammy and Papa are still sleeping. They didn't even hear us arguing.

STUDENT #7: Hey, this is a great chance to wake somebody up and be religious at the same time. Let's sing our Christmas carol with gusto! In fact (*turning to audience*), everybody join in!

## CONGREGATION AND STUDENTS SING "JOY TO THE WORLD"

**WHILE EVERYONE SINGS, GRAMMY AND PAPA WAKE UP  
AND JOIN THE SINGING WITH ENTHUSIASM.**

PAPA: Wow, what a great Christmas song! That sure woke us up. I



# Heavenly Harold

wonder if music in Heaven will be like the wonderful music we sing on earth.

HAROLD: Trust me, you haven't heard anything like the music in Heaven. Why it's inspirational...awesome...majestic....

PAPA: How do you know, Harold?

HAROLD: Hmmm, just guessing! Well kids, Isn't it time for you to be on your way home now? Don't you have a few more houses to visit before the night is over? Say goodbye and be on your way.

**STUDENTS SAY GOODBYE, HUG AND SHAKE HANDS  
WITH THE COUPLE AS THEY LEAVE THE STAGE.**



# GRADES SEVEN-NINE RUMORS OF ANGELS

Junior High students enter wearing coats, hats, mittens, scarves.



Use as many students as available  
for speaking parts.

If there are only two or three students,  
divide the parts between them

If there are more, spit parts  
so everyone has something to say.

STUDENT #1: Rumor has it that there an angel  
visiting Grammy and Papa tonight. I can't  
believe it myself but our Sunday School class  
has been studying Christmas angels and this  
might be a good opportunity to see a real, live  
Heavenly Angel!

TEACHER: Don't forget that Christians are not to search out angel  
experiences. If God wants us to see an angel, He will arrange it.

STUDENT #2: (*Nervously*) I don't think I like this. Maybe we should just  
go home and wrap a few more presents.

STUDENT #3: Oh, Hi Papa! No one answered your door and we  
thought we'd better check on you. There have been some  
disturbing rumors going around town tonight.

PAPA: We are doing great. In fact, we haven't slept this good in  
years. Why would you think we need help?





STUDENT #4: Let's get right to it. Papa, is there an angel visiting you tonight?

STUDENT #5: You can't just walk in and ask somebody something like that. We have been talking so much about Christmas angels in Sunday School that we must have angels on our mind.

GRAMMY: Mercy no, children. The only person here tonight is our new friend Harold. Say hello to Harold. He needs a few friends.

IN UNISON: Hi Harold.

STUDENT #6: Harold, have you seen any angels around here?

HAROLD: Ummm, well, what do you think an angel should look like?

STUDENT #7: (*Eagerly raising hand in air...*) I know! I know! An angel is huge, at least 10 feet tall. He glows. He has huge wings that flap when he flies. Angels wear halos and fly around all day looking for people to help.

HAROLD: Very interesting. Any chance you could be wrong?

STUDENT #7: Nope. I'm never wrong.

HAROLD: Okay then, I guess I haven't seen any angels around here today. How about you?

GRAMMY: No, we haven't seen anything like that. Just Harold and a bunch of kids and some Christmas carolers. Sorry.

STUDENT #8: I told you guys this was crazy. Let's go home. There's no such thing as angels.



HAROLD: Hold on there, young fella. I wouldn't say that. Maybe God makes His angels look more like, more like...well, like you!

ALL STUDENTS: *(Looking at each other)* Nah!

STUDENT #9: All I know is we are ready to sing about angels and *(pointing to audience)* you can all join in.

## CONGREGATION AND STUDENTS SING "HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING"

While everyone sings, Harold sings with great gusto and moves from spot to spot putting arms around shoulders of singers. When in the back, Harold proudly points to himself and makes flying motions with his arms. Have fun with it, Harold!

HAROLD: Oohhh, I like that song. In fact, I think that's my favorite Christmas song. *(Singing alone...)* "Hark, The Herald Angel Sings...." That's my favorite part!

STUDENT #10: Who is this guy anyway?

STUDENT #11: Give it up. There are no angels here. They are kidding around with us. It is obvious that Grammy and Papa are just entertaining a friend for the holidays. Let's go!

HAROLD: *(Laughing...)* Bye! You can "fly in" any time! Just "wing" us up before you come. Don't forget to say "Ha-lo"!

STUDENTS: *(Shake heads in disgust as you leave the stage.)*



# GRADES TEN-TWELVE THE PRESENCE OF PRESENTS

Students enter wearing their Christmas best and carrying small wrapped gifts.



Use as many students as available  
for speaking parts.

If there are only two or three students,  
divide the parts between them.

If there are more, split parts  
so everyone has something to say.

STUDENT #1: Merry Christmas, folks! The door was unlocked so we're popping into bring a few gifts and join the party.

STUDENT #2: Word on the street is that there's a pretty good party going on here. Where's the food?

GRAMMY: Come in! Come in! Meet Harold. He's a wonderful visitor and you'll enjoy our little party.

STUDENT #3: My mom and dad sent you a gift for under your tree. They said you can't open it until tomorrow morning. It's not much but we wanted to tell you we love you.

ALL STUDENTS: Here's more! Merry Christmas! *(Fill their laps with the wrapped gifts.)*

GRAMMY AND PAPA: *(Together)* Presents! Thank you! How



thoughtful. We never expected this.

HAROLD: Yes, how thoughtful. (*Looking upward in prayer....*) And, Thank You!

TEACHER: I drove everyone over after our last Christmas lesson. The kids were surprised to learn the Wise Men were not part of the Bethlehem night. They followed the star and brought perfect presents to Jesus later.

STUDENT #4: Mary and Joseph needed money to tide them over during the years they spent hiding in Egypt. Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh sound weird but in those days, they were the perfect gifts.

STUDENT #5: And to think they found Jesus after following a star in the sky. My astronomy teacher would be impressed.

HAROLD: You know, I always thought of them as wise "guys". They even threw old King Herod off track. That evil man was so scared of a "newborn king" that he had all baby boys killed in the area. That old codger was a piece of work.

If he could think a bad thought or do a bad deed, he did. His idea of a good day was making everyone else miserable. He didn't get Jesus though! We outsmarted him. Wise men leave town fast, gifts get to Jesus, Wise men go home a different way, Herod gets no information. Mary and Joseph and Jesus head for Egypt. All in a day's work. Chalk up one for the good guys.

PAPA: Harold, I'm beginning to wonder about you. You seem to think you have met all these folks in the Christmas story.

GRAMMY: Take his temperature. Do you have a fever? Lie over here until you feel better.



# Heavenly Harold

HAROLD: Sorry, I just ramble on. You know, mouth in motion before brain in gear. (*Looking upward...*) Help me keep my big mouth shut, Lord.

STUDENT #6: Whatever road the Wise Men took from Bethlehem, one thing is for sure, they were never the same after they met Jesus. No one ever travels the same path after coming to Jesus.

STUDENT #7: Once we find Bethlehem, bow down before the Savior and surrender our life to Him, He tops *our* present with an incomparable present of His own, salvation.

STUDENT #8: The Wise Men brought Jesus the world's riches but Jesus gave them something priceless, a vision of an abundant life that they could claim that very day. Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10b) He does the same for you and me right now.

TEACHER: You are well on the way to being "wise guys" yourselves. We've delivered our presents. It's time to go back to my house and party! Who wants cookies and hot chocolate?

STUDENTS: We do!!! Bye! Merry Christmas!



## OLD FRIENDS GOTTA FLY!



Adult classes (the more the merrier) enter in their coats, hats and scarves carrying trays of cookies and fruit. In the confusion of many people entering, Harold has the perfect opportunity to disappear.

HAROLD: I think I'm ready to fly—umm—I mean, be on my way. Thank you for being wonderful hosts. God bless you!

GRAMMY: Don't go. We have so many questions to ask you. Where did you grow up? Where are you going?

**KNOCK ON DOOR.**

HAROLD: I'll get it! We'll talk later. *(To the audience)* Much later!

OLD FRIENDS: Merry Christmas, friends! Good to see you! How are you? We've come for a party!

PAPA: Don't you have families to greet and dinners to cook?

FRIEND #1: Do you think we'd let you spend Christmas alone? Why didn't you tell us your children couldn't come home? We would have planned a big shindig!

FRIEND #2: Lou, I'm ashamed of you. I'm your best friend and you





never said a word.

GRAMMY: We didn't want to worry you. We were having fun looking at pictures and telling old stories. And we met a new friend.

PAPA: Let us introduce you to Harold. Hey Harold, come over here and meet our old friends. Harold? HAROLD?

FRIEND #3: I didn't see anybody named Harold.

GRAMMY: Sure you did. He answered the door. He's a big guy wearing old clothes.

PAPA: No, Lou. He's a little guy with a suit, and a hat, and a feather.

FRIEND #4: You folks need a rest. There was no one of any description here. We just walked in on our own.

PAPA: He couldn't have been my imagination. We both saw him. The Sunday School kids saw him. *(Turn to the classes in their seats)* Didn't you? *(Let them respond)* Or...were we sleeping?

FRIEND #5: There were no footprints on the sidewalk when we arrived. I don't' think anyone's been here all night.

GRAMMY: An angel! The Lord must have sent an angel on Christmas Eve. Harold...Harold Angel...Hark, the Herald Angel! He said that was his favorite song!

FRIEND #6: Let me tell you something that happened years ago. My family's Christmas table was set and turkey aroma filled the house. It was beautiful and I was content. One of the children announced, "Someone is coming".



We saw an old man trudging up the driveway. Holding an old overcoat to his body to keep the wind away, he came through the snow as we watched.

I let someone else answer the door. My grandfather was indignant that a derelict person would intrude on our perfect Christmas. He opened the door, "Go away. Can't you see we're having Christmas! Go away!" And the old man went away. He turned around and walked down the driveway, down the road, still grasping his coat about him.

As years went by, the children grew up as children will do. I grew older and retired with my own grandchildren around me. Holidays are happy except for one grief for which there seems to be no cure.

I cannot forget the man I allowed to be turned away from my home that Christmas Day. I still wonder if the old man withstood the cold. Did anyone help him? I have tried to make up for my unloveliness by doing as many good deeds as I can but I cannot seem to make the pain disappear. It happened a long time ago, but I still feel his pain.

PAPA: Did he happen to say his name was....Harold?

FRIEND #6: (Thoughtfully) Come to think of it....

GRAMMY: Mercy! We have been visited by an angel!

**OLD FRIENDS EXIT QUIETLY. HUGGING AND SAYING "GOOD NIGHT".**



# YOUNG COUPLES WITH CHILDREN WE'RE HOME!

Group enters wearing coats, hats, scarves, carrying wrapped gifts.



Use as many people as available for speaking parts. If there are only two or three, divide the parts between them. If there are more, split parts so everyone has something to say.

**KNOCK ON THE DOOR.**

**COUPLES AND YOUNG CHILDREN ENTER HAPPILY  
AND LOUDLY.**

ALL: Merry Christmas Mom and Dad. We're home!

GRAMMY: Oh my dear children. You came home. Harold helped you get here, didn't he? He saved the best for last!

#1: Why yes, Harold called. He told me airline tickets were waiting at the airport. I assumed you left them there for us.

#2: I got a letter with some money in it from someone named Harold. It was just enough to get me here on the train.

#3: Harold called and told me I didn't have to work Christmas Day after all. We jumped in the car and arrived a few minutes ago.

#4: Harold told me it wouldn't feel like Christmas unless we came home. So here we are. We have arrived!



**THE CONCLUSION MAY BE SPOKEN BY THE CHRISTMAS DIRECTOR, PASTOR, GRAMMY, PAPA OR AS MANY FOLKS AS DESIRED. (Stand center front with the party continuing in the background)**

So that's the Christmas story of "Heavenly Harold". Was he an angel? Was he a down and out person with a special connection to Heaven? Was he a friend in disguise? Whoever he was, he took care of my dear friends, Lou and Grant, when they needed it.

Isn't that what Christmas is about? Just when the world needed Him, God sent His only Son, Jesus, to rescue us from sin. His birth brought hope from despair.

As we celebrate Christmas, remember those around you who need to feel the presence of Christ. You may be the only person who can bring Jesus close to those you love. Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, angels, wise men and even the frustrated innkeeper were privileged to be part of the world's most wonderful event. They couldn't begin to understand what the life of Jesus would mean to every human being across the ages of time.

The Baby's purpose did not end that night. Jesus died on a Cross thirty three years later, misunderstood by the very people He came to save. They thought if they could just get rid of Him, they could go back to their pathetic lives—guilt free. They did kill Jesus but He flashed out of the cold tomb and provides you and me the eternal life He promised when we accept Him as our Savior....but that's another holiday!

Well, I have a great party to attend. And you are all invited too. We have called it CELEBRATE THE SEASON PARTY but you can just call it...fun. If I were you, I wouldn't miss it. There's going to be FOOD! Merry Christmas! And, by the way.....Harold?



# Heavenly Harold

HAROLD: *(Appearing from the back and walking down the center aisle) Ye-e-s?*

DIRECTOR: Can you stick around for the party?

HAROLD: Gotta Fly! Merry Christmas! God Bless you one and all!  
*(Runs quickly out the back of the room.)*

**CONCLUDE WITH A VARIETY OF FAVORITE CHRISTMAS CAROLS.**

**A WONDERFUL CONCLUSION IS A QUIET CANDLELIGHT SERVICE  
LED BY THE PASTOR WHILE EVERYONE SINGS.**

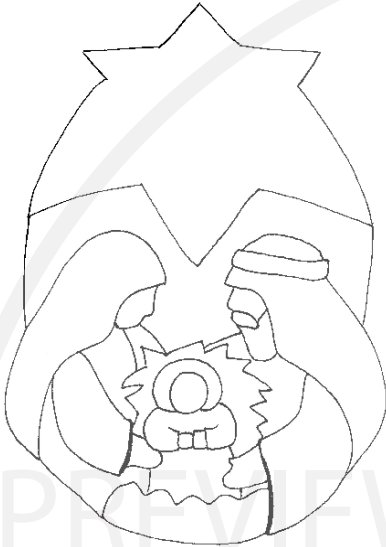
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## CELEBRATE THE SEASON PARTY!



Assign one small group the responsibility of preparing CELEBRATE THE SEASON PARTY. This could be a few men and women hand picked for this purpose or an individual adult Sunday School class.

Offer delicious desserts, Christmas music and casual fellowship.

### PREPARATIONS BEFORE PARTY DAY



**Menu:** Plan the menu and prepare a Christmas cake. A pleasant option may be to ask people to bring their favorite Christmas dessert to share.

*If this is a Sunday Morning event, consider serving a Continental Breakfast complete with doughnuts, orange juice and coffee/tea.*

**Seating:** Decide the best arrangement for seating depending upon the size of the anticipated gathering. Position tables and chairs and serve buffet style with guests standing and moving around the room to chat. Place a few chairs in small circles throughout the area for casual conversation.

**Music:** Provide background Christmas music. This could be live music performed by local church musicians or CD's. Organize a small group of musicians who play various instruments just for this party.





**Centerpieces:** Cover tables as desired. Christmas centerpieces should be featured on each table. Since angels are a prominent theme, consider angel figurines, candles and a few white feathers.

## PREPARATIONS ON PARTY DAY



Decorate serving tables and guest tables. Plug in the coffee pot and put tea water on to boil while the program is in progress. Set out desserts, cream and sugar. Make your favorite Christmas Punch and place on a nearby serving table.

## DURING THE PARTY



Assign people to cut and serve desserts, pour beverages and refill creamers and sugar bowls as needed. Greet guests cordially as they come through the serving line. Move about the group to be sure everyone feels welcome. Find seats for those who may not be familiar with your church. Introduce people. Program participants mingle still dressed in costume.

## AFTER THE PARTY



Don't forget! CELEBRATE THE SEASON PARTY is not over until clean up is complete. Ask everyone to help with dishes, removing tables and chairs and sweeping the area clean.

**GO HOME KNOWING YOU HAVE BEEN  
A GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT.  
CHRIST IS BORN! ISN'T IT HEAVENLY?**

