

**ADVENT:
MESSAGES FROM
THE NOT QUITE
PRIME TIME
ANGELS**

by Linda S. Allen



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An Advent Play

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SYNOPSIS: Christmas is a season of the year that can bring out the best in us...and...um...the worst in us. There are usually bright spots: lights, decorations, wickedly sinful foods, giggles, presents, and wonderful services at church. Music fills the air. And there's a sense of something—something big—going on.

Yet, that's a glossy magazine idea of the season. Every person we see is carrying a load of some kind. And we do well to recognize that in others and ourselves. And get help where we can. The Earthlings in these sketches receive heavenly assistance from... The Not Quite Ready for Prime Time Angels!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4-10 females, 1-2 males, 4-14 either)

First Sunday of Advent: A Message of Hope

NARRATOR (m) (1 line)
 ALAN (m/f).....Angel (10 lines)
 STEVE (m/f).....Angel (12 lines)
 FRANK (m/f)Angel (7 lines)
 ANGEL TEEN (m/f)Angel (12 lines)
 DIANA (f)Earthling (12 lines)
 KAY (f)Earthling (20 lines)
 EARTHLING TEEN (m/f).....Earthling (19 lines)

Second Sunday of Advent: A Message of Peace

NARRATOR (m/f)..... (1 line)
 ALAN (m/f).....Angel. (8 lines)
 ANGEL TEEN (m/f)Angel. (13 lines)
 HAROLYN (f).....Angel. (6 lines)
 STEVE (m/f).....Angel. (10 lines)

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FRANK (m/f)Angel. (6 lines)
 KAY (f)Earthling. (9 lines)
 MEG (f)Earthling. (12 lines)
 DIANA (f)Earthling. (7 lines)

Third Sunday of Advent: A Message of Joy

NARRATOR (m/f)..... (1 line)
 ALAN (m/f).....Angel. (12 lines)
 HAROLYN (f).....Angel. (6 lines)
 ANGEL TEEN (m/f)Angel. (14 lines)
 LELAND (m)Angel. (5 lines)
 STEVE (m/f).....Angel. (10 lines)
 MEG (f)Earthling. (13 lines)
 PAT (f).....Earthling. (13 lines)
 PAULA (f).....Earthling. (8 lines)

Fourth Sunday of Advent: A Message of Love

NARRATOR (m/f)..... (1 line)
 ALAN (m/f).....Angel. (9 lines)
 ANGEL TEEN (m/f)Angel. (12 lines)
 LELAND (m)Angel. (10 lines)
 STEVE (m/f).....Angel (8 lines)
 PAT (f).....Earthling. (12 lines)
 JENNY (m/f)Earthling. (9 lines)
 EARTHLING TEEN (m/f).....Earthling. (16 lines)

CASTING NOTE: The above cast list is for churches with several cast members available. If you are limited, each sketch has three Earthlings. At most, three adults are needed except for the 1st and 4th Sundays when the cast includes Earthling Teen and only two adults are needed.

If you have more people who want to participate, you have free rein here. For example, different people could play roles like Steve and Frank. Steve is in all of the four playlets, so you could use four actors (one for each week) or just the one. Because the Alan, Leland, Angel Teen, and Harolyn characters are unique, it would be best if they were played by the same person.

In order to reach a smaller cast number, there are also doubling possibilities. For example, Diana and Kay from the 1st Sunday can also play Pat and Paula from the 3rd Sunday. Or Frank from the 1st Sunday can play Jenny on the 4th Sunday. There are multiple options available to meet your cast requirements.

The Earthling cast is very flexible. There is no one constant character. We had several women who were available, and we had six different Earthling adults and one grumpy, disrespectful teen (but you could have a different teen for the first and fourth Sundays of advent.)

PRODUCTION NOTES

COSTUMING: Angels wore white robes and tinsel halos (no room for wings at our church, but certainly wings at yours if you do have the space); Our Earthlings wore all black, but they could wear regular clothing.

NARRATOR (GABRIEL'S UNDERSTUDY) – Wears angel costume.

NARRATOR – For the 2nd-4th Sundays. Wears all black or street clothing.

SET: Bare stage

AUTHOR'S NOTES: These sketches may be used with or without lighting of the advent candles. The series deals with the real-life issues we Earthlings have with hope, peace, joy, and love. In this series, angels—the ones not quite talented enough to be part of the heavenly host at Jesus' birth—do take seriously their mission of delivering messages to the confused Earthlings.

We keep our worship drama simple. We have only one long-ish rehearsal on the Saturday morning before the Sunday presentation. At the rehearsal we discuss the characters, points in the script that need special focus, and dig into the meaning. Memorization is not necessary. We used our scripts in black notebooks. It helps to be familiar enough with the script to be able to interact with the other players. The director needs to watch actors who keep their heads buried in the books and encourage them to look up!

How to balance heaven and earth on stage? At our church, Angels were able to use the back row of the choir loft. Earthlings were on the chancel area. And Narrator at the podium, except for the first sketch in which Gabriel's understudy makes a dramatic, angelic center-stage entrance to introduce the series. (In our church, he came down the center aisle.)

During Angel conversations, Earthlings remain "frozen" because they cannot appear to hear what Angels are saying. Angels, however, are very aware of Earthling conversations. And when an Angel delivers a message, the Earthling receiving it reacts as if it just came to mind (the way our conscience works!!!). So in other words, Earthlings can and do receive messages from Angels...but it's subtle.

Entrances: To save time during worship, all the characters take their places at the start. They remain frozen during the Narrator's lines. They "move downstage" when their lines begin. The three exceptions are on the first Sunday when the Narrator (Gabriel's understudy) enters dramatically and stands center stage rather than the podium and when Frank joins the other angels and enters from off stage. On the second Sunday, Harolyn enters from off stage. If there is no room for characters to physically walk onto the stage, Harolyn could be facing away from the audience at the start, and when she "begins," simply turn to face the audience.

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A Message of Hope

First Sunday of Advent

SYNOPSIS: A cynical, unhappy teen voices anger at his life of parental chores, schoolwork, and life in general. The angels offer him hope, which they point out is a choice. Choose to live in God's hope and care or live in the land of the hopeless.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Isaiah 46:3-4

DURATION: 8 minutes

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females, 1 male, 5 either)

NARRATOR (m).....Angel; Gabriel's Understudy. *(1 line)*
 ALAN (m/f)Angel; Christ-like character. *(10 lines)*
 STEVE (m/f).....Angel; Good, solid but tends toward grumpiness. *(12 lines)*
 FRANK (m/f).....Angel; Calm, thoughtful. *(7 lines)*
 ANGEL TEEN (m/f).....This angelic teen is more typically teen-ish than angelic. Learning and eager to help the Earthlings. *(12 lines)*
 KAY (f).....Earthling; Older woman of the church. *(20 lines)*
 DIANA (f).....Earthling; Older woman of the church. *(12 lines)*
 EARTHLING TEEN (m/f)Teen Earthling; Grumpy, irreverent. *(19 lines)*



AT START: ALAN, STEVE, and ANGEL TEEN enter and take places.

NARRATOR: (*If space allows, he can make a grand entrance down the center aisle and take his place in the center.*) I know what you're thinking, but I'm not Gabriel. I look like Gabriel *thought* he looked. I sound like Gabriel should've sounded—note the deep resonant voice. But I am merely Gabriel's understudy. Just in case he...oh, well. An understudy *is* something.

Today the Earthlings will get a message of hope from the Not Quite Prime Time Angels—and when you think about it (*Resignation.*)—aren't we all not quite prime time? Though angels look great on Christmas cards, we're not particularly creative. We just say what we're told to say. And my word today is from God's word from yesterday:

Isaiah to God's people, "...you whom I have upheld since your birth and have carried since you were born. Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you." (*Exit.*)

ALAN: (*Singing.*) The First Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; In fields as they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

ANGEL TEEN: It's Christmas-time again! Yay! I like this season.

STEVE: Well, it's been around for thousands of years. I'd think you'd be tired of it by now.

ANGEL TEEN: Never!

STEVE: Even though you're part of *us*? The ne'er do-well unit of the heavenly host that didn't get to do *anything* for the first Christmas.

ALAN: The Angel Minister of Music said he didn't have another bass-baritone.

STEVE: If only I could sing tenor, maybe...

ANGEL TEEN: We got to see it! That's something, ain't it?

FRANK enters.

FRANK: Hello? Are you guys part of the heavenly hosts?

ANGEL TEEN: Sort of.

ALAN: (*To FRANK.*) Greetings! Haven't seen you up here before. Are you new?

FRANK: No, I'm antediluvian. But I got lost. This is a big place. And I have no sense of direction.

ALAN: You're welcome here with us. Maybe you can help. We have a little job to do.

STEVE: Yeah, encouraging words to the Earthlings.

FRANK: Ha! Well, that's a full-time job!

ALAN: Yep. We've been told to check out this situation below.

Enter KAY, DIANA, and EARTHLING TEEN.

KAY: Merry Christmas! Happy holidays! Cheers!

DIANA: Merry Christmas!

EARTHLING TEEN: (*Grumpy.*) Yeah.

KAY: You're supposed to say Merry Christmas to us.

EARTHLING TEEN: Who says?

DIANA: Everybody does. It's what we do at this time of year.

EARTHLING TEEN: Whatever.

KAY: (*To EARTHLING TEEN.*) It's Christmas time! Joy! Excitement! What are you all grumpy about?

EARTHLING TEEN: Nothing.

KAY: It must be something.

EARTHLING TEEN: It's *everything*. Okay? Everything.

STEVE: What's his problem?

FRANK: He's a teen.

ANGEL TEEN: We teens have issues.

STEVE: He's an Earthling. All Earthlings have problems.

ALAN: No matter what their age.

KAY: *Everything* is terrible? Be specific.

EARTHLING TEEN: My parents yell at me all the time. Clean your room. Brush your teeth. Change your clothes. Take out the trash. Walk the dogs. Do your homework.

KAY: Do you do all that stuff they tell you to do?

EARTHLING TEEN: Yeah.

DIANA: Really?

EARTHLING TEEN: Yeah. *(Beat.)* After they yell at me about it.

KAY: If you think you've got it rough now, wait till later.

DIANA: Right now, you and all your issues are ultimately on your parents' shoulders. When you get to be our age, our stuff is on our own shoulders.

EARTHLING TEEN: Like what's on your shoulders? *(Heavy sarcasm.)*
Dandruff?

STEVE: That was a smart alecky thing to say.

ANGEL TEEN: Way to go, Kid!

ALAN: No. Not way to go. That's not our message. Read your handbook!

KAY: For one thing, health issues are on our shoulders.

EARTHLING TEEN: Kids get sick too.

KAY: Of course, they do. God made us beautiful creatures inside, but these bodies are definitely made out of clay. And the clay is—

DIANA: Fragile. We're fragile. Vulnerable. It doesn't take much.

EARTHLING TEEN: That doesn't seem fair. If God made us...
(Ponders for a moment as STEVE speaks. Remember, ANGELS will jump in with their observations, but EARTHLINGS cannot directly hear the ANGELS.)

STEVE: God made you! You've been in church all your life. You *know* that.

EARTHLING TEEN: If God made us and God is all powerful and stuff, couldn't God have made us perfect?

FRANK: Maybe he did. Maybe God's idea of perfect is different from Earthlings.

KAY: Maybe you were made perfect in God's eyes.

EARTHLING TEEN: Yeah. Well, tell my parents I'm perfect!

KAY: Sure! But that means *they are too!*

STEVE: Good one!

DIANA: *(To EARTHLING TEEN. Or to herself.)* Look, I know nothing here seems perfect or complete. We carry this idea in our heads about what *ought* to be.

KAY: An ideal. We know what life could be. And sometimes is. But...

DIANA: But... reality. The beautiful church downtown got termites in the organ.

KAY: And I have arthritis.

EARTHLING TEEN: What's that?

KAY: You'll find out.

DIANA: And my best friend is in hospice.

KAY: And my son is getting a divorce.

DIANA: Mine lost his job.

EARTHLING TEEN: And I don't have my history project done. Not ideal.

KAY: I guess ideals live in our heads.

DIANA: And hearts.

EARTHLING TEEN: So, what do we do with all the stuff that isn't...

KAY: Ideal?

EARTHLING TEEN: That just... *isn't*. What do we do?

ANGEL TEEN: What do we tell them?

ALAN: We tell them about hope.

ANGEL TEEN: That don't sound like much.

STEVE: It's huge. (*Beat. Think about it.*) And elusive.

FRANK: It's a choice. God's Word is full of hope. From creation to the culmination of it all. Hope. They have to grab onto that.

ANGEL TEEN: What if they don't wanna choose hope.

STEVE: Then, they get to live in the land of the hopeless. They can dwell in the *now* with what they don't have. Or they used to have and lost.

ALAN: And what they *do* have that they don't want.

ANGEL TEEN: And what they want but don't expect to get.

FRANK: In all that, God is there. God is here.

ANGEL TEEN: God is everywhere! That sounds like Dr. Seuss!

STEVE: I know we're not very powerful angels, but our message is great. Do you think they're hearing it?

EARTHLING TEEN: Okay, you guys are all grown up. You've got all the answers. What do I do?

KAY: We don't have all the answers.

DIANA: We're all on a journey. And we don't know what comes next.

KAY: Some of it is good. (*To EARTHLING TEEN.*) C'mon, admit it. Part of your life is great.

EARTHLING TEEN: Yeah.

DIANA: We just need to try to travel this journey... rocky roads sometimes and fabulous sights other times, and... um... realize that God is with us in all that.

KAY: There's a Bible verse that reads: "I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you." Isaiah 46:4. That's God talking!

ANGEL TEEN: That sounds good. Did we tell them that?

ALAN: Sort of. And I think they got the idea.

THE END

A Message of Peace

Second Sunday of Advent

SYNOPSIS: Three women discuss their family get-togethers where petty annoyances, politics, and jealousies mar their time together. And another threatens to leave the church over hurt feelings. They get an angel's reminder about Jesus' love for everyone and peace from Paul's letter to the Colossians.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Colossians 3:12-15a

DURATION: 8 minutes

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 females, 5 either)

NARRATOR (m/f) (1 line)
 ALAN (m/f) Angel; Christ-like character. (8 lines)
 ANGEL TEEN (m/f)..... This angelic teen is more typically teen-ish than angelic. Learning and eager to help the Earthlings. (13 lines)
 HAROLYN (f)..... Angel; Haughty, judgmental, and overbearing. (6 lines)
 STEVE (m/f)..... Angel; Good, solid but tends toward grumpiness. (10 lines)
 FRANK (m/f)..... Angel; Calm, thoughtful, pleasant and friendly. (6 lines)
 KAY (f)..... Earthling; Older woman of the church. (9 lines)
 MEG (f)..... Earthling; Younger to middle-aged woman, stretched thin. (12 lines)
 DIANA (f)..... Earthling; Older woman of the church. (7 lines)



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AT START: *Cast takes places.*

NARRATOR: Let us imagine we're in an observation booth. And let us observe the goings on that are going on right now—above us—and around us. And maybe even in us. Earthlings have challenges, struggles, failures, mishaps. But, above us are angels—granted these are not quite prime time—but they are willing and somewhat able to deliver messages to those created a “little lower” than the angels. And we all know who we are. Don't we.

Paul wrote a powerful message to Christians in Colossians, “Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues, put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as member of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.”

ALAN: *(Singing.)* “Jesus loves the little children. All the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world.” *(If this song is unfamiliar to you, the tune and lyrics are on YouTube.)*

ANGEL TEEN: How come you're singing a baby song. I thought you'd be singing some big choir anthem thingy about Christmas.

ALAN: Oh, I think I am singing a big anthem thingy—about Christmas.

HAROLYN: *(Enters or turns toward audience, confused, as if getting her bearings.)* Well, I do believe...I have...wandered into a very low place in the heavenly kingdom.

ANGEL TEEN: Low place?! Does she think we're basement angels?

STEVE: Bargain basement angels!

FRANK: Well, look at us. Ever see any cherubims and seraphims hanging out with us? Nooo. Any of you got a harp? Noooo. Been quoted in the scriptures?

ALL—except HAROLYN—react to this. “Nope.” “Never been seen or heard.”

HAROLYN: Well, I’m from better stock. One of my cousins on my mother’s side—he’s one of the Methodists up here, I think—he knew Gabriel on a first name basis.

STEVE: Well, la-di-da!

ANGEL TEEN: Don’t we know some Methodists?

ALAN: Of course. But none of them are my cousins. I’m related to a few Penecostals. A Catholic or two. Some Baptists.

HAROLYN: Since this obviously isn’t some kind of heavenly soiree, what is your little clutch about?

FRANK: We’ve been called together for a special Earthling message today.

ANGEL TEEN: *(To HAROLYN.)* We give Earthlings messages. That’s our job! Wanna help?

HAROLYN: Probably not.

MEG: So, I said to Aunt Gladys, I said and I quote, “If you think your mac and cheese is sooooo much better than mine. I bet you don’t go to Whole Food and buy five different kinds of organic gourmet cheeses and make your own pasta out of the Rachel Ray cookbook like I did.

KAY: You told her that?!

MEG: As God is my witness!

ANGEL TEEN: Uh-oh. Um... I think God is her witness.

STEVE: And the rest of us too.

DIANA: And then what did she say?

MEG: Not fit to repeat.

DIANA: Oh, my. I guess that put a damper on your family get-together.

MEG: And when one of her daughters had the unmitigated gall to ask me behind her mother’s back for my recipe on the QT—

KAY: You gave it to her?

MEG: Sure. But I might’ve left out an ingredient or two. *(Fake memory loss.)* I just don’t remember anything anymore.

ANGEL TEEN: Aren’t they supposed to be Christians?

FRANK: Just because there’s a mouse in the carport, doesn’t make him a Chevy.

STEVE: What can we do with this?

ALAN: I'm thinking, I'm thinking.

MEG: How about your family get-together?

DIANA: We didn't—get together. One of my sons isn't speaking to one of my daughters, and my husband is at war with his brother-in-law over politics, and I made a promise to myself I'd never sit down at a meal again with my Aunt Margarita's fourth husband who chews with his mouth open and blows his nose at the table on my damask napkins. So, we went out to eat.

FRANK: I'd say we have our work cut out for us.

ANGEL TEEN: And they are Christians. Right?

ALAN: They are.

ANGEL TEEN: Followers of our Jesus? Right?

STEVE: They could use some of Jesus' words right about now.

KAY: Our family is so scattered, we don't get together unless someone dies or gets married. *(Sigh.)*

MEG: Well, at least you have the church. You're so active there.

KAY: Not anymore. Harry went to the clean-up day at the church. Almost no one else showed up. And Harry did practically all the work himself with not a word of thank you from anyone on that committee. And he heard the preacher was supposedly out fishing that day. Fishing! And then I got out-voted on the theme for the church bazaar decorations—

DIANA: Again?

KAY: Again! I'm just devastated. Devastated. No one soul down at that church appreciates all Harry and I do for the Lord. So... I guess we're church shopping. I wrote a scathing—scathing, I tell you—email to the pastor. And I copied the church board.

STEVE: *(Heavy sarcasm.)* That must've been helpful.

HAROLYN: Now that I think about it, I may have helped her write that email. Just a skosh.

ALAN: Wrong message! We speak peace up here.

ANGEL TEEN: *(To ALAN.)* Does this new girl angel have the handbook?

ALAN: I'll try to find her one.

DIANA: Well, at least we have the beautiful season of our Lord's birth.

KAY: That sweet babe in the manger.

MEG: Visions of angels and wise men from the East.

STEVE: So, they do get that we're celebrating Jesus' birth?

ALAN: Problem is, they're not making the connection between Jesus's birth and—

FRANK: Jesus' teachings of love and forgiveness and—

STEVE: Jesus' call to repentance.

ANGEL TEEN: I have an idea. Is it okay if I send them a message?

ALL ANGELS agree. Ad-lib.

ANGEL TEEN: *(To the EARTHLINGS.)* Think about Sunday School when you were little. Think about the songs you sang...

MEG: I know this is crazy, but a song just popped into my mind.

KAY: A Christmas carol?

MEG: Not really. *(Sing.)* "Jesus loves the little children of the world.
Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves the little children of the world."

DIANA: That's sweet. Wonder why you thought of that.

KAY: It is a beautiful image. Jesus with all the children of the world.

ANGEL TEEN: All the children of the world. All the children!

DIANA: All the children. *(Beat.)* Even Aunt Margarita's fourth husband?

STEVE: Get over the napkins. When he's coming, use paper ones.

MEG: And Aunt Gladys?

FRANK: Cut her some slack. Aunt Gladys loaned you her old Dodge to use when you were in college.

KAY: And the people in my church?

HAROLYN: Maybe next time I help you with an email... *(Sigh of resignation.)* ...don't press send.

ANGEL TEEN: They are precious in his sight!

MEG: I remember something else—we don't look at anyone Jesus didn't die for.

STEVE: Earthlings, all of you are precious in his sight.

THE END

A Message of Joy

Third Sunday of Advent

SYNOPSIS: The Earthlings ponder real joy—where and how? Meg struggles with whether to continue to work with the church kids because of criticism she's getting from a fellow member. Pat encourages her with atta-girls. Paula, however, contends she should say no to helping. But whose voice to listen to? Which voice brings joy?

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Ephesians 2:10

DURATION: 8 minutes

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 females, 1 male, 4 either)

NARRATOR (m/f) (1 line)

ALAN (m/f) Angel; Christ-like character. (12 lines)

HAROLYN (f) Angel; Haughty, judgmental. (6 lines)

ANGEL TEEN (m/f) This angelic teen is more typically teen-ish than angelic. Learning and eager to help the Earthlings (14 lines)

LELAND (m) Angel; Egotistical, know it all. (5 lines)

STEVE (m/f) Angel; Good, solid but tends toward grumpiness. (10 lines)

MEG (f) Earthling; Younger to middle-aged woman, stretched thin. (13 lines)

PAT (f) Earthling; Older woman of the church, sweet, grandmotherly. (13 lines)

PAULA (f) Earthling; Has a hard edge. (8 lines)



AT START: *CAST takes their places.*

NARRATOR: Joy! What is it? Is it something you feel? Want to feel? Used to feel? Does joy happen when we get what we want? Or does it happen when we give up wanting? (*That's Buddhist.*) So, is joy contentment with what is? Or... could joy be *not* a state of contentment but a state of *commitment*? Commitment to what *could* be in Christ? Does joy happen when we say yes? When we get in sync with God?

Ah, that's an idea! Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Let us listen to a message of joy the Earthlings need to hear from the Not Quite Prime Time Angels.

ALAN: (*Singing.*) "I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart. Down in my heart. Down in my heart. I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart! Down in my heart to stay."

HAROLYN: (*A touch of sarcasm. Not too snarky.*) What a sweet little ditty. Not quite up to Handel's standards. But, oh, well...what does one expect from—

ANGEL TEEN: Us?

STEVE: Exactly. She seems to think we're not up to *her* standards.

HAROLYN: I was just thinking *some* standards would be nice.

LELAND: Ah, yes! One does presuppose certain conventionalities here in the paradisaical province.

ANGEL TEEN: He's not from around here, is he?

ALAN: Oh, I'd say he is *definitely* one of us.

STEVE: He just doesn't *realize* he is.

LELAND: Considering the song-like number you were singing...you're not part of the imposing angelic choir one considers when taking into account the angelic...

ANGEL TEEN: Nah. We're messengers. We help Earthlings figure things out. Wanna join us?

HAROLYN: You might want to take under advisement whether to actually say "yes". You don't know what you're in for.

ALAN: But that's always true of saying yes to God's calling.

STEVE: We never know what we're in for.

ANGEL TEEN: But that's what we're supposed to do. We can't say no. No matter what.

ALAN: That's true here. But not on Earth. They have choices. And that's why they need us.

MEG: June Richardson called me up from the church.

PAT: Oh, dear.

PAULA: I guess she wants you to help with the children.

MEG: *Again!*

PAT: Well, of course! You're so good at it! What did you tell her?

MEG: I said I was busy.

PAULA: And you are! Your plate is full!

MEG: That's what I told her. Between my kids and Leonard, and my parents, and his parents, and out of town company coming, and...

PAULA: What does she *expect* you to do?

PAT: I guess she didn't want to take no for an answer.

MEG: She's really hard to say no to.

ANGEL TEEN: But if she says no to June, is she sort of saying no to God? I mean, she *is* good with kids.

STEVE: She is one of the best with kids!

MEG: And then there's Wendy Miller.

STEVE: For heaven's sake, don't listen to Wendy Miller!

PAT: What about her?

MEG: The last time I did a class with the children, she criticized the lesson plan. She said the Zacchaeus-in-the-tree story had been done to death. She said the kids are bored with it. And she said the craft project was too messy. And the church sexton complained to the pastor because of the glitter in the carpet.

PAT: But how do you do a kid's craft without glitter?!

MEG: There's no pleasing Wendy.

ANGEL TEEN: But couldn't she just try to please God?

STEVE: That takes gumption! It takes focus. It's hard to shut out other voices.

LELAND: That is altogether accurate. I read about an experiment a scientist did using headphones that played two different opposing voices into the subject's ears.

ALAN: What did he find out?

LELAND: You can only listen to one voice at a time.

ANGEL TEEN: Is it okay if I tell her that? (*ANGELS ad lib their okay. ANGEL TEEN speaks to EARTHLINGS.*) Hey, listen up! Pick a voice to listen to. It's your choice.

PAT: So, what are you going to tell June? Are you going to teach the class?

PAULA: On the other hand, you *are* busy.

PAT: But you are so creative and patient. Just what the kids need.

HAROLYN: And children *do* take patience. I tried working with the cherub choir up here, and—

LELAND: All the little wing flapping...?

HAROLYN: Drove me gaga.

ALAN: Saying yes to God... has it ever been easy? Every person in the whole scope of history who said yes to God...

STEVE: Had hardships.

ANGEL TEEN: But was it all bad?

ALAN: No! Had they said no... *that* would've been bad. Consider this. Where does our joy come from?

HAROLYN: I have no idea.

STEVE: We know.

ALAN: Read the handbook.

ANGEL TEEN: (*To EARTHLINGS.*) Think about how *bad* you feel when you do *bad*.

MEG: Last year when I didn't sign up for Vacation Bible School, I ended up cleaning out a closet.

PAULA: See! You got something accomplished.

MEG: But I missed the kids and the other teachers. I felt I'd missed out on something I couldn't get back.

ANGEL TEEN: And think how good you feel when you do good!

ALAN: Think God-sync!

PAT: And when you agreed to teach the fall session of Sunday School, you felt...

MEG: I was fine! Until...

STEVE: Until Wendy Miller gave her grief.

ALAN: (*To ANGEL TEEN.*) C'mon. Give her a message she can use.

ANGEL TEEN: (*To MEG.*) Pick a voice! Which voice brings you joy?

STEVE: What brings you joy...



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