

Christ the Shepherd, Christ the King

A musical drama for Easter

By Kathy Applebee and Linda Lineberry

Cast list

(Doubling possible as well as using members of the choir)

Spoken lines

Amos*
 Rachel
 Gabriel (part of choir)
 Choir voice 1
 Choir voice 2
 Magi 1
 Magi 2
 John the Baptist
 Priest 1
 Priest 2
 Nicodemus*
 Caiaphas
 Jesus*
 Voice of God
 Blind Man 1
 Blind Man 2
 Centurion
 Canaanite Woman
 MARTHA:
 Mary, sister of Lazarus
 Judas
 Pilate
 Mary, the mother of Jesus
 Crowd Voice 1
 Crowd Voice 2

No spoken lines

One or two additional children with Amos
 Shepherds
 Joseph
 Baby Jesus
 Magi 3 (traditional but optional)
 Demon possessed girl
 Father of dead girl
 Mother of dead girl
 Dead girl
 Poor widow
 Barabbas
 Simon of Cyrene
 Mary Magdela
 Salome
 Mary 2 - the mother of James the Younger
 John (the disciple)

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SCENE 1 (before the curtain)

Before the curtain Amos is tending to a lamb (If a prop lamb is used it should be wrapped in a blanket to help hide the fact) Children come running on stage ad libbing Amos! You found our lamb! Our lamb is found!

AMOS: Yes. This little one had wandered from the flock. He could have been lost forever or found by wolves. *(Hands lamb to child)* I have fixed his foot but best you carry him home and for the next two days to allow him to heal. *(Child leaves immediately if lamb is a prop. Otherwise stays on stage as long as lamb is still)*

RACHEL: Tell us the story of the Lamb of God, Amos. Tell us about how you were there when he was born.

(Shepherds enter in front of the curtain. They lay down)

AMOS: When I was your age, I was already a shepherd. One night we were out in the fields watching our flocks. I was taking my watch when ...

BETHLEHEM SCENE 2

(Curtains open with Gabriel center stage backed by the choir in angel robes standing powerfully. The choir sings. – “Joy to the World” verse one and two. Choir hums during spoken dialogue.

Other songs to consider for this scene: “Angels from the Realms of Glory”, “The Flocks were wrapped in Slumber”, “In the fields their Flocks Abiding”, “Rise Up Shepherd and Follow”, “While Shepherds Watched their Flocks”, “While their Flocks the Shepherds Tended.”

Shepherds notice Gabriel and are frightened, the younger ones scurrying into the protective embrace of an older shepherd. Amos and children insert themselves into the scene.

GABRIEL: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

ANGEL VOICE 1: *(from the choir):* Glory to God in the highest!

ANGEL VOICE 2: *(From the choir)* And on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests

Choir sings “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing, verse one” while the shepherds look to each other in wonderment and listen to the choir of angels

AMOS: Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about. *(Shepherds exit left. Angel Choir sings “Rise Up, Shepherd and Follow”, then the second and third verses of “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing” while the following occurs without dialogue. Lights on the choir are dim to focus attention on MARY, JOSEPH, etc)*

(Mary, Joseph and baby enter stage right during the song. Mary lays Jesus in a manger and Joseph and Mary bow to pray, then raise their heads and hands to God. Shepherds enter, bow and exit. Magi enter from the back and bow before the family)

AMOS: We told everyone of this glorious news! The prophet Micah had told us that Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, was by no means least among the rulers of Judah; He said “for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel. The Messiah was born. The Great Shepherd had arrived. Israel would be redeemed. We returned to the flocks and told the ones who had stayed behind. But this news was not confined to just us Jews.

MAGI 1: Here is the one who has been born king of the Jews. We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.

MAGI 2: It has been said that in the land of Judah,
 one will come who is a ruler
 one who will be the shepherd of the people of Israel

(Song “Hail, Thou Source of Every Blessing”, “by Magi, (Can be backed by the choir. Magi can have servants who lend their voices as well) Curtain closes. Choir changes into Biblical costumes. AMOS, RACHEL and other child(ren) in front of curtain)

SCENE 3 (before the curtain)

AMOS: The good news spread as far as the palace of King Herod. He did not rejoice at the news of a rival king. He sent out soldiers to destroy any threats to his throne. But God shepherded the family away to Egypt. For thirty years we heard nothing. Then we heard about a man preaching in the desert, a powerful man. One day we brought our flocks to the River Jordan, hoping we might see for ourselves. There he was – John – baptizing people for the remission of their sins.

BAPTISM SCENE 4

(Curtain opens. Rocks in the forefront conceal the area where baptism will take place and water can be hidden to wet those being baptized. Choir starts “There’s a voice in the Wilderness Crying”. John will baptize two people, Amos and children will merge with crowd)

PRIEST 1: Who you are? Are you the Christ?

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JOHN: I am not the Crist

PRIEST 2: Then who are you? Are you Elijah?

JOHN: I am not.

NICODEMAS: Are you the Prophet?"

JOHN: No.

PRIEST 1: Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?

JOHN: I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.

NICODEMAS: Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?

JOHN: I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord. He stands among you, one more powerful than I.

PRIEST 1: Who is this one who is coming?

JOHN: The promised Messiah, he the prophets of old proclaimed. *(Jesus begins moving to the front of the crowd. John suddenly whirls and points directly at him)* Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! *(Crowd parts and Jesus steps forward.)* This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'

JESUS: *(to John)* I have come to be baptized.

JOHN B: I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me? *(Bowing)* I am not worthy to tie your sandal.

JESUS: Let it be so now; *(Jesus takes him by the shoulders and raises him up)* it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness. *(JOHN B baptizes Jesus)*

JOHN: Look, this is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.

VOICE of GOD: This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. *(Dove comes down)*

JOHN: Behold the Lamb of God. He must become greater; I must become less.

AMOS: From that day on many chose to follow Jesus.

(Jesus beckons and several follow him. Amos and children come downstage. Curtain closes behind them. Disciples singing "Like a Lamb Who Needs a Shepherd" enter stage left, spot on them as they sing. They exit)

SCENE 5 (before the curtain)

AMOS: John had called him the Lamb of God. That was confusing. We were expecting the Messiah to be a king like David, the lion of Judah! Not a lamb. We were looking for one who would restore the kingdom to Israel and rid us of Roman rule, a son of David, a conquering hero.

RACHEL:

David, he's the one who saved the lambs from the lion and the bear!

AMOS: Yes. We had forgotten, even me, a shepherd. David was a shepherd before he was a king and the prophet Isaiah had said "Out of Judah would come a ruler who will be the Shepherd of Israel. A shepherd cares for his flock first and tends to his own needs second. David had been that kind of king. And like David, Jesus had compassion for the weak, the young, the sick, the outcast. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. *(Choir and crowd start to trickle on stage; they are looking expectantly at each other, and looking as if they expect someone. Then from the back, Jesus with a few disciples appears. People's faces light up, they point and their faces reflect the excitement of seeing him. A few children run to him and he bends down to scoop one up for a hug, then returning them to the ground. Two children take Jesus' hands and walk by his side as he continues to walk, stopping to touch people, touch a child being held out to him as he moves toward the stage. Curtain opens to reveal the rest of the choir and crowd. Blind men are far stage left, softly calling once for Jesus to have mercy on them. Crowd will shush them)*

JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD SCENE 6

AMOS: He went through all the towns and villages, teaching in our synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. Word of his teaching and miracles spread like wildfire. Even the Romans occupying our country heard of him and his power.

He even called himself the good shepherd. He said his sheep would know his voice. I remember the day two blind men heard his voice and knew him. Knew him as the son of David, the shepherd king. *(Amos and children merge into the scene)*

JESUS: *(Center stage, children are closest to him, sitting at his feet. A few adults sit as well)*

Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? *(Scoops up a very small child in illustration and puts her on his shoulder, the blind men are inching their way by touch)*

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toward his voice,) And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' (*Hands child back to parent*) I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

BLIND MAN 1: Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"

CROWD: Quiet. Be quiet.

BLIND MAN 1 & 2: (*Louder*) Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!

JESUS: (*Indicating two of his disciples should lead them to him*) What do you want me to do for you?

BLIND MAN 2: Lord, we want our sight. (*Jesus touches their eyes, they receive their sight and thank him; the crowd is amazed*)

JESUS: The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep and the sheep listen to his voice. The shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice.

Centurion comes down center aisle. The crowd looks at him with loathing as he kneels before Jesus. Jesus focuses on him. The crowd grows silent - a Roman kneeling to a Jew?! The centurion lifts his head and speaks)

CENTURION: Lord, my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering.

JESUS: I will go and heal him.

CENTURION: Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

JESUS: I tell you the truth; I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. Go! It will be done just as you believed it would. (*Centurion bows his head in reverence and exits center. The crowd has mixed emotions. Most are either perplexed or unhappy Jesus that has helped a Roman enemy*)

JESUS: I am the gate for the sheep. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

(There is a commotion stage right. The stage right crowd parts to reveal a woman and her daughter who is shuddering and foaming from demon possession. The girl falls and shudders once more, then lies as if she is dead. The woman, kneeling by the girl, cradling her as the seizure subsides, calls out desperately. The crowd reacts with fear and avulsion to this gentle and the demon. They pull back, holding children in protective embraces.)

CANAANITE WOMAN: Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon possession. *(Someone in the crowd comes forward and kneels by the girl, gently wiping her mouth and tending her as the mother goes to Jesus)*

JESUS: *(Compassionately)* I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.

CANAANITE WOMAN :*(Comes and kneels before him, face down. Sobs rack her body. She lifts her tear streaked face and one had, imploring him)* Lord, help me!

JESUS: *(Kneels down to her, gently and expectantly)*

It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.

CANAANITE WOMAN: Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table

JESUS: *(Pulls her to her feet, with evident joy at her response)*

Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted. *(He indicates the girl with a wave of his hand. The girl sits up, smiling and unpossessed. The crowd gasps. Mother and child rush into each other's arms and embrace)*

CENTURION: *(Coming from stage left moving right next to Jesus, kneeling)*

Lord Jesus! My servant has been healed. At the very moment you spoke of it! *(Crowd looks amazed)*

JESUS: I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They

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too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. *(Crowds faces start to register that maybe he is talking about Gentiles such as the Canaanite woman's daughter and the Centurion's servant. Priests push to the forefront and center stage for a confrontation.)*

PRIEST 1: *(To the crowd and Nicodemus)* He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?

NICODEMUS: These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?

PRIEST 2: *(To Jesus)* How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.

JESUS: I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.

PRIEST 1: Blasphemy! You, a mere man, claim to be God.

JESUS: I am the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world. Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'? Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.

(Crowds attention shifts to the back where a father carries in a dead girl. The mother and possibly siblings, following, weeping. Jesus takes the child in his arms. The choir starts quietly singing "Lamb of God by Rebecca St. James. (or "Worthy is the Lamb") Jesus prays over the girl. Slowly he lifts her to heaven. Brings her back down and cradles her momentarily. The girl stirs. The crowd is flabbergasted. Jesus gives the girl back to her parents. Choir finishes song with volume and enthusiasm and praise. Priests 1 and 2 leave in disgust. Girl runs to Jesus to hug him. He picks her up and stretches one hand to heaven. Everyone kneels to Jesus, raising their hands. Black out. Crowd moves off and Amos and children take center stage in a spot light. Priests are down left)

SCENE 7 (before the curtain)

NICODEMUS: Caiaphas, this Jesus performed miracles of healing and casting out demons! He raised the dead!

CAIAPHAS: It was all staged. There was no demon. That other girl wasn't dead.

PRIEST: 1: People swear the men were, had been, blind for years, Caiaphas. *(Spot out)*

AMOS: Though John never performed a miraculous sign, all that John said about this man was true. *(Spot up on priests who are before the curtain, stage left)* But it wasn't until Bethany, that whole towns were convinced.

RACHEL: What happened in Bethany?

AMOS: Something that the priests could not dismiss or silence. Bethany was home to Jesus close friends, Lazarus and his sisters MARTHA: and Mary. Lazarus became gravely ill and the sisters had sent for Jesus. But he did not come right away, and Lazarus died. He was wrapped in strips of cloth and laid in a tomb. Many had come to mourn with MARTHA: and her sister Mary. Some of priests had come, I think, to see if Jesus would and to use this as an opportunity to discredit him.

RAISING OF LAZARUS SCENE 8

Curtain opens. Tomb with a crowd of mourners. Jesus and disciples enter. MARTHA: runs out to Jesus and embraces him, sobbing. Amos, children and Priests merge into the scene.

MARTHA: If you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.

JESUS: Your brother will rise again.

MARTHA: I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

JESUS: I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?

MARTHA: Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.

JESUS: Get Mary. *MARTHA leaves to get Mary, Priests to the crowd, away from Jesus.*

Priest 1 Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?

MARTHA: *(Calling off stage right)* The Teacher is here, and is asking for you.

MARY: *(Enters to Jesus, falling at his feet weeping. Jesus gently raises her up to console her)* Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

JESUS: Where have you laid him?

MARTHA: Come and see, Lord.

JESUS: Take away the stone. *(Some of the crowd do so)*

MARTHA: But, Lord, by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.

JESUS: Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God? Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me. Lazarus, come out!

(Lazarus emerges from the tomb. Reprise of Lamb of God. At end Amos and children move down center so curtain can close behind them.)

SCENE 9 (before the curtain)

AMOS:

Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out of their way to hear and see him for themselves. *(Crowd enters from the back waving palm branches)* By the time Passover came, people lined the streets with their children, hoping to catch a glimpse of him. When he arrived they greeted him as king with shouts of praise, singing and waving cut palm branches.

(Jesus enters, trailed by his disciples. Song "Blessed is He" or "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna" The crowd calls out

"Hosanna!

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

"Blessed is the King of Israel! Jesus touches the people and when he is in place center stage many children come to him for his blessing.)

TEMPLE SCENE 10

(The crowds start to gather to hear him teach. Curtain opens to the temple. Three priests are set up, collecting taxes. Some of the people stop to pay before they make their way over to Jesus. Two with large sums make a big show of what large quantities they are giving. In the back of the line is a poor woman, dressed in rags, moving humbly)

JUDAS: Look, Teacher! The temple! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!"

JESUS: Do you see all these great buildings? Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down. Destroy this temple and in three days I will rebuild it. *(The crowd*

turns to each other in confusion. Two members of the crowd go to the priests collecting money, point at Jesus during the next segment)

Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. *(Judas should shift about uncomfortably but the rest should not notice. The priests are now noticing what Jesus is saying. They shake their heads and two come over to join the group gathered around Jesus)* So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

PRIEST 1

Who gives you the authority to teach these things to these people?

JESUS: I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or from men?" *(Priests put their heads together briefly)*

PRIEST 1: We don't know.

JESUS: Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

PRIEST 1 Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?

JESUS: Show me the coin used for paying the tax. *(They bring him a denarius)* Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?

PRIEST 1 Caesar's *(Widow needs to be at the front of the line by this time)*

JESUS: Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. You see that widow? She has put in two very small copper coins. I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.

This temple should be a house of prayer for all nations but you have made it a den of thieves. *(Priests walk away angry. Curtain closes)*

SCENE 11 PRIESTS PLOT *(before the curtain)*

AMOS: The priests were embarrassed, outwitted and angry but what could they do? The people were convinced the Messiah had come. He claimed to be the gate for the sheep – the barrier

between them and all that might harm them. He claimed to be the good shepherd, and indeed he cared for them as none of their leaders did.

Discouraged, the priests reported to the High Priest, Caiaphas and plotted in earnest against the Lamb of God. (*Priests enter in front of the curtain*)

PRIEST 1: Caiaphas! The crowds are worse than ever, worse than at Bethany. Here is this man, this Jesus of Nazareth teaching in the temple and the people latch on to his every word. Because they are convinced he has performed many miraculous signs and that Jesus brought Lazarus back from the dead!

CAIAPHAS: See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!

NICODEMAS: This man Jesus is performing many miraculous signs. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised. No one ever spoke the way he does.

CAIAPHAS: You mean he has deceived you also? "Have any of us believed in him? No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them."

NICODEMAS: Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?

CAIAPHAS: (*To Nicodemus*) Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee

PRIEST 2 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.

CAIAPHAS: (*To Nicodemus*) You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man dies for the people than that the whole nation perish. (*Priest 2 and Judas enter as Caiaphas says to Priest 1*) If he comes to the feast I want it reported to me immediately so we can arrest him. But not during the Feast, or there may be a riot among the people.

PRIEST 2: Caiaphas, this man, one of his disciples, is willing to help us.

JUDAS: What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?

CAIAPHAS: Thirty pieces of silver. (*Judas nods, they count out the money to him, lights off and spot on Amos and the children*)

AMOS: We began final preparations for the Passover. For hundreds of years we Jews had celebrated the Passover on an annual basis, remembering, thanking God for his salvation, teaching our children to be awed by the mighty power of El Shaddai.

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Yet the words of Jesus, I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— kept ringing in my ears. As my hands ran over our lamb one final time I heard him saying: I lay down my life for the sheep. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.

LAST SUPPER SCENE 12

(Curtain opens. Song Beautiful Lamb of God. During the song Jesus blesses, then breaks bread and hands it to the disciples. He blesses, then passes the cup.) Jesus and his disciples celebrated the Passover. But Jesus was troubled. *(Judas gets bread from Jesus and exits)* He knew what was to come, the ultimate sacrifice.

JESUS: This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. A time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. *(Curtain. First verse of Night with Ebon Pinion.)*

GARDEN SCENE 13 *(before the curtain)*

AMOS: *(As Amos is speaking, choir is humming Ebon Pinion. Jesus and three disciples enter in front of the curtain. . Jesus has them stay center right while he crosses to center left. Disciples lie down and fall asleep. Jesus kneels and begins praying)*

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. He was sorrowful to the point of point of death. All the disciples fell asleep while he prayed the cup be taken from him, if it was possible. Even with the knowledge of the horrors he would face in such a short time he said “Yet not as I will, but as you will.

(Choir sings the second and third verse. Jesus prays and three times wakes the sleeping disciples but they fall back asleep. During the last time the temple guards and Judas enter from the back. Voices say “take him to us Judas” or “He’s got to be stopped” “Where is he?” Judas kisses Jesus and the guards arrest him. Disciples at first try to stop them, then they run. Guards haul Jesus out the way they came in. Judas falls to his knees, remorseful)

Song Shepherd by Todd Agnew *(before the curtain)*

PILATE’S TRIAL SCENE 14

Curtain opens to Pilate’s Hall. Crowd is muttering, angry, expectant. A few members of the crowd filter in from the back. Pilate comes out. Guards bring Jesus, bound in from stage right. Crowd mutters and points angrily. Priests step forward to accuse Jesus.

AMOS: The same crowd that was ready to crown him king was calling for his execution. *(Amos and children merge into the scene)*

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PILATE: What charges are you bringing against this man?

CAIAPHAS: We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God.

PILATE: Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.

PRIEST 1: But we have no right to execute anyone.

PRIEST 2: If he were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.

CAIAPHAS: We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Christ a king

PRIEST 1: He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching. He started in Galilee and has come all the way here

CAIAPHAS: If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar

PILATE: *(To Jesus)* Do you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?

JESUS: You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.

PILATE: See how many things they are accusing you of. Aren't you going to answer? Are you the king of the Jews?

JESUS: You are right in saying I am a king. But my kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. My kingdom is from another place. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.

PILATE: What is truth? I find no basis for a charge against him. You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death. *(Motions to guards stage right. They bring our Barabbas, a surly looking man)*

But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release Barabbas or Jesus, the one called Christ, the king of the Jews'?

CROWD: No, not him! Give us Barabbas! Away with this man! Release Barabbas

PILATE: Shall I crucify your king?

CROWD VOICE 1: We have no king but Caesar!

CROWD: Crucify him!

PILATE: Why? What crime has this man committed?

CROWD: Crucify! Crucify! Barabbas! Give us Barabbas! Take him away! Take him away!
Crucify him!

PILATE: I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your responsibility!

CROWD VOICE 2: Let his blood be on us and on our children!

(Amos and children remove themselves from the scene and come in front of curtain)

PILATE: Take him away! Have him flogged and crucified. *(Barabbas is untied. Crowd cheers as curtain closes)*

SCENE 15 (Before the curtain)

AMOS: The words of Isaiah flooded into my soul.

We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before her shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

By oppression and judgment he was taken away.
And who can speak of his descendants?
For he was cut off from the land of the living;
for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

THE FLOGGING SCENE 16

(During his recitation, the blows of a whip will be heard. Curtain will open part way to reveal Jesus, tied to a post, being flogged. The only lighting should be a spot on Jesus. This is not only to hide any activity while the crosses are set but to focus the audience's attention.)

The children will look in horror, then starting with the youngest will turn away and bury their faces against Amos. During the song, Jesus will be given his cross to carry and will prodded by the guards, carry it out by going up the aisle and out. Jesus stumbles three times. Each time raising his eyes to God and clearly portraying to the audience it is his love for us, not the soldiers, which urges him on. After the third time the soldiers will seize Simon of Cyrene to carry the cross the rest of the way. Curtain closes.

SCENE 17 (before the curtain)

AMOS: His words came echoing back.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again.

CRUCIFIXION SCENE 18

Mourners enter from the back and kneel before the curtain. Curtain opens. Dim lighting with spots gives the feeling of the darkness that came over the land. Jesus and the thieves will be upon their crosses. A written notice is nailed to the cross that says THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. During the crucifixion scene the following needs to be done in accordance with scriptures: Someone will offer Jesus a sponge to drink from, soldiers will cast lots for his clothes, MARY, MARY MAGDELA, SALOME, MARY 2 will be crying with John comforting Jesus' mother.

Song(s) "Lamb of God" or "Beautiful Lamb", "Worthy the Lamb", "Glory of the Lamb", "Lamb of God, Whose Dying Love."

While the chorus hums the following dialogue takes place. Jesus has obvious difficulty getting enough breath to say the lines. There are pauses between them.

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (*Towards heaven*)

Dear woman, here is your son. Here is your mother. (*Toward his mother and John. They should react*)

It is finished. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. (*To heaven*)

Jesus will bow his head and die. There will be a crack of lightning and thunder. Mourners will leave hurriedly. Blackout and curtain closes. Another verse or song. Mary enters to center stage, spot light on her)

MARY'S SORROW SCENE 19 (before curtain)

Mary's Sorrow (Written by and used by permission of Linda Lineberry. The audience should be able to relive the crucifixion scene from Mary's point of view as she relives it in words)

In the darkness of noonday I stood on that hill and looked at my firstborn, my promised child, hanging bloodied and torn on a criminal's cross. (*pantomimes*) I wrapped my arms around the base of his cross. It was as close as I could get to him. (*Looks up*) His blood was falling on me. He was dying and I heard him cry out (*in anguish*) "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me." (*Looking up*) I looked up into his loving face and never in all my years of watching and caressing and loving that beautiful face had I ever seen such agony... and such sorrow. I tried to comfort him. He was dying. (*Catch in throat, struggle to go on*) I was watching him die. (*Cover area below chin so sound is not blocked*) I covered my mouth to keep the horror inside. As they laid him in the tomb the only comfort came from knowing I could trust the words that the angel Gabriel gave me so many years ago. "He shall live forever and his kingdom will never end." (*with hope*) El Shaddai, the Holy God, keeps his promise. I held to that. (*Bow head. John comes on stage to gently lead her off. Spot switch to Amos*)

AMOS: Christ, the Passover lamb for the entire world, had been sacrificed. He had been sacrificed for me. He had been sacrificed for you.

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree. The chief priests and elders posted their guard. But neither man nor the powers of the Roman government nor death himself could prevent God's plan from being carried out. Nothing in all of creation could stop the Son of God.

RESURRECTION SCENE 20

Curtain opens to the tomb. Guards posted on either side. Song "Low I the Grave He Lay" with first verse slow, majestic. At the close of the first verse the guards fall, the stone rolls back and Jesus appears as the chorus begins.

Jesus comes out of the tomb. MARY MAGDELA and 2 other women enter; the women see him and all but Mary exit. MARY bows low to the ground. The other women return bringing first Peter and John; then the nine others follow. They hug him; examine his hands, his side. All kneel before him. The choir and crowd enter the scene and slowly move toward Jesus, except the children who move to Amos. The children should take the positions they took in the first scene. When Amos starts speaking, everyone else should be kneeling before Jesus.

AMOS: The news he had risen spread like wildfire through the city of Jerusalem and to Emmaus and beyond. Over 400 people saw the risen savior during the next 40 days. He led us out to the vicinity of Bethany lifted up his hands and blessed us. (*Amos kneels*)

JESUS: All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (*He ascends, curtain*)

SCENE 21 (before the curtain)

AMOS: (*Standing*) While he was blessing us, he was taken up into heaven. We worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. (*Choir and crowd start filtering in before the curtain*) Disciples went into all the world preaching the good news. We made disciples in all nations, all walks of life. No matter what someone had been, no matter what someone had done, they found new life as their sins were nailed to the cross of the Savior.

SONG: "Just as I am" or "Come just as you are" and the Invitation to the audience

(Choir sings first verse)

AMOS: Jesus gave us the task of telling others his story. We have done that tonight. Maybe you are one of the lost sheep he spoke about.

Don't you wait too long. If you have never accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior do so tonight. As the choir sings, come forward. There are people here waiting to receive you, help you and pray with you. Don't let what other people might think stop you from coming to the one who loved you enough to die for you.

(Sing second verse of Come Just as You Are)

AMOS: (*Celebratory voice that can now rejoice in Jesus glory about to be revealed*) Jesus told us that whoever acknowledged him before men that he, the Son of Man, would also acknowledge before the angels of God.

Jesus declared - I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

CHRIST THE KING! SCENE 22

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(Curtain opens and Jesus is center stage, robed as a king, wearing a crown with the angels around him, kneeling, raising their hands to pay him homage)

Choir B A "Crown him Lord of All" The following all enter from the back, kneel before Jesus, present their gift and move to the side, alternating left and right. A person from Jesus day alternates with one from modern day.

The Magi enter from the back and lay their crowns before Jesus. A doctor, laying down a surgical cap. The centurion comes, laying his sword down. A soldier, laying down his gun. A shepherd, laying down his staff, a businessman lays down his briefcase, the widow with her 2 mites, football (or other sportsman) lays down his helmet and trophy, the demon possessed girl and her mother lay down a basket with fruit, a motorcycle gang member, his helmet, a graduate lays down her cap.