

HOPE HAS COME

WELCOME: (On Screen) - Pastor Mickey Cogdill

"Good evening, friends! On behalf of our entire church family here at Bannertown, welcome!! We are truly honored that you've chosen to spend part of your Christmas season with us. Whether you've been part of this family for years or tonight is your very first time walking through our doors, we're so glad you're here.

Christmas has a way of stirring something deep in all of us. It brings back memories—music, laughter, and maybe even a few tears. But it also gives us moments to pause, to breathe, and to reflect on the real reason we celebrate. That's our prayer for you tonight—that no matter who you are, where you've been, or what you've walked through this year, you'll experience the joy and peace that only God can give.

As you sit here tonight, I hope you feel right at home—surrounded by friends, family, and the warmth of this season. What you're about to see isn't just a performance or a production—it's a celebration of family, of hope, and most of all, of a Savior who loves you more than you could imagine.

So relax. Let your heart rest. Let the music, the story, and even the laughter remind you that Christmas is still full of wonder. I pray that your Christmas is filled with God's love!

From all of us here at Bannertown—Merry Christmas!"

ACT 1

VIDEO OF COUPLE DRIVING AND THE CONVERSATION

[DAVID sits behind the wheel of a car. His wife, EMMA, scrolls through Pinterest on her phone. Tired of the silence, David turns on the radio. It plays Jingle Bells. He doesn't like that one. He changes the station. It also plays Jingle Bells. He changes it three more times, and all of it is Jingle Bells. Frustrated, he turns the radio off.]

DAVID

How hard is it to write new songs?

EMMA *[still staring down]*

I like that one.

DAVID *[upset]*

You like everything.

EMMA *[looking up]*

Will you try to be in a good mood? My parents are really looking forward to this.

[David sighs.]

DAVID

Fine.

>>> *(We hear a car cut off and door slam. Screens go off and then...) DAVID and EMMA enter stage left.*

[David walks up the sidewalk to his in-laws' house, hand-in-hand with Emma. She is smiling and full of Christmas cheer. David is not. Emma knocks on the door.]

>>> *Enter TERRY, the mother*

[Terry is the exact same way as her daughter: joyful. She runs out and gives Emma a bear hug, shaking her violently. David looks at the scene in fear. He starts to turn and leave, but Emma, through the hug, grabs him and pulls him back to the door.]

EMMA *[returning to her mom]*

It's so good to see you.

TERRY

You, too!

DAVID

Sorry we're late, the fast food place gave her the "wrong kind of ice".

EMMA

I like the crunchy ice!

[David rolls his eyes.]

>>> Enter MARK, the father. Mark comes up behind Terry.

MARK

Your mother's been goin' crazy all week waiting for this.

TERRY

I have not!

MARK

You bought all the food Sunday, prepped it Monday, and cooked it Tuesday.

TERRY

So what?

MARK *[waits and gives a look]*

It's Saturday.

TERRY

Oh whatever! Everyone, inside, please. Let's get this show on the road.

MARK *[to Emma, half-whispered]*

See?

>>> All enter Living Room

[Terry ushers Mark, David, and Emma to their spots on the sofa, and she sits down on a recliner.]

DAVID *[sniffing the air]*

What smells so good?

[Mark, Terry, and Emma answer simultaneously]

MARK

TERRY

EMMA

[TOGETHER] *Chicken pot pie!*

[David smiles for the first time all day.]

DAVID

Sounds good!

[They all laugh, then suddenly Terry gasps excitedly.]

TERRY [to Emma]

I forgot to tell you, since this is your first Christmas at home in a while, I wanted to let you put the angel up.

[Emma jumps off the couch.]

EMMA

Really?

[Terry nods, smiling. Emma runs to hug her. David looks on, slightly confused.]

TERRY

It's in the attic.

EMMA

I'll come with you!

>>> Exit Terry and Emma

DAVID [turns to Mark]

Angel?

[Mark looks oddly at him.]

MARK [points]

The angel. On top of the tree.

[David stares blankly.]

DAVID

What in the world is that?

MARK

Your family never put angels on their trees?

DAVID

We didn't even have a tree.

MARK

I'm sorry to hear that, David.

DAVID

So why do you put an angel on a tree? That doesn't make much sense.

MARK

It's a symbol of the heavenly host that told the shepherds in the field that Jesus had been born.

DAVID [gets awkward]

Oh...Jesus. Yeah, okay. Gotcha.

>>> Enter Terry and Emma

[The ladies return, now with a porcelain angel.]

EMMA

I love this part! ***[waits a moment]***

MARK

Careful now, that thing is held together by super glue and prayers.

[The ladies walk over to the tree and begin putting it on top. Once it's done, Terry steps back to marvel at it.]

TERRY

I'm so glad we're all together. Now it's really starting to look like Christmas!

[lights down, begin music]

END ACT ONE

SONG

Jingle Bells, Deck the Halls, Frosty the Snowman:

Into (jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the waaay. END (Custom song medley.

Music written by Chad and Camden and ...)

- Kids choir. Adult choir. Band. Piano. Singers dressed in Christmas clothes. Snow.
 - During song. Someone with a puppy. Kids sledding. Kids throwing snowballs. Family around a Christmas tree (stays up for next scene), Crowd interaction.
 - This song should put the Christmas spirit, joy, and smiles on every face in the audience
 - Song ends with a crescendo, applause, lights down.
-

ACT TWO

>>> DAVID, EMMA, MARK enter, returning to original placement

[Mark and David laugh at an old photo album, while Emma sits hunched over, embarrassed.]

MARK [pointing at the album]

That's her on her first day of second grade.

EMMA

Do you have to show him that? It's embarrassing!

MARK

Oh hush. It ain't that bad.

>>> Enter TERRY

[Terry comes in, carrying a plate of cookies, when she notices the photo album.]

TERRY

Oh, you pulled Emma's baby pictures ***[bends down to see]***

Oh look at how much of a cutie she was.

[Emma groans, putting her head in her hands. David laughs. Terry suddenly remembers the food she's carrying]

TERRY

Oh! I almost forgot. Would anyone like a cookie? I made them myself.

[David reaches up to the plate and grabs one almost instantly.]

DAVID

Yes, please!

TERRY [laughing]

Anybody else?

MARK

I'll pass, thank you.

TERRY

Emma?

[Emma doesn't move.]

MARK

I think it's best to just let her have a moment.

[Terry sets the plate down and sits next to Mark on the couch.]

DAVID

This has been a great night. Thank you.

MARK

Of course.

TERRY

What time is it?

MARK [Looks at watch]

10:04.

TERRY

Oh my goodness. We'd better wrap this thing up so we can make it to church tomorrow.

[David perks up, but not in a happy way. He's nervous.]

DAVID

Church?

TERRY

Yeah, I thought it'd be nice for us all to go to service as a family in the morning.

DAVID

Oh.

TERRY

I know it won't be y'all's home church, but I think you'll like it.

DAVID

Home church?

TERRY

The church you and Emma go to on Sundays when you're at home.

[Now Emma's perked up, also nervous.]

EMMA

Look, mom, it's not a big deal—

DAVID [interrupting]

We don't go to church.

[The whole room goes silent. Terry looks at Mark, and vice versa.]

MARK

Do you guys at least do any devotionals or go to a Bible study?

DAVID [a beat]

No. Can we just go back to talking about Christmas?

[Terry and Mark give each other a look.]

MARK

Have you ever read the Bible, David?

DAVID

No, not really.

MARK

Then you don't know how important Christmas is to our faith.

DAVID

What do you mean?

[Mark walks over to a bookshelf and pulls out a Bible.]

MARK

This is Isaiah chapter seven, verse fourteen: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel." That was written 700 years before Mary gave birth to Jesus.

DAVID

700 years?! How is that possible?

MARK

Because God knew, even then, exactly who He was going to choose to carry out His miracle.

[Lights down on drama. Video starts and shows the night sky and stars. Then we see an angel's brightness. Mary is in the baptismal, and we see her silhouette. We hear wind then we hear.]

Angel

Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.

Mary [afraid and audibly crying]

Angel

Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.

Mary

How will this be since I am a virgin?

Angel

The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.

Mary

I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled.

SONG

Mary Did You Know (Travis Cotrell version from Heaven's Hope | Solo by youth and adult with praise team and choir)
Spotlights on singers and choirs. Videos play.

[Lights dim while music plays:

Mary and Joseph travelling with a donkey across a lot of land with music playing. They walk across the front and to the other side of the stage. They exit. Video shows the town of Bethlehem and a stable from far away. Finally we see them in the baptismal, silhouette style and they begin talking.]

Mary

It's not how I imagined it. A place like this.

Joseph

Me either. But God knows the beginning and the end. He knows what is best for this night.

Mary

Yes. I know.

(a beat)

Joseph

I'm afraid to be a father. I don't know what to do other than love Him and protect you both with everything I am.

Mary

That's all God expects. That's all I need. That's all He needs. Do you remember what the angel said?

Joseph

Yes. "You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

Mary

He's coming to save the world... and yet here we are, just two simple people in a stable.

Joseph

This may be just a stable, but tonight, it becomes holy ground.

SONG

O Holy Night (Solo with choir in chorus)

Lights go down on Mary and Joseph (in baptismal) while we show wise men walking, then shepherds walking in front of stage, same path taken by Mary and Joseph...

[Set change in baptismal to Mary holding Jesus and all kneeling before Him around the manger]

...then the lights come back up on Mary and Joseph and we see all around kneeling and giving gifts as they worship the newborn King. The song ends with a light on Mary holding Jesus and video of Jesus on screen. At the end of the song, all goes dark with the music ending.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

[Terry and Emma sit on the floor, passing presents back and forth to different members of the family. The girls chat and make jokes. David stares off into space; something's clearly bothering him. Mark takes notice.]

MARK

Somethin' on your mind?

DAVID *[snapping out of it]*

What?

MARK

You're quiet. Is something wrong?

DAVID

No...just thinking.

MARK

About?

DAVID

What you were reading earlier. About Jesus' birth.

TERRY

Really? What about it?

DAVID

I'm a good guy. I help people in need. I work a good 9 to 5. I love my wife. But, I'm not perfect...does that mean I'm not right with God? Isn't God loving and forgiving?

MARK

Yes, but...being "good" is not the same thing as being saved.

DAVID (a beat)

Yes...but, doesn't God want us to try hard? Live as right as we possibly can?

MARK

David, the problem is we'll never be good enough. And God knew that! He knew we would be separated from him forever...so He sent a perfect sacrifice. He sent Jesus, because He loves the people of this world so much that He was willing to give His son as a sacrifice on our behalf.

TERRY

If we could ever be "good" enough, there would have been no reason for Jesus to have come.

DAVID

I didn't think of it like that...no one ever really explained this stuff to me.

[Emma scoots over to her husband and places her head on his shoulder.]

EMMA

David, I...I have been praying for you for so long...I never wanted to push you but...All I've wanted is for you to understand...

DAVID

So...am I...not right with Him?

MARK

David, we have all sinned. We've all fallen. No one can earn Heaven. But God loves us! That's the whole point. Salvation is gift-- a God-given gift...but you have to understand it, and accept it.

DAVID

How do I...what do I do?

TERRY

You have to admit that you need Him. You have to believe -- with all you have -- that what Jesus did for you on that cross was enough. And you have to ask Him to forgive you and become your God and Savior.

[A beat, silence.]

DAVID [half-whispered]

I want to...

[The rest of the family move in around David, laying their hands on him. As the music begins.]

[Fade lights after the actors have finished praying with David and all are hugging and smiling at David.]

END ACT THREE

[Lights dim while music begins playing: Jesus is seen in Gethsemane, praying.]

Jesus (on scene talking to disciples)

Sit here, while I go over there and pray. My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.

***[Blue spotlight isolates Jesus as He steps away, kneels to the ground.]
[Jesus turns around, takes a few steps, and falls on his face dramatically praying.]***

Jesus

My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.

[He trembles, falls forward in anguish. Pause. Then He rises, stronger.]

Jesus

My Father, if this cup cannot pass away unless I drink from it, Your will be done.

[Spotlight tracks to the side where we see Judas and the Roman soldiers. Judas says...]

Judas (Possibly on Video)

Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him.

[Spotlight back. Jesus sees disciples sleeping. Walks toward them, pained but firm.]

Jesus

Are you still sleeping and resting? Listen, the hour of my sacrifice is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners whose way and nature is to oppose God. Get up, let us go. My betrayer is near....**[cutoff by Judas interrupting]**

Judas

Greetings Rabbi!

Jesus

Friend do what you came to do.

[Judas kisses Jesus on the cheek...as He and Jesus keep looking at each other. A Roman soldier or several grab Jesus and the lights go out with a boom as a pad immediately starts setting up the song coming up.]

SONG

Living Hope (*starts immediately after the salvation of David moment*)

(Living Hope ends with “O Come Let Us Adore Him, O Come Let Us Adore Him, O Come Let Us Adore Him, Christ the Lord...” then goes immediately into the full...

SONG

O Come All Ye Faithful

ACT FOUR

[Suitcases sit next to Mark and Terry's front door.]

>>> *Enter DAVID and EMMA*

[Emma runs around, yelling out a checklist so she doesn't leave anything. David grabs his shoes and begins putting them on. Emma turns to him, smiling.]

EMMA

Are you ready?

DAVID

Yeah.

[He walks up to her, kisses her head.]

>>> *Enter TERRY*

[Terry comes into the living room, carrying to-go cups of coffee for them.]

TERRY

Please drive safely.

DAVID

I will.

TERRY

I love you two so much!

EMMA

We love you, too, mom.

[David gives Terry a hug. They are both holding back tears.]

DAVID

Thank you. I mean it.

[Terry squeezes him tight]

TERRY

I am so proud of you.

[Emma watches on, tears in her eyes.]

DAVID *[letting go]*

Alright...we should be going--

>>> Enter MARK

[Mark interrupts.]

MARK

Not yet. I have a present for you, David.

[David stops in his tracks.]

DAVID

I thought we already did this part.

[Mark hands him an old leatherbound Bible.]

MARK

That was my grandfather's. He was a preacher back in Tennessee. It's been passed two generations...

[hands it to David]

Now I'm passing it to a third.

[David stares at it.]

DAVID

How can I repay you for this?

MARK

Use it faithfully.

[David smiles.]

DAVID

Thank you.

[The family does one more round of hugs and I love you's before David and Emma grab their bags and walk out. Lights Dim]

[We hear a crowd on audio. Lights come up. Spot on baptismal, Pilate stands elevated, weary. Jesus stands silently beside him. He is aimed at the church congregation as if they are the crowd. We have people behind the congregation to yell and respond to Pilate for realism.]

Pilate (frustrated, to the crowd)

What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Crowd (several voices behind congregation/audience)

Crucify Him! Crucify Him!

Pilate (pleads)

Why? What crime has He committed?

Crowd (louder)

Crucify Him! Crucify Him!

[Pilate, defeated, washes his hands as the lights fade and music begins playing. Jesus is led away. Lights dim completely. Video starts playing with rumbling. This is a slow and timed out segment. Video shows the cross, up close of Jesus on cross and the cross in the baptismal lights up.]

Jesus (slowly)

Father... forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.

[He pauses, then lifts His head toward heaven.]

Jesus

It...is....finished.

[All goes immediately silent.]

[Rumble begins and a video shows the tomb closed then victoriously begin to open. It remains open on screen as the spotlight goes to an angel.]

Angel

Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here... He has risen!

END ACT FOUR

SONG

King of Kings (starts immediately after the angel speaks)

(This song includes all choirs, musicians, praise teams, flags, and a filled stage. This should be the biggest song and most impactful.)

ACT FIVE

[Video starts immediately after song. Video shows a small country church with cars parked outside to set up the scene. This should be used to change set pieces.]

[The scene is now the sanctuary set as a funeral. A table with pictures, and a wreath that reads "rest in peace" with Mark's face on it. A pulpit is now on stage and David addresses the audience as though they have come to the funeral.]

>>> Enter DAVID

[David, the now-pastor of a small Baptist church steps up to the pulpit.]

DAVID

Hello, church. Last week, we lost an incredible man...A man I loved very deeply. Before we move on to the eulogy reading, I wanted to share a story. My testimony, if you will. I know that it's odd that the pastor of this church is only now telling his testimony after all this time, but you'll have to forgive me.

[David takes breath and collects himself]

12 years ago, I celebrated my first Christmas with the Shepherd family. I walked through that front door a broken, sinful man. I had never been truly told the Gospel, and I had denied my God more times than I would like to admit.

[another moment]

But that night... something changed. For the first time, I heard the truth: *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Romans 6:23)

I came into that house a sinner. But I didn’t leave the same way. I left redeemed. I left a man of God.

And I have to give the glory to God. But also...I wouldn’t be here if it weren’t for this man.

[points to a picture of Mark]

Without his love for Jesus, he would not have shared the Gospel with me. Without his prayers, I may never have bowed my head that night. Without his kindness, his patience, and his faith... I don’t know where I would be today. He loved me like I was his own son.

[turns fully to the picture, holding back tears]

So thank you... thank you for showing me Jesus. Thank you for being the father I didn’t know I needed. Thank you for being faithful until the end.

[turns to congregation]

Merry Christmas, Mark. We’ll see you again.

END ACT FIVE

INVITATION

Pastor Mickey steps to the front with a spotlight on him and begins giving an invitation with something like... “We are all one of these people. Which one are you?” The invitation will continue as long as needed.

[Lights fade slowly. Then suddenly the lights come up and the song of celebration and finale begins.]

SONG

The Joy/Joy to the World (The Belonging Co) *(starts immediately after David stops speaking. All sing.)*

EVERYONE ON STAGE FOR THE ENDING