

# Christmas With the Kingstons

*By Amber Herring and Adam Herring*

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**Dedication**

*To Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, without whom we would be nothing, and to all the faithful cast and crew that helped make this production a reality.*

**STORY OF THE PLAY**

Mark Kingston has been pastoring the same church for seven years. This particular year has been a stressful one. His kids want him to find a new "job," his wife is trying to lead every program and ministry herself, and his congregation has an opinion about *everything!* One day, Mark wishes his life were "normal," that he didn't have the stress of being a pastor. When he wakes up, his wish has come true. Will Mark's new life be easier having a typical job, or will he discover that his old life was exactly the way it should be?

**Premiere Performance**

Originally performed December 2011  
at Muscle Shoals Church of God,  
Muscle Shoals, Alabama.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(3 m, 4 w)*

**PASTOR MARK KINGSTON:** Man in early to mid-50s. He is the pastor at South Pointe Community Church.

**DIANE KINGSTON:** Mark's wife, in her late 40s. She feels the need to take care of everyone and everything.

**JONATHAN KINGSTON:** Their son who sometimes feels pressured to live up to everyone's expectations. In his late teens/early 20s.

**BRIDGET KINGSTON:** Their oldest daughter who is very ditzy; late teens.

**ANGELA KINGSTON:** Their youngest daughter who has a "don't care what others think" mentality; she always has her iPod in ears and likes to dance. Early teens.

**MRS. SIMMONS:** One of Brother Kingston's "concerned" members of his congregation; mid-30s.

**MR. SIMMONS:** Husband of Mrs. Simmons. He lets his wife do his thinking for him; mid-30s.

## **SYNOPSIS OF SCENES**

**Scene 1:** Dec. 20, early afternoon

**Scene 2:** Several hours later

**Scene 3:** "Dream Scene," morning

**Scene 4:** "Dream Scene," evening

**Scene 5:** "Dream Scene," the next evening

**Scene 6:** Dec. 21, morning

## **SETTING**

Living room scene with couch, chairs, coffee table, etc. and a Christmas tree. During Scenes 1, 2 and 6 the tree should not be decorated. For the "Dream Scenes" (Scenes 3-5) the tree should be decorated. One way to do this is to use one tree, decorating one side but not the other. There is an outside door SL and an inside door SR.

The church scene is indicated simply with a pulpit and chairs.

## **PROPS**

Dust rag, clothing and other odds and ends under sofa cushions, laundry basket, newspapers, backpacks, textbooks, boxes with "decorations" written on it, phone, coats, telephone book, ipod with headphones, sofa pillows, magazine, a variety of secular Christmas decorations, bowl and spoon, briefcase, t-shirts for Mr. and Mrs. Simmons that say "We're" and "Pregnant," bathrobe for Mark, and a white angel outfit for Angela.

## **SOUND EFFECTS**

Door knocks, ringing telephone, reverb of Mark's voice, dream sequence music, bell tinkling.

**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: DIANE is in the living room cleaning. There are boxes marked "decorations" around the bare Christmas tree. There are no gifts under the tree. As Diane works, she finds clothing stuffed under the couch as well as newspapers, etc. She puts the clothes in a laundry basket. She shows frustration each time she finds something "buried" under the cushions. JONATHAN enters SL with backpack, textbooks, etc. He throws backpack down on couch and then proceeds to take off jacket. He struggles to get jacket off and shows anger as he throws it on the ground and kicks it.)*

**DIANE:** Bad day?

**JONATHAN:** Mom...I *hate* being a preacher's kid!

**DIANE:** Yeah? Try being a pastor's wife. I get to decorate the church for Christmas, get the children's Christmas program together, *(Her voice gets higher as she names off each item.)* plan and cook for the women's ministry luncheon, raise three children to be perfect stewards, get a speaker for the Christmas banquet, raise money for the youth's winter retreat, find actors for the live nativity scene, clean up after all of you *(Picks up jacket he threw on floor.)* and do all the other things that everyone else is too lazy to do. Oh, and those decorations, *(Points to boxes in floor.)* they've been sitting there for a week now, and I still don't have the tree decorated. *(Deep breath' voice returns to normal.)* Trust me kid, you got it easy.

**JONATHAN:** Yeah, I've been meaning to ask...why aren't there any gifts under the tree?

**DIANE:** Really? You think I've had time to shop, much less wrap presents? I've got so much on my mind, I can't even remember if I've showered today!

**JONATHAN:** *See!* You obviously don't like Dad being a preacher either, seeing as how you're all stressed out. Why, out of all the professions, did Dad have to choose to be a pastor?

**DIANE:** He didn't choose it, son. God chose him.

**JONATHAN:** Well, why couldn't God have chosen for him to be a doctor or a lawyer, or even a janitor? Anything that paid better than what he gets paid now. Or why, if he *had* to be a pastor, couldn't God at least let him pastor a big church like that Osteen dude. At least then I would have a nicer car.

**DIANE:** Did ... what do you call your car ... Betty ... break down again? Is that what this is all about?

**JONATHAN:** It's Betsy, Mom. And yes, the ol' Pinto broke down, for what I believe is the final time. May she rest in peace.

**DIANE:** I guess you'll just have to share with your sister until we can get it repaired.

**JONATHAN:** Mom, I can't drive Bridget's car. She drives a lime green Bug. My friends will revoke my man card, and no girl will ever want to go out with me.

**DIANE:** Well, I guess you'll just have to drive my car.

**JONATHAN:** The minivan? Do you want everyone at college to hate me?

**DIANE:** I think you're being a little over-dramatic. Where are your sisters?

**JONATHAN:** Mrs. Simmons caught them as they were walking up the driveway. I was the only one smart enough to pretend I didn't hear her when she yelled.

**DIANE:** Are you insinuating that your sisters aren't smart?

**JONATHAN:** It is what it is, Mom.

**DIANE:** Hey, *none* of my kids are dumb.

**JONATHAN:** Mom, Bridget once asked how they get deer to cross only at the yellow signs. And let's not forget the time she went out to the mailbox after the computer said, "You've got mail."

**DIANE:** Oh yeah. *(Beat.)* Well, she takes after your father.

*(BRIDGET and ANGELA enter SL with backpacks and textbooks. ANGELA has iPod and is dancing around as she puts her things up.)*

**BRIDGET:** Hey, Mom!

**DIANE:** Hey, girls. How was school?

*Christmas With the Kingston*

- 7 -

**BRIDGET:** Fantastic. Brandon Conrad asked me to the New Year's Eve Dance. Do you know what this means?

**DIANE:** That we're going to have to dish out money for a new dress?

**BRIDGET:** Well yeah, but it also means that every girl in school is going to be jealous of me. My life is great!

**DIANE:** Honey, you shouldn't want people to be jealous of you.

**BRIDGET:** That's just what jealous people say.

**DIANE:** Remind me again who teaches your Sunday school class?

**BRIDGET:** Uh ... that old dude with the mustache.

**DIANE:** *(Closes her eyes and takes deep breath.)* What about you, Angela? How was your day? *(ANGELA is oblivious to everyone, acting as if she is drumming. She is really getting into it.)* Angela ... Angela .... ANGELA!

**ANGELA:** *(Taking off earphones.)* Huh?

**DIANE:** I asked how school was.

**ANGELA:** Same old, same old. People assume that since I'm a preacher's kid that I'm the perfect child, and they're disappointed when they learn that I'm not. What's for supper?

**MARK:** *(Entering from SR.)* Hey, kids. I just had a very interesting phone call, Diane.

**DIANE:** Oh? Who was it?

**MARK:** Angela's principal. *(ANGELA makes face as if she's caught.)* Angela, care to explain to me why exactly you have detention for the entire month of January?

**ANGELA:** Beeeecause ... the school hates me. They're prejudiced against me because I'm a preacher's kid.

**MARK:** You go to a Christian school.

**ANGELA:** Exactly. That's their cover, but underneath they're just a bunch of heathens.

**MARK:** What'd you do?

**ANGELA:** It was a simple misunderstanding really.

**MARK:** Angela ....

**ANGELA:** OK, so we're sitting in class and Mrs. Alexander says, "Angela, did your parents name you Angela because you're a little angel?"

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