

# Lake Stevens Presbyterian Church

Christmas Program - December 16th, 1990

## **The Tailor's Shop : A Christmas Eve Play with Caroling**

Script by Barry McWilliams

### **Meditation:**

"Love each other as I have loved you." John 15:12

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35

Prelude - Congregation "O Come All Ye Faithful"

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Opening prayer

**Act 1:** A small town tailor's shop - Somewhere - Sometime - on a busy Christmas Eve afternoon.

Scene 1: A pushy customer "Love is not proud and is not rude"

Wee Caroler's songs:

"Away in a Manger" "Jingle Bells"

Scene 2: The busyness of charity "Love is kind"

Caroler's songs:

"Here we come a caroling" "Fom Fom Fom" "Christmas is a time to love"

Scene 3: Closing time "Love is patient and is not easily angered"

Carolers and Bells

"Ring Ring Ring the Bells" "Hear the chimes"

Intermission: in our play, but not in our worship

Tithes and Offerings - Prayer

## **Act 2: That same tailor's shop - later that night.**

Scene 1: Many stitches and Merry mice

"We wish you a merry Christmas"

Caroler's Songs: Congregation please join in!

"The First Noel" "O Little Town of Bethlehem" "Silent Night"

Scene 2: A Tailor's Tale

"This is the Christmas" - A Serbian Folktale

"But now in Christ, you who were once far away have been brought near  
by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace..." Eph 2:13,14

Scene 3: The other cheek "love keeps no record of wrongs - Love never fails."

Musical Finale:

"Joy to the world"

Benediction

About Our program:

In the midst of the bustle of your Christmas, remember that it is Christ's coming to us that is at it's core. John tells us that Jesus "came to his own, but they received him not." But "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." John 1:12; Romans 5:8)

He came to bring mercy to those needing mercy. He came to comfort and encourage those in need. He calls us to that same ministry of compassion and love.

There is no greater gift we can give this Christmas than our hearts to Him and our lives to the "widow and orphans" of this world.

About the Story: "This is the Christmas"

This is an old folktale from Serbia, what is today Romania and Yugoslavia. It is found in a collection of Christmas legends titled Joy to The World, by Ruth Sawyer.

This tale of a blind gypsy boy, under a curse and excluded from the church reminds us that Jesus came to take away the curse of sin from us, and welcome us into His presence.

While the miracle that takes place in the story is clearly that of folklore, it helps us reflect on the true miracle of Christmas. That while we were sinners, under the curse of sin, and separated from God, yet God's son came into our midst and dwelt among us. He was not welcomed, in fact suffered terribly at the hands of sinners just like us. His love was so great he took that curse upon himself and forgave us, welcoming us to Himself and to His Father.

This Christmas, a woman in our congregation has gone to Romania to seek an unwanted child, for adoption. May this story remind us that we were all once under a curse, but through Christ's coming, have been adopted into the family of God.

*God rest ye merry Gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay.  
Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day.  
To save us all from sin and shame when we had gone astray.  
O Tidings of comfort and Joy, Comfort and Joy.  
O Tidings of comfort and Joy, Comfort and Joy.*

## **The Tailor's Shop**

**Set:** a tailor's shop [Stage right] Christmas tree, clothing, hat and tie racks, Cashier's counter, Grandfather clock, Candles or oil lamps, potbellied stove & coal shuttle. A angled window and door (with bell) forming a divider center stage. Outside the shop [Stage left] with snow drifts (batting??), lighted lamp post and tailor's shop sign.

**Story summary:** A tailor is unable to finish his work for a cheerless customer on Christmas eve due to the bustle of shoppers and others. There are groups of Carolers. At closing time he settles down to spending Christmas eve with the dog, cat and mice. But more caroler come and insist he tell them a story. He tells an ancient Serbian folktale of Christmas. The customer comes and rudely picks up his coat. The tailor shows him no ill will for Jesus came to remove the curse from those had received him not.

**Costuming:** Early 20th century. Shoppers and Carolers- Coats, mufflers, stocking caps. Counter girl - lace apron. Tailor. Apron, bow tie.

**Cast:** (speaking parts) [scene #]

Tailor:	Poor Woman:[4]
Counter Girl:	Unsympathetic customer 2:[4]
Pushy Man: [1, 6, 9]	Cold Child 1:[4]
Snowball boy 1:[1]	Cold Child 2:[4]
Snowball boy 2:[1]	Cold Child 3:[4]
Pastor:[1, ]	Boyfriend:[5]
Unsympathetic customer 1:[2]	Undecisive Woman:[6]
Solicitor:[2]	Her Husband:[6]
Mother:[3]	Caroler 1:[8]
Crying Child:[3]	Caroler 2:[8]

Non-speaking shoppers to come, pantomime shopping, purchasing and exiting. Some have packages and shopping bags.

# The Tailor's Shop: Script

Prelude - Congregational singing. "O Come all Ye Faithful"

Lighting of Advent Wreath and Prayer

## Act 1:

**Scene 1** - *Tailor's shop: Tailor Taylor, Sally (counter girl) and Customer (no speaking parts) being measured in shop. Solicitor and boys with snowballs outside. {Add a Bustle of shoppers??} Mr. Styles, Grumpy old Banker, Mr. Styles enters from left. Two boys throw Snow balls. Angry he shouts at boys. enters shop and Interrupts Tailor and customer. Insists he must have repair job on coat done that night! Tailor pleads to no avail. Man leaves. through more snowballs. - Pastor drops in - reminds tailor of Christmas eve service at 6:00 PM - Tailor says how much he wants to attend, but may have to work late. (Note: from now on every time the tailor picks up the coat to work - somebody or something interrupts his work.)*

Boy 1 " Look! Its Crabby old man Styles!"

Boy 2 "Let's see who can knock off his hat"

Mr. Styles: "W-W-what! You darn boys! I'll get you for this." Enters stompin snow off shoes. "Tailor Taylor! Excuse me, Tailor..."

Counter Girl: "The tailor's helping someone right now, can I help you?"

Mr. Styles: "No. I need to see the tailor, right now, I'm in a hurry. I got so much to do! excuse me..."  
Pushes between customers and Tailor.

Tailor: "Yes, Banker Styles, what is it?"

Mr. Styles: "My wife is having a important dinner party tonight, and my coat has a tear in it. I need it repaired right away."

Tailor: "We are rather busy right now, after all it's Christmas Eve and the church service will be starting in an hour or so. I'd hoped to attend..."

Mr. Styles: "Well I think my coat is more important! I will expect it done in an hour."

Tailor: "I'm not sure..."

Mr. Styles: "Don't forget the money you owe my bank! I don't have time to argue or time to waste. My wife has a lot of last minute items for me to pick up before her dinner party." Throws coat at Tailor, turns and goes out. "It had better be done."

Boy 2 "Here he comes"

Boy 1 "I'm ready" Snowballs fly.

Mr. Styles: "You brats!" stomps off.

**Music and Singing 1**- Carolers sing "Jingle Bells" as Wee Carolers enter, then assist them in singing outside the shop "Away in a Manger", as Tailor and people in shop stop to listen.

**Scene 2-** *Solicitor enters and asks for donation for charity. Someone complains about "too many solicitations at Christmas time". Rebuking him "God gave us His son at Christmas time", - the Tailor gives generously.*

Solicitor: "Excuse me miss?"

Counter Girl "Yes?"

Solicitor: "I'm collecting donations for the Orphan's Home and was wondering if the Tailor would make a donation."

Customer: "There seems to be no end to requests for charity at Christmas time. Bell ringers on every corner and if they don't get it there, they come a knocking to your door."

Tailor: "So what. God gave his Son to us at Christmas. I will be glad to make a donation. Here! Well, no...Take this too. And if any of the children need clothing let me know."

Solicitor: "Why, thank you sir. God bless you Sir. Merry Christmas to you."

Tailor: "Merry Christmas to you and all the orphans."

Solicitor returns to tripod outside as a woman enters with a crying child - doll needs repair. sets aside coat to repair. Comforts child. "Jesus always had time to comfort even the littlest child".

Woman: "Miss, my little girl's doll needs some repairs. Her brother tried to take it away from her and in the tug a war the arm ripped off. She's been crying ever since.

Counter girl: "Well the tailor's rather busy. He's working on a rush order for Mr. Styles. Perhaps you could leave it?"

Child: "No Mommy! Boo hoo. I want dolly fixed now! boo hoo."

Tailor: "That won't help her tears, Sally! Here bring it to me! Jesus always had time to comfort even the smallest child. He knew what it was like to be a child."

Woman: "Thank you. Mr. Taylor.

Poor woman sits on bench shivering, needing warm clothing for herself and 2 children. People shy away. But Tailor gives her his best coats off the rack. Woman and children exit.

Woman: "Oh look, Sally, at that woman with those children. It must be freezing outside and none of them have coats."

Counter girl: "I doubt she can afford them. I've seen her in the soup kitchen line at the mission."

Customer: "Why doesn't she go to the Salvation army or a poorhouse somewhere."

Tailor: "Well, she's welcome here! Sally, go bring them in here, please. Here you go - one sweet dolly - good as new." Returns to woman.

Woman: "Thank you so much Mr. Taylor. Merry Christmas." child hugs doll, they leave as Sally brings in the poor woman.

Tailor: "I couldn't help noticing your children needed warm coats, ah Mrs...?"

Poor Woman: "Wollins, Mrs. Wollins. My husband is real sick and we've no money for clothing."

Tailor: "When I'm overstocked and would consider it a favor if you'd pick something out for the yourself and the children."

Woman: "We can pay you when my husband gets better."

Tailor: "I wouldn't hear of it. Its a Christmas present to you. Sally help her find coats, will you? No, not off that rack, that rack over there."

Counter girl: "But those are your most expensive coats?"

Tailor: "God gave his best for me. Now I am giving my best in His name to those who need it most. Now where did I leave that mending job?"

**Music and Singing 2-** Carolers come forward to sing : "Here we come a caroling", "Fom Fom. Fom"  
"Christmas is a time to love."

(Tailor mimes struggle between enjoying carolers and working on Jacket).

**Scene 3** *Boyfriend arrives. Anxious to go. Counter girl asks to leave early. Have date. "Only one customer left for you to wait on." Tailor wishes them a merry Christmas.*

Boyfriend: "Sally, are you ready to go? I don't want to be late."

Counter girl: "O Mike, it'll be a few more minutes yet."

Boyfriend: "Can't you leave now. It's slow going in the snow?"

Counter Girl: "Well, I will ask Mr. Taylor. Mr. Taylor, Mike's here and we've a date tonight. Can I leave a little early? There's only one couple left in the store."

Tailor: "Well... O.K. Sally, Merry Christmas to you. Have a nice evening"

Boyfriend and Counter girl: "Thanks. Merry Christmas."

*but it's indecision time - woman (with husband) can't decide what to buy - Trys one thing after another. fades into pantomime as Bells announce Service time.*

Tailor: Mr. Styles should be here soon, and the coat is a long ways from being finished. I'd better get busy."

Woman: "I can't decide which hat for Mother and which tie for Father. How about this one, dear?"

Man: "Well, we've looked in every store downtown and you haven't found anything yet. Let's just get something, before the store closes."

Woman: "You are no help - Mr. Taylor, do you think my father would like this tie or that one."

Tailor: "That one is a popular style this year."

Woman: "But maybe this one? or perhaps I should get a shirt."

Man: "Mr. Taylor is busy dear..."

Woman: "yes, busy helping me, which is more than you have done all day. Now for mother....."

**Music and Singing 3-** Carolers sing without coming forward: "Ring Ring Ring the Bells" (Solicitor exits)

**Scene 7- 5 O'Clock - Past closing time - As the indecisive lady leaves, the man's coat not done. About to lock up - blow out lights - Mr. Styles returns, insists he needs it that night - Tailor resigns self to working late.**

Tailor: escorting couple to door. "Yes I'm sure your mom and dad will be very happy with those gifts. Good night. Merry Christmas to you. (mutter) "forty-five minutes and she bought the first things she looked at anyway - some people can never make up their minds. Well, I'd better lock up."

Mr. Styles: bangs on door "Tailor Taylor, is my coat ready?"

Tailor: "I'm sorry, it's not."

Mr. Styles: "Why not!"

Tailor: " We were rather busy and there were a few interruptions."

Mr. Styles: "You knew I needed it done right away. Surely there was nothing more important going on here."

Tailor: "I could loan you a suit."

Mr. Styles: "You know all my clothes are tailored. I don't want to look tacky at my wife's dinner party. But I'll be generous - I'll give you half an hour to get it finished."

Tailor: "I did so want to go to the Christmas Service at the church..."

Mr. Styles: "Your church service will go on with out you, my wife's dinner won't without me. One Hour, no more!!" Exits.

Tailor: "Well I guess I'll just have to celebrate Christmas eve here, all by myself"

**Carolers sing "Hear the Chimes"**

Intermission - Offering is received and Prayer given.

## **Act 2**

*Scene 1 - Tailor lights candles and sets to work as Lights are dimmed. Mice come in and try to cheer him up. (Ears and tails on children in sleepers)*

Tailor: "Well It's just me and the mice tonight and just a few more stitches left. I wonder if the fable is true that the animals can talk on Christmas eve?"

Mice enter from left, dance in a circle then sing "We wish you a merry Christmas" Tailor joining them. They flee as Carolers come forward singing "The First Noel" (One verse) then Tailor and congregation joins in on "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and "Silent Night".

Tailor: "Why look! They do speak on Christmas Eve. Can I dance with you?"

Tailor: "What's that - look all the mice are scurrying away - Why it's carolers from the church. I Love Carolers. Everybody sing."

**Scene 2 - He invites them in to get warm and for cider. They ask tailor to share with them a story.**

After songs: Tailor: "Merry Christmas to all of you."

Pastor and children: "Merry Christmas Tailor Taylor"

Tailor: "You all must be cold out there. Come in and I'll heat up some cider for you."

Children: "Yippee"

Child 4 "If it's not too much trouble..."

Tailor: "I insist - come along." (They enter through door and sit down between Tailor and audience.)

Child: "Mr. Taylor can you tell us a story while we are waiting for the cider to warm up?"

Other children: "Yes, Yes - a story - please? Please?"

Tailor tells a story by candle light: *This is the Christmas: A legend from Serbia*

by Ruth Sawyer - found in her book: *Joy to the World*

and at <http://www.eldrbarry.net/rabb/folk/sawychrm.htm>

Songs by soloist - "Plough, Plough" And "This is the Christmas" are sung within story.

**Scene 3-** *Man returns for coat. Rude. Refuses to pay price since it wasn't finished on time and that was so inconvenient for him. Leaves.*

Tailor: (concluding story) "Now Three apples fell from heaven. One for the teller. One for the listeners, and one for the rest of the World."

Mr. Styles: at door "What's this! a party! My coat had better be done. Open the door." (Tailor lets him in)

Tailor: "Mr. Styles!"

Mr. Styles: "You had better have my coat done!"

Tailor: "It's right here. Better than new"

Mr. Styles: "It does seem OK."

Tailor: "That will be \$2.50 for the seam repair."

Mr. Styles: "But you didn't get it done on time, as I requested. And I had to come back twice. So as far as I am concerned, I don't owe you anything. Just be glad I won't take my business elsewhere. Goodbye." Leaves, banging the door.

Child 3: "Mr. Styles is a mean old man"

Children: "Yeah!!"

Child 4: "I hope he gets run over by a streetcar."

Children: "Yeah!"

Tailor: "Now children, don't go cursing Mr. Styles. After all, Jesus forgives us for much greater sins...."

Tailor follows with an Application of the story and play - we deserved the curse. Jesus came to set us free.

**Music and singing 5-** finale - "Joy to the World"

**Benediction**