

# *Happy Birthday, Jesus!*

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**Summary:** Join the Powell family on Christmas Eve as they decorate their tree and discuss what the kids would like for Christmas. As they read about Jesus' birth they are reminded of how baby Jesus was a gift for everyone. The Powell children realize they would each like to give Jesus a birthday gift this year, but what does someone get for the Son of God?

**Running Time:** 20 - 25 minutes

**Cast Needs:** This play can be pulled off successfully with as few as 12 kids, 4 – 5 rehearsals, and less than \$50. You will need 7 children of various ages for speaking parts and the rest will sing in the choir – some can even double up when their speaking part is finished. We worked out simple hand motions for the choir to perform that added a lot to the performance.

**Characters:**

(Note: the kids' gifts to Jesus (playing flute, singing a song) can be whatever fits with the kids in your church)

- Cindy Powell, Mom
- David Powell, Dad
- Jessica Powell, older daughter
- Abby Powell, younger daughter (needs to enjoy singing)
- Jason Powell, son
- Pastor Will (can also be in choir)
- Narrator (can also be in choir)
- Choir

**Supplies Needed:** God's Kids Worship White Christmas CD (\$10) from <http://www.godskidsworship.com/c-3-cds.aspx>. This will provide all the music you will need. Any other supplies are up to you, depending on what you have and what you'd like the stage to look like. Here is how we set up our stage: We painted a canvas backdrop with a lit fireplace (see backdrop idea on p. 6), but it's not necessary. You'll need a tree, mostly decorated set on the side and some more ornaments for the characters to hang as they talk. A couch with a small table holding a plate of cookies & a Bible is nearby. You'll also need several blankets and 3 pillows. Our choir stood on the other side of the stage.

**Featured Songs:**

Deck the Halls, We Three Kings, Good Christian Kids Rejoice, Away in a Manger (Abby Powell solo)\*, O Come All Ye Faithful, We Wish You a Merry Christmas

\*Another solo option for Abby Powell can be found at [www.kidtunz.com](http://www.kidtunz.com), called "The Gift of My Heart." You can download the music & lyrics, but it's a minimum cost of \$20 to join. It's a beautiful and moving song if you can afford it.

## The Script

On one side of the stage is a painted backdrop with a lit fireplace. A tree, mostly decorated stands to the side, with a box of unused ornaments. A couch with a small table holding a plate of cookies & a Bible is nearby. You will need several blankets and 3 pillows tucked away where they can be grabbed quickly. The choir is standing on the other side of the stage or in the middle. The Powell kids have on nice clothes, but they are covered up with robes. Mom and Dad are dressed like any parent would be.

**Narrator:** Merry Christmas to you, one and all! Before we begin, I have one question for you: how is your Christmas shopping going? Have you checked everyone off your list yet? Sometimes it's hard to find that perfect gift for someone you love, but what if you had someone on your list who has everything, who owns everything.....who, in fact, made everything? (pause) Today we will meet the Powell family and we will see the children struggling with that very question. It's Christmas Eve, and they are just finishing up decorating their tree.

*Choir Sings "Deck the Halls" (1:57) while we watch the family decorating the tree. Or you could have the family come out at a specific point in the song to decorate if it's too long.*

*While they continue decorating –*

**Jason:** "I can't believe tomorrow is Christmas! I can't wait!" *Other kids agree*

**Dad:** "Well, what would everyone like to see under the tree tomorrow morning?"

**Abby:** "Oh, I know. I want a CD player so I can play my High School Musical 2 karaoke CD and sing along as loud as I want to!" *(sings a few lines, gets interrupted.)*

**Jessica:** "I want clothes! No, a curling iron! No, a new flute...with a metronome so I can practice and get better."

**Jason:** *folding hands like praying*, "Oh, God, please let there be a metronome under the tree!" *(Jessica gives him a mad look, Mom and Dad chuckle a little)* Sorry. I really want a Nintendo DS Lite and if I can't have that then I'd like a year's supply of Sweetarts Squeeze candy!"

**Mom, standing back from the tree:** "Well, I don't know about that, but I do think this is the *best* looking tree we've ever had!"

*Everyone agrees.*

**Jessica:** “Yeah, except for the year when Jason thought the candy canes were real and tried to climb up to the top and the whole thing came crashing down on top of him!”

**Jason:** “Hey! They looked real! Besides, it’s not my fault the biggest one was near the top.”

**Abby:** “Well, maybe if you didn’t have such a sweet tooth...”

**Dad:** “All right, everyone, enough. The tree does look about done and that means.....”

**All kids:** *interrupting*, “It’s time to read the Christmas story!”

**Jason:** “And eat cookies!”

**Dad:** “I’ll get the Bible.”

**Girls:** “We’ll get the pillows!”

**Jason:** “I’ll get the *cookies!*” grabs for the cookies, Mom takes away playfully.

**Mom:** “*I’ll* get the cookies, you get the blanket.”

*All gather around the fireplace, Dad on the couch, kids on floor, Mom next to Dad.*

*Mom & Dad don’t need to memorize this part because you can have the script tucked in the Bible, but they need to be able to read it well and smoothly. Another option if you’re able is to show PowerPoint slides of the story while he reads. You can find many beautiful Nativity scenes on the internet.*

**Dad:** In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world and everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up to Bethlehem, the town of David, because he belonged to the family of David. He went there with Mary, who was to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. *(pass Bible to Mom)*

**Mom reads:** And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.”  
(ask kids) Do you remember what the angels said to the shepherds?

**Jason:** “Where’s our cookies?” (siblings react)

**Jessica:** “Don’t be afraid!”

**Abby:** “Glory to God in the highest!”

**Mom:** That’s right. So the shepherds decided to go see if what the angels said was true. *(begin reading again)* “So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.”

**Dad:** Here’s the rest of the story in the book of Matthew. “After Jesus was born, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.” Instructed by the king, they set off. Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time!”

They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother. Overcome, they kneeled and worshiped him. Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, myrrh.”

Choir sings “**We Three Kings**”. (2:54)

**Jason:** Wouldn’t it be great to give Jesus something for Christmas?

**Jessica:** Yeah, it is His *birthday*, after all!

**Abby:** Except I spent all my money already on gifts for me.....uhm, I mean for *the family*.

**Mom:** Well, I tell you what. Let’s sleep on it and I’m sure something will pop into your heads. In the meantime, we’ve got to get some sleep because it’s a special Christmas service in the morning!

**Kids:** Aw, man! Already? Can we sleep down here by the tree?

**Mom:** “What do you think?” *to dad*

**Dad:** “Sure, why not? See you guys in the morning.”

*Mom gives kisses and says sweet dreams.*

*Parents go offstage. Kids get ready for bed and talk about it.*

**Abby:** “Boy, what in the world could we give to Jesus?”

**Jason:** “Yeah, what’s on the Top Ten Gift Ideas this year for the Son of God?”

*All quietly think.*

**Jessica:** I’ve got an idea!

*Kids gather around, whisper together, high fives all around, and then lay down to go to sleep. When narrator starts talking, kids go backstage and take off robes. Join choir to sing “Good Christian Kids Rejoice.” Also, Mom and Dad can join choir from this point on.*

**Narrator:** Well, it looks like the Powell kids have a plan! Personally, I can’t wait to see what they’ve cooked up. It’s now Christmas morning and the faithful have gathered at Vineyard Church of West Houston for a heart-warming service with their church family. Let’s join them and see what the Powell kids decided to give to Jesus.

**Pastor Will** (kid dressed like pastor): Good morning, I’m Pastor Will and I’d like to welcome you to our special Christmas morning service. Our kids have been practicing a special song for us today.

Choir sings **“Good Christian Kids Rejoice”** (2:39)

**Pastor Will:** I’ve been told we have some members of our church who were reading the story of what happened when Jesus was born and would like to give Him a gift just like the Wise Men did when they came to worship Him. Kids....

**Jessica:** Good morning. I’ve been learning how to play the flute so my birthday gift to Jesus is this song, \_\_\_\_\_. (“Happy Birthday” or whatever song works!)

**Abby:** Merry Christmas! I love to sing and I’d like to sing a song to Jesus for his birthday. **“Away in a Manger”** (2:15)

**Jason:** I thought about making Jesus some cookies, but I finally decided the best thing I can give him is.....me! I love you, Jesus (*look up, shout it, hands up*).....and Happy Birthday!

**“O Come, All Ye Faithful”** (2:20)

Finish with song, **“We Wish You a Merry Christmas!”** (1:39)

