

Of Flagpoles, Feuding & Fudge

a Roaring Twenties Christmas Musical

(running time approx. 75-80 minutes)

Script & Music by
Kevin & Tami Boesiger

THIS IS A SAMPLE OF THE SCRIPT. IT INCLUDES SCENE ONE AND SCENE EIGHT FROM THE PRODUCTION. FOR A FULL SCRIPT AND PIANO/VOCAL SCORE, ORDER A PREVIEW COPY OF THIS MUSICAL.

TIME

1928

SETTING

Linwood Grove, USA typical small town where everyone seems to know everyone's business.

SYNOPSIS

Linwood Grove is in an uproar! The town is trying to pick a new Christmas display that will, as Senator Keith Manning states, “put Linwood Grove on the map.” Dolly and her ladies have a different purpose for the display and Etta is always caught in the middle. The kids of Linwood Grove have their own idea of what will bring fame and notoriety to the town. “Lucas Bligh the longest flagpole sitter of 1928!” Everything gets more confused with each passing moment and everyone gets more upset with people they really don’t know for reasons that are not even true. How will this small town overcome the differences they have on what is really important in life and come together to show the world that God’s love for us is more important than a Christmas display?

“Of Flagpoles, Feuding & Fudge” is a Christmas musical set in the late 20’s. Unity among believers is a critical way we demonstrate the power of God. Jesus said in the book of John that if we are unified “the world will know that you sent me and will understand that you love them as much as you love me.” The characters in Linwood Grove learn that everyone is important to God and people accomplish greater things for God when they work together. Romans 15 tells us to “accept each other just as Christ has accepted you; then God will be glorified.” It is our hope that this show will entertain and teach at the same time. It is our prayer that the message of the gospel is clear for those people who see this show and do not have a relationship with Jesus and that believers are challenged to work together to accomplish great things for God.

CHARACTERS

SILAS GALLAWAY is a craftsman whom few people in town know well. They don't realize that he is a believer and devout man of God who prays for citizens of Linwood Grove.

DOLLY BLIGH is the town busybody. She is a strong personality and wants the new Christmas display to about "God's glory."

LUCAS BLIGH is Dolly's son.

HANK STEWART is the town Mayor. He is a good leader and tries to unify town. He does everything he can to maintain order.

ETTA MARSHALL is a timid woman who is strong in her convictions. She recommends having a nativity scene for the new town Christmas display.

KEITH MANNING is a well respected senator with a tough, strong personality. He leads the charge to have a Christmas display that is new and modern, something to put Linwood Grove "on the map."

Additional Roles

CECIL BLIGH is Dolly's husband

AVERY

ETHEL

FERN is Calvin's wife

MABEL

CALVIN is Fern's husband

ABIGAIL is Calvin & Fern's daughter

DANNY is Mabel's son

KATE is Avery's daughter

TOM is Ethel's son

TOWNSPEOPLE

Scene One - The Town Meeting

A gavel is heard as the scene opens. Hank Stewart, the mayor of Linwood Grove, is at the front of the room bringing a town meeting to order. Etta Marshall, Keith Manning and Dolly Bligh are sitting in the front of the audience. Lucas sits next to Dolly. Silas is sitting alone in the last row, a pencil and book resting in his lap.

HANK

(banging the gavel) Okay, folks, let's get started here. Thank you all for coming out tonight to hear the ideas for Linwood Grove's new Christmas display. I want to give a special thank you to Miss Etta Marshall, Senator Keith Manning and Mrs. Dolly Bligh for their hard work and willingness to share their ideas with the rest of us. Let's hear them out and open the floor for questions. Miss Marshall, would you like to go first?

Etta is carrying a tray and slowly approaches the front, all the while appearing nervous and rarely looking at the audience. Silas opens his book and jots down notes throughout each presentation.

ETTA

(sheepishly and nearly inaudible) Thank you, Mayor Stewart, for this wonderful opportunity. . . *(There are murmurs in the crowd as they cannot hear Etta. Hank recognizes the problem and steps in.)*

HANK

Uh, Miss Marshall, you're going to have to speak up. They're having trouble hearing you out there.

ETTA

(still very quietly) Oh, pardon me, I'm so sorry. As I was saying. . .

CALVIN

For crying out loud, Etta, we can't hear you!

ETTA

(takes a deep breath, and speaks louder, yet slower, as if talking to a deaf person) Thank you, Mayor Stewart, for this opportunity to share my ideas for the Linwood Grove Christmas display. Before I begin, I would like to pass around this plate of fudge in appreciation of your. . .

ETHEL

Good grief, Etta, we're not stupid, we just couldn't hear you.

HANK

(trying to calm her) You're doing fine, Etta. What is your idea?

ETTA

Well, *(she looks down at the platter and back out again then hands it to Hank and says meekly)* fudge.

HANK

Thank you, Etta, that is very sweet of you. Please go on. *(He passes the platter around.)*

Etta smooths her clothes and sighs before beginning.

ETTA

Thank you, Mayor Stewart. *(she speaks out to the audience)* I feel the central figure of our display should be what Christmas is all about--Jesus. A beautiful nativity scene portraying the holy family will remind us all of God's great love for us.

SONG #1: *Etta's Presentation*

ETTA

JUST IMAGINE THE MANGER WHERE MARY LAID JESUS.
THE STABLE FULL OF ANIMALS AND MARY SINGS
A LULLABY FOR THE BABY JESUS.
CAN YOU JUST HEAR HER SONG OF LOVE?

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT,
BABY JESUS IS SLEEPING.
MOTHER'S ARMS OF LOVE ENFOLDING
WHILE THE SHEEP ARE GENTLY BLEATING.

Etta is overcome with emotion and breaks down as she sings the final word of the lullaby. Hank moves quickly to console her and keep the meeting moving.

HANK

Thank you, Miss Marshall. *(leads clapping)* I am quite honored to introduce our next presenter, Linwood Grove's pride and joy, our very own Senator Keith Manning.

KEITH

(Keith stands, bows to Dolly, then motions toward her) Oh, no, no, no, ladies first, I insist.

Dolly is surprised and immediately huddles her group to give last minute instructions. Among the people surrounding Dolly is her family - son, Lucas and husband Cecil.

HANK

Oh, all right, that's very gentlemanly of you, Senator Manning (*nodding his way*). (*Keith smiles and waves at the crowd.*) In that case, our next presenter will be Mrs. Dolly Bligh. Mrs. Bligh? (*she is still talking with her group*) Uh, Mrs. Bligh? (*still no response... loudly and a little annoyed*) DOLLY!

DOLLY

Well my stars, Hank, there's no reason to get het up. I'm just organizing my people for the presentation.

HANK

Mrs. Bligh, we don't need a major production here, we just need you to tell us your idea.

DOLLY

Oh, I can't do it justice with just little 'ole me. To truly get across the 'jest of the display I'll need a little assistance. Ladies... Cecil.

Cecil is oblivious to Dolly's request. Avery who is sitting next to him nudges him and says...

AVERY

Hey, your wife, the Queen of Sheba needs a "little assistance."

Cecil meanders over to Dolly as she gets her people in position. Lucas wanders to the back of the room. He and Silas share a smile and Lucas sits down next to him.

LUCAS

What'ya got there? (*motioning to the book*)

SILAS

(*making light of it*) Oh, it's just a little book I use to help me remember things.

LUCAS

Why do you need help remembering things?

SILAS

I'm not as young as you. My mind doesn't work as good as yours anymore.

LUCAS

(peering over to get a look) Wow, mister, you've got a lot of stuff in there. What is it?

SILAS

(smiling) You ask a lot of questions, don't ya? I mostly write down names and maybe something I think is important to remember about them. Sometimes I clip a newspaper article *(He flips to a page with an article on it to show him)* and put it in, to be sure I get all the facts straight.

LUCAS

Hey, I've got an article too. *(He pulls a crumpled piece of newspaper out of his pocket.)* Look here, it's all about "Shipwreck" Kelly. You ever heard of him, mister?

Dolly begins to speak and Silas motions Lucas to watch. She has her ladies arranged to portray the angels and Cecil is standing behind them holding up a star.

DOLLY

(she tries to quiet down the crowd) I think we are ready now. I apologize for the delay but for you to understand my vision I have asked the ladies from my church choir to help me out. Our Christmas display needs to show the glory of God. I see angels, spotlights and huge cut outs of the heavenly hosts as they appeared to the shepherds. Why we could even hoist a few of the those angels up the flagpole to depict the angels coming down from heaven.

SONG #2: *Dolly's Presentation*

DOLLY

JUST IMAGINE THE ANGELS SINGING GLORY,
SHOUTING, "HALLELUJAH!"
IN BLAZING LIGHT
SHEPHERDS ON THE HILLSIDE,
TERRIFIED AND SPEECHLESS,
FROZEN IN FRIGHT
ANGELS ALL AROUND THEM PROCLAIMING CHRIST!
CAN YOU JUST HEAR THE ANGELS SING?

DOLLY & LADIES

SING GLORY TO GOD AND PEACE TO ALL MEN.
SING GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST.
SING GLORY TO GOD AND PEACE TO ALL MEN.
SING GLORY TO GOD, GLORY TO GOD
GLORY TO GOD, AMEN!

Everyone begins to applaud politely as the song seems to be over. Dolly brings the ladies back in for a final ending which seems to never come to a conclusion. On the final "Amen" people are stunned in silence, not knowing quite how to react. A few clap politely.

DOLLY & LADIES

GLORY TO GOD, GLORY TO GOD, GLORY TO GOD,
GLORY TO GOD, GLORY TO GOD, GLORY TO GOD,
GLORY TO GOD... AMEN!

As Dolly and her entourage settle back into their seats, Lucas begins to talk to Silas again.

LUCAS

(motioning to his Dolly's group) You see, mister, I want to be Mama's angel. *(points to newspaper article)* Then I can be like "Shipwreck" Kelly.

SILAS

You mean that fool who sits on top of flagpoles?

LUCAS

Yeah, he draws crowds wherever he goes.

SILAS

Oh, you wanna be in the spotlight, do you? Didn't your Mama tell you flagpole sitting is dangerous?

LUCAS

Well, sure, but being Mama's angel would give me lots of practice. Maybe I could beat ole "Shipwreck's" record. I could be famous!

Lucas is interrupted by Hank calling the meeting back to order after the commotion of Dolly's presentation.

HANK

Thank you, Mrs. Bligh, for that. . .*(searching for the right word)* vivid depiction. Our final presenter is the honorable Keith Manning. Senator Manning?

KEITH

Thank you, Mayor Stewart. The pleasure is all mine. And before I start my presentation, I want to take this chance to invite you all to the annual Manning Christmas party to held a week from Saturday at 7:00. It's a great time for our community to come together and celebrate the season. *(whispers in the crowd)*

HANK

(enthusiastically) Thank you, Senator Manning. Mark that down on your calendars everyone. We all know the annual Manning Christmas party is the highlight of the year for Linwood Grove.

KEITH

Mayor Stewart, you're too kind. Folks, Linwood Grove has always been a treasure in the heartland. We have upstanding citizens and a community to be proud of. *(Murmurs of agreement in the audience.)* I propose it is time to put ourselves on the map, be bold and stand out in our state as a town that is contemporary and fresh.

SONG #3: *Keith's Presentation*

KEITH

DON'T YA' WANT TO BE KNOWN FOR SOMETHING,
BE A MODERN TOWN?
DON'T YA' WANT TO SEE PEOPLE FLOCKING
FROM MILES AROUND?
THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO STEP UP TO THE PLATE.
CAN YOU JUST HEAR THE ACCOLADES?

Music continues in a very stately manner as Keith kicks into his political speech mode. He delivers the speech with grand gestures and finesse as he has done many times running for office. He rallies the people and they react with cheers and applause at the close of the speech.

KEITH

Fellow citizens of Linwood Grove, we are all aware of the amazing assets our fine community has to offer. Our men are hard-working, our women praiseworthy, and our children healthy. We can boast of safe streets, neighbors who are kind and trustworthy, thriving churches and fine shops. We have before us now an opportunity to become even stronger. Let's make Linwood Grove a beacon, a flourishing society, a place known not only for its warmth and charm, but its ability to adapt with the changing times. We could be a landmark known for its modernism. Our display should be classy, sophisticated, new. I envision a giant gift, over six feet tall, outlined in lights *(at the mention of "lights" people are impressed)*. This gift will be split down the middle and hinged so it has the ability to be opened, revealing a sampling of the wares available in our fine business establishments. Word of our display will pique the curiosity of outsiders who will be encouraged to spend their money here as they come to see it. We showcase our products, our prosperity and our ingenuity all at the same time. Now is our time to shine, people. *(Hail to the Chief is playing in the background)* Now is our time to be bold. NOW is OUR time. Can I count on you to be the generation that puts Linwood Grove on the map?

The people cheer and there are ad libs of agreement with what Keith has just said. Dolly, realizing that she is losing the battle for the display jumps up and tries to engage Keith in a debate.

DOLLY

Now, wait just a minute, Senator Manning. *(out to the crowd)* Don't you see what he is doing, folks? This is not a political race for office. We are talking about a Christmas display. What is Christmas all about? Come on, Etta, help me out here.

ETTA

Oh, I don't know. Um... yes... uh... Christmas is... love and... uh... uh... fudge?

DOLLY

Oh my stars, Etta, Christmas is not love and fudge. Listen to me folks. What do you really want for our display? Think with your minds and hearts, not your pocketbooks.

KEITH

(looking at the crowd) Now, Mrs. Bligh, this is not about money, it's about making a name for ourselves.

DOLLY

(indignant) Christmas is for proclaiming Christ, not ourselves!

KEITH

Oh, so that's what your little show *(gives her jazz hands)* was about. I guess I missed that in your performance.

DOLLY

(sputters) Well. . .I. . . .how. . .it was. . .glory. Well at least Etta and I thought to include the namesake of Christmas. *(turns to Etta)* Right, Etta?

Etta doesn't know what to say and so she begins singing her song again very softly. Not to be outdone, Dolly and Keith join her and they all sing their respective lines from "The Presentations".

SONG #3: *Keith's Presentation (cont.)*

ETTA

JUST IMAGINE THE MANGER WHERE MARY LAID JESUS.
THE STABLE FULL OF ANIMALS AND MARY SINGS

DOLLY

JUST IMAGINE THE ANGELS SINGING GLORY,
SHOUTING, "HALLELUJAH!"
IN BLAZING LIGHT

KEITH

DON'T YA' WANT TO BE KNOWN FOR SOMETHING,
BE A MODERN TOWN?

All three sing their lines at the same time. They try to get people from the town to support their idea and the townspeople join in the singing.

ETTA

THE STABLE FULL OF ANIMALS AND MARY SINGS
A LULLABY FOR THE BABY JESUS.
CAN YOU JUST HEAR HER SONG OF LOVE?
JUST IMAGINE THE MANGER WHERE MARY LAID JESUS.
THE STABLE FULL OF ANIMALS AND MARY SINGS
A LULLABY FOR THE BABY JESUS.

DOLLY

SHEPHERDS OF THE HILLSIDE,
TERRIFIED AND SPEECHLESS,
FROZEN IN FRIGHT
ANGELS ALL AROUND THEM PROCLAIMING CHRIST!
CAN YOU JUST HEAR THE ANGELS SING?
JUST IMAGINE THE ANGELS SINGING GLORY,
SHOUTING, "HALLELUJAH!"
IN BLAZING LIGHT
SHEPHERDS OF THE HILLSIDE,
TERRIFIED AND SPEECHLESS,
FROZEN IN FRIGHT
ANGELS ALL AROUND THEM PROCLAIMING CHRIST!

KEITH

DON'T YA' WANT TO SEE PEOPLE FLOCKING
FROM MILES AROUND?
THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO STEP UP TO THE PLATE.
CAN YOU JUST HEAR THE ACCOLADES?
DON'T YA' WANT TO BE KNOWN FOR SOMETHING,
BE A MODERN TOWN?
DON'T YA' WANT TO SEE PEOPLE FLOCKING
FROM MILES AROUND.
THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO STEP UP TO THE PLATE.

Dolly holds onto her final note of the song. It causes Etta and Keith to stop singing and finally the high pitch causes a window to crack. All is silent.

HANK

Well... does anyone have any questions? *(stunned silence)* All of you have excellent ideas, but we must be fiscally responsible. In order for us to make a good decision, we need estimates of how much each of your ideas will cost the city. It seems to me there will be pieces to be made. *(looking to Silas)* Mr. Gallaway, *(everyone turns to look at Silas as if they're thinking "Who?" which embarrasses him)* would you be able to give us an estimate on the building costs for each of these ideas?

SILAS

(softly) Yes, sir. I'd just need to know what all is to be made and possibly some dimensions.

HANK

(to Etta, Dolly and Keith) Okay, did you hear that? You need to get your plans and dimensions to Mr. Gallaway so he can give us a quote on building costs. *(to Silas)* Does two weeks give you enough time? *(Silas nods in agreement.)* All right then, our presenters will meet with Mr. Gallaway and we'll assemble here two weeks from today. Thank you, folks. This meeting is adjourned. *(bangs gavel)*

As people leave, there is ad libbing concerning their favorite presentation. Lucas smiles and waves at Silas as his mother grabs his hand and leads him out.

LUCAS

See ya, mister.

Silas smiles, nods, clutches his book and leaves quietly.

Scene Eight - Silas & Keith

Scene opens as Keith is exiting Silas' shop. Silas follows him outside and they stop to watch the kids playing marbles.

KEITH

I'm glad we were able to work this out. Thank you for your help, Mr. Gallaway. I'm certain this display will put Linwood Grove on the map.

SILAS

Always glad to do what I can. I hope it makes a better statement to those kids. *(He nods in their direction.)*

KEITH

They certainly opened our eyes at the party, didn't they? We all got served a healthy piece of humble pie.

SILAS

That's the truth. It made *me* stop and check myself.

KEITH

You? I don't understand. What do you mean?

SILAS

Sometimes I use my prayer journal as a measuring stick. *(shows Keith the book)* If I can fill this book up, I must be important to God. In reality, He'd love me with or without it.

KEITH

But there's nothing wrong with praying.

SILAS

No, but am I pleasing God or trying to prove my worth to the people around me?

KEITH

Why does it matter?

SILAS

You can't earn a spot in heaven by proving your worth. I'm valuable because Jesus was willing to die for me.

KEITH

Do you think I try to show people I deserve God's love?

SILAS

(stammers) Oh. . .Senator Manning, I don't think that's my place. Who am I to judge my neighbor?

KEITH

I'm not asking you to judge. I want to know what you see in me. Please. . .I really want to know.

SILAS

(nods and resigns himself to the fact) Well, first of all, I see a man who has a heart for the people of this town. You have devoted your life to ensuring our best interests.

KEITH

(trying to make him get to the point) And. . .

SILAS

(taking his time) You have spent a lot of time looking at polls and trying to gain votes, right?

KEITH

Of course.

SILAS

You work very hard to promote an image of yourself--articulate, cunning, attractive. . .I'm not sure any of us know the real you.

KEITH

So I try to prove myself worthy by. . .

SILAS

(gently) You try to prove yourself worthy of God by creating a desirable image.

There is a long silence as Keith mulls over what Silas has just said.

SILAS

It's understandable in your line of work. Anybody in your position would do the same. We all do it.

The silence continues from Keith.

SILAS

It doesn't mean God doesn't use you. I hate to think of where this town or our entire state, would be without you.

KEITH

Mr. Gallaway, is my name in your book?

SILAS

Of course.

KEITH

So you've prayed for me?

SILAS

Yes, many times.

KEITH

Then it appears to me that any benefits this town has received because of my work have a lot to do with YOUR work as well.

SILAS

I've never thought of it that way, Senator.

KEITH

(shaking Silas' hand) Thank you, Mr. Gallaway, for your honesty. I am proud to know you *(winking)* even if you are a spy!

SILAS

(waving) Thank you, Senator Manning. See you at the unveiling.

BLACKOUT