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DramaShare[®]

**Christian Drama Ministry
Organizational Manual**

Edition 3.0



Assisting in Christian Drama Ministry Worldwide

DramaShare®

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ASSISTING IN CHRISTIAN DRAMA MINISTRY—WORLDWIDE

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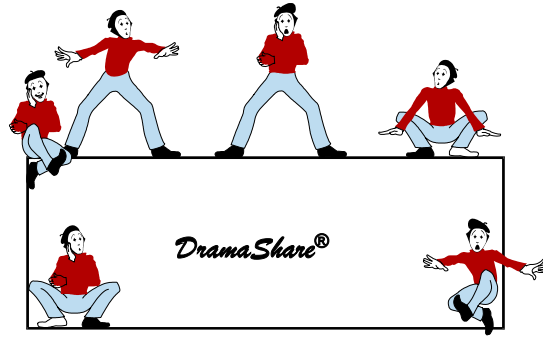
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The Butterfly—a symbol of new life. As a gift to you, with all orders for *DramaShare* materials, we enclose the *DramaShare* Butterfly. Until her passing in her 98th year, these butterflies were lovingly hand-made by “The Butterfly Lady”, and the tradition continues.



Christian Drama Ministry Organizational Manual

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DramaShare Philosophy

We in DramaShare believe that Christian Drama Ministry has a major role to play in spreading the Word of God. We believe that lay people participating in this ministry have an obligation to become trained in the various skills involved in Christian Drama Ministry, both in front of, and behind the footlights. We believe that it is the responsibility of those in leadership in Christian Drama Ministry to actively search out those not active in the various ministries of the church, and to encourage their involvement in Christian Drama Ministry. We believe that all who are committed to serve should be given the opportunity to do so, without question or audition, providing that they are prepared to become trained and to commit the necessary time to the project.

Scope of this manual

As with all DramaShare materials, this manual is not primarily intended for professionals, (although we have many customers who are professionals), it is for amateur lay people or clergy who, (in fear and trembling), are called on to initiate Christian Drama Ministry in their church or group.

We have tried to include the information which will be needed to organize and coordinate a successful Christian drama ministry, while at the same time avoiding all of the non-essential jargon and details found in the more technical, or school-based, documentaries.

If there are issues or matters not covered in this manual for which you are seeking input, please contact us at your convenience, we are here to assist you in any way possible.

Through surveys which we conduct around the world, we have determined a very frightening statistic about Christian drama ministries. A Christian drama ministry, on average, last less than two years. That's right. On average, a new drama ministry initiated today will be history in less than two years from now. What causes ministries to go down when they have really just begun?

We assumed that the reason was an unacceptable level of performance which was being offered. Turns out we were wrong. We found that the greatest reason for the termination of a drama ministry was . . . internal dissension within the church and / or the group.

Dissension?

In a Christian ministry?

How can that be?

Fact is, church drama programs are initiated for a multitude of reasons. A need to minister, a need to provide a creative outlet for church members, an

opportunity to utilize theatrical skills of one or more individuals in the congregation.

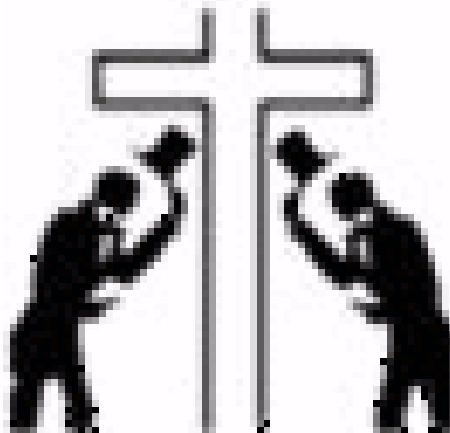
Unfortunately, all too often, the reason may be ego-gratification.

But almost never are the organizational needs and grounding of the new ministry given the attention they deserve. And that's an accident looking for a place to happen!

The new drama ministry deserves planning, procedures, controls and guidelines.

Without these components, the ministry will seldom stand.

There's just something about dramatic ministry which runs the risk of allowing ego to take over. Proper organizational attention AT THE BEGINNING can reduce the risk of this happening. And, it is to that end that this manual is dedicated.



Welcome to the DramaShare Christian Drama Ministry Manual Edition 3.0!

You will find many upgrades and improvements since our earlier editions. Many of the suggestions for new areas of interest have come from those who are users of our DramaShare Manual Edition 2.0, as well as materials from our large Internet site, <http://www.dramashare.org>, and from our Christian drama eMail list conference, Christian-Drama-Forum, (where over 350 drama leaders meet to discuss matters related to dramatic arts ministry. We appreciate all who have contributed to this new reference work through their comments and input.

Who is DramaShare?

We are a family based ministry, presently, (as of January, 2000), working in over 3,800 ministries in 49 countries around the world. DramaShare began as a method of getting people into active ministry in our own church, so we can certainly associate with what a lot of churches around the world are attempting to do today in initiating Christian drama. We believe this is why we have had some success in assisting in initiating dramatic arts ministry in hundreds of other churches around the world. Many years ago, as youth leaders in our church, we found that many young people who were "musically challenged" felt at a loss to find a ministry niche in the church. It just seemed to us that surely Christian drama would fit that need to a "T". However, we were thoroughly non-theatrical in background, so we went looking for materials and methods which would not require past experience and expertise, where anyone and everyone was welcome and

Comment from the Anastasis Theater Web Site:

"DramaShare. Possibly the most complete Christian Drama Resource on the Web."

accepted. And we found - nothing, really! There was nothing on the shelf that fit our needs. So we, (with many mistakes made along the way), set out to create our own methods and materials. We had some success, and subsequently were asked to share our information with churches, colleges, groups and individuals, mainly in Canada.

It was at that time we became convinced that a new phenomenon, called the Internet, held great opportunity for people in Christian ministry. The Internet has proven to be a wonderful vehicle for carrying God's Word to the most remote areas around the world, quickly and economically. We established a web site, <http://www.dramashare.org> and placed all of our scripts, manuals and other resources on this site. In spite of the fact that we did no advertising whatsoever, the DramaShare site quickly became the most visited Christian drama site in the world. We now have materials and training for a wide range of dramatic ministries, including mime, interpretative movement, puppetry, clowning, illusion, storytelling and more. In addition we offer materials for those interested in the supportive areas, such as makeup, lighting and sound, writing, directing, costuming and all on and off stage functions associated with Christian drama ministry.

Under God's provision, the DramaShare ministry has grown in size and in reputation throughout the world. The following are some comments about this ministry:

DramaShare Member **Judy Herring of North Carolina** says:

You offer such an all-encompassing site that has been a tremendous resource for me -- and I want to share it! The CDF, (Christian Drama Forum email list), alone a tremendous help. I love knowing that I am not alone out there. I think it is something that no creative ministry should be without! Thanks again for all you do! You are truly appreciated -- even by those of us who don't respond a lot!

Some Recommended Christian Drama Ministry Guidelines

One major informational request we have had when working with churches and groups around the world has been for suggestions on how to first establish the Christian drama ministry. There is a real feeling that Christian drama ministry can play a big part in the life of the church, however there is a lot of concern and caution being expressed as well.

The following are some guidelines which we have found useful in our churches and also in the churches with whom we have worked. Our thoughts are offered as suggestions only, not meant to be a foolproof, sure-fire blueprint to success. We would hope that our suggestions will spur further thought within individual church.

During our extensive travels we have heard of many horror stories of how poorly planned introduction of drama has resulted in great conflict, division and hurt within churches. While we may disagree with those who oppose Christian drama ministry in church, the fact is that some opposition to drama does exist. We can fight these feelings and force drama on the church, however, in most cases, both drama ministry and the church as a whole will suffer.

It is our impression that in most, (not all), cases where Christian drama ministry has not been accepted by the church, there has not been proper or adequate preparation by those who are seeking to introduce drama.

Therefore, **rule #1: DO YOUR**

HOMEWORK. Have a **complete written plan** for the project. This plan will include a projection of all required resources, (financial, human, time, space requirements, etc.). This must be well thought out and very detailed. If you are going into a project such as this without a plan you will likely not succeed. Why a written plan?

Something in writing is much easier to "sell" to others. Of even more importance, a written plan is a great advantage to those organizing the project since it will demand greater planning and also will form the basis of future control as you measure your actual results against your projections and budgets.

Rule #2: HAVE A TEAM PUT TOGETHER IN ADVANCE.

While, in most cases, there will be one person who is the driving force behind the project, Christian drama ministry will seldom be successful if

it is a "one person program." Recruit the various committee leaders: prayer and planning, as well as the technical areas of sound, lighting, costumes, set construction, art & decoration, advertising & promotion, and others.

Rule #3: ENSURE THAT SUPPORT FROM THE BOARD OF ELDERS AND PASTORAL STAFF IS OBTAINED PRIOR TO INITIATING THE PROGRAM.

Recently we heard of a Drama Coordinator who went ahead with the new drama program, in spite of being fully aware of serious opposition to the proposed program. The project blew up in this person's face since it was, (rightly), perceived that he was trying to force his ideas on the church.

Our suggestion is that if, through your



best efforts, support is not forthcoming, you are better to shelve the project for a time and go back and do your homework and your "selling job" until unity of purpose can be attained. What may appear to be a needless delay actually could turn out to be the enhancement of the entire program. Remember that virtually all people will come on side if they are properly, positively and lovingly approached.

Rule #4: INCLUDE AND ENCOURAGE THE LEADERS OF THE VARIOUS PROGRAMS IN THE CHURCH TO SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN DRAMA MINISTRY. Point out the ways in which drama can enrich other programs such as Sunday School, Seniors, Music, Outreach, Youth, etc. Try to get the involvement of others in the program right from the beginning, these people will bring strong support and encouragement and will also contribute to making drama a church wide happening and not a "one person show." In our own case, the person who most strongly objected to drama ministry at the outset has turned into our strongest supporter through working closely with this person. We have found that seldom will only one person have an objection. Usually there are others with the same concern but not the same open attitude. Be thankful for the person who openly criticizes your program. Get to know them, they can tell you a lot of what needs to be "fixed".

Rule #5: ALWAYS ENSURE THAT THE PROJECT IS THOUGHT OF AS "CHRISTIAN DRAMA MINISTRY", by your committee and by the church as a whole. Frankly we have a lot of problem with drama being referred to as

"skits". We even have problems with the word, "plays". We realize that it is only words, but when you are introducing this type of program into the church we feel that it sends a very wrong message to those who may, in advance, be skeptical. There is another very important reason for our bias and that is the organizing committee must, themselves, look on this as: a) Christian and, b) ministry. We all tend to live up to our own level of expectation. If we refer to our project as "Christian" activity and a "Ministry" it will bring out a higher level of commitment and dedication. Further it is our bias that, while your drama offerings will have varying Christian messages, they must be Christian in content. We don't need to, and shouldn't, have our drama message "hit people over the head with a Bible", but we must be ever cognizant of the reality that since this program is church-based, it should be a Christian-based program carrying a Christian message. To us, this is a crucial point. We know of church based drama groups which were organized to stage excellent secular drama, this is their privilege. It is our opinion, however, that if your intent is to stage secular drama, the machinery is already in place to make use of the local Little Theatre or some other group. We really don't believe that we need to run competition with these amateur theatre groups. (Sorry for those on whose toes we have stepped).

Rule #6: USE COMEDY WITH GREAT CARE, PARTICULARLY WHEN DEALING WITH BIBLICAL CHARACTERS. Comedy is a great tool in Christian drama ministry however be very aware that some people may feel that comedy drama is mocking or

trivializing when used in reference to biblical characters. We owe it to our audience to be sensitive to other people's sensitivities.

Rule #7: SET UP YOUR OWN

ADVISORY BOARD. We believe that one of the greatest dangers for those involved in the front lines of a very creative area such as drama is that we come to believe too much in our own abilities, there is a tendency to "read our own press clippings". Our creations, the dramas, become our "children" and none of us like it "when someone says something against our children". It is critical that we have a reliable, responsible person, (or small group of people), who will review and give prior guidance and approval to all that we do or create.

We have set up an Advisory Board for *DramaShare*. The Board members, prior to offering to the public, must review activities and un-staged creations of *DramaShare*. Not only does this result in a wider pool of good ideas and a better end product but the most important thing for us personally is that in the back of our minds we know that there is someone to whom we are answerable. We ask that our Advisory Board be a "think tank" that comes at the project from a spiritual, rather than a literary or artistic base. They are asked to evaluate and judge from the following perspectives:

- Theological Content,
- Outreach & Missions,
- and Vision & Need.

We also ask that the Advisory Board be a Prayer Support group for all of our activities.

Choose your Advisory Board very carefully. These may be people with a drama background, or they may be those to whom drama is totally foreign, (this will provide a

very useful, fresh and unbiased perspective. Most crucial is that these must be people with whom you feel comfortable and secure, who can make honest comments and suggestions without creating hard feelings.

Rule #8: DEVELOP A POOL OF TALENT FROM ALL AREAS AND AGE GROUPS.

Unfortunately, (as earlier mentioned), all ministries, whether music, teaching or drama, tend to use the same people repeatedly rather than spread the workload and the opportunities throughout the church. When you find a good soloist or teacher or actor, the tendency is to keep going back to this person rather than developing new talent. At *DramaShare* we have developed a method which identifies and develops new talent. We have initiated a Christian *DramaClub* which is open to all and meets weekly. The *DramaClub* training agenda covers all areas such as voice training, stage movements, body language, makeup, costuming, production, directing, writing, promotion, set construction, forms of drama, biblical basis for drama, etc. By working closely with a pool of available talent over a long period we are able to uncover people who have talents which can be developed. We have been successful in getting the under-utilized people out of the pews and into ministry. In a church of 300 people your aim should be to involve approximately 100 of the congregation, in one area or another, in Christian drama.

Rule #9: THE CENTRAL REASON FOR THE EXISTENCE OF THE DRAMA PROJECT IS TO BUILD UP THE PARTICIPANTS AND TO

HONOR GOD. We do not believe that it is satisfactory to have a drama project simply as an artistic activity. We have witnessed over and over, the tendency for those involved in creative church activities such as drama to let their egos rule over their good judgment. We need to constantly remind ourselves, (and ask others that they remind us), of the real reasons for Christian drama ministry.

Rule #10: SURVEY AND INFORM CHURCH CONGREGATION ON ON-GOING BASIS. It is your wish to serve the congregation through the medium of Christian drama. Realize in advance that these are people with the usual combination of beliefs, convictions, notions, persuasions, positions, sentiments, views, images, thoughts, awareness, requirements, needs, perceptions, opinions, (yes, along with some prejudice and bias), as to what they would like to see in their church.

A

Sample Drama Ministry Informational Bulletin:

(Church or Group Name) **DRAMA MINISTRY INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN**
February 2000

Thanks to all the church family for the support of the Drama Ministry here at *(Church Name)*. Your involvement in all areas, especially in prayer, is crucial to the continuing success of this exciting ministry.

This month we are planning the following presentations:

Feb 12 - Valentines Banquet "A Time for Love" 3 drama presentations, singing, coffee and strawberry short cake ensure a fun time

Feb 27 - Evening Service - Communion "A Meeting Between Two Mothers" A meeting of the mothers of Jesus and Judas

Note we need to plan for the Valentines Banquet so please ensure that you have purchased your ticket not later than February 5, cost is only \$2.50 per ticket.

which we have to bear in mind is that **this is their church**. We have no authority to use a heavy - handed approach in doing "what we know is right for the congregation". Quite the opposite, we must be constantly aware of the rights of the congregation. We believe that no new major undertaking such as Christian drama ministry should be initiated without first surveying the congregation for their input. Not only will such surveys keep the congregation informed on church planning, it may well provide a pool of ideas and participants for the project.

This surveying should be an on-going activity, including response cards provided at all drama performances. On the following pages are some examples which can be used or adapted.

We trust that some of these suggestions will assist in establishing Christian Drama Ministry.

"we cannot do God's work without God's power"

The Organizational Structure of Christian Drama Ministry

In our own experience, and in working with churches throughout the world, we have found that one of the critical factors in assuring the success of the drama program in a church will be the manner in which it is organized and structured. This section will provide suggestions taken from real-life examples in churches

around the world. Naturally, like all guidelines, some adaptation is necessary, and not all suggestions will work in all churches. The hope is, however, that these guidelines will provide the basic framework from which a workable plan can be put together.

So, how should the organizational structure of the up-and-coming drama ministry look? The first consideration of the drama ministry is: to whom will the ministry be answerable? Where does it “fit” on the organizational chart?

We find that in most churches, drama is placed under some other ministry such as Music or Outreach. And this may be a good place for it in certain churches. The danger when this happens is drama tends to become a secondary function of that ministry, something which is done not for its self but rather to facilitate another ministry. As an example, frequently if drama is placed under music, most drama becomes musical drama. (Note: there is nothing wrong with musical drama, but drama has much more to offer than just music).

As well, where drama is placed under the music ministry we tend to get only the musically talented turning out for involvement, seldom will the “musically challenged” turn out since the perception will be that musical talent and interest is a requirement. Beyond this, there often tends to be little on-going drama skills training since most practice time is spent on choir rehearsal, (as should be the case in any music based group). If Christian drama ministry is to have major emphasis in a church it needs to have a front row presence in the

church. This begins with conception of drama ministry plans and is ensured through providing:

- a spot on the Organization Chart, and
- formal Job Descriptions for those in the drama department.



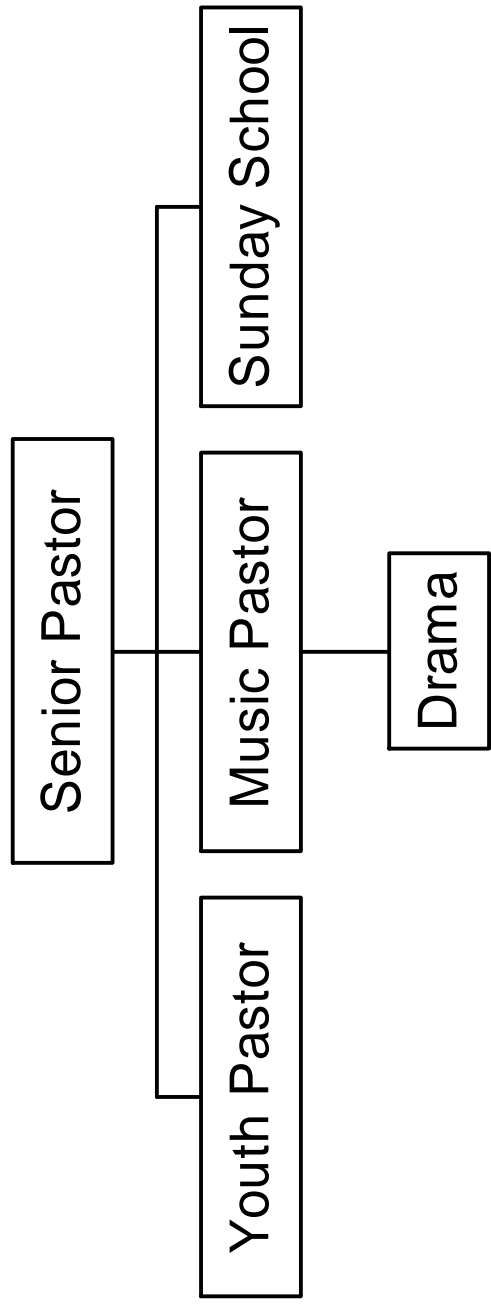
It is assumed that all departments within the church have, and utilize, effective, well-planned Job Descriptions and Organizational Charts.

(For complete information on these two key management areas, see our “Creating Job Descriptions in the Church” Manual.

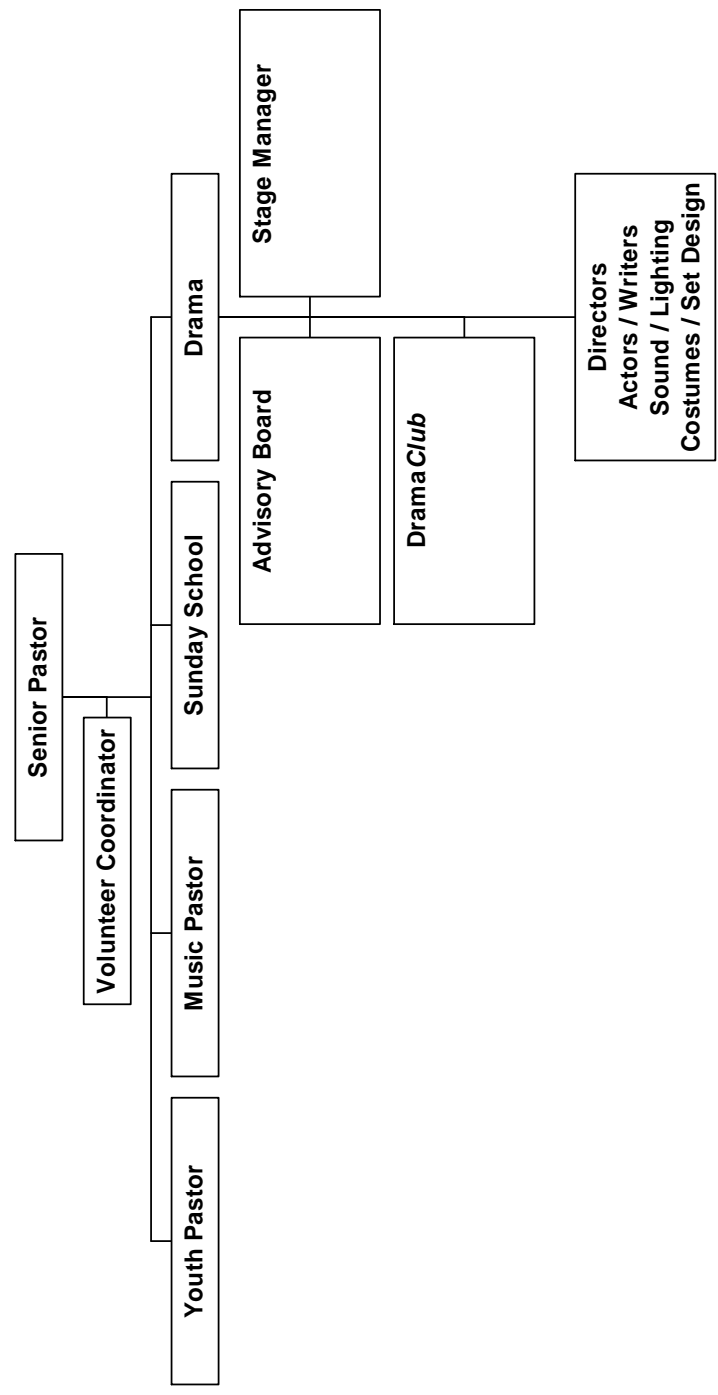
However we will capsulize some of the information, as it relates directly to Christian Drama Ministry, in this section).

On the following pages we show examples of drama ministry reporting to the Music ministry, followed by another Organizational Chart where the drama ministry has its own identity on the chart, and showing the relationship to the Senior Pastor, the Board, the congregation as a whole and to the other ministries in the church. Note that in our model we are referencing only on the Drama department, all sub-departments within other ministries have been left out in order to make the chart more clear. Also in our model the Drama Coordinator, like all other ministries coordinators, answers directly to the Senior Pastor. (In many cases in larger churches the Senior Pastor would delegate some or all of this control to a senior staff member). By reporting directly to the Senior Pastor, or a senior staff member, drama ministry achieves an equal measure of emphasis with other ministries in the church. Note also that the other ministries, such as Youth and Music, are on the same organizational level as is drama. With all ministry leaders on the same level there will be more emphasis on cooperation with the various church departments. This makes dramatic

Standard Church Organizational Chart



Revised Church Organizational Chart



involvement in other ministries more easily instituted.

Note that we have an Advisory Board in an advisory position to the Drama Coordinator. (In other sections we discuss the need for an Advisory Board). We also have a Volunteer Coordinator in a staff position and a Stage Manager reporting to the Drama Coordinator, in an advisory position, these very important positions will also be covered elsewhere.

Very important in our opinion is the *DramaClub* position reporting to the Drama Coordinator. We believe that the *DramaClub* is the key to the long-term success of the Christian Drama Ministry project, providing the training and development which will ensure a readily available pool of volunteers for the various positions in the ministry.

You will also notice that there are the solid lines of authority linking the various ministries together through their respective coordinators. This means that all other ministries in the church gain from the existence of the Drama Department and are able to access the expertise in the Drama Department. However to do so they must go through the Drama Coordinator. (In the same way that the Drama Coordinator would have access to the resources of other departments through their respective coordinators). These solid lines of authority then proceed upwards from the various ministries to the Senior Pastor to who all report.

Note as well that there are broken lines from each of the other ministries to the pool of Drama Department staff, and also to *DramaClub*. This means that, while there is no authority based relationship from the other ministries to the Drama Department resources, (or vice versa), there is clear access to resources between departments. This is very important feature and allows all departments to make full use of expertise in

the church as a whole. For example, it allows the Drama Department to access the Music Director to assist in staging a Drama with some musical numbers, or to call in

the expertise of any of the other ministry departments to assist in the training function in *DramaClub*. Naturally this works both ways, example, the Music Coordinator is free to call on the expertise of the Drama Coordinator to assist in a Music project.

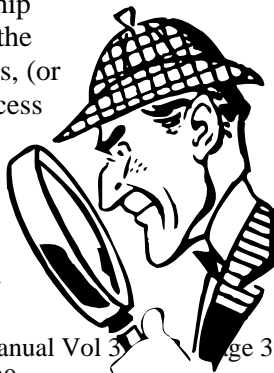


Job Descriptions

Before we start in this area, **YES, JOB DESCRIPTIONS ARE WORKABLE AND QUITE NECESSARY FOR VOLUNTEER CHURCH WORKERS.** In fact, in some ways it is even more important for a volunteer to have a written job description than for a paid staff member. We need to be aware that volunteers are a scarce commodity and we need to keep them as happy and productive as is possible. As is proven everyday in business, a position without an up-to-date written job description will result in employees who are unclear as to their function, authority and responsibility.

A key to a smooth running church is that we ensure that everyone knows what is expected of him and to whom he is answerable. No church worker, (staff or volunteer), should have any doubt as to his job function, guidelines and limits of authority.

Suppose that a certain person believes that she has full authority for a certain drama project. She takes the initiative to order materials for the project only to find, (after the fact), that she was expected to have prior approval from the Senior Pastor. This span of authority makes good sense, but it is essential that all parties be aware of the guidelines in advance, no surprises. Many church leaders have a great problem with formal, written job descriptions: some because they don't use them, (and thereby



Pleasantville Community Church for 12 month period ending Oct 31,00

Job Description—Drama Coordinator

Name of church worker

Responsible to:

Responsible for:

Works closely with:

Committee involve-

Knowledge re -

Skills & abilities

Gifts & personal

Page 2 Job Description—Drama Coordinator

Primary job function

Job responsibilities

Guidelines of authority

Job goals for year

Training & develop-

Comments worker

Comments = Super-

Signed—worker

Signed—supervisor

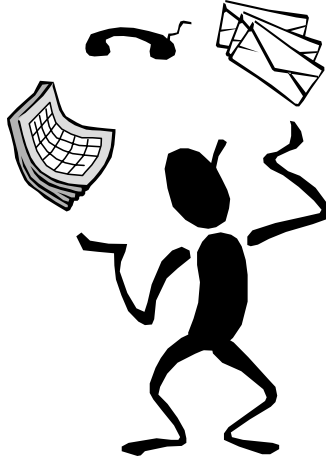
Date

The Reorganization Process

Many church officials tell us that they believe it is much easier to start from scratch rather than to forge a new direction in an established Drama Department. Practices become entrenched, policies become "cast in stone", old habits are difficult to change. Regardless, changes and minor adjustments are essential, and on an on-going basis.

The easiest and most acceptable method of change is to make a series of smaller changes as opposed to one massive change. However this can't be a haphazard process, there must be an overall plan behind it all. The following are some suggestions as to how change can be brought about in the human structure of the church drama department.

- Compile a list of all duties performed in the department. This would involve the whole department: leaders and assistants, paid positions and volunteers. Throughout this process ignore the structure and makeup as it presently exists. Simply list the duties which are, or should be done. Obviously this will be a long list, don't try to restrict it.
- Group "like" activities. Look at this as a total department activity, disregard how the various functions may presently be broken down into sections or portfolios. You may well find that activities which presently are in two or more sections would best be combined under one person. Consider the potential of this type of change. Disregard any negative reactions which this may raise among staff or membership as a whole, this must certainly be considered, but must be done as an entirely separate issue. As a beginning, organize the *DramaClub* and the Skills areas.



How can these areas be better organized?

- Evaluate the number of "positions" which these activities will require. Note that a "position" is the amount of work that an average person can perform in one average day or the average time allocated as a general rule with a full or part time, paid or volunteer worker. Don't have duplication, but also avoid over-committing volunteers.
- Total the number of persons within the groups which were determined in the step above.
- Evaluate the number of supervisory people required, if necessary additional team leaders will need to be added.
- From the information obtained set up a trial organizational chart. Again, ignore the present makeup of your organizational chart. Also, (and this is key), ignore the strengths, weakness', wishes, idiosyncrasies, etc., of present staff members and leaders. Again, this will have to be addressed as a separate issue.
- Evaluate the flow through the organizational chart. Should some positions and / or sections be eliminated or added. Would staff - advisory positions improve the efficiency and operation of the organization? Would a project management structure enhance the smooth operation of the overall organization by freeing up some people from the on-going projects? A project management structure is

where a group are put together for a specific, relatively short term project, after which the group is disbanded. In Drama Ministry this type of structure works very well since most of the drama projects are for the staging of a specific performance after which the group disbands, to come together again with a somewhat different mix of personnel and functions.

- Allocate from your present personnel pool the people best suited for the positions identified.
- Identify those areas where training will be required to upgrade people into their new responsibilities and where new recruitment will be necessary. Project the time line and any possible costs involved in providing this training. Can the church afford both the time and the finances? Will volunteers be prepared to commit to this training? Is there alternate opportunities with less cost or time requirements? (Avoid the tendency for urgency, take the long-term approach).
- As accurately as possible try to predict the reaction of staff and membership as a whole to the proposed changes. In what areas will there be a possibility of a negative reaction? This should not automatically change your plans, rather it should create a willingness to ensure that all possible has been done to lovingly and prayerfully present the changes in such a way as to create an opportunity for growth and advancement in service to God.

Job Makeup

Particularly for volunteers, there is a fine line between a job which is too limiting, (and thereby boring), and one which has too many functions of various natures, (and thereby will overwhelm the volunteer).

Often a person is often recruited into a drama position to perform a certain function, example to look after sound. It can sometimes happen that this person feels limited and secretly wishes for some variety in service. In *DramaShare* we now overcome this problem by multi-skilling all our staff through our *DramaClub* program, thus widening the scope of their opportunities for service. Now the individual can, and will, move on to another position within the program. However, on the other end of the scale, care must be taken that the worker is not overloaded and thereby frustrated as would likely happen if this person were given responsibility for sound, lighting, costumes, etc., or by being expected to look after all activities for a full year. Through *DramaClub* we spread the work around and give all participants opportunity for various activities and also for time off from time to time. The fact is that we find that in the mind of participants we are under-utilizing them rather than burning them out. In our opinion this is the lesser of the two evils.

There has to be a happy balance in job makeup, and this balance will vary among positions and among individuals. How do we determine the proper balance? This requires very special skill and sensitivities. It is very critical that the individual worker is very much involved in determining the proper balance since only that person can know exactly their own time limitations, goals and aspirations. Always ensure that there is free and open dialogue with all individuals. One method to enlist this input from all members of the drama department is through the regular use of a Position Function Questionnaire Form. Every church worker, paid or volunteer, should complete this form annually. It will provide an indication of manpower requirements, changes in function and duties and also an indication of the job aspirations of the individual worker. A sample form is shown on the following page.

POSITION FUNCTION QUESTIONNAIRE

"Your Church" DramaClub

Through Christian Drama Ministry, enabling our church and it's people to be all God has lead us to be.

(Name of) Church _____

Position _____

Name of Respondent _____

Supervisor _____

Date Reviewed _____ Last Review _____

1. Principal Function:

Regular Duties:

List major duties normally performed:

Approx time spent

Other Duties:

List other duties normally performed, not on regular basis:

Approx time spent

4. Any comments as to changes you would like to see in the duties and function of your position would be greatly appreciated and will be reviewed with you.





DramaShare®

Christian Drama Ministry Manual
Edition 3.0

People in Drama Section

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Assisting in Christian Drama Ministry Worldwide

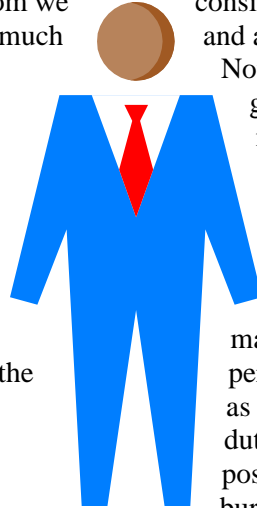
The People Side of Drama Ministry

Personnel for Drama Ministry

Those of us in *DramaShare* have a special common bond which unites us with the many thousands of churches with whom we have contact. We all started out with much enthusiasm, much trepidation and absolutely no experience.

At the outset we had many doubts, probably none more worrisome than the concern over where we would recruit the personnel for drama ministry. To our great surprise, acquiring personnel is actually one of the easier mountains for the novice Drama Committee to climb. Perhaps the greatest concern however is in very clearly setting out in advance the positions required to be filled and the very specific responsibilities and authority which goes with each position. Do not underestimate the importance of very clearly establishing these guide lines in advance since failure to do so has destroyed many potentially very successful drama ministries. (See the guideline suggestions for developing the organizational structure and job descriptions elsewhere in the **Organizational Structure section** of this manual).

People attracted to drama may be, by nature, outgoing. When one creates a drama, whether as an actor, a playwright, a director or a stagehand, it is a situation not unlike giving birth to a child. This new entity is very important to the creator and often that creator will be highly possessive and sensitive about his or her creation. If the responsibility, authority and other guidelines are not carefully addressed in advance there is opportunity for disagreement and tensions developing. In secular drama these tensions are unfortunate and to be avoided. In Christian drama these tensions must not happen since they not only destroy relationships and even churches, but worse, these disagreements take glory away



from the very God who is the only reason for the Christian Drama.

Therefore in this section we will identify not just the specific positions which should be considered, but also the responsibilities and authorities which each should carry.

Note that these are recommended guidelines only, individual situations may dictate very different guidelines. However, we believe that whatever the guidelines shall be, they must be laid down in written form and fully understood in advance.

Naturally in smaller groups there may be a combining of functions, one person may wear several hats. As much as possible, however, try to separate the duties among as many people as possible since it will not only help avoid burnout, it will increase the idea base and thereby the success of the endeavor. As mentioned, we have found that attracting personnel is one of the easier problems to deal with. Properly attacked, we believe you will find the same results.

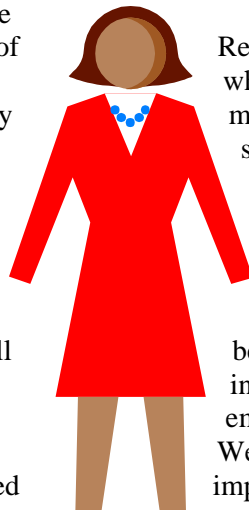
Recruiting Personnel for Drama Ministry

Recruitment is often mentioned as an area which causes great problems for drama ministry organizers. When we first started we did a lot of arm twisting to get people involved. We were surprised, disappointed and frustrated when we didn't have lots of people rushing to sign up for service as soon as we put out the word that a drama ministry was being organized. Those who we did rope into service proved largely unreliable and emotionless. We were upset!

We then realized that we were trying to impose our will on others. We were very confident that we, more than the candidates, knew who should and should not be involved. How foolish!

When we opened the opportunities for those who had a burden for involvement, things really turned around! All of a sudden we had people interested in the ministry.

(Naturally in our heart of hearts we were



ON RECRUITING AN ACTOR

Many of the churches with whom we have worked have asked for information on recruiting actors for Christian Drama Ministry. These are some personal observations and suggestions:

Suggestion #1. We believe that Christian Drama Ministry within a church should be aimed at widening the base of "ministers" in the church. One of the reasons for establishing *DramaShare* was to honor God through the involvement of those in our church who seemed to have no apparent opportunity for ministry. Those who are gifted in music, and those who are talented in preaching or in teaching, all have greater access to ministry, and their gifts tend to be used. Those whose talents are less obvious may be overlooked. Here, we believe is a natural opportunity for drama. Note that in going to a different segment of the congregation we are not accepting a lesser level of commitment, expertise or spiritual awareness. Those to whom we look as candidates for drama are simply gifted and empowered in a non-traditional area. Does this mean that singers or instrumentalists or preachers are not welcome in drama? Not at all. All members of the congregation are welcome. Our concern with using those whose talents are already being used in other areas are twofold: 1) there is too much of a tendency in the church to over-use



those who will allow themselves to be used. We believe that one of the greatest reasons for burnout among volunteers in the church today is our tendency to use a volunteer until they scream "ENOUGH"! 2) we believe that we ought to first try to provide opportunities for those who are presently not in Christian service. We ought to go looking for new candidates to fill the newly created posts which Christian Drama Ministry provides. We hear many

churches saying that when recruiting for drama they choose those who have musical abilities "since they are more artistically inclined". We're not sure that most drama coordinators, including ourselves, even know what "artistically inclined" really means! Furthermore, our experience is that those with no service background will, after some *DramaClub* training, be every bit as effective in Christian drama ministry as the "artistically inclined". Further we find that in many cases inexperienced volunteers can be more moldable and much more excited about their new opportunity.

Suggestion #2. We suggest that there should be a forum for exploration and identification of one's skills within the church. As previously mentioned, we have established a monthly *DramaClub* in our church. The entire congregation is welcome to attend and participate in these classes. In *DramaClub* we examine all of the various functions in drama: acting, directing, stage management, costumes, lighting,

Some of the many other sources for costumes include:

Garments of Praise
Joy Reaser Mertz
RD 2, Box 537-H, Fryling Road
Northumberland, PA 17857
570-473-3851
ramertz@jdweb.com
(Joy has a huge inventory of assorted costumes at excellent prices)

AlterYears 3749 East Colorado Blvd,
Pasadena, CA 91107
Store and Phone: 818-585-2994
Tues-Fri 10am-5:30PM PST, Thurs
10-7:30,
Sat 11-5:30 for live person
FAX: 818-432-4530
Gary Anderson
72437.674@CompuServe.COM

Joyful Costumes
<http://www.joyfulcostumes.com/>

Milieux: The Costume Site:
<http://milieux.com/costume/>

The Costume Page:
<http://members.aol.com:80/nebula5/costume.html>



Costume Patterns -
Sewing - Net Links

<http://sewing.miningco.com/msubcostume.htm>

Morris Costumes, 4300 Monroe Road
Charlotte, NC 28205

Phone - (704) 333-4653
Fax - (704) 348-3032

Production Values, Inc
<http://www.mindspring.com/~pvinc/>

Pierre's Costumes
7882 Browning Road, Pennsauken, NJ
08109
609-486-1188 Phone
609-486-4402 Fax
<http://www.costumers.com>



When purchasing or producing costumes note that in bible times there were a wide range of colors used. However use care in having bright colors as the entire costume, better to use the bright colors as the accessories and accents.

We prefer to use a single color for a costume, in some cases two or more shades of the same color are attractive. As a rule we use lighter colors on the top of the costume with the darker colors on the bottom. Bright colors should not be used on larger people. On stage one wants to ensure that the face of actors stand out, therefore avoid neutral colors around the face. Pin scarves or clothing back from the face so as not to mask the face.

Costumes should enhance and not dominate the performer. Use care in design.

Props

Props are equally important to a performance. Standard flats, (wooden frames with canvas stretched across them), can be used in a wide range of applications. Simple props can be easily constructed from scrap materials for minimal cost. When properly designed, props can be easily stored for future productions. There are many excellent books on set and prop design available at the library. A good carpenter is worth his weight in gold, try to get one or more for your group.

Set construction: The art of turning big pieces of wood into small pieces of wood ...

Something every drama group needs is a collection of basic scenery flats which can be reused many times over. The size is basically up to you, what is easily stored, handled, etc. Standard flat sizes are 72' wide, only because this is the standard width of

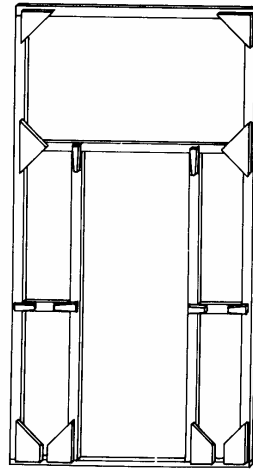
theatrical canvas and muslin. However, it is also possible to use old curtain material purchased from the Next-To-New shops. Although an 8'to 10'tall flat is advantageous, higher flats may not store well in your church. We use an 8' x 6' flat, seems to work best for us.

Construct the flat frame from 1' x 3' lumber, free from knots and not warped. Install 1' x 2' triangular corner braces cut from 1/4" plywood, at the top and bottom of the flat for necessary strength.

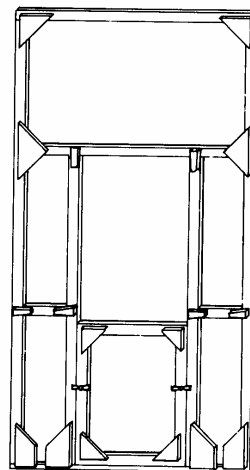
If money is no object, cover the flat frame with canvas or muslin, if you are like most organizations where budgets do not exist, (as mentioned above), go to the Next to New shop and buy some old curtains or sheers. Fabric should be two to three inches longer and wider than the flat. Temporarily tack the fabric in place at each corner. Tack or staple the canvas to one side, keeping fabric smooth, but not stretched, as it will tighten when sizing is applied later.

Tack the fabric to the outside frame working from the center outwards. Now apply a thick coat made of a mixture of glue, whiting, and paste to the back side of the frame. Ensure that all corners and flaps are firmly in place.

When glue is dry, put another row around the frame. Next, trim off the excess fabric.



The flat is now ready to be sized. Sizing helps shrink and tighten the fabric, leaving it



with a good painting surface. Sizing can be purchased from most paint or hardware stores, or the more adventuresome can make their own by mixing glue, water, some whiting, and a little light

color pigment.

Flats can then be painted as required, as many times as necessary.

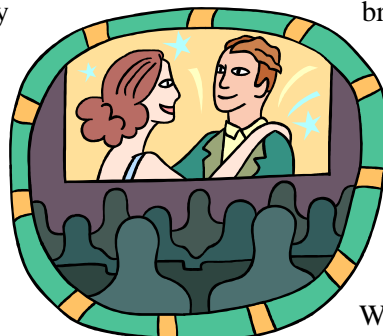
You might want to add some door flats to your collection. The door flat has a door opening framed into the flat, to be used as a doorway when required. You can also build a "plug" which fits into the bottom half of the doorway, converting the door flat into a window.

A cheap, easy alternative to fabric is the use of black construction paper, used in home building. You can simply tack this onto the frame. The drawback is that the paper tears easily so it does not last long.

Another advantage of having sturdy scenery flats is that you may use the flat to hang pictures, murals or other backdrops.

To stand flats in place, use two large shelf braces per flat, screwed to the floor. NOTE – obviously if your stage area happens to be the new hardwood floor in the sanctuary, this may not be advisable. But where the staging area is normal carpeted area, this is the best and safest route.

Where flooring does not permit the use of screws, construct a triangular brace plate secured to the frame, weighted down with sandbags. Keep the brace sufficiently large to provide the necessary support, yet small enough so as



tape on	<i>While set is still dark, the voices are heard.</i>	All actors offstage DS right for courtyard & campfire scenes
Ready for break	<i>Jesus:</i> Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.	
break	<i>Peter:</i> Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.	Peter offstage DS at edge of audience
tape on	<i>Jesus:</i> I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.	
Ready for mikes & lites up, campfire on in courtyard	<i>Silence for 30 seconds, then Peter speaks in the darkness.</i> <i>Peter:</i> After Jesus was arrested all the other disciples were frightened, and they fled. Well, I did too, but I followed at a distance. They took Jesus to the home of the High Priest, Annas. It was no secret that Annas and his son-in-law, Caiaphas, had long been plotting to put the Master to trial. Caiaphas had, in fact, told all the Jewish people that it would be good if one man died for the people.	Courtyard actors ready
Lites, mike, fire on in courtyard	<i>(Lights slowly come up on the courtyard scene and the "fire" is turned on, Jesus is led into the courtyard by Caiaphas and a mob of townspeople, soldiers, on-lookers)</i>	
Ready for lites down 50% mikes off in courtyard, up in campfire area	<i>Caiaphas:</i> Summon for us the High Priest, Annas. We have arrested the treasonous Nazarene and require the services of the High Priest that he be judged at once.	Courtyard action
	<i>Servant:</i> The High Priest has gone to bed and has asked not to be disturbed.	Campfire actors ready
	<i>Caiaphas:</i> You will do as I say and immediately!	
Lites down 50% in courtyard, up in campfire area Ready Peter's mike Peter's mike on	<i>Servant:</i> Very well, as you say. After all he is your father-in-law. <i>Servant goes inside, all actors freeze, except for the two servant girls, Ruth and Martha, and the two soldiers, Maximus and Phillip, who move to a position in a semi-circle behind the fire.</i>	Courtyard freeze, campfire action,
	<i>Peter's voice :</i> I carefully moved closer to the courtyard of the High Priest. I had to determine that it was safe to enter. <i>(With a blustery voice).</i> No! I was not afraid! I, I, knew that, that I must choose the proper moment to, to rescue the Master. <i>(Now in a more subdued voice).</i> Many people had gathered near the home of the High Priest. As well there were two servant girls and two soldiers who had gathered around the fire which had been lit to protect from the cool night breeze. The four were talking quietly together, I tried but was unable to hear what they were saying.	Peter ready to move on stage
	<i>Ruth:</i> Maximus! Phillip! Surely there must be something that you can do. There will be no justice for the Master.	



DramaShare®

Christian Drama Ministry Manual
Edition 3.0

Developing a Character Section

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Assisting in Christian Drama Ministry Worldwide

Developing a Character

In this section we look at the complex area of character creation, from the perspective of the amateur actor and amateur director.

The following material is quite extensive, and, but don't be intimidated! Choose that portion which addresses your needs, run with that. In subsequent attempts you will find yourself going back for more.

For this subject we have received the input of many DramaShare members and contacts.

Betty Hamm says: "For character analysis, I pull from a couple of different locations. That means it is never the same. I try to make it apply to the present production and the level of analysis I can expect from the cast. We went over a few of them just last night and I appreciated their insight. It moves the play from "just being" a comedy or musical or drama, etc. I have printed it below along with the note I mailed with it.

Enclosed is a character evaluation that will help you get a handle on the script and your character. Please spend some time addressing the questions in the evaluation. We will go over this on Tuesday. This is not a test, so don't get hung up on any question. If you don't know, move on. Also enclosed is an order of songs, and a break down of scenes. I hope this will be helpful. I am very excited about this production and the cast we have assembled. I know you will all bring an excellent level of commitment, creativity, fun and talent to this play. I am available to help you through this process. Don't worry, every actor worries about their ability. Actors are notoriously an insecure lot. This will be a wonderful production. Thank you for your participation.

Questions for Characterization

1. What is the basic or central idea set forth in the play?
2. How does your character contribute to the central idea of the play?
3. Is your character honestly drawn, or has he/she been distorted in order to affect the overall intent of the play?
4. Indicate several illustrations of action/dialogue of your character that help reveal the thematic idea of the play.
5. How do the factors of age, social status, dress, education, occupation, health, physical environment, climate, and familiarity with surroundings suggest the type of movement to be used in the portrayal? Will any of these factors necessarily change your normal speaking voice?
6. Does the playwright indicate any necessary movement or business that must be incorporated into the character? If so, what does it suggest about playing the role?
7. Are there any critical pieces of furniture or props that will affect movement and business? Can they be used to sharpen your character?
8. What is the main motivation (goal) of your character in the play?
9. What significant comments does the character make about him/her self that reveal aspects of the characterization?
10. What significant comments are made about your character by other characters in the play?
11. What obstacles exist that prevent your character from achieving his or her goals?
12. How does your character deal with the obstacles?
13. In what ways are you and your character similar? Different?
14. What selections of clothing describe your character?

Although some of this may be somewhat duplicative, we believe it is useful to receive the perspective of many drama leaders.

Michelle Jett from Acts of Faith, Faith Academy of Marble Falls, offers the following information:

CHARACTER ANALYSIS #1

When performing, you should have a believable character. You should act and think like this person would. Here are some questions to get you started on developing your character. You will find some of the answers in your script, others you will have to make up based on what you know. To get you thinking like your character when a question says "you" it means your character.

1. What is your full name?
2. Describe your physical characteristics. Include your age, sex, weight, height, hair style and color, typical gestures or movements, typical manner of dress, and voice.
3. Describe where you live. Describe the town and your home.
4. Describe your family.
5. Describe your personality.
6. Describe your education, job, and hobbies.
7. What do you want out of life in general? What are your goals?
8. What specifically, do you want in this scene?

CHARACTER ANALYSIS #2

Internal Aspects: Discovered through the script or through imagination.

- A. Background: (family history, standard of living, spouse, number of children/siblings, relatives, home situation - how do you live? What does it look like?)
- B. Mental Status: What is it? Why is it the way it is? Is this normal or abnormal for you? Does it change during the course of the play? What factors make a difference?
- C. Spiritual Life: What things does your character hold sacred? Why? Does this change?
- D. Emotional Life: What adjectives describe your character's emotions? What events in the play make them change? Is your character open about his emotions? If not, why not? What brings your character joy? Fear? Anger? Humor?
- E. How is your character LIKE you?
- F. How is your character UNLIKE you?
- G. Education: (What and where?)
- H. Job: (What and where?)
- I. Basic Motivation Desire" (What does this character MOST want?)
- J. Adjectives you would use to describe your character:

External Aspects:

- A. Posture:
- B: Movement and Gesture: (describe, create, invent)
- C. Mannerisms:
- D. Voice:
- E. Dress:
- F: Hair and/or make-up:

"we cannot do God's work without God's power"



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Forms of Drama Ministry Section

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Assisting in Christian Drama Ministry Worldwide

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Various Forms of Drama Ministry

The types and forms of Christian drama are as many and as diverse as the imagination will allow. We have broken this down into just a few categories:

Outreach Drama

One of the greatest opportunities for Christian drama ministry is reaching the un-churched and unsaved. Similar to music, Christian drama can be more palatable to those who will not normally be attracted to "things spiritual". This is, at one time, both an awesome opportunity and also a frightening responsibility. Great care must be taken to present an Outreach offering which will be at all times worthy of God's blessing and true to good Christian standards and guidelines. At the same time the message must be non-threatening to the target audience. We have to make the message such that it will be received by the un-churched yet acceptable in God's sight. This is a problem with which we will always wrestle and there are no easy answers. At *DramaShare* we believe that if we are to err, it must always be "on the side of God". We are not in drama for entertainment value, if this is our motivation we would be well advised to pursue regular (secular) drama. We must be in Christian drama, (first, last and always), for the glory of God. Therefore while we want to serve up an offering which will be acceptable to man, it is much more essential that our offering is acceptable to God. Ensure that you invite the congregation as a whole, ask that the church members be the "welcoming committee" for those attending church for the first time. There will be a fine balance in your programming between what will motivate and encourage those attending for the first time versus the regular church members. Explain to church members in advance that, while the message will be unquestionably Christian in



content, the delivery will of necessity be different from regular church drama.

We recommend that there be a range of drama offered in an Outreach program. Early in the program a light comedy could be staged which would perhaps poke good natured fun at church goers, (example, the *DramaShare* script, "The Old Maids"). This shows to those who normally don't

attend church that we enjoy good clean fun and that we can laugh at ourselves. Later in the program there should be more "meaty"

performances. We recommend that the final presentation very clearly present the truth of the message of salvation and that an opportunity be given for those who feel the call to give their life to the Lord.

A handout should be prepared and distributed, giving the audience an opportunity for feedback. A small wallet-sized business card with names and phone numbers of pastoral and support staff is a good take home item for future reference.

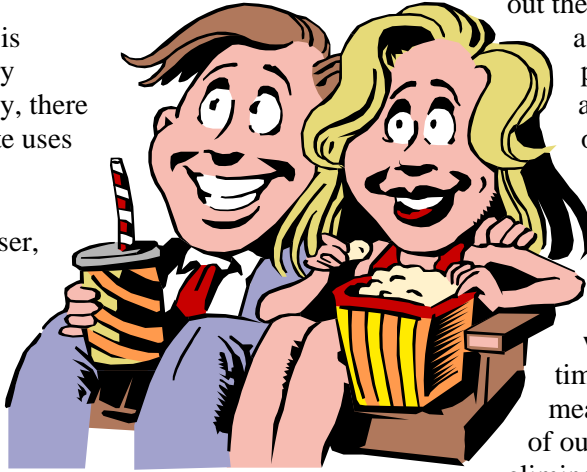
Children's Church Ministries Drama

Rather than a story about a bible character, why not a story from a bible character? Imagine the excitement when Noah, in full biblical dress, comes to talk to the Children's church about the ark and the flood and the rainbow. Or Jonah telling of his experience. Help make bible characters come alive to the young children in your congregation. The bible character comes into the sanctuary during the service and invites the young children to come with him for Children's Church. He, (or she), then tells of the part which they played in the Bible and of the way in which God used them. For added impact the Children's Church Drama can be planned to follow the same curriculum as the regular church service. That is, if the church service is to be on a certain biblical character, (example Noah), the Children's Church Drama would be on that same character. In this way the young children feel that they are part of the mainstream of the church as a whole. Children's Drama Ministry is, essentially, a monologue along with questions for the children

Dinner / Dessert Theater

This type of theatre is widely used and very versatile. Essentially, there are two very separate uses for Dinner / Dessert theatre:

- as a fundraiser, where the primary motive is financial and normally large sums of money are raised. The message is usually less Christian in nature, hoping to attract a wider based audience.
- as an Outreach, where the intent is to reach out with a Christian message. Normally this would financially be a breakeven venture at best. The message will be varied but definitely Christian.



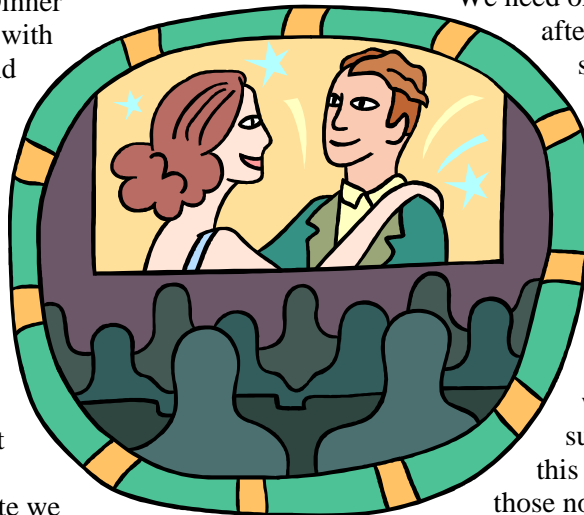
quickly thaw as much as required when we find out the size of audience. (Obviously we have a good idea of numbers prior to the performance, however there is absolutely no last minute panic if more, or less, than the anticipated numbers show up).

The difference with Dessert Theatre is that, while we aim for first class Christian dramatic ministry efforts, we make no attempt to spend a lot of time and energy on providing a lavish meal. Personally we prefer to channel all of our efforts into the drama itself and to eliminate the time and frustrations of serving a meal. We are able to spend more time and energy on promoting the Dessert Theatre and looking after the fine details. There is virtually no cost to putting on the presentation, (complete with snack), therefore there is no need for fund raising or , (very important in our minds), no need for charging admission, although donations are accepted.

In the past we have attempted Dinner Theatres with some success but with great outlay of time, finances and frustration. Firstly, whether catered or pot luck, there has to be a large number of people involved to coordinate the food preparation and serving. For a properly run Dinner Theatre it is critical that the exact numbers of guests be known well in advance in order that plans can be made. (We always found that we didn't get final commitments until the last minute, and at the last minute we had frantic calls for more tickets). All of this simply becomes a frustration which we felt we could easily do without. (Other churches have had excellent success, however).

So, what do we do?

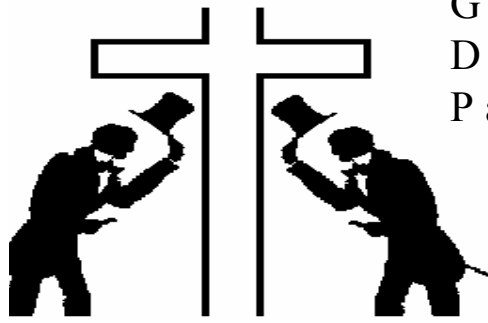
We provide coffee, juice and a dessert. The desserts which we choose must be able to be frozen. This allows us to buy extra dessert and to



We need only a small group to look after the food preparation and serving. Note that it is advantageous to have a fairly large freezer and a microwave oven so that food can be quickly prepared (or stored for the next presentation).

Many groups find that Dinner Theatres work well for them and we suggest that everyone give this consideration. But for those not prepared for this commitment, consider Dessert Theatre.

Many churches use a "Whodunnit" kind of Mystery Theatre script for Dinner Theatre. We have a feature script, "The Gift", which is widely used for Dinner theatre applications. This drama tells the true story of a family coping with a grandparent with Alzheimer Disease. Contact *DramaShare* for details.



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