



I'll Fly Away!

a musical

*Commissioned by First Southern Baptist Church
of
Porterville, California
David S. Russell, Minister of Music*



I'll Fly Away!

Dialogue Segments

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5

The Songs

TITLE	BOOK PAGE	INTRO TIME	SONG TIME	SOLO
I'll Fly Away w/ We'll Understand it Better By and By	80	:16	4:22	X
When We all Get Together with the Lord	60	:11	2:43	(X)
Those Good Old Gospel Songs	12	:07	4:39	
He Came to Me w/ He Giveth More Grace	48	:20	4:27	(X)
Victory Shall be Mine	34	:09	2:45	X
He'll Understand and Say 'Well Done'	93	:12	3:41	X
Raise the Roof	106	:08	2:26	X
Though Your Sins be as Scarlet w/ Wonder Working Power	27	:14	3:39	X
When the Lamb Becomes the Light	3	:24	4:15	X
Right Here and Now	8vo	:12	4:16	
			38:00	
<i>Music literature ordering information is included on page 24</i>				

10

Setting

15 A long-time, and highly regarded matriarch of a small local church has just passed away. She was a very old woman, and had been looking forward to going home to be with the Lord. One night she simply slept her way into His arms. The church has gathered to bury her, but there is very little sadness. They are here to celebrate her life — to rejoice together and to testify to the impact this saint has had on all their lives.

Set

20 The stationary set is simple: Down Center (or elsewhere, depending on the physical stage and Director discretion) is a slight mound of earth or grass. Atop the mound will be placed a simple pine casket (carried in by pallbearers in the first scene). For purposes of the final scene, the mound should be constructed so as to permit the casket to be lowered out of sight of the audience.

25 Beyond this, the set can be as simple or elaborate as the Director wishes. Trees and bushes (or painted equivalents) could be used to suggest an outdoor setting. These could be in place already, or brought in by the cast during the opening number.

In any case, the physical set should not have a funereal pallor. It should be pleasant and park like.
For a drawing of a suggested layout, see page 23.

Wardrobe

30 The entire cast should be dressed in simple, contemporary “Sunday-go-to-Meeting” clothes. The only exception would be for the (4) pallbearers, who should be dressed in similar (but not necessarily identical) dark suits.

Staging

35 The staging should be kept fairly loose and casual — at least from the perspective of the audience. The choir, upon entering, will form a loose semicircle behind, but mostly up left or up right (see drawing). *But this is not a stationary position.* This is a casual gathering, with much movement (in some churches in which this musical is performed there could even be dancing). This position is the one in which they begin, but certainly not where they stay. The Pastor, stands opposite the choir (again, not all the time), with the casket between.

Casting

40 This script is very flexible for the Director in assigning roles. It has been written under the following assumptions: 1) This musical will be performed by a predominantly adult choir that would not include children, but may include a few older teenagers, and 2) the church may have some people who wish to participate on stage, but who do not sing, or are not able to sing solos.

45 Because of these assumptions, the script allows for flexible casting. For example, the role of George could be played by a choir member, or by someone who steps in unobtrusively at the appropriate moment — *as if he were part of the choir.* Additionally, the song that follows his segment could be personalized, and presented as more of a testimony, if he sings measures 26 to 42 as a solo — or it can be sung, as written, by the choir, or another soloist.

Characters (in order of appearance)

50

- Choir/Chorus** In this musical the choir, or chorus, represents the fictional church congregation. Throughout the entire musical (save, optionally, during the last song) they remain in character — just your average folks from a small, evangelical church.
- Pastor** In *I'll Fly Away*, the Pastor is the central figure. He is not the “lead” in the traditional theatrical sense that he is the most important character, but rather in the more traditional church sense that he is the spiritual leader of the group. He should offer a strong, trustworthy presence. The age of the character is not critical, but the person should be old enough to lend maturity to the role.
- Jill** Jill is a mature teenager, sensitive to the loss of her dear friend, and observant of things around her.
- Helen** This middle-aged woman is a strong aunt-figure (or just good friend) to Jill.
- Choir Director** The choir director has only one line, but it is a good one. The Choir Director should be played by a woman, and one happy to put a lot of “juice” into the part. (Optionally, if the audience is to be invited to sing along during *Those Good Old Gospel Songs*, this character could be the one to step out and lead the singing. Or the Pastor character could do it.)
- George** George is a middle-aged man and a Vietnam war vet. (This would make his age somewhere around 45 to 50.) It wouldn't hurt for him to be a strong, burly type, but this is not necessary.
- Fred** A friend of George, Fred has a fast mouth and a happy, kidding nature. This part has just two quick lines.
- Janet Barlow** Janet is a thinker, and, while her age is not critical, she should be old enough to have had some history with Edna Mae.
- Loretta** Like the Choir Director, Loretta has one fast line that should be delivered well.
- Bill Lewis** While Bill is the Chairman of the Deacons, this doesn't necessarily mean he needs to be aged. He could be in his mid-Thirties on up. He is a good leader, but is prone to periodic fits of temper when displeased. His fast mouth, however, is counterbalanced by his willingness to apologize for committing an offense.
- Pallbearer/Scotty** Because Scotty is in, or is just out of, military service, he should be between 18 and 25 years old. He has a tough, defensive personality, but has been emotionally hit between the eyes at this burial service.
- Pallbearers** With Scotty, three other pallbearers should be sufficient. They have no lines, and don't even need to express any stage presence. So this is a good opportunity to enlist willing volunteers without any stage experience.

55

Opening

Song: I'll Fly Away

Suggested Set for opening:

The stage is relatively bare. If there are to be trees and/or bushes to suggest a cemetery setting, then they could be . . .

Option #1: *already in place, or*

Option #2: *brought in by members of the choir at their entrance at m15.*

In either case, there should be nothing about the set by itself to suggest that this is going to be a funeral.

Suggested Staging during song:

As the Intro begins, the soloist enters, followed immediately by a subset of the choir. The soloist moves Down Center, while the ensemble remains Up and either Left or Right. During intro and solo with backup (m1-m14), the choir members are subdued, behaving in a typically somber funereal way. The soloist's demeanor is solemn, reaching.

At m15 lights up. soloist and ensemble visibly brighten, smile, become more active. The remaining members of the choir enter briskly, possibly bringing in with them set pieces (see Option #2 above).

The Pastor (character) enters with choir, and moves Down, opposite the choir (optionally, the Pastor may remain within the choir, then move Down after the song). Within the physical constraints and traditions of the church, there is movement, joy. (Soloist joins choir.)

At m46, lights dim somewhat and singers turn to and make way for pallbearers bringing in a simple wooden casket. While the choir sings, the pallbearers (all dressed in similar dark suits) silently set the casket generally Down Center, then exit in the same manner that they entered.

At m58, lights and faces up.

At m61, energetic activity resumes.

At m81, singers are spread out to fill the stage; big finish.

After cutoff, all choir members return to (approximately) where they were when they first entered.

Pastor

(after everyone has quieted down; warmly)

60 Brothers and sisters, we're gathered here for a joyous occasion. We've gathered to say good bye to our dear friend and beloved sister, Miss Ida Mae Hampton — the fruit and spirit of this congregation for many years.

Amens and general assent from the chorus.

Pastor

(continuing)

65 We've met, not to mourn her passing, but to celebrate her, and to give thanksgiving for being so blessed by God that we could share in her life.

Amens and general assent from the chorus.

Pastor

70 Our ways are not of this world; we may miss her company, but we can rejoice, knowing that Ida Mae is now with the Lord. She's taken that final step for which all of us long.

Subdued amens from the chorus.

Pastor

75 *(more formally; taking care of necessary business)*

Ida Mae Hampton was born in Rockport, Illinois in the year nineteen-o-nine. She came to our community with her parents at the age of ten. Ida Mae studied to become a nurse, and by her efforts and the grace of God she advanced in her field, teaching others how to care for the sick and dying. *(pause)* Ida Mae never
80 married, so her church became her family. In the life of Miss Ida we saw someone who took people as she met them. She didn't believe in treating one person differently from another. To her, we were all God's children, brothers and sisters.

Now she's gone on before us, and if I know Miss Hampton, she's busy telling the
85 Lord all about every one of us. She knows now what she already knew in life — what we should all learn from her witness — that when we get to heaven, 'cross that beautiful shore, ☺ there'll be no more rich, no more poor, no more short or tall, no more fighting or war — just brothers and sisters together with the Lord.

90 Song: When We All Get Together With the Lord

Suggested Tech/Staging during song:

Option #1: Cue Trax at ☺ in dialogue above. The Pastor (character) sings m8 to 12 as solo; choir joins at m13 to 15; Pastor sings m16 to 20 as solo; choir joins at pickup to m17. Choir remains in place during intro, then moves as it begins singing at m13.

Option #2: Cue Trax at ☺ in dialogue above. Choir remains in place during intro, then moves as it begins singing at m8.

After the song, the choir ends up in, or moves to, a more casual arrangement on stage.

after: When We All Get Together With the Lord

During or immediately after the song (When We all Get Together With the Lord) Jill enters without being noticed, remaining in the middle or near the back of the choir. After everyone on stage settles down after the song, a quiet whimpering is heard. Jill, a teenage girl, is upset over losing Miss Ida — who had been a sort of grandmother to the girl — and is in the back, with head down, struggling in vain to hold back the tears.

95

*Everyone looks around, wondering where the crying is coming from. Everyone, that is, but **Helen**, who is standing (or seated) right next to Jill. Helen is a middle-aged woman, the motherly type, and is touched by the young girl's feelings. Helen wraps an arm around the girl to console her, then Jill notices that everyone is silent, and staring at her.*

100

Jill

I — I'm sorry. I just can't help it.

105

Helen

Oh honey, don't worry. It's all right.

Pastor

(impatiently)

Now, there's nothing to cry about here. We shouldn't —

110

Helen

(with even more impatience; firmly)

Pastor, some of us have to mourn.

Pastor

(with gentle insistence; to Helen)

115

Miss Ida Mae Hampton had a long life and she's been given her reward. *(to all)*
We should be celebrating —

Jill

But I'm not crying for her.

Helen

(what did you say?)

120

What dear?

Jill

(collecting herself)

125 I know Miss Ida's in a better place. I know she's happier now than she's ever
been. I just miss her, that's all.

Helen

(comforting)

We all do, Jill. *(with a sigh)* We all do.

Jill

130 Both my grandmothers died when I was just a baby. I never knew them. Miss Ida
was like a grandma to me — always there to listen. And I'll miss her.

Helen

Do you think Ida would want you — want any of us — to weep for her?

Jill

(after a moment's thought; smiling)

135 I think Miss Ida would want us to remember the good things — what we liked
about her, what she meant to us.

Jill moves away, deep in thought, then her face brightens as she recalls...

Jill

(continuing; grinning at the thought)

140 What I'll always remember best about Miss Ida was *(pausing for dramatic effect;*
anticipating the reaction) her singing.

There is an immediate gasp of disbelief from everyone, because the truth was,
Miss Ida Mae Hampton couldn't carry a tune in a bucket!

Jill

(continuing)

145 Sure, I know she couldn't sing a lick.

Helen

(quickly)

150 Oh, my yes. She may have known the words, but she made the tunes sound like
speaking in tongues!

Choir Director

(aghast)

155 Why, one year she came to me wanting to join the choir, don't you know. Well, I
tried to let her down easy — I tried her on a few old favorites, but land, her voice
made even the organ sound out of tune!

Jill

160 I know. When I was a little girl I used to be embarrassed by Ida's singing. I
wouldn't want to sit next to her. But later on, when I grew up and started paying
more attention to what was going on in church, I began looking around —
watching people sing the hymns. And you know what I saw? I saw people staring
at the floor when they sang, or looking out the window. I saw people talking to
their neighbor during the hymns, and some people not singing at all. *(pause)* But
165 Miss Ida always sang full out — she sang from her heart, from the deep love she
had for God.

I think maybe out of all the Sunday voices, it was Ida Mae's that made it up to
heaven first. Maybe to our ears it was painful, but I think to God's ears it was the
most beautiful sound, because it came from her heart. *(pause)* I never thought
much about them before, but now, I guess I'll look forward to the old songs —
170 the old gospel songs. And when I do, ☹ I'll remember Miss Ida, and I'll make
sure I'm singing for the Lord, and not my neighbors.

Song: Those Good Old Gospel Songs

Suggested Staging during song:

Cue Trax at ☹ in dialogue above. If the director wishes the audience to join in singing the familiar portions of this song, it is recommended that someone already on stage — such as the Pastor or Choir Director characters (above) — invite the audience to sing along.

after: Those Good Old Gospel Songs

175 *From out of the choir (or entering unnoticed from offstage), a middle-aged man asks to be heard.*

George

Well I don't care what anyone says, in my book Miss Hampton had the sweetest voice I ever heard, because it was Ida Mae who introduced me to the Lord, and I'll be forever in her debt.

180

Fred

I remember, George. Must have been — what, about twenty years ago?

George

Almost thirty, Fred.

185

Fred

(shocked; good-naturedly)

Boy, you are getting old, aren't you!

George

(teasing back)

190 Yeah, but some of us carry it better than others.

The choir reacts.

George

(more seriously)

195 You know, I've thought a lot about it over the years. I realize now that it was what Miss Hampton didn't say that made all the difference. That's what I'm grateful for. She didn't condemn, didn't preach, just listened, and in her quiet, gentle way, showed me not only the way to Christ, but His example right here among us. *(pause, thinking back)* Thirty years ago I was just finishing up my tour in the Navy. We were on a tin can off the coast of Vietnam when a storm hit.

200 That little ship bounced around on those waves like a cork, and I think everyone on board that night was praying as hard as they could. *(pause)* In the dead of the night, one of the men on watch was washed overboard. They sounded quarters, and we circled around trying to find that guy till dawn, but there wasn't a trace. The night was pitch black — no moon, no stars, just black. That man went to his

205 death all alone in the middle of a black sea. *(pause)* And I just couldn't shake the image — the thought of that happening to me. What if I had been the one washed over, all alone out there in the waves? No one to reach down a hand and pull me back to safety. No one to save me!

210 The first Sunday after getting back to the States I went to church. I had been going there all my life, but the truth was for all I cared it was just a social club. I didn't know Christ. And as always, Miss Hampton was there. She gave me a big hug and told me to drop by for lunch the next day. I don't know why, but I went. Ida Mae treated me like a long-lost son. I think she knew all along that I wasn't really a Christian, but she just loved me. And that love seemed to push through
 215 all the tough layers I had put on in the service. After lunch, I sat there and dumped the whole load on her — all about life overseas, life around a war, and all about that poor slob that died alone in the black of night with no one to reach down and haul him out of the grave. I was miserable but, like I said, she didn't preach. Oh she had all the answers, but stepped aside and let God work in me.
 220 She did say one thing: Ida Mae took my hand in hers and very simply said, "George, Christ died for you. He's the one reachin' down right now to haul you up outta the water. ☺ You don't have to drown." It was then I realized *(forcefully)* that there was no way I could do it myself — there was no way I'd make it up out of the depths on my own strength. Jesus would have to come down to me.
 225 *(pause)* And you know, He did.

Song: He Came to Me/He Giveth More Grace

230 Suggestions for song:

Cue Trax at ☺ in dialogue above. This song lends itself to using a soloist in the middle.

Option #1: From p50, m26 to p52, m42 George sings solo as testimony. At m34 choir comes in as backup to solo, and solo out at pickup to m43.

235 **Option #2:** Same as Option #1, but solo is sung by someone else in choir (maybe Fred?).

Option #3: Song is performed as written, without solo.

240 after: He Came to Me/He Giveth More Grace

Pastor

(excitedly, yet with warmth)

245 What a revival we would have if Ida Mae could speak to us now ☹ from heaven.
(with wonder) What she could tell us of victory — of the rewards of living a life for
 the Lord.

Song: Victory Shall be Mine

250

Suggestions for song:

Cue Trax at ☹ in dialogue above.

If the director is troubled by some of the chorus lyrics in this song, the following substitutions are offered:

Original Lyric	Suggested Replacement
If I hold my peace,	I will hold my peace,
let the Lord fight my battles,	let the Lord fight my battles,
If I sing and shout,	I will sing and shout,
have faith and never doubt,	and know without a doubt
It shall be mine, vict'ry shall be mine.	It shall be mine, vict'ry shall be mine.

after: Victory Shall be Mine

A woman from out of the choir (or entering unnoticed from offstage immediately after the previous song) steps forward.

255

Janet

(haltingly)

Pastor, Miss Hampton surely did have victory in Christ, but I don't think Ida Mae would appreciate us painting her portrait with false colors.

People look at Janet, wondering what she's getting at.

260

Loretta

(sharply)

What are you going on about, Janet? Why, Miss Ida was the Godliest saint that ever —

265

Janet

(interrupting her friend)

Oh now, settle down Loretta. I don't mean to put her down. Every one of us could take a lesson from Miss Hampton's life. You're right: she was a Godly saint — but that didn't make her perfect. And it wouldn't be right to be going on as if she was.

270

Pastor

(to Janet; diplomatically)

Now, I know you Mrs. Barlow. You've got something on your mind, so let's hear what it is.

275

Janet

It's just that we need to remember that Miss Hampton's life was just like our own — every one of us. *(warmly)* I've enjoyed thinking about the good she did, her selfless devotion — not only to God, but everyone in her church. Her life was a true blessing to us all.

280

But if we go away thinking that's all there was, then we're not really honoring her memory. There was more to Miss Hampton than that. Have we all forgotten the troubles she had with that nephew of hers back in the Sixties? I remember how

she dealt with him — *(wryly)* and I remember that some of the words she used weren't necessarily to be found in Scripture.

The people remember too, nodding their heads in agreement.

285

Janet

(continuing)

Then there was the time she didn't agree with what the building committee was going to do with the memorial funds; as I recall, there was a lot of backbiting going on.

290

Bill Lewis

(chairman of the deacons; just barely managing his temper — which has been gathering steam during Janet's remarks)

Mrs. Barlow, I don't like you saying these things about our sister — especially at her funeral.

295

Janet

(defensively)

I'm just speaking the truth about —

Bill

Maybe so, but that's no reason to —

300

Janet

(accusingly)

I don't think you really knew —

Bill

(flustered; getting hotter around the collar)

305

I knew Miss Ida Mae Hampton better than —

Pastor

(stopping the two combatants)

310

Bill — Janet, please! *(trying to lighten the moment)* Go to your corners. *(pause; sarcastically)* Thank you both for this splendid illustration proving that none of us — no, not even Miss Hampton — is perfect. *(with quiet warmth)* We can all lose our temper and say things that aren't "necessarily to be found in Scripture."

Janet

Pastor, I loved Ida Mae, and I wouldn't take one thing away from her witness.
That's just my point: Jesus has it within His power to make every one of us
315 perfect little plastic saints. But He doesn't do that. ☹️ He leaves us here pretty
much as we are: steadily — clumsily — growing closer to Him. We're all just
regular people doing the best we can to serve Him.

320 Song: He'll Understand and Say "Well Done"

after: He'll Understand . . .

325

Bill Lewis steps forward.

Bill

(quieter than before, but still strong)

330

Pastor, I'd like to apologize to Mrs. Barlow. *(to Janet)* Please forgive my outburst, Janet. I do have a fast temper — and an even faster tongue. *(pause; to all)* I guess I didn't realize before how passionate I was about Miss Ida and her life among us. You see, she was my Sunday School teacher when I was a boy and, like George, I remember her gentle way of passing along God's truth to us.

335

We all have images from childhood that still fill our heads — stick with us as if they were moments from just yesterday. One of those for me is the day Miss Hampton brought out her flannel graph to tell us the story of the paralyzed man who was lowered through a hole in the roof by his friends, so Jesus could heal him. The characters were so real to us kids. She placed the small house, and

340

the crowd of people pushing their way inside to Jesus. Then she introduced the four men carrying their friend on a litter. They couldn't get in, you see; there were too many people around Jesus.

Young person

(excitedly)

345

So they cut a hole in the roof.

Bill

So they cut a hole in the roof. Miss Ida lifted away a piece of the fabric to reveal an opening, and because of the faith of the men, the one paralyzed was healed. *(pause)* It's a story of faith, of healing, of friends devoted to each other. But Miss

350

Ida made another point with the story. She told us how our church could become like that small house all cramped with people — so much that the people outside wouldn't be able to get in. She turned that flannel house around, and on the other side it looked just like a church. She placed the same crowd of people inside, filling the place until there was no room for even one more person. And I

355

know as kids, we were fascinated by the colorful picture being painted with the bits of fabric. But even if we didn't realize it at the time, Miss Ida left us with the

message that the church should never become so closed up that the hurt, and
the needy, and the desperate can no longer get in. To my dying day I'll
remember her lifting the top of that little flannel church ☹ — lifting the whole roof
360 right off! so that all the people could get inside to Jesus.

Song: Raise the Roof

365

after: Raise the Roof

370 *As the choir settles down after the song, a young man — one of the original pallbearers still dressed in his dark suit — enters. He is serious, his eyes darting nervously about, feeling out-of-place. As he is noticed by the people in the group and their attention turns toward him, he awkwardly, haltingly begins . . .*

Pallbearer

375 I — I hope you don't mind. *(gesturing off-stage)* I was standing over by the tree listening. *(awkwardly long pause)* Most of you don't know me. I've been away awhile. My family was here before, when I was younger, but we moved away. At the last minute today they needed an extra pallbearer. I had a dark suit, so I said okay.

380 I've been in the service. *(uncomfortably)* Kind of a problem kid growing up — *(embarrassed)* still am, I guess. They said do time, or join the army. So I put on a uniform and *(smirking awkwardly)* learned some other bad habits. *(finally giving it up)* Look, forget it. I'm sorry I bothered you.

The pallbearer turns to go, but is stopped by George.

George

(firmly, but with compassion)

385 What's your name, son?

Pallbearer

(flatly)

Scott. My friends call me Scotty.

George

(friendly)

390 Well Scott — Scotty — why don't you stick around. We're about through here. We'll be going back to the church for a potluck, and you look like you could use a good home-cooked meal.

Scotty

(wanting to, but feeling profoundly out-of-place)

395 No, I couldn't. I don't really belong.

George
(firmly)

Yes you do.

400

Scotty

But I'm not a member.

George
(good-naturedly)

405

Hey, haven't you heard? We've popped the top right off this church! Everyone's welcome.

Scotty
(backing away; with tinges of anger)

Listen, you don't — I mean, I'm not one of you. (sadly) You don't know about me — the things I've done. ☹️

410

George
(seriously)

It doesn't matter what's in your past, boy — only what's in your future. God knows all about where you've been, and He's still reaching down for you.

Song: Though Your Sins Be as Scarlet

415

Suggestions for song:

Cue Trax at ☹️ in dialogue above.

Option #1: Soloist near George and Scotty sings from m5 to m8, then choir joins. This could be the same soloist to sing from m23 to m32.

Option #2: Women sing the line from m5 to m8.

George remains with Scotty throughout the song.

Option #1: If the George character has been singing on songs in the musical as a part of the choir, it would still work for him to not sing this song, being, instead, a silent encourager and support for Scotty.

Option #2: George could remain mostly silent, during the song (or miming brief remarks to Scotty) but join in singing during the strong chorus from m34 to m43, dropping out during the quiet finish.

Near the end of Though Your Sins . . . (say from m43 to 48) the choir moves into a slightly more formal arrangement similar to where they were at the beginning of the musical. The Pastor takes his place near the casket, Bible in hand. There should be no movement after the cutoff.

after: Though Your Sins Be as Scarlet

420 *The following remarks by the Pastor (character) are delivered **in character** throughout. They begin to the people on stage, as normal, but where indicated in the script, they are delivered out to the audience — **but always in character**. He speaks to the members of the audience as if they are members of his (on-stage) congregation.*

Near the end of Though Your Sins . . . the choir moves into a more formal arrangement similar to where they were at the beginning of the musical. The Pastor takes his place near the casket, Bible in hand.

Option: During the transition during the end of the song, as the Pastor moves closer to the casket, the pallbearers could return and take their positions around the casket. As the Pastor begins speaking the pallbearers lift the casket and lower it into the "grave" and out of sight of the audience. Scotty joins them, then they all exit after doing their job.

425

Pastor

(seriously, but with profound warmth, to the people on stage)

Dear friends, we've gathered to lay to rest the body, but not the spirit and soul of our sister, Ida Mae Hampton. We say this with all confidence and hope because of the blood of the Lamb.

430

During the next sentence the Pastor turns toward the congregation — naturally, as if simply turning toward another portion of the same congregation.

Pastor

(continuing)

435

Ida Mae, for almost the entirety of her earthly life, had placed her trust in the Lamb: Jesus Christ. He was her Brother. He was her strength and Foundation. He was her Lord. When Ida Mae's body breathed its last, her soul was immediately in the arms of her Savior.

440

There is no death for the one in Christ. Because of the sacrifice of the spotless Lamb, our eternal life — begun here on earth — moves quickly into His presence when the physical dies. *(happily)* And this is why we rejoice! What Ida Mae Hampton took on faith all those years has now become . . . light. Jesus has been revealed to her — in person. Our sister and friend is now bathed in the glow of His glorious light.

445 There was nothing special about Ida Mae Hampton. She was simply another
human being, cast in the image of God and placed here on earth to live out her
life as best she could. ☹️ Nothing special — nothing that would, in herself,
commend her to the Lord. (*firmly*) It was Jesus Christ who secured her eternity in
450 heaven. And that same security is available to you — to each one of you. Simply
believe that He died . . . for you.

Song: When the Lamb Becomes the Light

Suggestion for song:

Within the abilities and traditions of the church and/or choir, treat this song as the Grand Finale, with a big finish. The choir members should be sure to remain in character at all times, but might finish this song, for example, spread across the entire stage with their gaze lifted up toward heaven.

455

after: When the Lamb Becomes the Light

Suggestions for after song:

This spot in the musical may be personalized to fit the traditions of the local church, the preferences of the local Pastor, or the leading of the Spirit at the moment. The following options are offered; the director may wish to use a variation on one or more.

Option #1: *The following scripted dialogue may be used between the two songs.*

Option #2: *The Trax are immediately cued for Right Here and Now. There is no spoken word between the two songs.*

Option #3: *If the Pastor character is being played by someone other than the real Pastor, the real Pastor may wish to address the audience: pursuing a more direct, personalized invitation; greeting the audience and delivering remarks based on the musical's theme; or receive an offering. Immediately after the Pastor is finished, the Trax are cued for Right Here and Now.*

Option #4: *Same as Option #2, but the audience is addressed by the Director of the musical, or someone else — especially if the real Pastor is playing the on-stage Pastor character.*

460 *After the cutoff (and any audience reaction), the choir “loosens up,” expressing their joy to one another. Meanwhile the Pastor (character) moves Down.*

Pastor

Okay, quiet down now. I know you've all worked up an appetite for those casseroles and salads back at the church, but just one more thing: I don't want
465 anyone to leave this place thinking that our focus should be on the blessed hereafter. That's not our purpose for being here.

Jill, you reminded us of how we should worship with honesty. George, you told of how we should be modeling Christ for each other. And Janet, thank you for pointing out that our perfection is not in ourselves, but from the Lord. And thank
470 you, Bill, for teaching us that our congregation should have its doors always swung wide for anyone to enter.

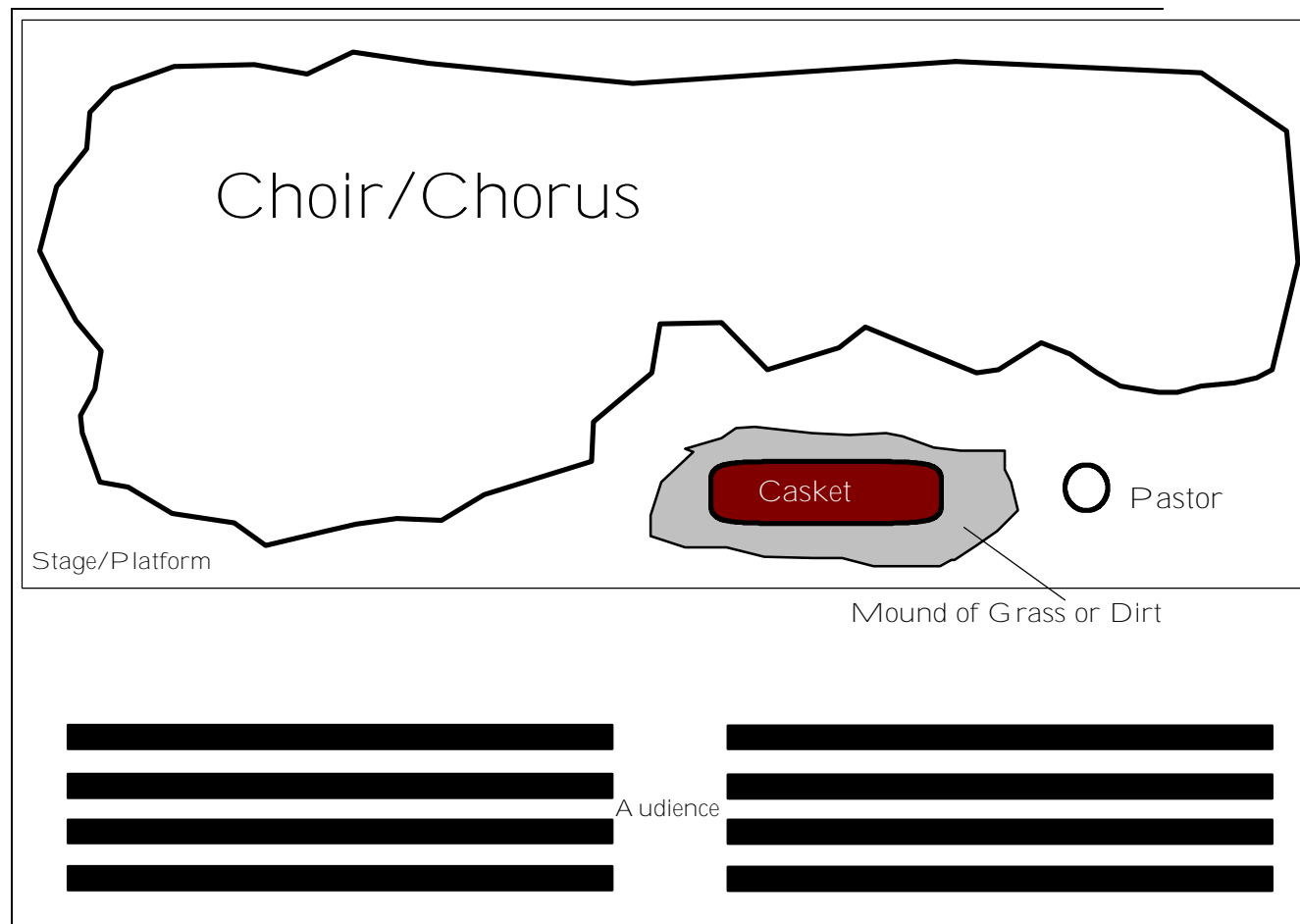
Heaven is something we keep in our back pocket. ☹️ Our present home is the here and now. *(crescendoing)* Here is where we are to worship. Here is where we are to be serving the Lord. And right here is where we are to be praising His
475 name!

Song: Right Here and Now

480

Staging

This illustration shows the suggested staging for the Opening.



Music Ordering Information

(as of Autumn 1997)

485

More Gospel Truth - Order #MB-746		Right Here and Now - Order #25986-0784-7	
LILLENAS PUBLISHING COMPANY		Benson Music Group	
Box 419527		365 Great Circle Road	
Kansas City, MO 64141		Nashville, TN 37228	
800-877-0700		615-742-6800	
(M-F 7:30 A.M. TO 6 P.M. CST, SAT 8 A.M. TO 1 P.M.)		Fax: 615-742-6911	
FAX: 800-849-9827		Order: 1-800-846-7664	
Choral Promo Pack (for Music Directors only) - L-9211C \$6.00	8vo - \$1.30 (5000 available 7/1/1997) / Trax	- \$14.98 (100 available 7/1/1997)
Book - MB-746 \$6.99		
Listening Cassette (10-pack) \$39.99		
Accompaniment CD, Split-Channel - MU-9211T \$65.00		
Accompaniment Cassette Stereo - MU-9211C \$65.00		
Accompaniment Cassette, Split-Channel - MU-9211S \$65.00		
Orchestration - OR-9211 \$250.00		

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know where this play has been performed

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