

The Righteous Railroad

Our Christmas program for this year will focus on a time machine (The Righteous Railroad) carrying our Sunday School kids through time to visit people from all over the world throughout history. Through their interaction with these various characters, we hope that they, and you as the audience, will appreciate all the different ways that we can show our love for Christ in everything we do.

CAST

(somewhat in order of appearance)

Tour Guide
Crew Member 1
Crew Member 2
Crew Member 3
Crew Member 4
Crew Member 5
Crew Member 6
Crew Member 7
Crew Member 8; Mother Mary
Crew Member 9
Crew Member 10; Betsy Ross
Musa Filibus; Wounded Soldier
President Lincoln
Crew Member 11; J.S. Bach
Bach's wife
Crew Member 12; Joseph
Florence Nightingale
Martin Luther
Michelangelo Buonarroti

THE RIGHTEOUS RAILROAD

Seated in Train: Tour Guide and Crew Members 1-10

Back Stage left: Musa Filibus, J.S. Bach, Bach's wife, Florence Nightingale & Michelangelo Buonarroti

Back Stage right: President Lincoln, Joseph & Martin Luther

(Intro) Tour Guide: Welcome crew members and passengers to The Righteous Railroad. Today we have an exciting adventure planned for you. Not only will we visit Venice and Washington, D.C., we will also be traveling through time and visiting some people from the past that

devoted their lives to the service of God in one way or another. Are you ready?

Kids: YEAH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Tour Guide: Get your anti-gravitational, ion-enhanced, time-encapsulated anti-matter decelerators with the standard particle nova-blast attachments and a custom-fit drink holder ready for action by following this complex procedure: Turn the big red switch "On".

Kids: Ready for action, (name of tour guide)

Crew Member 5: Is this thing gonna fly?

Tour Guide: Well...Since God had this train wing-delivered by 10 of his angels, I didn't think it was necessary to test it before beginning this mission. God wouldn't give us something that didn't fulfill the purpose He made it for.

Crew Member 3: (name of tour guide), umm...I have to go to the bathroom.

Tour Guide: (name of #3), can it wait until Venice?

Crew Member 3: Do they have toilets in Venice?

Tour Guide: Just have faith. If God doesn't provide any toilets, well, I'm pretty sure there are plenty of canals there.

Crew Member 8: Don't people drink out of those?

Tour Guide: What they don't know won't hurt them. All right. Proceed to commence with time deceleration, start your spiral ionic sparklers. Takeoff in T-minus 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 (*blast off sound*)

Stage left: Musa Filibus is preaching to a group of people (using African-sounding language), who we can't see

Crew Member 4: Who is **that**?

Tour Guide: According to my travel itinerary, our first stop has taken us to... yesterday...at Bronnum Seminary in Nigeria, Africa. We didn't travel far in time, but we sure covered the miles fast! That's Musa Filibus, the seminary President. Remember when he visited our church?

Let's go see what he has to say.

(The train kids approach Musa and circle around.)

Musa: Well, hello there kids! It's so wonderful to see you again! All of us here at the Seminary are so thankful for all the help your church has given us. May God bless you for your generosity! So what brings you to Nigeria?

Crew Member 6: We have a question for you. But first, we'll tell you what we're going to do on our time-travel trip.

Crew Member 9: We're visiting people from all different times in history to see how their lives show God's love.
And since it's Christmas, a time of giving, we're going to ask them what gift they would give to Jesus if He was here today.

Crew Member 7: So, if Jesus was standing right here beside us, what would you give Him?

Musa: I would give Him a tour of our Seminary and our surrounding community so that He could see how much His Word and love have changed the lives of so many people here. Jesus has given them the truth they have been searching for, the faith to proclaim His Word despite many dangers, and the hope of eternal life.

Tour Guide: Thank you, Musa. We have lots of people to see, so we'll be on our way. God Bless!

Kids get into train, except Crew Members 6 & 7. Bach's wife and J.S. Bach enter from left to join train.

Crew Member 6 & 7 exit to right.

Okay kids, start your spiral ionic sparklers!

5...4...3...2...1.

Tour Guide: Well, here we are in Washington, D.C...the White House looks the same, but there's not much traffic. In fact, all I see is horse-drawn carriages...we must have jumped back to the mid-1800's.

My guide says it's 1863 and we have an appointment with the President at 10 a.m. sharp. Let's go! We don't want to be late!

Kids get out of train and walk toward President Lincoln.

Stage right: Lincoln is sitting at desk, writing.

Crew Member 5: Mr. President?

Lincoln: Come in! I'm a very busy man, but there's always time to hear what children have to say.

Bach's wife: What are you working on, the Emancipation Proclamation?

Lincoln: You know, I haven't given it a name yet, but that would be a good title. This document will grant freedom to all slaves living in states that are still involved in rebellion. I hope and pray these measures will help to bring about an end to this Civil War we are involved in.

J. S. Bach: We know you're a Christian man, Mr. President. Could we ask you a question?

Lincoln: By all means!

Bach's wife: If you could give a gift to Jesus, what would you give Him?

Lincoln: I believe that **all** men are created equal, whether they are black or white, African or Italian. My gift to Jesus would be to devote my life to freeing the slaves in our country so that they may live full lives as citizens and fellow-countrymen.

Crew Member 8: Keep up the good work, Mr. President.

Crew Member 9: And if I were you, I'd stay out of the Ford Theatre!

All kids: Goodbye!

Lincoln: Good day to you, too. Work hard in school so you can be tomorrow's leaders.

Tour Guide: Okay, are we ready for another Righteous Ride?

Crew Member 10 exits to right.

J. S. Bach and Mrs. Bach exit to left.

Crew Member 12, Crew Member 7 and Crew Member 6 enter from right to join train.

All kids: Let's go! (*spinning spirals*) 5...4...3...2...1...(blast off sound)

Stage left: Florence Nightingale leaning over wounded soldier (Wounded Soldier), wrapping arm with bandage.

Tour Guide: Well, that was a quick trip. We only had to go back nine years to 1854, but we switched continents. We're on the Crimean Peninsula near Russia, right in a war zone...so keep your heads down!

Crew Member 12: Who are we looking for?

Tour Guide: Florence Nightingale.

Crew Member 9: Who is she?

Tour Guide: She was the pioneer of modern nursing (*pointing*) There, that must be her.

(all approach Florence Nightingale)

Florence: Oh good! Reinforcements! Can you help bandage up this poor soldier?
(Crew members 4, 6, 2 and 1 kneel down to help)

Crew Member 12: Looks like you have plenty of wounded men to take care of.

Florence: Yes. Many more than what my supplies can handle. We work from dawn to dusk, bandaging wounds, giving medicine, comforting frightened hearts.

Crew Member 7: Aren't **you** scared, too?

Florence: Yes, but God has called me to this mission to help the sick and wounded who have fought so bravely for our country. Even though I'm scared, God has granted me an inner peace that keeps me going when everything around me seems to be falling apart.

Crew Member 9: So, maybe God's healing power can reach these soldiers through you.

Crew Member 5: And God's gift to you becomes part of your gift back to God!

Florence: I sure hope so.

Crew Member 8: I'm sorry, but we have to go now.

Florence: Good day. Thanks for your help!

Tour Guide: Take your seats, everyone and start the sequence.
Kids get into train.

Kids: 5...4...3...2..1...(blastoff sound)

Stage right: Betsy Ross sitting in chair with American flag draped over her lap.

Tour Guide: Our train has taken us back to 1776, when our country was fighting for its independence. We've arrived at the home of Betsy Ross.

(Crew Member 7 admires flag)

Crew Member 7: Wow, that's awesome! What are you sewing?

Betsy: This is my flag design for our United States of America!

Crew Member 8: I guess one way we can serve God is by doing good things for our country.

Betsy: Yes, I love God and my country!

Crew Member 9: I wonder what I can do for my country when I get back home...

Tour Guide: Are you kids ready for some musical entertainment?

Crew Member 12: Are we going to a Christian rock concert?

Tour Guide: No, we're in the 1700's, remember? We're going to visit one of the greatest composers that ever lived...Johann Sebastian Bach.

Kids get into train.

Are your sparklers ready?

All: 5...4...3...2...1...(blast off sound)

Stage left: J. S. Bach sitting at piano playing/composing. Mrs. Bach standing nearby.

Kids walk to stage left.

Mrs. Bach: Hello children! If you're here to sing with the church's children's choir, rehearsal isn't until 6 p.m.

Crew Member 6: No, we're here to meet you and your husband.

Mrs. Bach: Johann, we have some visitors.

Bach: *(stops playing)* Hello! I was just working on the melody for my newest concerto.

Crew Member 7: I played "Minuet in G Major" for one of my piano lessons and it was one of my favorites.

Crew Member 5: How do you come up with all those different ideas for songs?

Bach: It is truly God-given inspiration. I have such a desire to write music for the church, that I just can't **wait** to get to the piano every morning. Some days, the songs just flow from me so fast that my fingers can hardly keep up!

Crew Member 6: If Jesus were here right now, would you write a song for Him?

Bach: Oh, definitely! It would be a great cantata to honor our King. But you know, I hope that **all** of my music is a gift to God. Everything we do should reflect our love for Jesus.

Crew Member 12: Thank you for talking with us. We'll be on our way now.

Mrs. Bach: Thank you for stopping by.

Tour Guide: Time to rock and roll, kids. Or should I say, time to opus and rondo! Next stop, Wittenberg, Germany, 1517.

(kids enter train)

Bach and Mrs. Bach exit to right.

Crew Member 9: (guide's name), it seems like we're going farther and farther back in time. Are we going to talk to Adam and Eve, too?

Tour Guide: No, I don't think we'll have enough time to go back **that** far. Start your sparklers! 5...4...3...2...1

Stage right: Martin Luther pounding a long paper onto a door, turned away from audience and kids.

Luther: *(says loudly while pounding):* Well, this should wake them up!

Crew Member 4: What are you doing?

Luther: Oh! You startled me, my young friends. What brings you here so early in the morning?

Crew Member 6: We've heard a lot about you and wanted to meet you in person.

Luther: *(shaking hands)* I'm Martin Luther. Pleased to meet you. What can I do for you?

Crew Member 9: We've been asking a bunch of people what kind of gift they would give Jesus if He was right here at this moment.

Luther: My gift would be to show the world the wrongs of the current church. The church needs reform before it can show the world God's light. But, as always, there are people who would have me stop, and some even threaten my life!

Crew Member 3: Doing the right thing isn't always easy, is it?

Luther: No, I'm afraid not. It can often be the more difficult path. But if you stay true to His Word, the Bible, God will be on your side. And with God, all things are possible!

Tour Guide: Amen!

Luther: God bless. I must be on my way. *(exits to right)*

Crew Member 4: Where to next, (tour guide's name)?

Tour Guide: We're going to visit a famous painter.

Crew Member 3: You mean Ron, the janitor at school?

Kids get into train.

Tour Guide: No, this painter was from Italy. Let's set our sparklers for 1510. Now Michelangelo Buonarroti is Italian, so be ready for anything!

All: 5...4...3...2...1... *(blast off sound)*

Stage left: Michelangelo loudly humming a tune while painting.

Tour Guide: Excuse me, are you Michelangelo?

Michelangelo: Buena Sera!!!! *(hugging tour guide cheek to cheek)* My long-lost Cousin, Vinny!!!!

Tour Guide: Well, no, my name is (name of guide). But I do have a cousin Vinny.

Michelangelo: Well, **any** Italian is welcome in my home. But I must say, your children don't look particularly Italian.

Tour Guide: They're not all **my** children, just *(picks up own child)*. The rest of the kids belong to our church.

Michelangelo: Ahhhh, such a sweet little girl. And blonde hair as fair as sunlight on a daffodil. *(turning to tour guide)* What did you do, young man, marry a Norwegian?

Tour Guide: Well, yes...something like that.

Michelangelo: I guess love has been responsible for stranger things. What can I do for you today?

Crew Member 5: We heard that you do a lot of painting in cathedrals.

Michelangelo: Yes, sometimes when I am laying on a scaffold painting the ceiling in the Sistine Chapel, I feel like I am almost in heaven.

Crew Member 7: If Jesus were to come and visit you, what would you paint for Him?

Michelangelo: I would paint him ascending into heaven in all His glory, with thousands of angels surrounding him singing praises.

Crew Member 6: That sounds like that would take a lot of time to paint.

Michelangelo: Yes, I suppose so, but we Italians have lots of time. One cannot rush perfection!

Tour Guide: I apologize, Michelangelo, but as typical Americans, we are going to rush off to meet our next appointment. Thank you for spending time with us.

Michelangelo: My pleasure! Ciao! (*exits to stage left*)

All: Ciao!
Kids get into train.

Tour Guide: Okay, kids. Get those arms circling. We're off to our last stop, Bethlehem!

All: 5...4...3...2...1...(*blast off sound*)

Center Stage: Mother Mary and Joseph sitting near manger.

Crew Member 3: Is this where Jesus was born?

Tour Guide: That's right. Let's have a talk with the new parents.

Kids walk to manger scene.

Crew Member 5: Hello. You must be Mary and Joseph.

Joseph: Yes, we are. And this is our son, Jesus. I am embarrassed that I could not find better lodging for my wife and first-born, but all the inns in the city were full of people coming to be registered.

Crew Member 6: We're from out of town, too. A little town named (your town's name).

Mother Mary: What brings you to Bethlehem? Surely you did not come just to see my

baby?!

Crew Member 7: Well, actually we did. And to ask you a question. What do you think is the most important thing you can give your son?

Mother Mary: As blessed parents, we must first of all love him with our whole heart, and raise him to know the Scriptures and to walk in the ways of God.

Crew Member 9: I think you'll be great parents!

Joseph: Thank you. It is a privilege and responsibility we cannot take lightly.

Tour Guide: You know, considering all the people we've met on this time-travel journey, it is amazing to see how they have devoted their lives to serving God in so many different ways. Do you think each one of **us** can do that back home in (your town's name).

All: Yes!!!!!!

Tour Guide: Let's get back home and live our lives giving glory to God!
Ready?

All: 5...4...3...2...1...*(blast off sound leading into music intro to Joy to the World).*
All characters get on stage and join hands.

All & Audience: Joy to the World

Submitted by Elizabeth Overhold-Berg, Trinity, Starkweather, ND, Eastern North Dakota Synod of the ELCA