

ah! there's the celebration



a musical celebrating the whole of life

by The Fisherfolk

Scenario

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"Ah! There's the Celebration" was created for performance at the 1976 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The musical was evolved organically by the Fisherfolk over a ten-month period at their home in Scotland. Using dramatic improvisation to develop the story line, the Fisherfolk incorporated music written previously as well as other songs composed specifically for the musical. The American premiere was at the Triennial Convention of the Episcopal Church, September 1976 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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AH! THERE'S THE CELEBRATION

PROLOGUE

Jesus celebrates his love for the Father, drawing the cast into his joy.

ISN'T IT GOOD!

See all the crazy dances that I can do
on tops of hazy mountains, singing to you
A song for celebrating ev'ry day new,
Isn't it good, Father! Isn't it good!



I love to feel the mornin' smilin' on me,
warmin' the tops of the mountains and trees;
Loveliest sight for somebody to see,
Isn't it good, Father! Isn't it good!

**Isn't it good! Ah, isn't it good!
Haven't I found the sound
 that makes it all go on and on,
 and on and on?
Isn't it light! Isn't it right
 that I should celebrate the love I have for you!**

**I feel like taking chances singing for you,
 like maybe making up a song that is new;
A song for celebrating what we can do,
Isn't it good, Father! Isn't it good!**

**Isn't it good! Ah, isn't it good!
Isn't it you and me,
 and skies and trees,
 and ev'ry other living thing?
You paint them blue, Father, you paint them green.
You give them pretty clothes and bread to eat,
 and wine to drink,
 and songs to sing.**

**And I think it's good, Father! Isn't it good!
Isn't it you and me, and skies and trees!
Isn't it good!
And haven't we found the sound
 that makes it all go round and round,
 and on and on, and ah,
Isn't it good!**

Jesus, although ascended and thus invisible to the players, is present on stage throughout the musical. He is involved with every event; he empathises with the personalities and conflicts of all characters. As the Family encounter pain and turmoil, he teaches them that hope in him means celebrating the whole of life.

ACT I

Scene 1: THE INN

The Family (Jodi, Conway, Richard, Pat and Margi) amuse themselves at the local inn, singing, dancing, telling stories. Others in the inn join their merriment: even lonely Mr. Crazy Roundaround emerges from his solitude to dance with them. A lively miming of the Prodigal Son story from the Bible, however, incurs the wrath of Devv, the Inn's proprietor. Enraged by their jubilant humour, he insults them, then evicts them from his premises.

Scene 2: THE BUS STOP

As they wait for their bus the Family ponder their dismissal from the Inn. They are suddenly left in total darkness as the street light above them flickers and goes out. Unable to read the timetable they search about for a match and Devv, in garish disguise appears in the darkness. He clicks his fingers and the street light "magically" flicks back on.



The Family is dazzled by this performance and hardly notices that the light again goes off as Devv leaves. Jesus, indignant with the charlatan's tricks, reminds the Family "**You are the light of the world!**" This they affirm, breaking into a lively jitterbug dance.

YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Jesus

**You are the light of the world,
you know it's true!
The light of our Father in heav'n
shines out through you!**

Family

**We are the light of the world,
We are the salt of the earth.
A lamp shall not be lit
to be covered over and hid.**

Jesus

**Well, you are a city,
a city set on a hill.
So let your light shine before men
that they may see our Father and live!**

Jesus and Family

**We are the light of the world,
We are the salt of the earth.
A lamp shall not be lit
to be covered over and hid.**

Family

**Since we are a city,
set up high on a hill,
We'll shine our windows, open our gates
and invite ev'ryone to come in!**

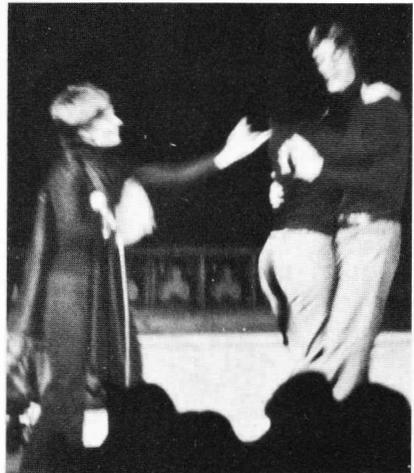
Jesus and Family

**We are the light of the world,
We are the salt of the earth.
A lamp shall not be lit
to be covered over and hid.**

The Family board their bus, and as it leaves Crazy Roundaround runs on: "I missed it! And they're gone! What is it about those people?" Dejected, he disappears.

Scene 3: THE HOME

The Family gather in their sitting room to relax after such an eventful evening. Richard reminisces about his life in London. Lapsing into reverie, he enacts a mimed sequence with "Pleasure", who entices and drives him with gluttony, speed and sensuality. He pursues her ever more desperately, then is finally overwhelmed when she turns on him and triumphantly knocks him to the floor. The Family, watching in shocked silence, hurries to aid Richard. Pat reassures him of their acceptance:



I'D LIKE TO SIT YOU DOWN

Your feet are so weary
from walking through problems
much too big for you.
I'd like to sit you down,
gently wrap a towel around,
and bathe your feet in my tears:
Gently wipe the fears away,
Gently love the years away.

I would like to walk through your deepest sorrow.
I would like to weep with you while weeping lasts,
And wake with joy tomorrow.



The rest of the Family join in, singing to Richard, dancing with him, acting out their love. Moved by this display of love and tenderness, Jesus responds:

I remember a time when I was sitting, talking with some friends. A man came to the door and said to me, "Your family's here, and they want to see you." So right away I had to think, "My family. Who is my family?" He gestures to the Family and continues, "These people are my family. They're happy doing the will of our Father in heaven. Yes, this is my family—because they accept the one I send, as though he were me."

Scene 4: THE CITY



Devv, in another disguise, enters announcing a game of “Human Monopoly”. From the characters idling about, two are chosen to play, a Mr. Rich and a Mr. Poor. It soon becomes obvious that all moves are predetermined. No matter how he tries, Mr. Poor fails unerringly. Landed in jail because of his enormous debts, he watches helplessly as Mr. Rich is applauded the winner.

Conway and Margi happen onto the game, to their delight and Devv’s irritation. It becomes impossible for him to control the game, as they break all the rules: sharing their money, foregoing debts owed, eagerly helping each other. Devv’s rage grows until finally, turning to Luci, his assistant, he curses, “Jesus Christ! Read them the rules!”



Luci, Devv’s Assistant



Devv, the Banker

She opens her rulebook but is interrupted as Jesus responds to Devv's injunction:



Jesus

If a man asks you for your coat, give him your shirt as well.
If a man asks you to go with him one mile, go two.
If a man asks you for anything, give it to him. And if he just wants to borrow, give him what he needs and don't ask for anything in return. Make friends with your opponent while you are still on your way to court, or he might turn you over to the judge, and the judge would turn you over to the officer, and you would be taken to prison where you would surely stay until you had paid every last cent.
In short, owe no man anything, but to love him.

Outraged, Devv commands the dismantling of the game. Crazy Roundandround, dispirited and discouraged, sings of his futile life:

CRAZY ROUND AND ROUND

**Crazy round and round
Curling up without a sound
Upon the cold,
And getting very wet.
Talking to myself,
Or nobody, or someone else:
When I ask them "Why?"
They always say,
"Isn't it amazing how he can get lost
Right there before our very eyes;
And close himself up in his tiny music box?"
So no one ever knows
Just how his story goes.
No, they just think he's singing
When he cries.
"Isn't it amazing how he can get lost
Right there before our very eyes;
And close himself up in his tiny music box?"
So no one ever knows
Just how his story goes.
No, they just think he's singing,
Crazy round and round,
I once was lost but now I am
Curling up without a sound
Upon the crazy, crazy round and round.**



Crazy

Scene 5: THE PARK

Out-of-tune carousel music permeates the slightly bizarre atmosphere. In another of his disguises Devv announces the International Arm Wrestling Competition. The Family joins the throng watching as Bruiser Barton defeats Mugsy Malone for the championship and the prize: either Peggy or Luci. When Peggy is not selected she wanders away in abject disappointment—but is quickly met and comforted by Mother Divine, the local fortune teller. Mother Divine prophesies “**a tall, dark handsome stranger**” in Peggy’s near future, and Peggy expresses her gratitude:

MOTHER DIVINE

Peggy

**Mother Divine
You make me feel fine,
You’ve got the future in hand!
He’s big and he’s tall,
I see it all,
Mother Divine, it’s just grand!**

Mother Divine

**Everyone’s doin’ it,
Everyone’s wooin’ it,
Try for the future and see!
Big days ahead,
Nothing to dread,
Just give me your hand,
Come with me!**

Jodi is attracted by the song and sceptically but good-naturedly queries:

**Mother Divine,
What is your line?
Everyone has one, you know!
Big crystal ball,
Fortunes for all,
There’s a big search on, you know!**

Mother Divine and Peggy

**Everyone’s doin’ it,
Everyone’s wooin’ it,
Try for the future and see!
Big days ahead,
Nothing to dread,
Just give me your hand,
Come with me!**

Jodi refuses the offer of a palm reading but laughing, leads Mother Divine into a spontaneous dance that the rest of the Family initiates. She challenges her further:

**Mother Divine,
You have a strong line,
You reach out to help, oh it's true.
But your crystal ball
Seems like a wall,
I wonder if I could touch you?**

Mother Divine

**People who come to me
Only expect to see
What I can read in their eyes.
Why are you asking me
Something that cannot be?
Surely, you must realise!**

Conway and Richard

**Well, Mother Divine,
We like you just fine,
But fortunes we don't understand.**

Jodi, Pat and Margi

**We know that you care
But why don't you dare
To reach out and give us your hand?**

Mother Divine

**Everyone's asking me
'What will my future be?
Promise me good days somehow.'**

Family

**We have a place to stand;
We have a helping hand,
Here in the present and now.**

Mother Divine

But I promise them good days somehow . . .

Family

We offer you our hand right now!

Mother Divine

I'll promise you good days somehow!

Family

But we offer you our hand right now!

These exchanges are interrupted by the sudden appearance of Devv, in yet another form, as the Politician:

Devv

Ladies and gentlemen! Fellow citizens! Gather 'round! Quickly, gather 'round! Wonderful!

Every time I've walked into the middle of a crowd and issued that call, some have responded! Wonderful people like yourselves, full of common decency and integrity, people who aren't afraid to stand up and be counted, people who aren't afraid to make their influence felt, to push other men of integrity, men like myself, into the highest positions of political office our country affords! Men and women, I am concerned! I am deeply concerned at the insidious elements I see launching a formidable attack on everything that you and I hold near and dear, even as we sit here now! Elements so insidious and so devious as to send us to our beds at night with our hearts clutched by icy fingers of fear . . .

Jodi disclaims such fear-arousing rhetoric by affirming the Family's hope despite tension and turmoil:

GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US

Jodi

**The signs of the times are alarming!
Things seem to change everyday.
Are we out of control?
O Lord, I don't know,
Sometimes it's hard just to pray. But,**

Family

**God has not given us a spirit of fear,
But of power, and of love,
And of a sound mind.**

Devv

**The Catholics and Protestants are fighting—
But he promised love and not hate!
He's called "Prince of peace"
But when will this cease?
And what if his love comes too late?**



Mother Divine



The International Arm Wrestling
Competition
Mugsy Malone vs. Bruiser Barton



Peggy



"Ev'ryone's doin' it, Ev'ryone's wooin' it. Try for the future and see!"

The Park



Devv, the Politician



"God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."



Mugsy



Conway

Family

**God has not given us a spirit of fear,
But of power, and of love,
And of a sound mind.**

Devv, gesturing to Crazy who is wandering aimlessly on the fringe: **"That's a fine philosophy for you in your comfy churches. What does it do for a lonely guy like him?"**

Crazy

**I'd better look out for myself now,
'Cause nobody else seems to care!
It's lonely inside, here where I hide,
But outside, there's nobody there!**

Both the Family and Mother Divine reach out to Crazy. He moves toward the Family but becomes frightened, turning to Mother Divine instead.

Family

**God has not given us a spirit of fear,
But of power, and of love,
And of a sound mind.**

Mother Divine reveals to Crazy the bright new future she sees in his hand, leading him suggestively to her booth. While the Family is looking for a place to picnic Devv re-enters the park. He hires Mugsy to attack one of the Family.

Mother Divine and Crazy join the picnic and Conway returns to the Arm Wrestling Block to look for the wine the Family left behind. The picnickers are stunned when Conway's heart-rending scream pierces their chatter. He has been assailed and knifed by Mugsy, who flees. During the attack Conway heard Jesus speak to him: "If a man hits you on one cheek, turn the other." Rushing to Conway all see that he's seriously wounded and they carry him to an emergency station. Richard returns, overwhelmed by grief and fury. Determined to revenge Conway's attacker, he explodes in bitter confusion. Jesus, sharing his grief yet pained by his hatred, speaks to him: **"An eye for an eye? A tooth for a tooth? No, if you only love those who love you your love is nothing."** Pat and Jodi return to embrace and comfort Richard.

IF YOU HAVE NOT LOVE

Jesus

If you have not love, you are nothing.

Richard

**When I was a child, I spoke as a child,
I thought as a child, 'cause I was one,
But now I have grown, and I'll have you know,
That I've put away childish things.**

Jesus

If you have not love, you are nothing.

**Love suffers long, and never does wrong,
It always is gentle and kind.
Love never shouts, it never seeks out its own,
Never tells you, "That's mine."**

If you have not love, you are nothing.

Richard

Well, now we see things but dimly, it seems,

Jesus

But someday you'll see face to face.

Richard

Our treasures are vain,

Jesus

**But three things remain the passing of time can't erase.
They are faith, hope and love,
The greatest of what will remain will be love.**

Jesus, Richard, Jodi, Pat

If you have not love, you are nothing.

END of ACT I

ACT II

Scene 1: THE PARK

Meeting Richard by chance at the Bus Stop, Crazy discovers that Conway has lost the sight in one eye. Crazy's compassion is matched only by his eagerness to share his own news; he and Rita (Mother Divine) have been seeing each other constantly. Meeting her in the fortune booth he speaks of his desire to make their relationship permanent. She slyly manipulates Crazy into continuing their affair but relinquishing his hope of marriage.

Scene 2: THE HOME

Pat is cleaning when without warning the crew of a daytime TV show bursts into the house. She has been selected "Housewife of the Day". The "Piles More!" show (Devv and assistants) overwhelm Pat with costly gifts, unattractive but expensive decorating items, and a cosmetic "make-over". The experience leaves her shattered. Conway comes from his sick bed to comfort her and the rest of the Family return from shopping; together they reassure Pat of their love.



Jesus encourages them to care for each other but then turns their eyes from consideration of their own discomfort to awareness of the discomfort that others live in continually.

TAKE A LOOK AROUND

Jesus

**But take another look,
See what I see:
All the broken people.
Why should this be?
Hungry and broken,
How can it be?**

**Take a look around,
Look through my eyes.
Stop and listen,
Can you hear them cry?**

The Family is confronted by the world's dispossessed. They see before them Mr. Poor and his family and hear their story:

Mr. Poor's family waiting at the table,
Waiting for the bread to come, hoping
Soon their low income will somehow be more stable.

Mr. Poor's family is now increased by one:
Granny, feeling not so well, has caused the family
To swell, without another income.

Mr. Poor's Uncle Ed appeared again today:
Without a job or salary, he's added to their misery
Of growing bills to pay.

Mr. Poor's breadman didn't come today:
He sent a note on which he wrote
'NO MORE BREAD UNTIL YOU PAY!'

Shocked, and grieved by their former lack of conscience, the Family become aware of their responsibility for the poor and needy. Their repentance is heightened as they offer to experience the sufferings of Christ.

KYRIE

Jodi

**We can hear them, hear them cry.
We can see them, try and try.
Always failing, broken, lonely—
How could we have been so blind?**

Family

**Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.**

Jesus

**Walk among them, I'll go with you.
Reach out to them with my hands.
Suffer with me, and together
We will serve them, help them stand.**

Jesus and Family

**Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.**

**Forgive us, Father, hear our prayer.
We will walk with you anywhere.
Through your suffering, with forgiveness,
Take your life into the world.**

**Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.**

Jesus

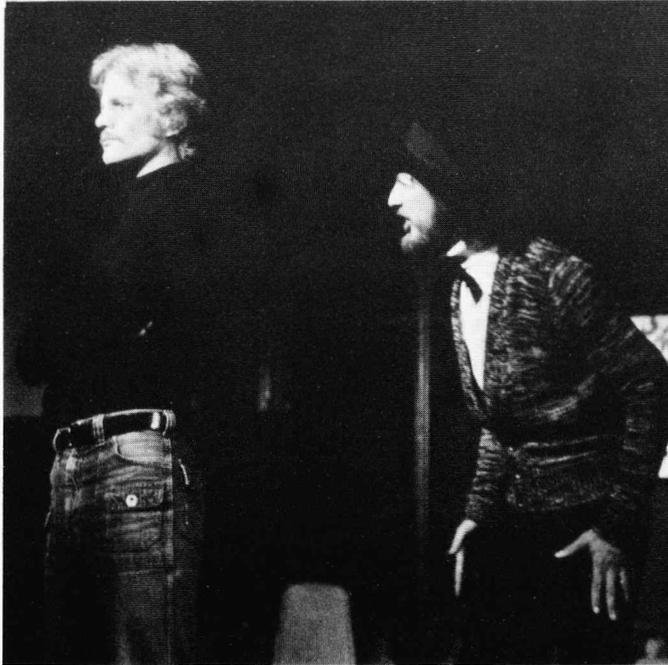
Isn't it good, ah, isn't it good!

Scene 3: THE INN

Mother Divine and Peggy are having a drink together when Peggy blurts out her desire to live with Mother Divine as friend and assistant. Rita's careful but firm refusal is made easier for Peggy by the entrance of Crazy, who is celebrating his successful week at his new job. Insisting on buying drinks, his enthusiasm spirals anew when the Family come in. They are celebrating Conway's returning health and have brought a special bottle of wine for the purpose. Crazy runs round and round faster and faster, insisting that no luxury or pleasure is too expensive for his friends. Drinks, hors-d'oeuvres, the band that plays special music, more and more drinks—all can be had for a price, and Crazy spends lavishly. Mugsy enters but is frightened when he recognises Conway; he crosses quickly to the bar. A feast is being prepared when Crazy discovers he is out of cash. Humiliated, he fears his friends will leave him.

The Family urge Conway to offer Crazy their wine. Stunned by this gesture Crazy is speechless; during this time the import of such an offer is interpreted by Jesus: "My blood, my very blood is what they need to quench their thirst. Father, how good you are, how very, very good you are, to take the water of my soul and make it wine." Crazy accepts the Family's wine and Mugsy, intrigued, has moved closer to witness the encounter. Conway recognises him and though the Family notices Conway's shock, he refuses to identify Mugsy as any other than "a friend, a friend I met in the park one day".

Devv is enraged. Scathingly he evicts the Family "for the last time!" Turning to Mugsy, who has refused to throw them out, he needles and mocks him until in fury Mugsy commands, "Go to hell!" and storms out.



Crazy entreats Rita to leave with him to find the Family but she, aware of the implication, rejects him in bitterness: "You're not just talking about walking out of this place! You're talking about living the way they live! And I told you before, Crazy, I can't do that!" She turns away in pain, then pauses, asking Crazy to care for Peggy. Crazy is so staggered by his sense of grief and loss that initially he can't even look at Peggy. Finally he goes to her and reaches out. Only Devv and Luci, his faithful assistant, remain. Bleating in disgust and anger he stalks out, leaving her to clean up.

Mugsy, Peggy and Crazy are received by the Family; and Mugsy is reconciled first to Conway and then to Richard, who has hated him. Jesus interprets these experiences as he sings.

THE NAME OF LOVE

Jesus

In the beginning was the word.
I know that it's true.
And the word, it was love,
the love I have for you.
And the love turned on the light.
I know that it's you.
And you lighten the world,
With our love I know it's true.

And the word is heard in the darkness,
So the light falls on blind eyes.
And the word becomes your name
inscribed upon my palms,
So I never can forget.
The name of love, it will live on.

But the time's gonna' come when you feel lonely,
like orphans in an angry land;
So come and make your home in me.
Ah, I know there is room;
There's room enough for those who choose
to hear my word and simply come.

Won't you come, won't you come and follow me?
Take my name, the name of love.
Come, walk as children in the light.
Leave your shadows far behind.
Ah, please take my love, don't be so blind.
The name of love, it will live on and on and on.

Then the word will be heard in the darkness,
So the light falls on blind eyes.
Where it's spoken there'll be light,
I know that it's you.
And you lighten the world,
With our love I know it's true.

The Family, now expanded to include Crazy, Peggy and Mugsy, joins with Jesus to worship the Father.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallow'd be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Do not bring us to the time of trial
but deliver us from evil,

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

FREE WORSHIP

DANCE BEFORE HIM

O give thanks unto the Saviour,
Bless his holy name.

O give thanks to the Lord.
Jesus is the King!
O give thanks to the Lord.
Let his praises ring!

Dance before him,
Dance before him,
Magnify his holy name!

THE CELEBRATION SONG

For our life together, we celebrate.
Life that lasts forever, we celebrate.
For the joy and for the sorrow,
Yesterday, today, tomorrow, we celebrate.



For your great creation, we celebrate.
For our own salvation, we celebrate.
For the sun and for the rain,
Through the joy and through the pain, we celebrate.

Ah! There's the celebration.
Celebrate the whole of it!

For his body broken, we celebrate.
For the Word he's spoken, we celebrate.
For the feasting at his table,
By his grace we are able to celebrate.

For the Lord above, we celebrate.
For our Father of love, we celebrate.
For the Son who is our brother,
For his Spirit, for the three together, we celebrate.

Ah! There's the celebration.

Reprise: ISN'T IT GOOD/THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Isn't it good, O, isn't it good!
Haven't we found the sound that makes it all
go on and on and on and on?
Isn't it light! O, isn't it right
that we should celebrate the love we have for you!

We are the light of the world!
We are the salt of the earth!
A lamp shall not be lit
to be covered over and hid!

Since we are a city,
set up high on a hill,
We'll shine our windows, open our gates
and invite ev'ryone to come in!

Ah! There's the celebration.

THE BLESSING

THE LORD BLESS YOU

The Lord bless you, the Lord keep you
and make his face to shine upon you.
The Lord be gracious unto you.
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
and give you peace.
Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good
to those who trust him for tomorrow.

So, make a new word for tomorrow.
Call it "Take-no-thought-for" day,
Or even better, you might say,
That as for me and my great big family,
We will trust him for tomorrow.

The Family



richard
gullen



margi
pulkingham

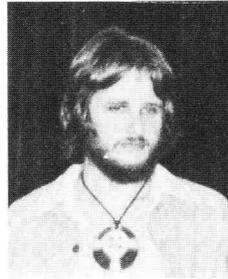


jodi
page



conway
barker

pat allen



Jesus

mikel kennedy



Devv

david gustafson



Luci

ruth wieting



Crazy Roundaround
ed baggett

Mother Divine
martha barker



Peggy
peggy gustafson



Mugsy Malone
bill pulkingham



Bruiser Barton
max dyer

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