

A Contemporary
Youthknd
Medieval  Morality Play

a youth musical inspired by
Mankynd, a medieval morality play

written by
Mark Jensen
with advice and ideas from the
House of Hope Youth Group and Their Friends

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DRAFT: 3/23/2014

FIRST PRODUCTION

YOUTHKYND was first performed at House of Hope Lutheran Church in New Hope, MN. The production took place on March 14-16, 2014.

YE PIOUS PLAYERS:

HERKYND – Kaitlyn Remple

HIMKYND – Matt Wittmer

WISDOM – Ceci Wold

GENEROSITY – Breanna Thompson

MODESTY – AllieRose Walker

JOY – Jonathan Nyquist

MERRYBELLE – Mike Wittmer

MISCHIEF – Carter Jensen

ROWDY – Teddy Flomo

LAZY – Kayla Nyquist

GREED – Ceci Wold

VANITY – Breanna Thompson

GLUM – Jonathan Nyquist

GLUTTONY – Mike Wittmer

FALSIFER – AllieRose Walker

YE MERRY CREW:

Director/Playwright – Mark Jensen

Music Director – George Brooke

Production Manager – Karen Brehmer

Lighting and Effects Designer – Gary Wittmer

Mask/Costume Designer – Barb Drenth

Mask/Costume Designer – Anna Drenth

Props Designer – Patti Remple

PowerPoint Designer – Erin Taylor

Choreographer – Jonathan Nyquist

YE JOYFUL BAND:

Piano – Pr. Tim Rauk

Guitar – Pr. Mark Vinge

Saxophone – Jill Jensen

CAST OF CHARACTERS

All characters should be played by youth ages 12-18.

THE YOUNG HUMANS:

HERKYND – A female teenager

HIMKYND – A male teenager

TEAM VIRTUE:

WISDOM*

GENEROSITY*

MODESTY*

JOY*

MERRYBELLE*

THE VICE SQUAD:

MISCHIEF

ROWDY

LAZY

GLUM*

VANITY*

GREED*

GLUTTONY*

THE FIEND:

FALSIFER*

*These roles can be double-cast.

SOME HOPEFULLY HELPFUL NOTES

YOUTHKYND is a contemporary adaptation of MANKYND, a medieval morality play that was staged in England sometime between the years 1465-1470. Morality plays have allegorical plots. A central character represents humanity, while the other characters represent the virtues and the vices. Aided by the Virtues, the Human characters strive to follow God. Meanwhile the Vices do their utmost to prevent the Human characters from staying on God's path.

We chose to adapt MANKYND because this play is one of the more comedic morality plays. In fact the humor in the original is quite bawdy(!), so this adaptation keeps the intent while making the humor more cheeky. We got great compliments on the physical and verbal humor, so that was a relief! Plus the junior high boys in the cast loved it. The actors talk directly to the congregation too, so be sure to encourage (and warn) the congregation about this convention before the show. The play runs about an hour.

To give the play a classic feel, the cast members wore masks. These masks only covered their eyes and foreheads. The masks also helped the congregation keep track of the different groups of characters; the Virtues wore orange masks, the Vices wore purple masks, and the Humans wore blue masks. They also wore shirt sized "tunics" that had the same color, and their character names were on them. To finish decorating the masks, we held a Lock-In where the cast members each decorated their character mask. This gave the students another opportunity to both explore their characters and unleash their creativity.

We kept the design simple. For the set, we just used some platforms and a ladder to get playing levels. During the show the Vices take an offering, so we used metal cans that made a lot of noise when coins were dropped in them. We did use a fog machine for FALSIFER's entrance, but that's certainly optional. Also note that HIMKYND plays a musical instrument -- any instrument this actor can play is fine.

We staged the show with ten actors, but there are enough parts for fifteen. The actor who played MODESTY also played FALSIFER, so that meant MODESTY couldn't appear at the end of the play. If you have enough actors for MODESTY to appear again, additional lines for this character appear at the end of the script. Other than HIMKYND and HERKYND, the roles are gender neutral, so you can cast anybody in the VIRTUE and VICE roles. We cast the show by having the students read the play and then we passed out a ballot. The actors ranked their top five favorite roles, and we were able to honor their number one or number two choices. This ballot is at the end of the script too.

The play has places for five songs, two dance numbers and three singing numbers, and you can select the songs you would like to perform. Please pay the appropriate royalties and acknowledge the artist's work. We used the following songs for the first production of YOUTHKYND:

- Alleluia, Song of Gladness. Latin Eleventh Century. Edited by Richard Proulx. © 1984 Schola Antiqua, © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.
- Psalm 121. Lost and Found. © 2001 Lost and Found/Limb Records, P.O. Box 305, Lewiston NY 14062. CCLI License 1816053.
- Reflection. Lost and Found. © 2005 Lost and Found/Limb Records, P.O. Box 305, Lewiston NY 14062. CCLI License 1816053.

Most importantly, have fun! We had a terrific time developing and staging this play.

(DANCE MUSIC. The CAST enters during this song, and their dance should identify the VIRTUES, VICES, and the HUMANS. Everybody wears masks. After this dance ends, only TEAM VIRTUE is onstage.)

(MODESTY, JOY, GENEROSITY, and MERRYBELLE sleep and comically snore for a few beats. MERRYBELLE snores by lightly ringing a bell. WISDOM runs onstage.)

WISDOM

Wake up everybody! Wake up!

MODESTY

Oh, too loud! You're hurting my ears.

GENEROSITY

So much for my nap....

WISDOM

Wake up! Himkynd and Herkynd will be here soon!

JOY

Oh wow! That's terrific!

GENEROSITY

Himkynd and Herkynd! The young mortals, coming here! I was so hoping they would come!

MERRYBELLE

(Rings bell.)

WISDOM

These young people are working on a song to praise God, so naturally they will need our help. We should pray for guidance, so we may give them good advice.

JOY

We get to pray! Praying makes me so, so, so HAPPY! GO PRAYER!

MODESTY

Joy! Stop being so loud all the time. Be humble in your praise!

JOY

Well, you should just stop being so modest.

MODESTY

How can I stop being modest? I'm Modesty!

GENEROSITY

Modesty and Joy are both needed for prayer. Be at peace, both of you.

WISDOM

Please stop arguing which virtue is the most important for prayer. It's silly.

GENEROSITY

You are both important.

WISDOM

Listen to what Generosity says. Generosity is very wise.

GENEROSITY

No, you're wise, I'm generous.

WISDOM

Now you're being modest.

MODESTY

She can't be modest, I'm Modesty!

MERRYBELLE

(Impatient, rings bell multiple times.)

WISDOM

Right, right, right MerryBelle. Look at us, babbling on, while these good people all sit out there, watching us patiently, waiting for Himkynd and Herkynd to appear.

JOY

Oh! Look at all the people!

(Runs into the congregation, shaking people's hands.)

Hi good people! I'm Joy! Oh nice hair. Hello. Hi! I'm Joy. People make me happy! Great shoes! Hello. I like to smile. Do you like to smile? Hello! Mm! You smell really good!

MODESTY

Joy!

JOY

What?

MODESTY

Get back here! We need to start our prayer! NOW!

JOY

Yay, we're gonna pray! Prayer rocks! Whup-whup!

MODESTY

Wisdom, would you start us? Please!

WISDOM

Very well, let us kneel.

MISCHIEF

(Creeps unseen behind the VIRTUES. To congregation.)

Shh...

WISDOM

Dear Lord, we thank you for founding this wondrous Earth and all the creatures and plants that dwell in it. And thank you for loving us and saving us by sending your only Son to die for us.

MERRYBELLE

(Rings bell.)

MISCHIEF

(Loud whisper.)

Hey Rowdy, come here, the Virtues are praying!

(ROWDY joins MISCHIEF. They quietly giggle and point during the prayer.)

WISDOM

Each of you, speak in turn.

GENEROSITY

Grant to all people who receives the Lord's mercy a generous heart, so they may share this gift with others.

MERRYBELLE

(Rings bell.)

(MISCHIEF goes offstage and then drags LAZY onstage. LAZY, disgusted, sits next to MISCHIEF and ROWDY.)

MODESTY

May their hearts be filled with humility, so they do not make a show of their faith. For all people must remember they sin, and must quietly ask God's forgiveness.

MERRYBELLE

(Rings bell.)

JOY

And as they share this gift, may their hearts be filled with gladness, loveliness, excited-ness, and any other words that end in “ness” that give people joy.

MERRYBELLE

(Rings bell.)

WISDOM

And lastly good Lord, we trust and hope that you remember—

ROWDY

--that you remember people are loser idiots and a total waste of skin. Whoop, whoop!

MISCHIEF

Oo, major slam, Rowdy! High five!

WISDOM

Oh no, not them.

MODESTY

Why did they come here?

WISDOM

Go away! You interrupted my prayer! I need to finish it.

ROWDY

Why? Your prayer was stupid. And that’s stupid with a capital “Z”. Yeeyah!!!!

MISCHIEF

There isn’t a “Z” in stupid. Stupid.

ROWDY

Nice insult, Mischief! So cruel, you rule!

MISCHIEF

Once again you Virtues look like fools. It was a lucky thing we Vices came by before you embarrassed yourselves any more in front of these... these... people. Wow, just look at them out there. They let everybody into a church these days.

WISDOM

And as usual, Mischief, I see you brought a couple friends along.

MISCHIEF

Just a few. More are on their way.

ROWDY

I just came here to fart. Ahhhh... Warm, silent, and deadly.

(Everybody gasps from the incredible stench.)

MERRYBELLE

(Angrily rings bell.)

MODESTY

Ugh! Rowdy, how horrible can you be?

ROWDY

I bet I can do worse. Got any beans?

JOY

(Finally stops coughing.)

You Vices need to go! Herkynd and Himkynd will be here any second, and they can't get goofed up by you goons. They're working on a song for God!

MISCHIEF

Forget it Joy. We're staying.

MODESTY

But you'll ruin everything!

MISCHIEF

Oh, so you want Himkynd and Herkynd all to yourselves! Aren't you Virtues getting a little greedy now?

GENEROSITY

We don't want to be greedy. Maybe the Vices should stay?

MERRYBELLE

(Angrily rings bell.)

JOY

They do not make me happy.

WISDOM

You seem very determined, Mischief, to stay and cause trouble.

MISCHIEF

I wouldn't be Mischief if I didn't cause a wee bit of trouble. See, I heard you say Wisdom, that you and Team Virtue here are planning to give the young mortals advice on creating a heavenly song to the Almighty. What a waste of time! God is too busy to listen to a song from them! They

MISCHIEF (CONT.)

should instead sing a song about something most young people want. Like money, or food, or even naughtier things.

MERRYBELLE

(Urgently rings bell.)

WISDOM

Team Virtue! Conference.

(WISDOM, GENEROSITY, MODESTY, JOY, and MERRYBELLE huddle up and talk quietly in gibberish.)

MISCHIEF

Don't worry, my nasty friends. That goodie-two shoes Generosity will convince them we should stay. And then we'll corrupt the young mortals. Instead of a joyful song, they'll sing a sad and awful song.

LAZY

Mischief, why did you drag me here! This sounds like too much work. I wanna go and sleep in the shade.

MISCHIEF

Stay here Lazy! I have a special job for you.

LAZY

Job? I hate jobs! If it's hard, I'm not doing it.

MISCHIEF

Okay, okay, just sleep until I need you.

ROWDY

Yeah, just take a nap Lazy!

LAZY

It's too noisy, I can't sleep!

WISDOM

So... We are agreed.

MODESTY

Not totally agreed.

WISDOM

Well, enough have agreed. You Vices can stay, but you have to let us meet Herkynd and Himkynd first. Once we have given them our guidance, you may meet with them.

MISCHIEF

Sounds fair. Agreed Wisdom.

(Shakes WISDOM's hand.)

JOY

They won't listen to you. They'll be too filled with the joy and love of Christ.

MISCHIEF

Pretty confident there. What's that saying? Pride cometh before the fall?

GENEROSITY

Look, here they come! Herkynd and Himkynd!

JOY

THE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE HERE! YEAH!

MODESTY

Ugh. I should've brought earplugs. We get to talk to them first. You agreed Vices, so get, shoo!

ROWDY

No big whup. You'll just make them bored anyway.

(The VICE SQUAD moves to another part of the stage.)

WISDOM

Thank God for saving us from those worthless guests. They are worse than beasts. Amen.

(Enter HERKYND and HIMKYND.)

(SONG: Medieval era tune. For example, ALLELUIA, SONG OF GLADNESS or a similar tune.)

(After the song, only HIMKYND and HERKYND are on the main part of the stage. HIMKYND holds a musical instrument, HERKYND has paper and pencil.)

HIMKYND

Whattaya mean you don't have any lyrics yet?

HERKYND

I can't think of any!

HIMKYND

The church wants the song today!

HERKYND

Yeah duh, you've only said that about ten billion times now.

HIMKYND

Oh no, out there, Herkynd! Look! The congregation is watching us, watching everything we do.

HERKYND

Oh wow, look at them. Okay, now I'm scared!

HIMKYND

All those people will laugh if we don't get this song done! We'll get kicked out, wandering here and there, begging for food, a place to sleep. Then when the time comes... we won't get to heaven. Instead we'll get to... That other place.

HERKYND

At least we'll be warm.

(They scream in panic!)

HIMKYND

We need help! Help us, somebody!

HERKYND

Help us!

HIMKYND

Help please! Freaking out here!

HERKYND

Major freaking out here!

(The VIRTUES enter.)

WISDOM

Whoa, be at peace Himkynd and Herkynd! Relax, we're here.

HIMKYND

What? Where did you come from? Who are you?

HERKYND

They're the Virtues. Can't you read their shirts?

WISDOM

I'm Wisdom, and that's Generosity--

JOY

HI I'M JOY! HI! HELLO!

WISDOM

There's Modesty.

MODESTY

I'm the humble one.

JOY

More like the crabby one.

MERRYBELLE

(Happily rings bell.)

WISDOM

And that's Merrybelle.

HERKYND

But how can you help us? We're writing a song and we don't know where to start!

HIMKYND

It's for the church too! Those people sitting right out there expect big things from us. I could really use a Tums.

WHOLE CAST
(Sings Tums jingle.)

Tum, ta-tum, ta-tum, tum, TUMS!

JOY

Maybe you two could both take some deep cleansing breaths and think about good things. Like apple pie, puppies, and, and – oh! Ukuleles!

HERKYND

But I don't know how to write a song for a ukulele!

HIMKYND

And I hate apple pie!

(HIMKYND and HERKYND stressed, start crying.)

MODESTY

Way to go, Joy.

GENEROSITY

Poor, poor humans. Joy just meant to help.

HERKYND

Ukuleles! What a nightmare!

WISDOM

Christ sends you comfort, young mortals of Earth! Stand up, c'mon up, both of you. That's better. See because we are the Virtues, we can inspire you to write beautiful music to God.

GENEROSITY

Think about what you're thankful for! The good things God gives you for free.

HIMKYND

Good things? Like what?

WISDOM

Like warm sunbeams and crunchy snow and sandy beaches.

JOY

God gives these gifts to you every day. Every single day.

HERKYND

Well, that's true. But I don't know if I can turn that into a song.

JOY

You've got to believe that rock 'n roll is in your soul!!!
(Air guitar.)

MERRYBELLE

(Joins JOY and rings bell like an air guitar.)

HERKYND

That does help. I kind've feel like writing a song now. Are you feeling better, Himkynd?

HIMKYND

A little. At least I'm remembering what notes sound like again.

GENEROSITY

Wonderful!

JOY

We helped! YAY!

HERKYND

Sunbeams, sand, stars...