



The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

By Barbara Robinson

**Contact us with any questions at
solanocommunityplayers@yahoo.com**

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever is the story of the Herdmans, who are the worst kids in the history of the world. They lie, they steal, they bully other kids, and they smoke smelly cigars. There used to be only one place where you'd never see them—church. This all changes when Charlie Bradley brags that his Sunday school offers free snacks. All six of the Herdmans show up at church in search of pizza, cookies and Hawaiian Punch, and end up in the Christmas pageant. Charlie's mom, Grace, is the novice director, who not only casts them in the show but, much to the dismay of the other kids, lets them play all the leads. Grace instantly finds herself caught between two forces of nature—the Herdmans and Helen Armstrong, who speaks for all of the outraged citizens of the town. Grace has two choices: get rid of the Herdmans, or let them stay and risk being blamed for the worst pageant in the history of the world.

Audition Packet



Audition Details:

- **Date:** Submit your audition materials by Sunday, October 19, 2025 by 5pm.
- Callbacks will be held on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, 6pm-8pm.
- Email your audition to solanocommunityplayers@yahoo.com

Roles Available:

The Herdman Kids:

Ralph – the oldest and coolest. He's the enforcer, 13
Imogene – leader of the Herdmans. She's loud, bossy, and crafty, 12
Leroy – Ralph's back-up. Very confident in the muscle department, 11
Claude – scrappy and smart, 10
Ollie – a bit of a naïve urchin who follows the older boys' leads, 9
Gladys – little but fierce. Nothing scares Gladys, 8

The Bradleys:

Grace – sweet, good-humored, slightly frazzled mom, 35 to 40ish.
Bob – easy-going dad, wry sense of humor, 35 to 40ish
Charlie – typical kid brother, says what he thinks, 10
Beth – Charlie's older, and wiser sister. She's honest and kind, 11

Church People:

Helen Armstrong – organized steamroller. She's always in charge, 40 to 50ish
Reverend Hopkins – occasionally befuddled, always well-meaning, 40 to 50ish

Church Ladies:

Luanne – sassy, tells it like it is, 35 to 40ish
Betty – sweet southerner, calls everyone "honey," 30 to 40ish
Connie – direct, no nonsense type, 30 to 40ish

Kids:

Alice Wendleken – know-it-all. She thinks she's perfect, 11
Elmer Hopkins – preacher's kid, which means he needs to behave and be nice, 10
Teddy Shoemaker – wimpy kid with glasses, asks too many questions, 9
Ivy Reed – Beth's earnest friend who is sometimes a goody-goody, 11

Children's Ensemble:

Various kids play angels and shepherds in the pageant, and other kids in the lunchroom.

Requirements:

- Prepare 32 bars from any Christmas song that best highlights your skill.
- Prepare a short monologue from the list below.

AUDITION CHECKLIST

1. Read through the entire packet carefully. Pay special attention to the calendar, please note **ALL CONFLICTS** on your audition form.
2. Prepare your song that best highlights your skill and prepare to read one of the characters from the list below.
3. Email your audition materials to solanocommunityplayers@yahoo.com by 5:00PM on Sunday, October 19, 2025

If you have questions, email us at solanocommunityplayers@yahoo.com.

AUDITION TIPS

To start your audition video, please start with a slate. You would state your name, the Christmas song you will be performing and something interesting about yourself.

SAMPLE

"Hello, my name is Maggie Smith and I will be performing "Jingle Bell Rock". An interesting fact about me is that I can bake a mean chocolate chip cookie."

REGISTRATION FEES

For any students under the age of 16, there is a registration fee of \$199 to participate in the production. For Starbound Theatre Performing Arts Academy members the fee is \$150. Upon being cast in the show, a link will be sent to complete registration prior to the first rehearsal.



AUDITION FORM

Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

EXPERIENCE. Please list any past/current experience in theatre below.

SHOW	ROLE	COMPANY

Would you like to be considered for a specific role? **YES** **NO**

If so, which role(s) _____

If offered, would you accept a different role? Please be honest. **YES** **NO**

Special Skills (juggling, acrobatics, unicycle riding, etc) _____

CONFLICTS. Please review the Production Schedule and **LIST ALL CONFLICTS BELOW.**

MONOLOGUES/READINGS TO PREPARE FOR AUDITIONS

MALE (AGES 6-17)

CHILD: *(Reciting in the pageant)* And in that region there were shepherds in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them...*(Gladys doesn't appear, trying again)*...An angel of the Lord appeared to them...*(Gladys still doesn't appear, continues worried)*...The glory of the Lord shone around about they were sorely afraid...*(trying to give Gladys her cue)*...WHEN THE ANGEL OF THE LORD appeared to them and said, Be not...*(Gladys appears suddenly yelling her line, continuing flustered)*...and suddenly there was a multitude of heavenly host, saying Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men.

CHARLIE: *(Singing)* "Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, because there are no Herdmans there. And Jesus loves us, as they say, because he keeps them miles away." I don't care what everybody else said, that's what they really thought. All that other stuff is okay but the main good stuff about church is that the Herdmans aren't there, ever...That's what I said...stay away from them. Go to church.

MALE (AGES 12-17)

RALPH: Somebody ought to fix the innkeeper...Gladys, you wipe out the innkeeper! I'll go after Ol' Herod! [Or] send the angel after him. She could just point her electric finger and turn him into a pile of ashes.

MALE (AGES 18 and Up)

REV. HOPKINS: I've been on the telephone all day, and I can't make heads or tails of it. Some people say they set fire to the ladies' room. Some people say they set fire to the kitchen. Vera Wendleken says all they do is talk about sex and underwear...The whole church is in an uproar. I don't know...Jesus said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me', but I'm not sure he meant the Herdmans...Grace, don't you think we should cancel the pageant? We could blame it on the fire...makes a good excuse.

FATHER: Well...that's what they were...Mary and Joseph. They were refugees, in a way. They were a long way from home, didn't have any place to stay, didn't know anybody. They were probably cold and hungry and tired...and messy. *(To Mother)* I think you worry too much. Now...I'm going to push baby angels onstage, and I'm going to hand out shepherd's crooks and then push them onstage...When do I do all that?

FEMALE (AGES 6-12)

CHILD: *(Reciting in the pageant)* And in that region there were shepherds in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them...*(Gladys doesn't appear, trying again)*...An angel of the Lord appeared to them...*(Gladys still doesn't appear, continues worried)*...The glory of the Lord shone around about and they were sore afraid...*(trying to give Gladys her cue)*...WHEN THE ANGEL OF THE LORD appeared to them and said, Be not...*(Gladys appears suddenly yelling her line, continuing flustered)*...and suddenly there was a multitude of heavenly host, saying Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men.

GLADYS: (*As the Angel of the Lord appearing to the Shepherds in the Pageant*) Hey!...Hey!.. Unto you a child is born!...It's Jesus, and he's in a barn...Go see him! (*Shepherd hesitates*) Go on, he's over there!

FEMALE (AGES 12-17)

BETH: The Herdmans were the worst kids in the whole history of the world. They lied and stole and smoked cigars, even the girls, and talked dirty and cussed their teachers and took the name of the Lord in vain and set fire to Fred Shoemaker's old broken down tool house. There were six of them – Ralph, Imogene, Leroy, Claude, Ollie and Gladys – and they went through Woodrow Wilson School like those South American fish that strip your bones clean. They were around town the same way – stealing things and tearing things up and whamming kids....so it was hard to get away from them. There was only one safe place...

ALICE: I didn't dare raise my hand. Imogene would have killed me! She said, "I'm going to be Mary in this play, and if you open your mouth or raise your hand, you'll wish you didn't." And I said, "I'm always Mart in the Christmas pageant." And she said, "go ahead then, and next spring when the pussywillows come out I'll stick a pussywillow so far down your ear that nobody can reach it...and it'll sprout there and grow and grow, and you'll spend the rest of your life with a pussywillow bush growing out of your ear!" And she would too! Herdmans will do anything. You just watch, they'll do something terrible and ruin the whole pageant...and it's all your mother's fault!

IMOGENE: My God! They didn't have room for Jesus? Didn't Mary know who he was? (*Pointing to Ralph who is playing Joseph*) Didn't he know? What was the matter with Joseph, that he didn't tell them? Her pregnant and everything...[and] you mean they tied him up and put him in a feedbox? Where was Child Welfare?

BETH: (*Referring to the pageant*) It did seem real, as if it might have happened just that way. We all thought the pageant was about Jesus, but that was only part of it. It was about a new baby, and his mother and father who were in a whole lot of trouble – no money, no place to go, no doctor, nobody they knew. And then, arriving from the East – like my uncle from New Jersey – some rich friends. Because of the Herdmans, it was a whole new story – Imogene, burping the baby, and the Wise Men bringing such a sensible present. After all, they couldn't eat frankincense! And even Gladys – "He's in the barn. Go see him"...so the shepherds didn't have to stumble around all over the countryside. But I guess it wasn't like that for Imogene. For her, the Christmas pageant turned out to be all wonder and mystery, as if she just caught on to what Christmas was all about.

FEMALE (AGES 18 and Up)

MRS ARMSTRONG: (*Talking on the phone*) I'll tell you again, Grace, how important it is to give everyone a chance. Here's what I do – I always start with Mary and I tell them we must choose our Mary carefully because Mary was the mother of Jesus...Yes, and then I tell them about Joseph, that he was God's choice to be Jesus' father. That's how I explain that. Frankly, I don't ever spend much time on Joseph because it's always Elmer Hopkins, and he knows all about Mary and Joseph...but I do explain about the Wise Men and the shepherds and how important they are. And I tell them, there are no small parts, only small actors. Remind the angel choir not to stare at the audience, and don't let them wear earrings and things like that. And don't let them wear clunky shoes or high heels. I just hope you don't have too many baby angels, Grace, because they'll be your biggest problem.

MOTHER: Well, let me tell you...Helen Armstrong is not the only woman alive who can run a Christmas pageant! I made up my mind to just do the best I could under the circumstances, but now I'm going to make this the best Christmas pageant ever, and I'm going to do it with the Herdmans! After all, they raised their hands and nobody else did, and I don't care... (*to Father*)...And you're going to help me!

MOTHER: Oh I don't have any idea what's going to happen tonight! We've never once gone through the whole thing, and the Herdmans still think it's some kind of spy story. It may be the first Christmas pageant in history where Joseph and the Wise Men get in a fight and Mary runs away with the baby.

MRS MC MCARTHY: Could you believe that was Imogene Herdman? And all the rest of them? Irma, this was the best Christmas pageant we ever had, and I'm not sure why, but I think it was them. Could that be? There was just something...different...Had lots of spirit. Sometimes you can't even hear the angel of the Lord. I must find Grace and tell her.



PRODUCTION CALENDAR

Not all actors/crew will be called to all rehearsals. Once casting is complete, actors may not add conflicts, except in cases of illness or emergency.

Starting December 1st, all rehearsals are *mandatory*. All actors must attend mandatory rehearsals- no conflicts except in case of emergency

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE “*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*”

Rehearsal Date & Time	Rehearsal Location	Rehearsal Schedule	Ensemble Called
Tuesday, October 28, 2025 6:00pm-9:00pm Children Released at 8:30pm	501 E Monte Vista Ave Vacaville, CA	Parent Meeting/ Read Through	ALL CALLED
Tuesday, November 11, 2025 2:00pm-7:00pm	501 E Monte Vista Ave Vacaville, CA	Blocking	ALL CALLED
Wednesday, November 12, 2025 6pm-8:30pm	501 E Monte Vista Ave Vacaville, CA	Music	ALL CALLED
Thursday, November 13, 2025 5:30pm-8:30pm	501 E Monte Vista Ave Vacaville, CA	Blocking	ALL CALLED
Saturday, November 15, 2025 12:00pm-4:00pm	501 E Monte Vista Ave Vacaville, CA	Music/Blocking	ALL CALLED
Tuesday, November 18, 2025 6:00pm-9:00pm	501 E Monte Vista Ave Vacaville, CA	Blocking	ALL CALLED
Wednesday, November 19, 2025 6:00pm-8:30pm	501 E Monte Vista Ave Vacaville, CA	Music	ALL CALLED
Thursday, November 20, 2025 5:30pm-8:30pm	501 E Monte Vista Ave Vacaville, CA	Blocking	ALL CALLED
Saturday, November 22, 2025 12:00pm-4:00pm	501 E Monte Vista Ave Vacaville, CA	Music/Blocking	ALL CALLED
Monday, December 1 5:00pm-9:00pm	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	Tech Rehearsal	ALL CALLED
Tuesday, December 2 5:00pm-9:00pm	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	Tech Rehearsal	ALL CALLED

Wednesday, December 3 5:00pm-9:00pm	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	Tech Rehearsal	ALL CALLED
Thursday, December 4 5:00pm-9:00pm	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	Tech Rehearsal	ALL CALLED
Friday, December 5 5:30PM CALL 7PM SHOW	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	SHOW #1 CAST A	ALL CALLED
Saturday, December 6 11:30AM CALL 1:00PM SHOW	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	SHOW #2 CAST B	ALL CALLED
Saturday, December 6 5PM CALL 6PM SHOW	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	SHOW #3 CAST A	ALL CALLED
Sunday, December 7 12PM CALL 1:00PM SHOW	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	SHOW #4 CAST B	ALL CALLED
Monday, December 15 5:00PM-9:00PM	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	Tech Rehearsal Brush Up	ALL CALLED
Wednesday, December 17 5:30PM CALL 7PM SHOW	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	SHOW #5 CAST A	ALL CALLED
Thursday, December 18 5:30PM CALL 7PM SHOW	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	SHOW #6 CAST B	ALL CALLED
Friday, December 19 5:30PM CALL 7PM SHOW	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	SHOW #7 CAST A	ALL CALLED
Saturday, December 20 11:30AM 1:00PM	125 W Kendal St Vacaville, CA	SHOW #8 CAST B	ALL CALLED