

I Can't Wait for Christmas

*Book, Music, and Lyrics
by Keith Klewer*

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STORY OF THE MUSICAL

David and Ashley Johnson and their six children are excited about the upcoming holidays singing gleefully "I Can't Wait for Christmas." But like most families today, they are over-extended and over-committed! That's why on Christmas Eve they still need to hit the mall to shop for gifts, stop at a local tree lot to buy the perfect tree, and once home, dig out the old decorations for said tree -- and the rest of the house! The family is so consumed with all the last-minute secular preparations they ignore the most important reasons for the holiday, even when the signs are right in front of them: a teen friend who sings "Praise Him," bell ringers who sing "Let Me Tell Ya 'Bout My Lord," and an apparently homeless man, who sings "That's What Christmas Means to Me." Even Grandpa, up from Florida, explains why David is so bitter against God. But it takes a serious electrical accident involving the youngest child Zoe to make the family really wake up. A hospital pastor, prayers and songs finally help the whole Johnson family experience the love that surrounds Christmas. This musical contains 13 original songs. Approximately two hours including an intermission.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

This musical was performed on December 12, 13 and 14, 2014 at The Oregon Community Theatre, Oregon, Ohio in partnership with St. Mark Lutheran Church in Toledo, Ohio. It was directed by Pastor Beth Giller.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(4 m, 1 w, 3 male teens, 4 female teens, 1 girl,
2 flexible, extras)*

DAVID JOHNSON: Father.

ASHLEY JOHNSON: Mother.

JAKE JOHNSON: Oldest boy. Senior in high school.

MIA JOHNSON: Oldest girl. High school student.

AMY JOHNSON: High school student.

LUCAS JOHNSON: Middle school age.

HANNAH JOHNSON: Middle school age.

ZOE JOHNSON: The youngest child.

NICKI: High school student and Amy's best friend.

BELL RINGER 1: Plays both Nick and Pastor Roberts.

BELL RINGER 2: Can double as Doctor or Nurse.

MARK: Good-looking 20-year-old but a bit of a burnout.

DOCTOR: Can be male or female.

NURSE: Can be male or female.

GRANDPA JOHNSON: David's father.

EXTRAS: MALE SHOPPERS, FEMALE SHOPPERS,
NICKI'S MOM, SHOPPERS, MALL SANTA, CAROLERS

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SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND MUSIC

ACT I

- Song #1: Overture
- Scene 1 - Home of David and Ashley Johnson
 - Song #2: I Can't Wait for Christmas (Johnson Family)
 - Song #3: What Day? (Johnson Family)
 - Song #4: What Day? (Cont'd.)
 - Song #5: Christmas Time Is Here (Ashley)
 - Song #6: Transition to Nicki's Bedroom
- Scene 2 - Bedroom of Nicki
 - Song #7: Praise Him by Rew!nd
 - Song #8: More of You (Nicki & Amy)
 - Song # 9: Transition to Mall
- Scene 3 - Outside the Mall
 - Song #10: Let Me Tell Ya 'Bout My Lord (Bell Ringers)
 - Song # 11: Let Me Tell Ya 'Bout My Lord (Cont'd.)
- Scene 4 - Inside the Mall
 - Song #12: Shopping Blues (Johnson Family & Shoppers)
- Scene 5 - Outside the Mall
 - Song # 13: Transition to Tree Lot
- Scene 6 - A Christmas Tree Lot
 - Song #14: We Need a Tree (Johnson Family & Mark)
 - Song #15: That's What Christmas Means to Me (Nick & Amy)
 - Song # 16: Transition to Intermission

ACT II

- Scene 1 - Home of David and Ashley Johnson
 - Song #17: Decorating (Johnson Family)
 - Song #18: Decorating (Cont'd.)
 - Song #19: Last Christmas (Grandpa)
 - Song #20: Transition to Hospital
- Scene 2 - Hospital Room and Hallway
 - Song #21: The Prayer (David)
 - Song #22: Christmas Wish (Pastor Roberts)
 - Song # 23: Transition to Zoe's Bedroom
- Scene 3 - Bedroom of Zoe Johnson
 - Song #24: I Can't Wait for Christmas (Reprise) (David & Ashley)
 - Song # 25: Transition to Living Room
- Scene 4 - Home of David and Ashley Johnson
 - Song #26: The Gift (Johnson Family & Cast)
 - Song # 27: Bows

Song # 1: OVERTURE

**ACT I
Scene 1**

(AT RISE: The living room and kitchen of a typical middle-class home. ASHLEY is busy in the kitchen preparing dinner for the family. The three youngest Johnson children are in the living room. LUCAS is playing an X-Box game on the TV, HANNAH has earbuds on listening to music, and ZOE is coloring a picture with crayons.)

ASHLEY: Come on, guys, your dad is going to be home pretty soon. You need to get ready for dinner.

(LUCAS ignores her and keeps on playing his game, HANNAH can't hear her and doesn't respond.)

ASHLEY: *(Cont'd.)* Lucas, Hannah, Zoe... Let's go.

ZOE: OK, Mom.

(Even though she answers, ZOE does not stop coloring. After a few seconds of no response, ASHLEY walks into living room, turns off the TV, removes HANNAH's earbuds, and takes away ZOE's paper.)

LUCAS: Hey!

HANNAH: Mom!

ASHLEY: I said let's get ready for dinner! Help me set the table.

(The KIDS reluctantly get up and move toward the kitchen. They gather glasses, napkins, and silverware while they continue their conversation.)

HANNAH: You know, Amber's Mom wouldn't have done that.

ASHLEY: So maybe you should go eat at Amber's house tonight.

HANNAH: So... What are we having?

ASHLEY: Meatloaf.

LUCAS: Anything but meatloaf.

ASHLEY: Anytime you want to cook something up, Lucas, I am sure the rest of us will be glad to eat it.

HANNAH: Don't count on it, Mom.

(LUCAS and HANNAH make annoying faces at each other.)

ZOE: I like your meatloaf, Mommy.

ASHLEY: Why, thank you, Zoe.

ZOE: I just don't like the way it tastes.

(LUCAS and HANNAH to each other under their breaths.)

LUCAS: Or looks...

HANNAH: Or smells.

ASHLEY: I heard that. Go get washed up. Lucas, take this trash out to the garage first.

(HANNAH and ZOE exit down the hallway. LUCAS exits through the kitchen picking up the trash on the way. A few seconds later, JAKE enters through the front door with his gym bag and basketball. ASHLEY finishes setting the dining room table.)

JAKE: Hey, Mom.

ASHLEY: Hi, honey. You're just in time. Dinner is almost ready. How was basketball practice?

JAKE: It was alright. We just have some guys on the team that don't work very hard. I get frustrated with that. I mean, the game tomorrow night is against Piedmont. They're in first place and we have to be on top of our game or we'll get crushed.

ASHLEY: I'm sure you'll do fine.

JAKE: Well, we'll see. What's for dinner?

ASHLEY: Meatloaf.

JAKE: *(Hesitantly.)* OK... What else are we having?

ASHLEY: Broccoli... and what's wrong with my meatloaf?

JAKE: Nothing, nothing. I'm sure it will be fine this time.

(ASHLEY goes back into the kitchen. MIA and AMY enter through the front door. Both are carrying school backpacks. Mia has a cheerleader outfit on.)

MIA: Hey, Jake.

JAKE: Hi, Mia.

MIA: *(Sniffs.)* What's for dinner?

JAKE: You don't want to know... meatloaf... and broccoli.

AMY: Eww...That's a tough one.

JAKE: Tell me about it.

MIA: Meatloaf, huh? You know guys, it's Christmas time and if you're smart, this could work to your advantage.

JAKE: There is no such thing as an advantage when it comes to Mom's meatloaf.

(JAKE exits through the kitchen with his basketball.)

MIA: Amy, you're my little sister and I feel it is my responsibility to teach you the way to turn disasters, like mom's meatloaf, into opportunities to get what you want from our parents.

AMY: *(Condescending.)* Oh teach me, O great one.

MIA: Watch and learn.

(THEY enter the kitchen.)

MIA: *(Cont'd.)* Is that smell what I think it is? Are we having... meatloaf?

ASHLEY: Yes...

MIA: That is one of my favorite meals that you make, Mom. It's like the perfect ending to the week -- Friday night meatloaf. The only thing that would be better is to have some broccoli with it.

ASHLEY: We are having broccoli too!

MIA: We are? I love you, Mom.

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(MIA hugs ASHLEY looking over Ashley's shoulder at AMY while Mia winks and nods.)

AMY: Oh, brother.

MIA: Oh, Mom, by the way, I need \$30.00 Monday as a deposit for our new cheerleading outfits. Mrs. Hester said we are going to be the best dressed cheerleaders in the league...no matter what it cost.

ASHLEY: OK, remind me Sunday. You really like my meatloaf?

MIA: Yeah, it's the best. I'm going to go wash up. Come on, Am.

(THEY leave the kitchen heading into the dining area.)

MIA: *(Cont'd. To AMY.)* And that's how it's done.

(MIA and AMY exit down the hallway. DAVID enters the front door with his briefcase.)

DAVID: Ashley, I'm home.

(ASHLEY comes out of the kitchen and kisses DAVID hello.)

ASHLEY: Hi, sweetheart. How was work?

DAVID: I'm just glad it's Friday. Just one more week until I'm off for 10 days over Christmas. I can't wait.

ASHLEY: Me too.

(JAKE and LUCAS enter into kitchen and they overhear DAVID and ASHLEY.)

DAVID: What's for dinner?

ASHLEY: Meatloaf and broccoli.

DAVID: *(Groans.)* Alright... meatloaf and broccoli.

ASHLEY: Oh David, not you too? Why does everyone hate my meatloaf? Except Mia. She just told me how much she loves it.

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DAVID: Mia said that? *(To himself.)* I hope she's not coming down with something.

JAKE: *(To LUCAS in the kitchen.)* I can't believe Mia told Mom she loves her meatloaf.

LUCAS: That's Mia for ya.

(ZOE runs in from the hallway followed by HANNAH. AMY and MIA are close behind. JAKE and LUCAS follow in from the kitchen a second later.)

ZOE: Daddy!

DAVID: *(Picking ZOE up.)* Hey Zo. How are you?

ZOE: I'm good. Are you home for Christmas?

(MIA secretly motions to AMY to follow her into the kitchen.)

DAVID: One more week and then I'll be home for a while.

ZOE: Yippee!

JAKE, LUCAS, HANNAH: "Hey, Dad." "Hi, Daddy." etc.

(In the kitchen, MIA walks over to the oven and turns the temperature up.)

MIA: I'd say 550 degrees ought to do it.

AMY: What are you doing?

MIA: Trust me.

(MIA leaves for the living room, AMY stays near the kitchen.)

DAVID: So, guys, what's going on?

(THEY all start talking at once. Ad lib lines based on the characters' personalities- JAKE talks about his basketball game, MIA talks about her cheerleading uniforms, AMY is silent and separate from the group in the kitchen doorway taking it all in, LUCAS is talking about the X-Box game, HANNAH is talking about her girlfriends, and ZOE is trying to get DAVID's attention to show him the picture she just colored. Each is absorbed with their own self-interest.)

DAVID: *(Cont'd.)* OK, OK... Hold on... I get it. Everyone is really busy. But, a week from tomorrow is Christmas Eve. And school will be out, and I'll be off work, and we can slow down and relax.

Song #2: I CAN'T WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS

(AMY does not sing but observes from the kitchen.)

DAVID: CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR,

JAKE: WE HAVE TO MAKE IT COUNT.

ASHLEY: PRESENTS UNDERNEATH THE TREE

HANNAH: IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT.

LUCAS: THE FOOD,

ZOE: THE SNOW,

MIA: THE MISTLETOE,

ASHLEY: THE WEEK AHEAD YOU'LL

SURELY DREAD,

DAVID: I KNOW!

ALL: I CAN'T WAIT FOR,

I CAN'T WAIT FOR,

I CAN'T WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS.

HANNAH: I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE MY PRESENTS

UNDERNEATH THE TREE.

LUCAS: WITH MY TOYS I'LL BE PLAYIN',

MIA: IT GOES WITHOUT SAYIN',

JAKE: IT'S THE COOLEST BEST,

MIA: FORGET THE REST,

JAKE and MIA: IT'S MY FAVORITE TIME OF YEAR!

ALL: I CAN'T WAIT FOR,

I CAN'T WAIT FOR,

I CAN'T WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS.

LUCAS: YOU CAN HAVE THANKSGIVING, HALLOWEEN, AND

NEW YEAR'S EVE.

DAVID: MY WORK WILL BE FLEETIN',

ASHLEY: WHILE I'M OVER-EATIN',

JAKE: I'LL SLEEP TILL NOON,

ZOE: I'LL WATCH CARTOONS,

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DAVID and ASHLEY: IT'LL BE HERE PRETTY SOON!

ALL: I CAN'T WAIT FOR,
I CAN'T WAIT FOR,
I CAN'T WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS.

MIA: SIGHTS AND SOUNDS AND TASTES AND SMELLS WILL
NEARLY CONSUME ME.

HANNAH: LIGHTS ON THE TREES,

ZOE: I'LL SIT ON SANTA'S KNEE,

LUCAS: NO SCHOOL OR TESTS,

DAVID and ASHLEY: JUST ONE REQUEST,
DON'T WAKE US UP AT THREE!

ASHLEY: SNOW WILL BE FALLIN',

DAVID: ON THE COUCH I'LL BE SPRAWLIN',

ASHLEY: I'LL BE RECALLIN',
THE YEAR THAT PASSED, IT WENT SO FAST AND
FRIENDS WILL BE CALLIN',

DAVID: OH HOW I AM LONGIN',

DAVID and ASHLEY:
FOR SOME REST, RELIEVE MY STRESS,
I THINK I AM OBSESSED!

ALL: I CAN'T WAIT FOR,
I CAN'T WAIT FOR,
I CAN'T WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS.

JAKE: IT CAN'T GET HERE SOONER, FASTER, QUICKER TO
SUIT ME.

ASHLEY: PARADES I'LL BE WATCHIN',

HANNAH: I'LL PEEK INSIDE MY STOCKIN',

HANNAH and MIA:
I'LL LOOK TO SEE, JUST WHAT'S FOR ME,

DAVID: THERE'S FOOTBALL ON TV...

DAVID, JAKE, and LUCAS: TV.

ALL: I CAN'T WAIT FOR,
I CAN'T WAIT FOR,
I CAN'T WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS.

DAVID: AN EXTRA DAY TO WAIT, MY DEAR, BECAUSE IT
WAS LEAP YEAR.

HANNAH: INSIDE WE'LL BE STAYIN',

LUCAS: GAMES I'LL BE PLAYIN',

DAVID and ASHLEY: KICK BACK, UNWIND, RELAX,

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ASHLEY: I JUST MAY
WEAR MY ROBE ALL DAY!

ALL: I CAN'T WAIT FOR,
I CAN'T WAIT FOR,
I CAN'T WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS.

ASHLEY: IT'S HERE AND GONE AND BEFORE TOO LONG
WE'RE THINKING OF NEXT YEAR.

DAVID: I HAVE TO ADMIT IT,
CAN'T WAIT ANOTHER MINUTE, OH

ALL: I CAN'T WAIT!
I CAN'T WAIT!
I CAN'T FOR WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR!

(AMY enters the living room from the kitchen. DAVID and ASHLEY exit to the kitchen. KIDS remain in the living room.)

JAKE: I am really looking forward to Christmas this year.

HANNAH: Me too. Amber asked me if I could go with her
and her family to the _____ (*popular artist*) concert the
Tuesday after Christmas.

JAKE: We have six basketball games over nine days. It's
like basketball heaven.

MIA: It's too bad it falls on Sunday this year and we have to
go to school all the way through Friday.

ZOE: I don't mind

MIA: I was hoping to be able to hang out with Steve a lot.

LUCAS: I know what I'm going to be doing next week. If I get
that new video game I want for Christmas, you won't see
me until February.

HANNAH: Promise?

AMY: Is that all you guys care about? Basketball games,
concerts, video games, and boyfriends?

ZOE: I don't have a boyfriend.

MIA: Well Amy, what do you want to do over Christmas?

AMY: I don't know. Something just seems missing.

LUCAS: I'll tell you what's missing... your brain. This is the
best time of the year.

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LUCAS: *(Cont'd.)* We get presents from everyone, we wake-up whenever, go to bed whenever, no school for two weeks, pig out on food we only see this time of year... Oh yeah, something's missing alright.

JAKE: I know what you're missing, Amy. Christmas decorations. We don't have one Christmas item up anywhere in the house.

HANNAH: We've all been too busy. You should see Amber's house.

MIA: Enough about Amber already.

(DAVID and ASHLEY enter from the kitchen.)

ZOE: We don't even have a tree yet. Where will Santa leave our presents if we don't have a tree?

ASHLEY: You're absolutely right, Zoe. We need to get our Christmas tree up. *(SHE pauses for a moment and looks around realizing how far behind they are.)* We have got a lot to do before next week.

DAVID: Like what?

ASHLEY: Like what? Have you looked around here? Do you really live here? Your dad's coming in for Christmas and we have to prepare the den for him to sleep in, the whole house has to be cleaned, everyone's laundry has to get done because I don't want to spend next weekend doing laundry on Christmas Day, I have a ton of food to buy for the next two weeks, we don't have any Christmas decorations up, we have Christmas shopping to do... Everyone is going to have to pitch in to get this stuff done.

LUCAS: Sounds like a lot of work.

(ASHLEY shoots HIM a hard stare.)

LUCAS: *(Cont'd.)* But that's cool, that's cool.

ZOE: When are we going to get our tree, Daddy?

DAVID: OK, how about Jake and I go up in the attic and get the tree down tomorrow?

ASHLEY: *(Taking a stand.)* No! No artificial tree this year. No burning pine scented potpourri this year to make it smell like a real tree. This year we get a real tree.

MIA: You go, Mom.

AMY: A real tree would be nice.

LUCAS: *(To JAKE.)* Have we ever had a real tree?

JAKE: Not that I ever remember.

DAVID: Do you know what that's going to cost?

ASHLEY: I don't care. I want the whole family to go and pick out our Christmas tree this year.

HANNAH: That could be fun.

MIA: *(Sarcastically.)* Uh-huh, fun...

DAVID: OK. Everyone, get their calendars out and we'll see when we all can go.

(The KIDS pull out various forms of electronic devices - laptop, I-pad, cell phones. Zoe picks up a toy cell phone and pretends it is real. ASHLEY sits down at the desk top computer and DAVID pulls out a folded-up paper from his coat hanging up. David looks around and realizes he has not kept up with technology.)

DAVID: I guess I am the dinosaur in the room.

MIA: *(To the other KIDS.)* Yeah, and he's behind on technology too.

(The KIDS all laugh.)

DAVID: What was that?

KIDS: "Nothing." "I don't know." "What was what?" "When are we going?" etc.

Song #3: WHAT DAY?

ASHLEY: WE HAVE TO PICK A DAY TO GET OUR TREE,
WE'RE ALL REAL BUSY AS CAN BE,

DAVID: WE NEED TO FIND A DAY WE ALL ARE FREE, WE
HAVE TO PICK A DAY TO GET OUR TREE,

End of Freeview

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