

PILGRIM WOMEN

A CHANCEL DRAMA FOR THANKSGIVING

By Linda B. Goens

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The Pilgrim Women

-2-

STORY OF PLAY

Four Pilgrim women find their strength and faith fading as they face the incredible rigors of harsh, wild, and unknown country known as America. Loneliness, despair, anger, and fear are their constant companions. But when the women bow their heads in prayer and hear the voice of Jesus, they remember why they sought this country. When Jesus shares their burdens, they grow strong and are ready to give thanks after their first year in the new world.

The Pilgrim Women

-3-

CAST OF CHARACTERS

THELMA: Burdened with despair.

ELIZABETH: Burdened with loneliness.

ABIGAIL: Burdened with anger.

ANNE: Burdened with fear.

VOICES OF JESUS: Renews their faith and strength.

COSTUMES: All are dressed as pilgrims.

The Pilgrim Women

-4-

OPTIONS FOR OPENING OF THE DRAMA

Women can enter sanctuary while a hymn is being sung. Possible selections include: "There Is a Balm in Gilead," "Send Your Word," or "Heal Me, Hand of Jesus." The women might also enter in dim light and take their positions or enter during the reading of a scripture.

The Pilgrim Women

-5-

SETTING

Though there needn't be any kind of set as such, the scene opens with the women clustered together as if in the kitchen or living area of one of their homes. Their activities may include, but are not limited to, writing in a diary, stirring cornbread mix, sewing, and reading the Bible. They may sit at small, rustic table/s or in rocking chairs, or be situated any other way the director sees fit. The characters may converse with the audience as well as with each other, the audience being like a visitor who steps in saying, "What's going on here?"

The Pilgrim Women

-6-

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: The WOMEN are together in one room, each doing something different: sewing, writing, reading or cooking.)

THELMA: *(Looking up from diary.)* The men have gone hunting already this morning. They promised venison, duck, and a fat goose for dinner. In a little while, we women will begin cooking, for today we celebrate our first year in the new world.

ELIZABETH: *(Looking up from Bible.)* Celebrate? Maybe you can celebrate, but I can't. My husband is dead, my little boy ... dead. Oh, how I long to feel his tiny arms around my neck. And I need my Jonathan so much. I am so lonely, I don't know how I can stand one more day.

THELMA: In England, my husband told me, "There are settlers already established in the Virginia Colony, and they will help us get started." Well, we aren't in the Virginia Colony. We are in Plymouth, and there are no settlers here. None but us. And the only help we've had came from the natives.

End of Freeview

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