

A dirt road with tire tracks stretches from the foreground into the distance, flanked by fields of dry, golden-brown grass. The sky is filled with dramatic, grey and white clouds, with a hint of sunlight breaking through on the left side. The overall mood is one of a long, open journey.

Jubilee Road

A big helping of the gospel
with a side of grits and gravy

JUBILEE ROAD

A SOUTHERN MUSICAL RE-TELLING OF THE GOSPEL **BY BRETT HADLEY AND MIKE MENNARD**

SETTING:

The play is set in the early reconstruction days of the old South, just after the Civil War.

CAST:

Casting can be flexible to accommodate a small cast of only 5 players or can include more including adding a chorus of singers.

The actors should be the singers, though the play can be done with the singers separate from the actors if needed.

CASTING FOR UNION COLLEGE 2017 SPRING PRODUCTION

John:	J-Fiah
Matt:	Doug
Petey:	Melvin
Andi:	Stephanie
Natty:	Guila
Jamie:	Maddie
Judy-Lee:	Charmaine
Philco:	Ben
Simone:	Hailey
Tommy:	Stuart

Order of Scenes

ACT-I

Scene-1

- Opening Song
- Angel visits Joe
- Wedding/Travel
- Nativity with Field Hands
- Nativity with Wise Men

Scene-2

- Governor's Office

Scene-3

- Revival Tent

Scene-4

- Water To Shine

Scene-5

- Johnny Baptist

Scene-6

- Wilderness Temptation

Scene-7

- Calling The Disciples
- Plantation Owner
- Turn It Around
- 5000 Fed/Make Him King

Scene-8

- Walk On The Water

Scene-9

- Good Samaritan
- General's Daughter

Scene-10

- On To Richmond

ACT-II

Scene-1

- Triumphal Entry
- Clearing The Church
- Wedding Banquet
- Last Days Song
- Mary Magdalen

Scene-2

- Judas Plots

Scene-3

- Bleeding Woman
- Greatest Commandment
- Blind Beggar
- Children
- Authority Questioned

Scene-4

- Pete's Confession
- We Gotta Get Organized

Scene-5

- Last Supper

Scene-6

- The Rock Garden

Scene-7

- Empty Tomb
- Great Commission



ACT-I

Scene-1

Opening, Angel Visit, Nativity

JOHN: Yessir, it surely was some dark times. Most people thought that victory for the South was gonna come quicker than a 1-legged man in a but-kickIn contest. But that ain't how it worked out...no sir. Instead of whippin them yanks and sending them scurrying home like squirrels, the war of Northern Aggression drug along fer four long years. Four years of blue fightin grey and both ending up red soaked with the blood of their brothers. But it was over now. General Lee had surrendered up the Army of Northern Virginia and Sherman was making his way through the south burnin a path of death and destruction all the way to Atlanta. Most folks round here was so beat down with a sadness so black they was wishen' for the blues. So when rumors started popping up bout a savior to be born in the South, lots of folk started flocking to church and looking at the preacher like a starving man looking through the window at a banquet, just to hear what he had to say bout the whole thing.

STAGE RIGHT SET UP TO LOOK LIKE A CHURCH. PREACHER STANDS ON BOX WITH CROWD SITTING ON FLOOR AROUND HIM.

PREACHER: (LIKE A SOUTHERN BAPTIST PREACHER) And you, Pascagoula Mississippi! Though you be small amongst all the confederacy, from out of you like a gooseberry from a briar patch will come a ruler who will shepherd his people and free them from bondage! Can a get a hallelujah!

(CROWD RESPONDS WITH HALLELUJAHS, AMENS AND BLESS THOSE GOOSEBERRIES)

JOHN: Now most folks took that to mean this savior was-a-comin to beat back the blue coats and kick out the carpet baggers so the South could rise again like a phoenix from the ashes. However, there were some that were confused about the prophecies specifying Pascagoula as the birth place of this savior. Some said...

MAN-3: Hemlock and hairballs, nothin' good ever came out of Pascagoula!

WOMAN-1: Only liars, cheats and shifty-eyed sneaks come from there.

JOHN: But despite which side of the arguin' you fell on, everyone agreed something big was about to happen. It was about this time that a couple of young'uns from Mississippi named Joe-bob and Mary-lou kicked up a stir. Joe-bob was a good lookin' fella who worked as a handy-man in Hattisburg. Mary-lou was a local gal who was so sweet she could charm the dew off a honeysuckle. Now they was pledged to get hitched but before they took their vows in front of the Parson something scandalous happened! Rumor got round that Mary-lou had a biscuit in the oven before her and Joe-bob had relations.

Now Joe-bob was a four-squared fella and wanting to do the right thing he planned to quickly dig up the bottle of bourbon he'd buried for their nuptials and get back his momma's ring that was sittin in Mary-lou's hope chest. But that night, as Joe-bob lay sleepin' sounder than a hound dog after huntin', he was visited in a dream by an angel of the Lord.

ANGEL: Joe-bob! Wake up boy! Do not be afraid of takin Mary-lou to be your better half. For the child she carries was given to her by the (ANGELS JUMP UP FROM BEHIND BED SINGS) Holy Ghost! She will give birth to a bodacious baby boy and you will name him—

JOE-BOB: Bubba! We done picked out names. Bubba if it's a boy after my daddy and Bubba-sue if'n it's a girl after Mary-lou's second cousin.

ANGEL: Boy, if intelligence was lard, you wouldn't be able to grease a pan. No sir! You will call him...(ALL ANGELS SING) Joshua!

JOE-BOB: Joshua? But that don't make no sense, I ain't got no kin named Joshua, why call him that?

ANGEL: Because he is gonna save his people! Well go on, skedaddle!

(JOE-BOB RUNS OFF, GETS MARYLOU AND THEY RUN TO THE COURTHOUSE.
WEDDING VIEL IS PUT ON MARY AND A TOP HAT ON JOE.)

JOHN: So Joe-bob did just what the angel told him and took Mary-lou down to the courthouse and got a justice of the peace to hitch em up. Course, everyone knew the baby Mary-lou was carryin' weren't Joe-bob's.

(TOWN FOLK LOOK AT THEM DISAPPROVINGLY)

The talk all over town was that the baker of that biscuit was another boy. And that made it a hard row to hoe for young Joe-bob and Mary-lou. To make matters worse, Joe and Mary had to travel down to Pascagoula due to a census being taken by the Union army. It was a mighty long trip for Mary, her being with child and bout ready to pop, and they had to travel with a borrowed horse and buggy instead of taking the train seeing as how they was so poor they couldn't jump over a nickel to save a dime.

(JOE-BOB GETS DOWN TO CHECK WAGON WHEEL)

Now it was pretty near midnight when Joe and Mary made it to the outskirts of Pascagoula when all of sudden Mary-lou let out a sound that was like nothin Joe-bob had ever heard before.

MARY: (SCREAMS AND GROANS) It's comin' Joe, it's coming now!

JOE: Nows not good timin' Mary-lou, can't you hold off fer a bit?

MARY: (GRABS HIS SHIRT AND PULLS HIM CLOSE) I said now!!

(JOE RUNS AROUND STAGE LOOKING FOR A ROOM WITH MEMBERS OF THE CHOIR TURNING HIM AWAY. FINALLY ONE RUNS BACK WITH HIM TO MARY AND SHE ESCORTS THEM TO STAGE RIGHT WITH THE SHED AND outhouse SET)

JOHN: So Joe-bob took off quick as a rabbit to find someplace for Mary-lou to lie down while he went and found a doctor. But all the rooms everywhere were all filled up cause of the census. But after a bit he found a space at Aunt Bee's Boarding House. Course it weren't a room proper like, no, all Aunt Bee had was a tool shed out back by the outhouse. They shooed away the dirt robbers, uncovered an old settee and delivered little baby Joshua right there and laid him in a apple crate.

Now most people didn't realize that God's son was bein' born that night. It was a fact of life that most folks had turned to tall tales and gossip stead of readin' the Good Book, and that left Joe-bob and Mary-lou all alone to celebrate this miracle in that little shed. But the good Lord in His love and long-suffering, sent a delegation of angels to a patch of cotton pickers to whip up some commotion and git the word out about His Boy's birthday.

SONG FOR ANGELS, COTTON-PICKERS AND NATIVITY

JOHN: It weren't long after baby Joshua's birth that three, what you might call exotic, travelers from a distant land showed up to pay honor to Mary, Joe and the baby.

(BAND PLAYS NATIVE AMERICAN SYTLE MUSIC, SOFTLY IN BACKGROUND)

They was wise Medicine Men from eastern Indian tribes and they brought gifts for the baby Joshua.

(AS MEDICINE MAN 1&2 GIVE THEIR GIFTS, MEDICINE MAN-3 LOOKS DESPERATE AS HE FORGOT TO BRING SOMETHING. FINDING A NEARBY ROCK HE PICKS IT UP JUST IN TIME)

MEDICINE MAN-1: I bring you a feather from a Golden Eagle, used only in the head dress of a chief.

MEDICINE MAN-2: I bring you a medicine bag full of precious herbs and spices from the highest mountains used for healing.

MEDICINE MAN-3: And I have brought you this rock (music suddenly stops)... taken from the wilderness...because he will be known to all people as a Rock of Ages.

JOHN: Now as the medicine men were leaving the angel that Joe had seen before showed up with a frightening message:

ANGEL: Joe-bob, take Mary-lou and the baby and git yourself down to south of the border.

JOE-BOB: You mean Texas?

ANGEL: Boy, if brains were dynamite you wouldn't have enough to blow your nose. No, I mean high-tail it to—

(BAND PLAYS A BIT OF "LABAMBA")

JOE-BOB: Oh, Florida.

ANGEL: Mexico boy! Now skedaddle because the governor wants to kill baby Joshua and he's on the hunt right now. Go on, git!

ACT-I
Scene-2
Governor's Office,

JOHN: That's right. See word had spread about Joe, Mary and baby Joshua being the comin' ruler from prophecy. So much so that the story found it's way into the legitimate press and onto the desk of Herodius Maximus, the Governor of the great state of Mississippi, though most folks called him "High-ball Harold" due to his fondest of expensive liquor.

Yes, word had reached the ears of Governor Harold about the birth of a boy that would one day knock him off his high horse and you can imagine that didn't sit to well with the governor whose family had been runnin' the state of Mississippi fer seven generations. So when he heard rumors of some up-start gonna try to pee in his pond, the Governor set about making plans.

GOVERNOR: Aberdeen! Aberdeen! Git yourself in her girl!

ABERDEEN: Yes governor, what is it? Take a letter, more coffee or are you out of funnel cake?

GOVERNOR: Hells bells Aberdeen don't you ever read the paper! We got trouble and I mean trouble like a skunk in a schoolhouse. Git my political advisers in here right now!

(ABERDEEN EXITS AND 3 ADVISERS ENTER)

ADVISER-1: Howdy governor.

ADVISER-2: Good day sir.

ADVISER-3: What can we do ya for?

GOVERNOR: How is it that the National Enquirer knows about this political coo before my own brain trust!?

(ADVISERS ALL MUMBLE EXCUSES)

GOVERNOR: I ain't paying you boys to sit around and knit in your knickers. Now get down there to Pascagoula and do what you do best.

ADVISER-1: Yes sir!

ADVISER-2: Right away sir!

ADVISER-3: Immediately if not sooner!

ADVISER-1: Were on it like white on rice.

ADVISER-2: Bees on honey.

ADVISER-3: Dogs on...cats.

(AS ADVISERS EXIT THEY STOP AT DOOR AND LOOK BACK)

ADVISER-1: What is it we do best again?

GOVERNOR: Eliminate the competition.

ELIMINATE THE COMPETITION SONG PART-I

JOHN:

About a week after Governor Herod sent his advisers down to Pascagoula, there was a terrible tragedy. Seems someone tossed a few sticks of dynamite into a church daycare where young Joshua was supposed to have been. Thanks to the angels message Joe-bob had already left for Mexico with Mary-lou and Joshua, but fifteen other innocent children were there and were all killed. One distraught mother, beside herself with grief, couldn't be convinced that her baby was dead.

ELIMINATE THE COMPETITION SONG PART-II

ACT-I
Scene-3
Revival Tent

JOHN: After a spell word got down to Joe-bob and Marylou, by way of the angel Gabriel, that High-ball Harold had done kicked the bucket and it was safe now to bring the family back home. Hattiesburg seemed to be the best place to build a homestead so thats where they settled to put down roots.

Now Josh's childhood was a fairly typical upbringing, growing up with brothers and sisters and all that goes along with being the oldest boy in a big family.

(KIDS SHOULD TEASE JOSHUA WHILE HE TRIES TO CONTROL THEM OR DO SOME TASK. JOSHUA CAN BARELY TOUCH HIS SISTER WHO DROPS TO FLOOR SCREAMING JOSHUA BEAT HER UP AND THINGS LIKE THAT. EVENTUALLY SOMEONE BREAKS SOMETHING)

MARYLOU: Who broke that!?

(ALL KIDS POINT AT JOSHUA)

JOHN: Nothing really remarkable happened until Josh's twelfth birthday. It happened to fall on the same weekend as the Get Back To The Bible Convention's yearly big tent revival and fellowship feast! Well you know nothing draws the saints like the words "tent", "revival" and "free food", so folks from all over the south converged on Jackson, capitol city of the great state of Mississippi.

(JOE-BOB AND MARYLOU TRY TO ROUND UP THE CHILDREN INTO THE WAGON)

After all the eatin and revivalin was done everyone packed up to head home. Marylou and Joe-bob were just about to set out when—

JOE-BOB: You all better git in that wagon before I start tannin me some hides! (ALL KIDS JUMP ON WAGON) Joshua, make sure the backends all closed up...Joshua...Joshua!

SISTER: He ain't here daddy, he done run off again.

BROTHER: Last I saw him he was talkin to the Bishop Long-bottom in the big tent.

JOBE-BOB: Dear Lord, not the president of the whole Southern Bible Convention! I swear I'm gonna cream that boy's corn. Ya'll stay here and don't break nothin!

(JOE-BOB RUNS OFF AND FINDS JOSHUA WITH THE BISHOP)

JOE-BOB: (NERVOUSLY) Oh Bishop Long-bottom! I see you have done met my son Joshua.

LONGBOTOM: Why yes I have brother uh...

JOE-BOB: Joe-bob, Bishop and it's a real honor to meet such a man of your godly stature. I'm sure sorry if Joshua heres been botherin you sir. (TO JOSHUA) Joshua, how can you do this to your daddy, all this runnin off has got to stop.

LONGBOTOM: Oh he's no bother at all, in fact it's been quite the edifyin experience listening to young Joshua here. He certainly seems to know his Bible.

JOE-BOB: Oh yessir, if theres one thing Josh knows its his Bible. Knows it backwards and forwards, almost like he wrote it himself.

JOSHUA: But daddy, I sorta—

JOE-BOB: Hush up now Josh, your daddy's talkin to the Bishop.

LONGBOTOM: Course young minds need more than memorization. They need guidance from their elders, learned men, to understand the Word properly.

JOE-BOB: Men like you Bishop, a real ivory tower of wisdom, ain't that right Joshua.

JOSHUA: Well, no sir, not really I—

JOE-BOB: Now hush up Josh, the bishop here is payin you a compliment. Well we really ought to get going Bishop Long-bottom, long ride back to Hattiesburg. Josh, why don't you recite something nice from the Word for the Bishop here before we go.

JOSHUA: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

JOE-BOB: Something else Joshua!

JOSHUA: For many deceivers have gone out into the world—

JOE-BOB: Something from the Old Testament perhaps!

JOSHUA: Oh, OK. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field—

JOE-BOB: Well we got to go! Blessings to ya Bishop, see ya next year! (GRABS JOSHUA BY THE COLLAR AND PULLS HIM AWAY WHILE BISHOP STORMS OFF) Joshua, what do think your doin? How can you act like this in front of your daddy?

JOSHUA: Well, I figured I should be about my daddy's business first... Joe-bob.

(BLACK OUT)

ACT-I
Scene-4
Water to Shine

JOHN: A few years after the big tent reveal incident, Mary Lou's relatives was holding a big ol family reunion! Aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, first, second and third cousins from all around came to git together for a great grand okra strut!

(WHILE THE FOLLOWING LINES ARE BEING SAID, TWO ACTORS EYE EACH OTHER ACROSS THE ROOM AND EVENTUALLY END UP HOLDING HANDS AND, TOSSING ASIDE THEIR OKRA, GIVE A QUICK KISS. A BRIDAL HAT/VIEL IS PLACED ON THE GIRL AND A TOP HAT ON THE BOY. EVERYONE SITS AT A TABLE WITH MASON JARS AND ACTS THE SCENE DURING THE MONOLOGUE)

As so often happens at the re-unions, after all the eatin, drinkin, and dancin, the young-uns start lookin at more than just okra, if you know what I mean. And sure nuff, true loves flower sprouts up and biminy-bam cousin Sarahs now your sister and you got yourself a weddin!

Now this particular time it happened to be Mary-lou's third cousin once removed that was to be the blushin bride and accordin to social protocol that made her family responsible for providin the refreshments for the nuptials. Normally that wouldn't be a problem with all the libations flowin at a reunion, but it had been a particularly hot and dry spell which necessitated more liquid intake than usual. And pretty soon the wells of moonshine had gone empty.

Now this had all the potential of being an embarrassin social fo-pah! But Mary-lou had always remembered what the angel had said about Joshua and him bein God's son and all and she was always on the lookout to find a chance for young Joshua to show his stuff! And this seemed like a golden opportunity.

UNCLE WALTER: Matradee! More moonshine for my mason jar!

J.J.: Sorry Uncle Walter but we've plumb run out of shine.

UNCLE WALTER: Well run up to the still and make some more!

J.J.: But uncle, the revenuers done blowed it up last week. They took ever-bit-a shine we had and dumped it in the crick. That's why everyone downstreams been so happy.

UNCLE WALTER: Well frogs an fairies, I sure nuff knew somethin had gottin in the water. Marylou! Bless your heart girl, I know you ain't bout ta let this here matrimonial shin dig turn sour cause we ain't got no mash, am I right child?

MARY LOU: Give me just a second Uncle Walter, we'll have this taken care of in two shakes of a lambs tail. (TURNS AWAY AND YELLS LOUDLY) Joshua! Joshua, git yourself over here!

(JOSHUA SHOULD BE HANGING OUT WITH A FEW FRIENDS WHO ARE STRUGGLING WITH A HORSE SHOE IQ TEST. JUST BEFORE LEAVING JOSHUA TAKES IT, SOLVES IT, AND HANDS IT BACK).

JOSHUA: Yes ma'am?

MARY LOU: Now Joshua, it's our cousin gettin married so it's our job to make sure everything flows smoothly—and right now ain't nothin flowin at all. You know how every summer you made all that money at your lemonade stand cause you never ran out!

JOSHUA: But mamma, that ain't got nothin to do with me.

MARY LOU: Boy, it's got everything to do with you. Just you remember who puts butter on your biscuits, listen to your mamma.

(MARY LOU GIVES JOSHUA A KISS ON THE CHEEK THEN WALKS AWAY TOWARDS THE JIMMY AND JESSE)

You boys listen good, you do whatever my Joshua tells you to do or I'll knock you into the middle of next week looking both ways for Sunday!

(SHE GRABS THE HORSESHOE PUZZLE AWAY AND WALKS OFF)

JOSHUA: (LOOKS A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED AND THEN OVER TO HIS FRIENDS) Go and get some empty jugs and bring em over here. (THEY DO) Now, fill em up here. (POINTS TO A WATER PUMP)

JIMMY: Uh, Josh I know you ain't always been the sharpest tool in the shed, but even you should know that's a water pump, not a still.

JOSHUA: I know exactly what it is, now fill em up.

JESSEE: Alright, just cause your mamma said to follow your orders but this makes as much sense as putting lipstick on a pig.

JIMMY: Ain't that how your mamma caught your daddy's eye?

JESSEE: Why you no good—(THEY GRAB EACH OTHER TO FIGHT)

JOSHUA: Stop it now and fill up these jugs! (FRIENDS FILL UP JUGS) Now, take one over to Uncle Walter and pour him a drink.

JIMMY: You ain't serious! He's gonna jerk a knot in our tails if we give him water when he's expecting shine.

JOSHUA: Just do it.

(FRIENDS LOOK AT EACH OTHER, SHRUG AND WALK OVER TO UNCLE WALTER. THEY STOP HALFWAY THERE TO LOOK AND SMELL THE JUG)

JESSEE: It's still water.

(THEY BOTH LOOK BACK AT JOSHUA WHO STERNLY POINTS TO CONTINUE).

UNCLE WALTER: Will it's about durn time, my throats so dry I'm spittin cotton!

(FRIEND-1 POURS A DRINK THEN THEY BOTH TAKE A BIG STEP BACK AS UNCLE WALTER DRINKS)

UNCLE WALTER: (SUDDENLY STANDS UP) Ooooooooooooooweeeeeee! Where did this come from?

JIMMY: It weren't us Uncle Walter, it's all Joshua's doin!

JESSEE: Yeah, it was his idea, he made us do it!

UNCLE WALTER: (CROSSES OVER AND PUTS ARM AROUND JOSHUA)
Joshua boy, this here is finer than a frogs hair split four ways.
You been holdin out on us savin the good stuff till now.
Where'd you come by this fine shine?

JOSHUA: It's my daddy's brand, we call it the grog of human
kindness.

(FRIEND 1&2 RUN OVER TO THE WATER PUMP AND TRY DRINKING FROM IT)

BLACKOUT