“A Joyful Heart”
A Puppet Script
by
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What: Betsy and Susie give Willie a joyful heart transplant.
Themes: Puppets, Joy, Broken Spirit

Who:
Betsy
Susie
Willie
Ralphie (dog)

When: Present

Wear (Props):
Stethoscope
Gauze
Band-Aid
Super Glue
Cut-out paper heart with a smiley face

*You can use cardboard cutouts of all the props

Why: Proverbs 17:22

How: *See the end of this script

Time: Approximately 6 minutes
Scene opens with Susie and Betsy chatting with each other.

Betsy: (Giggling) Oh Susie, I'm so glad your mom let you spend the night. I had such a good time.

Susie: (Cheerful) Yeah, me too. You really are my best friend, and I never realized how funny you could be.

Betsy: (Giggling) Me either. I guess I just get a little silly when I don't get much sleep.

Susie: (Scolding in fun) Well, you might have gotten more sleep if you hadn't stayed up half the night talking about boys.

Betsy: Oh, I didn't just talk about boys.

Susie: Oh yeah? What else did you talk about?

Betsy: (Thinking) Hmmm. Food. I talked about food. Spaghetti… remember?


Both Susie and Betsy laugh.

Betsy: Hey, Susie. We've still got about an hour before your mom picks you up. Would you like to do something?

Susie: Sure. We could have a tea party, or maybe play house.

Betsy: (Shaking her head) Nah. (Excited) Hey! I know. Why don't we play hospital. I can be the nurse.

Susie: (Excited) Okay. And I'll be the doctor. And we can pretend that my doll is sick and we'll try to make her all well.

Betsy: (A little disappointed) Yeah, okay. But I wish we had a real patient.

Susie: (Nods in agreement) Yes. That would be fun.

Ralphie: (Suddenly Ralphie enters) Arf! Arf!

Betsy: (Excited) Hey, we can operate on Ralphie.

Ralphie: (Begins yelping as he turns and exits quickly as though he understood) Arf! Arf!
**Betsy:** (Watching Ralphie exit) And then again, maybe not. I sure wish we had a real patient.

**Willie:** (Willie knocks on the door shouting) Hello! Anybody home?

**S&B:** (Excited and shouting in unison) Willie!

**Susie:** (Shouts) Come on in Willie!

**Willie enters.**

**Betsy:** Willie. We're sure glad to see you.

**Willie:** (Confused) You are?

**Susie:** Yes. We really need you to help us with something.

**Betsy:** (Pleading) Yeah. Can ya? Huh? Please. Can ya?

**Willie:** Well, uh…I don’t know. What do you want me to do?

**Susie:** Well, Betsy and I are playing hospital, and we want you to be our patient.

**Betsy:** (Excited) Yeah. We want to operate on you.

**Willie:** (Panic) Uh… I think I hear my mom calling. Gotta go. (Willie begins to exit as Susie and Betsy try to convince him to stay).

**S&B:** (Pleading) Wait. Stop! Don’t go, Willie. Please. It’s only pretend. We’re not really going to operate.

**Willie:** (Concerned) Are you sure?

**Susie:** Yeah, we’re sure. We’re just playing.

**Willie:** (Hesitates) Well, I don’t know. I was planning on practicing my song for my church solo this week.

**Susie:** (Thinking) Hmmmm. Well, how about if I promise to let you sing your song to us just as soon as we finish operating on you.

**Willie:** (Amazed) You’ll let me sing to you? Nobody’s ever done that before.

**Betsy:** (Panic as she whispers loudly to Susie) Hey, do you know what you’re doing? If he sings to us, it’s going to be us who’ll need a doctor.
Susie: *(Whispering to Betsy)* Trust me. I know what I’m doing.

Willie: Okay, Doc, whenever you’re ready. What do you need me to do?

Susie: Well, first we’ll need to examine your eyes. *(Susie puts her face close to Willie’s face)* Let’s see. Hmmmmm. Yep. There are two of them, all right.

Willie: Of course there’s two of ’em. How many did you expect there to…

Susie: *(Interrupting)* Shhhhhhh. Don’t interrupt the doctor. Now, open your mouth and say Oooooooo.

Willie: You’re not supposed to say ‘Oooooooo,’ you’re supposed to say ‘Ahhhhhhhh’.

Susie: Ahhhhh?

Willie: Yes, Ahhhhh.

Susie: *(Understanding)* Ohhhhhhh.

Willie: Not ohhhhhhh…ahhhhhhh.

Susie: *(Looking at the audience)* I can tell this isn’t going to be easy. *(Looking at Willie)* Now, open wide. *(Susie practically sticks her face down Willie’s throat)* Oh my! This doesn’t look good. *(Looks at Willie and sounding concerned)* This doesn’t look good, at all.

Willie: *(A little concerned)* What? What doesn’t look good doc?

Susie: Oh, never mind. You just lay down right here while I get my stethoscope. I want to listen to your heart. *(Susie exits as Willie lays down out of view of the audience. Susie then returns wearing a stethoscope)* Okay, let’s listen to your heartbeat. *(Susie places the end of the stethoscope up to Willie’s chest)* Hmmmmm. *(Pause)* That’s strange. I don’t hear anything.

Willie: *(Panic)* What!

Susie: *(Perks up)* Oh, there it is. *(The audience will hear the faint sound of Willie’s heartbeat as puppeteer taps his/her finger on the side of the stage)*.

Willie: *(Relieved)* Whew!

Susie: Sounds a little weak. Yes, *(pause)* I’m afraid we’re going to have to operate. *(The sound of Willie’s heartbeat becomes loud and rapid)*.

Willie: *(Concerned)* Operate? Can I get a second opinion?
Susie: Sure. (Looking at Betsy) Nurse Betsy?
Betsy: Operate!
Susie: Okay. There’s your second opinion. Now, let’s proceed. (Susie begins to ask nurse Betsy for items she requires for the operation as Betsy hands them to her one by one in rapid succession) Scissors.
Betsy: Scissors. (Hands the scissors to Susie)
Willie: (Concerned) Scissors?
Susie: Band aid
Betsy: Band aid. (Hands a band aid to Susie).
Susie: Gauze.
Betsy: Gauze. (Hands a roll of gauze to Susie).
Susie: Super glue.
Betsy: Super glue. (Hands the glue to Susie).
Willie: Super glue?

Pause
Susie: Oh, no. This is worse than I expected.
Willie: (Very concerned) Huh?
Betsy: Do you think we need to put the patient to sleep, Doctor?
Susie: Perhaps we should. Nurse Betsy… (Susie resumes asking for items). Anesthesia.
Betsy: Anesthesia. (Betsy holds up a hammer as Willie pops back up in view of the audience).
Willie: (Panic) DON’T YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT USING THAT THING ON ME!!
Susie: (Reassuringly) Okay. Nurse Betsy…hold off on the anesthesia. We’ll have to proceed without it. Lay back down Willie.
Willie: (Drops back down out of view of the audience) Whew!
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Susie: Hmmmm. Now let's see. (Pause) Ah ha! (Excited) There's your problem.
Willie: (Concerned) What is it, doc?
Susie: Why it's…a broken spirit.
Willie: (Confused) Huh?
Susie: …and that dries up your bones.
Willie: (Confused) Dries up my bones?
Betsy: (Starts singing) Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones. Dem bones, dem bones…
Willie: (Shouting) Enough already! (Frightened) Can you help me doc?
Susie: Oh, sure I can. All you need is a heaping, healthy dose of (pause) …a joyful heart.
Willie: A joyful heart?

*Optional

Sing Proverbs 17:22 to a simple upbeat melody.

Susie: Okay nurse Betty… let's finish up here. Give me a joyful heart.
Betsy: (Upbeat) One joyful heart coming up. (Nurse Betsy hands Doctor Susie a large cutout paper heart with a happy face colored on it). Here.
Susie: (Pretending to be giving Willie a joyful heart) Okay. We'll just place this joyful heart right here….like this.
Willie: (Begins laughing) That tickles doc.
Susie: Shhhhh. Quiet. (Pause) There! That should take care of the problem.
Betsy: Wonderful job, Doctor Susie. You can operate on me anytime.
Willie: (Still unseen by the audience) Are ya done doc?
Susie: Yes, Willie. I'm all through operating on you.
Willie:  (Relieved) Whew! (Pause) Does this mean I can sing my song now?

Susie:  (Panic) Ah…no! Not quite yet! I need to do one more thing first. (Susie resumes operating) Okay, put this here. Wrap this around like that. Tie this here. There! All done. (Pause) Okay Willie. Now you can sing to your heart’s content.

*Willie* pops back up in full view happily singing and waving his arms as if he were conducting a choir. His mouth has been covered with gauze so he can barely be heard.

Betsy:  Willie…you never sounded so good.

*Betsy* and *Susie* both laugh.
Tips for performing with puppets:

Puppets are wonderful tools for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in a fun, lighthearted way. What great joy it brings to hear the laughter of children when your performance goes well. I would like to take just a moment to focus on a few areas that I believe are key in order for that to happen.

The first has to do with the stage (curtain) itself. PREPARE YOUR WORK AREA. How you feel behind the curtain can make a big difference in how your presentation is seen in front of it. You will want a large enough work area behind the curtain to allow three or four puppeteers to maneuver comfortably behind it. A short stool or a rolled up blanket can provide relief from the discomfort to your knees and back. Proper lighting is a must. This will help prevent you from losing your place while reading from the script. You may want to attach several copies of the script to the back of the curtain and have each puppeteer highlight their individual parts.

Next, because puppets are mostly expressionless, you will need to give them their spirit and vigor. BE HIGHLY EXPRESSIVE AND ANNIMATED. Wave those arms, raise your voice and include lots of wows, boings, zonks and thuds! Children love that.

The presentation is most important. It is so easy for a good skit to suddenly go bad due to poor delivery. Reading over a script two or three times before performing it can make a world of difference. COMMIT TO MEMORY AS MUCH OF THE SCRIPT AS POSSIBLE. This will free you up to spend more time concentrating on the handling of your puppet….adding slap-stick humor, etc. ALWAYS KNOW WHAT YOUR PUPPET IS DOING. Is he positioned too high up….or down too low. Is he looking at who he’s speaking to. Are his lips in sync with your words.

And finally…..don’t forget the ‘risk’ factor. By this, I mean to be bold. Take risks. Dare to be differently. So what if your puppet (or your audience) gets a little wet. Who cares if your puppet ends up with whipped cream (shaving cream) on its face or with a little Play-Doh in its hair? It all comes out in the wash. DO THE UNEXPECTED. Your children will love it. If they are still talking about your puppet skit days, or even weeks, after it’s over you’re probably doing something right. In short, HAVE FUN!

1. Prepare your work area
2. Be expressive
3. Commit to memory much of the script and know what your puppet is doing
4. Do the unexpected
5. Have fun.