

THREE WOMEN WHO KNEW
The Mortal Messiah



Heather Horrocks

Song: *There Is Hope* (if available)

Opening Remarks

Mary Magdalene

Song: *I'll Believe in Him*

The Adulteress

Song: *The Song of Redeeming Love*

Christ's Mother Mary

Song: *Mary's Lullaby* ("Tonight You Are Mine")

Closing Remarks

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Curl up with a Good Book by Heather Horrocks

Visit www.heatherhorrocks.com

Women Who Knew the Mortal Messiah is available at *Deseret Book*.

Performing the Program:

Women Who Knew The Mortal Messiah is the touching story of three New Testament women who looked into the Savior's eyes and were forever changed, women who knew--as long as there is a Savior, there is hope. *Women Who Knew The Mortal Messiah* is also a book distributed by Deseret Book. If you'd like to see how these stories are touching lives, read the 5-star reviews from readers on DeseretBook.com and Amazon.com.

COST: At this time, I offer my program to you free; however, you will need to purchase the sheet music (see below) and I ask that you use the enclosed flyer to announce the performance (also below). In the near future, I hope to offer the program complete with sheet music included, for a cost less than buying the music separately.

PURCHASING THE SHEET MUSIC FOR THE SONGS:

Call and/or visit your local music store and purchase:

* *I'll Believe in Him* (Kenneth Cope's *Greater Than Us All*) (about \$10.95).

* *Mary's Lullaby* ("Tonight You Are Mine"), SSA, Order #00693, (about \$1.50).

by Bertha A. Kleinman and Wanda West Palmer.

* *The Song of Redeeming Love* (from the musical *Charly*) (about \$2.50 each plus S&H).

Call Excel Distribution at 1-801-355-1776 to order two authorized copies of *The Song of Redeeming Love*, for both pianist and singer, at about \$2.50 each plus about \$2 S&H.

* *There Is Hope* - Check WomenWhoKnew.com for availability.

PARTICIPANTS: You will need **five women** to perform the program: **a pianist, a narrator and three readers/singers**. (Choose the singers carefully, as you will need women capable of singing three specific parts for *Mary's Lullaby* and as they will also need to read the stories first.)

The first reader/singer will read the story of Mary Magdalene and then sing the accompanying song, *I'll Believe in Him*.

The second reader/singer will read the story of The Adulteress and then sing the accompanying song, *Song of Redeeming Love*.

The third reader/singer will read the story of Christ's Mother, Mary, and then will be joined by the first two singers for the final song, *Mary's Lullaby* ("Tonight You Are Mine"). This can be extremely effective and touching when read and the main part sung by a talented young woman, as Mary was also very young.

ATTENDEES: Try to get as many women as possible to attend. Think about inviting the young women to join the women, or combine with another ward. I am enclosing an announcement ("DON'T MISS the program...") you may use; it includes info about the program and myself as the author and has a place for you to fill in date, time, and place.

HANDOUT: I do ask that you use my enclosed announcement before the program and that you print/copy the Mary's story to hand out after the program (not before as that is one of the stories performed in the program). Bookmarks with my favorite quote from the book ("As long as there is a Savior, there is hope") may already be available for free print-out at heather@heatherhorrocks.com.

REQUIREMENTS: * *Four chairs* (for narrator and three readers/singers).

* *A microphone* (if the room is large; otherwise, not needed).

* *A piano*.

* *Kleenex tissues*.

* *Costumes* (see below).

COSTUMES: The program is much more effective if you have costumes. If not, you can still create the illusion of the New Testament look simply. Have each reader/singer wear a skirt and blouse in neutral colors. Then use your imagination. Drape shawls around their shoulders, material atop the head and hanging down, bathrobes over their skirts. (Do this *before* the night of the performance to avoid stress on performance night.)

ROOM / SET-UP: The size of the room will depend on the size of the group. The program can be performed on a stage, but doesn't need to be. It may be performed in the chapel, also, but usually without costumes. Keep in mind that this is a simple program and works best set up that way. Place the four chairs (for the performers) in the front row behind the piano (usually the performers don't like to sit in front of the group). Set up the chairs for the audience in as cozy a manner as you can for the size of group and room (semi-circular rows work well). Make sure any set-up you use invites coziness and warmth.

FOOD SERVED: If you are serving refreshments, you could prepare Milk-and-Honey Cookies. Or you could serve simple New Testament foods, such as sliced round loaves of bakery bread with cheese and grape juice. (Chocolate-covered locusts, anyone?)

DECORATIONS: Keep any decorating simple; otherwise, it could detract from the power of the program.

PERMISSION? If you're performing this at church and your bishop feels he needs to contact mine (about half do), email me at BooksByHeather@q.com with your name and phone number (subject line: NEED YOUR BISHOP'S INFO) and I'll call you with that information.

BOOKS? If you would like to purchase copies of the book, please contact me at BooksByHeather@q.com to enquire about any available discounts.

Thanks for performing my program. I hope you enjoy it and feel the same spirit that I felt while writing the stories.

Heather Horrocks

WOMEN WHO KNEW The Mortal Messiah

INTRODUCTIONS

[Prepare a brief one-paragraph introduction for each participant and begin the program by introducing everyone involved. Emphasize the talents of the women participating. The introductions are best done by a member of the Presidency before the narrator begins.]

Heather Horrocks is not here with us today, but she wrote the program you will see today. Heather was born in Utah but, as the daughter of an oil man, grew up traversing the globe. She is grateful for the exposure she had to many cultures, especially for the opportunity she had to walk the streets of the Holy Land. Heather has served in branches and wards in many capacities through the years. She began playing piano for the branch held in her family's home in Kuwait and still plays in church today. This program (and the book that expanded from it) are the writings of her heart, and she is pleased to be able to share three of the stories with you today, with the help of some very talented women.

OTHER INTRODUCTIONS HERE (narrator, pianist, three readers/singers):

WOMEN WHO KNEW The Mortal Messiah

NARRATOR -- OPENING REMARKS

Welcome. My name is Heather Horrocks, and I am the author of the program you will see today, *Women Who Knew The Mortal Messiah*. Though I am not with you in person today, I want to thank the person reading this so that my message can be sent out to you. I want you to know that if you find anything of beauty in this program, it comes from our Heavenly Father. I also pray that Heavenly Father will bless the participants as they use the talents He has given them to present this program to you in a manner pleasing to Him, to you, and to them and that His Spirit will be with you today.

In 1998, going into a busy holiday season, I was asked to write a Christmas program for church. Despite the hectic season and the extra hours I'd just taken on at work, I felt impressed to say yes. And thus began the marvelous journey of these stories. Within the next few days, I began to feel what the program would be: readings of three women influenced by Christ, each followed by a song which completed the theme of that reading. This view of the program came so strongly I knew it wasn't mine alone.

The program touched many hearts and I had so many requests for copies that I felt impressed to write nine more stories to complete the book. Now, six years and a long journey of faith later, that book, *Women Who Knew The Mortal Messiah*, is on the bookshelves of Deseret Book and other bookstores, with *Women Who Knew the Great Jehovah*, stories of women from the Old Testament, to come out shortly.

I would like to take a moment to share with you what I learned while writing this book. I always knew, from the beginning, that the stories illustrated the healing power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. But it took time for me to realize they were also about faith. And the real lesson I learned is that faith is an action word.

Each of the stories involves a person being healed--physically, spiritually, or emotionally. As I wrote the stories in *Men Who Knew the Mortal Messiah*, it struck me that many of the stories in the New Testament are about people who acted on faith. They were not healed solely because they believed in Jesus, rather they showed their faith by *doing* something. Some actively sought out Jesus hoping to be healed, like the woman who followed Him into the crowd and touched the hem of His robe. Others had not sought out Jesus, but He gave them a task that required faith to perform, as when He rubbed clay onto the eyes of the blind man and told him to wash.

One reader told me she felt as though she was surrounded by these women as they confided their stories to her. I love that image, for I feel they whispered their stories to me and, through me, to others. And today, you will also hear the echoes of those whispers.

Now relax and take a deep breath as we prepare to travel back in time. For the next thirty minutes, we are no longer women of the 21st Century, surrounded by electronic gadgetry and running to and fro trying to fit our to-dos into a mere 24 hours. We are about to leave our stress-ridden, trial-filled, have-to-get-everyone-everywhere-and-then-feed-them-when-we-get-home lives behind.

Slow down, ladies, for we are now women living at the time of Jesus' earthly ministry, when the pace of life was more sedate. Along with this change of pace, time travel will involve material objects we no longer own and knowledge we no longer possess. History now stops here, in the Holy Land, many years after Isaiah made his prophecies.

We have no electric lights, but carry tiny oil lamps in our hands -- lamps so small that, as in the story of the ten virgins, there is no way we can share our oil with another. They are personal-sized lamps. We've never seen plastic; our world is made of wood and other natural materials, and a carpenter in a land of wood is a very special person. We have no electronic objects, so please turn off any that might beep during this performance.

It is peacefully quiet without the boom-boom-boom of the teenager's car next to us at the stop light, the incessant noise pollution of the television set and radio, the snarl of traffic. Instead, there is smell pollution. You know--that flock of sheep up on the hill.

Nearly every place we need to go is within walking distance from our homes, so we walk and are in good shape physically. If we're lucky, we ride a donkey. If we're wealthy, we ride in a fancy cart or upon the shoulders of household servants.

If we are not yet married, our fathers tell us what to do. Once we marry, our husbands take over that job. At mealtime, we serve the men first and eat after they are finished. We are, like children, in the background of our world. Men are the important ones, the ones with a voice, the ones who are seen.

No matter what century we find ourselves in, trials never cease. Though the pace of life has slowed, our lives are still filled with hardship and heartache. Children die young. Illnesses abound. And hopelessness fills our entire nation because we live under the thumb of the hated Romans and we see no end in sight. Our lives in this earlier century, just as in the one we left, are filled with hopelessness, with despair, with doubt.

We may have heard of a man named Jesus, but we have *never* heard of Him being resurrected nor of Him hanging on a cross. There is no talk of an illegal trial. We have, of course, heard of the Garden of Gethsemane, or the place of the olive press, but we have never heard of a night when a man who is more than a man bled drops of blood. We no longer know the end of Jesus' story and that makes all the difference.

We have heard rumors of a carpenter's son, called Jesus of Nazareth. He is a very controversial man. We've heard the angry voices of the Sadducees and the Pharisees, the Jewish rulers and priests, denouncing Him as a blasphemer. Even more intriguing, we've heard of the many miracles He has performed. Lepers cleansed. Blind who now see. Food that multiplies itself in His hands to feed five thousand. And, most incredible of all, even the dead are raised.

We know from scriptural prophecy that the time for the Messiah is at hand. And, as we live under despised Roman rule, we need Him to save us *now*. But we have no clue what He has come to save us from; even our hope in a Savior is misplaced. We no longer have the luxuries of modern women and we no longer know the end of the story. But, ah, look at what we have gained. We can walk at Jesus' side. Meet Him at the well. Have Him forgive our sins.

I would now like to re-introduce these three ladies to you. These are women of faith from the pages of the New Testament who look into the Savior's eyes and are forever changed, women who know--*as long as there is a Savior, there is hope!*

* Mary Magdalene, at the Garden Tomb, is just beginning to realize that Jesus' story doesn't end wrapped in a tomb and sealed behind a huge stone.

* The adulteress taken in the very act doesn't have a clue that there might be hope for such a one as she.

* Mary, at Christ's birth, ponders these things in her heart, not fully understanding.

Through the eyes of these women, you will walk the ancient streets at the Savior's side, and witness both their faith and His love and miracles--and realize that Jesus feels this same love for us no matter when we happen to live upon the earth.

I hope you will be touched by these women, their faith and their encounters with the Savior. These women did not have to imagine the life-altering presence of Jesus--they *knew!* I would like to thank these women for coming here to speak with you. And now I will let them share their stories. Ladies, it's your turn.

He Is Risen! Mary Magdalene

I walk slowly up the hill to the sepulchre where they laid my Lord after His death. Jesus was buried with such haste on the eve of the Sabbath. I go now to ensure that all of the preparations were handled properly. This is the least I can do for my Lord.

I want also to make sure no harm came to His body when the great earthquake--yet another sign of our Father's displeasure at the rejection of His Son--shook the earth. As I carefully trod the path, which has shifted since the earthquake, I struggle to hold back the tears which have overwhelmed me since Jesus suffered and died on the cross.

As I recall the tragic events surrounding his death, tears sting my eyes. I blink them back. These are not the memories I wish to remember. Instead, I will remember other, happier times. Jesus casting the seven devils from me. My following him and witnessing the many miracles: the blind, the lame, the lepers, all healed under his hands. Sitting at his feet as he unfolded the mysteries of eternity.

Sitting at his feet. My heart wrenches as I think of his torn and bleeding feet. And now He is gone. My healer. My teacher. My friend. *Why did Jesus not command the hosts of Heaven to save himself? He could have stopped everything? Why did he not?*

As I make my way up the stony path, I wonder what I am to do now. What will any of us do? There is no one like Jesus -- no one to take His place. No one with his compassion, his power, his wisdom. His entire presence.

As I reach the sepulchre, I discover that the large stone has been moved aside. I stand open-mouthed, staring at the two men sitting on top of the stone. Dread fills my heart and sets my hands to trembling. They have taken the body of my lord! Haven't they done enough? Must they defile him even more? What more can they do to him?

I turn and race down the trail, slowing only long enough to catch my breath and then run again. Who were those men? Have the Pharisees taken Jesus?

I wipe tears from my cheeks, but more flow to take their place. I cannot stop crying as I run. At last, I find Peter and John. I try to tell them what has happened, but I can barely speak through my sobs. "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." Upon hearing this, they race back with me. I follow them and stand outside the tomb, still crying, as they enter in. I wait what seems forever.

When they come out, I ask, "Is He there?", hoping for reassurance. But Peter shakes his head no. Awe fills John's eyes and he says, "He has risen -- just as He foretold!" But my faith is not so strong. I saw the two men earlier--and I know they have taken the body. The apostles try to reassure me, but they cannot. All I know is that Jesus is gone.

I cry even harder as I watch Peter and John walk back down the path toward home. Now I stand alone in front of the sepulchre. And I am afraid to enter in.

Oh, what have they done with His body? I must see for myself. I wipe my eyes again, take a deep breath, gulp back my fear, and go past the large stone. Stooping down, I look into the sepulchre. But the two men dressed in white, who were sitting on the stone before, have returned. I remain stooped in the entrance and wonder how Peter and John could not have seen them. They sit where the body of Jesus should have been -- one at the head and the other at the foot. But Jesus is not here. Desolation envelopes me.

One of the men asks me, "Woman, why weepest thou?"

"Because they have taken away my lord," I answer, and my voice cracks with heartache, "and I know not where they have laid him."

I turn back from the sepulchre, my grief and loneliness completely overwhelming me. I stumble a few steps and collapse to the ground. I have fought to contain my emotions as best I could, but now I can do so no longer. My shoulders shudder in full heavy sobs. What horrible desecrations will there be to Jesus' body? Oh, please, my God, help me, for I cannot bear to think of anything more happening to Him!

As I stumble to my feet, the gardener steps up to me, and asks the same question as the other man, "Woman, why weepest thou?" and then, "Whom seekest thou?"

In desperation, I beseech him. "Sir, if thou have bourned Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away."

"Mary," the man says softly.

That voice! I know that voice! That gentle, loving voice! Oh, how could I not have recognized my Lord? His gentle smile, His strength, His love. It must have been my blinding grief that kept me from seeing.

But now I see that His spirit looks as His body did before. And then immediately I realize I am wrong. This cannot be His spirit only, for the marks of His death are imprinted on His hands and feet. The sight of those horrible wounds causes my breath to catch in my throat and a knot of pain to fill my heart.

Yet I see the marks are now a symbol of his sacrifice so that all may know Him for who He is: *Jesus, the Christ, the unblemished Lamb of God*. I marvel at how weak my understanding was. *He* has taken up His body. *He* has risen. *He did* command the very powers of Heaven -- not to save Himself from death, but to *overcome* it.

"Rabboni," I cry out. "Master." The joy in my heart vibrates in my voice.

If He has risen, then everything He has ever said is true. Suddenly my vision of life expands to include all of eternity.

My Lord stands before me, resurrected as He said He would be. The peace I always remember when I am around Him wraps around my heart and warms my soul. I see that our friendship is older than time and it will continue forever. Mere death cannot end it.

I take a step toward Him, to rain my tears on His feet and worship Him, but he raises a hand to stop me.

My steps falter. "Master?" I ask, bewildered. But my tears stop and the feeling of peace continues to warm my heart.

“Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father,” Christ explains gently. “But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father.” His voice shines with reverence. “And to my God, and your God.”

I believe. And I will do as He has asked. I will go to the brethren and bear this new testimony I have gained.

My Lord is risen. And I believe.

SONG: *I'll Believe in Him*

Words and Music by Kenneth Cope (*Greater Than Us All*)

In The Very Act The Adulteress

The eldest Pharisee drags me along, gripping my arm so tightly I blink back tears. He sets such a pace that I have to half-run to keep up, while he and the lesser Pharisees stride along swiftly on their long legs. The sun is barely peeking above the Mount of Olives, but, before it has completely risen, I will die. I have seen a stoning before, and it is a horribly slow, painful death. I cannot control the trembling in my arms and legs and I stumble again.

The penalty for being with Hezekiah is death. I have always known this. Why did I never think I would have to pay the price? Did love blind me to reality? Did I really believe we would not be caught? I begin to pray, then catch myself. How can I pray to my Lord when I have broken his law? He does not want to hear from a sinner.

I cannot begin to describe the horrible tangle of feelings when these men burst in upon us--my terror, my shame, my fear of the stones. At least they let me dress. I thought that we would die together, but these men let Hezekiah go. When I cried out his name, one of these men struck my face and told me to be silent. And Hezekiah stole away like a thief in the early morning light, with my heart in his palm and my virtue tucked within his pocket.

He did not even look back at me, this man who murmured words of love to me and proclaimed his undying devotion. But if he truly loved me, would he have left me to die alone? No. I can delude myself no longer. I know he would not. His love is a lie. My whole life is nothing but a lie.

The Pharisee yanks my arm again and I try to keep from falling. Anger and hatred distort the faces of these men as they drag me toward the temple and talk about their plan as if I am not present. They admit to each other that they have broken the law by letting Hezekiah go, even as I have broken the law by wanting him when he was not mine to have. They have done it so they can set a trap for another. They plan to use my sin to see if this man knows the law. As I listen, I realize their anger and hatred is not for me, but for Jesus of Nazareth. They want to destroy him.

I have heard of him. Who has not? Stories abound -- of miracles, healings, even raising from the dead. Impossible stories. Glorious stories. Surely this worker of miracles will look upon me and instantly see the wretched sinner I have become. I cringe to think of the revulsion I will see in his eyes. Perhaps he will cast the first stone himself. Dear God in Heaven, have mercy on my wicked soul!

We have reached the temple. In my terror, I stop, and my heart pounds ever louder in my chest. If I am lucky, an early stone will strike my head and my death will be mercifully quick. The Pharisee squeezes my arm so tight that I cry out in pain. "Silence, sinner," he spits out, and jerks me forward again. Only his fingers biting cruelly into my arm keep me from falling. My accusers lead me through the large seated crowd toward the man teaching them. We stop in the midst of the crowd. I know these people wonder what I have done. Soon enough they will know. This teacher who speaks with such authority and does not pay heed to our group must be the worker of miracles. Jesus.

The senior Pharisee steps forward and calls out loudly, "Master." Jesus turns to look at him. "This woman was taken in adultery." The Pharisee's voice fills with disgust as he says the words which contain the trap. "In the very act."

People gasp. My face burns hot with humiliation, but I stare straight ahead. Once before I saw a quiet crowd such as this get caught up in the frenzy of a stoning, and I struggle to draw each breath as I wait for the first stone to sing its song of death, followed by cries of "Adulteress!" and more singing stones. My fear chokes me until I can barely breathe and frightened thoughts of death and eternal damnation race through my head. How many blows will it take until I can no longer stand? How long until my fear of death changes to longing for its release? How many stones before the first bone is broken?

Jesus raises his hand and the crowd quiets. My life is now reduced to just a few moments more. How long can any man stop a crowd from stoning an adulteress when the heat is upon them? When will he give the command to begin?

One of the scribes continues. "Now Moses in the law commandeth us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?"

I know what the Pharisees want this Jesus of Nazareth to say. They hope he says they should stone me for that will show he does not know that the law demands the man to be brought forth with the woman when caught in the act. But if he knows the law, then ... Hope flickers in my bosom, but for

only a second. There is no hope for a sinner like me. I will be stoned. I try to steel myself for it. I have not lived with much dignity. All I have left is to die with dignity.

But Jesus of Nazareth does not answer at all. Instead, he stoops to the ground and writes in the dirt as if he hasn't even heard. His hands are strong and he writes boldly, though I cannot read what he has written. He must be very learned. But my accusers persist, and finally he lifts himself up, brushes the dust from his fingers, and says quietly, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

He bends back down and writes on the ground again, completely ignoring us. I wait, gasping each breath in as I wait for the stones. But there is silence--the stones do not sing. Suddenly, the eldest Pharisee turns and, without speaking, walks from the temple grounds. Then one follows another, still without a word, convicted by their own consciences, until there remain only the crowd, and Jesus of Nazareth, and an adulteress caught in the very act.

I stand still, in shock almost, and my breath is still hard to catch. Only then does Jesus stand, look around and his eyes meet mine. Nothing I have heard about this man could have prepared me for what I find there. *Love*. Love shines from this man's eyes. He knows what I have done--the horrible sin I have committed--and still he loves me. And this love fills my soul. My dark burden suddenly lightens and something deep within me begins to heal. Where I had expected revulsion, instead I find such compassion that I feel -- for the first time in my wicked life -- as if I have come home.

"Woman," Jesus asks gently, "where are thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?"

"No man, Lord." My voice comes out as a bare trembling whisper and my eyes brim with unshed tears.

"Neither do I condemn thee," Jesus says and I know he speaks only the truth. "Go, and sin no more." For a moment longer his gaze locks with mine, and then he turns back to the crowd and speaks with authority. "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Will this crowd follow him? Or will they condemn me anew with each new day? I stand mesmerized, unable to move. What do I do now? Surely I am dreaming. Am I free to go? Or if I move, will the crowd spring forward to stone me still? After what seems like an eternity, an older woman

struggles to her feet, approaches me, and places her hand on my shoulder. "Come, sister, sit with us and learn the song of redeeming love," she says, and her voice is also filled with this love. Others nearby nod their approval.

Now I cannot hold back my tears. I am no longer alone, but among family. Jesus of Nazareth has performed a miracle today--a miracle for me. He has changed the heart of a self-loathing sinner into that of a devoted disciple. He has changed my life forever. I will go and sin no more.

SONG: *Song of Redeeming Love* (from musical *Charly*) Call Excel Distribution at 801-355-1776 to order a copy (\$2.50 for one plus about \$2 S&H).

The Miracle
Christ's Mother, Mary

Sweet Bartholomew (for that is the whimsical name I call our faithful old donkey) is as tired as I am. He has carried me for five days and never balked over the 90 mile trip. Sometimes, when my large body cramps and aches from sitting on top of a donkey for so long, I have asked Joseph to help me off and I walk alongside them.

But this afternoon I dare not, for my pains have begun. Please, Lord, let our journey be done this night for this babe comes soon. Please do not let this child be born alongside this dusty road.

The sun has beat down on me all day. Normally, Joseph would have stopped and let Bartholomew rest, but we can see Bethlehem from where we are and I can feel Joseph's urgency to get there. I haven't said anything to him, but he knows.

The donkey stumbles and I pull tight on his mane to keep from falling. The movement causes another pain to begin. Each has become more surprising in its strength. Please, Lord, help me this night. I am so scared.

The sun has dipped low in the sky, and the desert's evening chill makes me shiver and pull my mantle around my shoulders. We are now passing by the first homes in Bethlehem. My pains are quite regular now, and when they come I have to catch my breath. When I do, Joseph stops the donkey and rubs my back until I can look at him and smile again. Worry creases his brow, and he walks much faster now, almost dragging Bartholomew along. He knows we have to find a place soon.

But we have stopped at three inns already. My pains are so strong. There--another one. [pause] I know from helping my mother that this can last awhile, but I wonder how I can do it. How strong will the pains get? Am I close now? Or do I have hours yet to go? There is no one to tell me.

Oh, how I wish my mother were here with me! I know the prophecy says the Messiah child will be born in Bethlehem, but at what cost to me? I am so tired and so frightened. Please, Lord, help me through this night.

Joseph comes back from the doorway of yet another inn. He is smiling, but I can tell it is forced. He tells me there is no room, but then hastens to add that the innkeeper has a place for us in back. He pauses. In the stable.

A stable? I ask, disappointed. For God's son?

When I was still a child, I always planned to give birth in my own home, as my mother gave birth in hers, with other women around for help. But I have only Joseph.

Joseph walks the donkey back around to the back to the stable. There are animals there. I try to hide my sigh as Joseph helps me down, but he hears me. As he walks me under the shelter, the air is warm inside. But how? Joseph says it is the heat from the animals. But I don't care, as long as it is warm. The animals watch as we walk in, but do not move.

As another pain begins, much stronger than the rest, I begin to cry. How can I give birth in here? With no women to help? I love Joseph, but he is a man, and how much help will he be during childbirth? I am overcome with my fears.

But suddenly, I feel arms around me. I look around, but there is no one. Only Joseph and the animals. But a warmth fills my heart and I know I am not alone this night. Peace fills my soul. And a great love surrounds me. Tears well in my eyes, for my prayers have been answered.

Joseph looks up with startled eyes and I know he has felt it, too. He says it is the spirit of the child within me which he feels. And then he pauses, amazed. It is the child, he repeats with awe filling his voice. And I know he is right.

The next pain comes, but it is not as hard to bear as the others. I have angels for midwives, and I could ask for no better.

I thank you, Lord, for the privacy and shelter this stable provides so I do not have to give birth alongside the dusty road. I thank you for these animals so the babe will not be chilled as He comes into this world. I thank you for my strong and loving Joseph, so I am not alone this night. I thank you for entrusting me with this sweet child, for I feel His strong presence already. He is here, and He is beautiful. My baby is here.

SONG: *Mary's Lullaby ("Tonight You Are Mine")* Text Bertha A. Kleinman / Music Wanda West Palmer
All three performers sing this song, with the woman playing His Mother Mary singing the main part.

NARRATOR – CLOSING REMARKS

To the moving testimony these women have spoken and sung to our Savior, I will add this testimony:

“I know Jesus is the Christ. Every fiber of my being cries out that this is true. He atoned for the sins I have already committed and for the ones I will yet commit--and also for the sins and great hurts committed *against* me. In the Garden, He took upon Himself every hurt I would ever feel, every grief, every infirmity. And He did it so that as I go through this life, I can turn to Him---over and over and over again---and cast my burdens at His feet, and rejoice anew that I have a Savior. *We* have a Savior.

“I am so thankful for a Savior, a Redeemer, a Messiah. One who came to earth because our Heavenly Father loves us. One who suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane to atone for our sins. One who gave up His life on the cross, then rose above death and was resurrected that we might also rise. One full of unconditional love for me. And for you. Truly this is a miracle -- that any of us may forsake our sins and be forgiven, may be healed from hurts and wrongs done to us. It is a miracle that we can be healed, through the Atonement of our Lord and Savior, from the hurts done to us, that we can be made whole again. Christ has the power to do what He said He could.

“I have felt Christ’s love in my life and, as I learn more of His teachings and clumsily try to follow in His sure footsteps, I feel His gentle guiding hand and that of my Father in Heaven. Christ’s power to heal is as great today as if He still walked the earth, as though He placed His hands upon our brows and blessed us, as if He looked into our eyes and smiled to see us. We can be healed as surely as though we touched His hem in the crowd, as surely as though we washed His feet with our tears and were forgiven.

“Alleluia. For unto us is born this night a Savior. We need only reach up our hands, and He will guide us safely back home, for the light of the Son keeps all darkness at bay. *For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* [John 3:16]

“I do believe. And I declare this, my witness, to you in the sacred name of our Savior, Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. Amen.”

The End

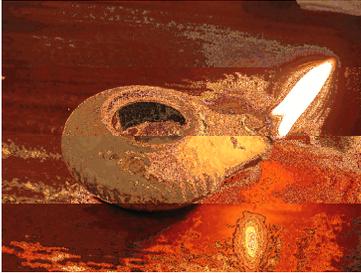
The next three pages contain the flyer that I request you use to announce the program, as well as the story of Christ's Mother Mary that you may print and use as a hand-out.

I hope what I have sent helps you present a beautiful program that will invite the spirit of our Heavenly Father into the meeting and testify of Him and His Son, our Savior.

Heather Horrocks

Announcing a touching musical program...

WOMEN WHO KNEW The Mortal Messiah



DATE/TIME:

PLACE:

Women Who Knew The Mortal Messiah is the story of a living Christ, a Savior who has the power to heal today as though He were still here on Earth. The story is told through the eyes of three New Testament women of faith who looked into the Savior's eyes and were forever changed. You will feel as though you are walking the ancient streets at the Savior's side, witnessing His love and His miracles. You will be touched by these women and their stories of faith and their encounters with the Savior. These women did not have to imagine the life-altering presence of Jesus, they knew--*as long as there is a Savior, there is hope!*

"I loved it. I was very touched." Anita Stansfield

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

HEATHER HORROCKS lived overseas for her first seventeen years, water skied through an oil slick in the Arabian Gulf, partied with a Kuwaiti princess, hid under the bed with her mother during a South American coup, flew in and out of the blacked-out Cairo airport mere moments before it was bombed during the Six Day War, and crossed the finish line first at Utah's Miller Motorsports Park. She's written inspirational books (*Women and Men Who Knew The Mortal Messiah*) a cantata (*Joseph and Emma in Harmony*), romantic comedies (*How To Stuff A Wild Zucchini* being the first, to be followed by the new *Chick Flick Clique* series), along with *The Bad Mothers Club* and *WhoDunHim Inn* mystery series. Visit www.heatherhorrocks.com for more info about the program and upcoming books.



As long as there is a Savior, there is hope!
And there is a Savior.

CHRIST'S MOTHER, MARY

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Excerpt from *Women Who Knew The Mortal Messiah*

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Sweet Bartholomew (for that is the whimsical name I call our faithful old donkey) is as tired as I am. He has carried me for five days and never balked over the 90 mile trip. Sometimes, when my large body cramps and aches from sitting on top of a donkey for so long, I have asked Joseph to help me off and I walk alongside them. But this afternoon I dare not, for my pains have begun. Please, Lord, let our journey be done this night for this babe comes soon. Please do not let this child be born alongside this dusty road.

The sun has beat down on me all day. Normally, Joseph would have stopped and let Bartholomew rest, but we can see Bethlehem from where we are and I can feel Joseph's urgency to get there. I haven't said anything to him, but he knows.

The donkey stumbles and I pull tight on his mane to keep from falling. The movement causes another pain to begin. Each has become more surprising in its strength. Please, Lord, help me this night. I am so frightened.

The sun has dipped low in the sky, and the desert's evening chill makes me shiver and pull my mantle around my shoulders. We are now passing by the first homes in Bethlehem. My pains are quite regular now, and when they come I have to catch my breath. When I do, Joseph stops the donkey and rubs my back until I can look at him and smile again. Worry creases his brow, and he walks much faster now, almost pulling Bartholomew along. He knows we have to find a place soon.

But we have stopped at three inns already. My pains are so strong. There--another one...I know from helping my mother that this can last awhile, but I wonder how I can do it. How strong will the pains get? Am I close now? Or do I have hours yet to go? There is no one to tell me.

Oh, how I wish my mother were here with me! I know the prophecy says the Messiah child will be born in Bethlehem, but at what cost to me? I am so tired and so frightened. Please, Lord, help me through this night.

Joseph comes back from the doorway of yet another inn. He is smiling, but I can tell it is forced. He tells me there is no room, but then hastens to add that the innkeeper has a place for us in back. He pauses. In the stable.

A stable? I ask, disappointed. For God's son?

When I was still a child, I always planned to give birth in my own home, as my mother gave birth in hers, with other women around for help. But I have only Joseph.

Joseph walks the donkey back around to the back to the stable. There are animals there. I try to hide my sigh as Joseph helps me down, but he hears me. As he walks me under the shelter, the air is warm inside. But how? Joseph says it is the heat from the animals. But I don't care, as long as it is warm. The animals watch as we walk in, but do not move.

As another pain begins, much stronger than the rest, I begin to cry. How can I give birth in here? With no women to help? I love Joseph, but he is a man, and how much help will he be during childbirth? I am overcome with my fears.

But suddenly, I feel arms around me. I look around, but there is no one. Only Joseph and the animals. But a warmth fills my heart and I know I am not alone this night. Peace fills my soul. And a great love surrounds me. Tears well in my eyes, for my prayers have been answered.

Joseph looks up with startled eyes and I know he has felt it, too. He says it is the spirit of the child within me which he feels. And then he pauses, amazed. It is the child, he repeats with awe filling his voice. And I know he is right.

The next pain comes, but it is not as hard to bear as the others. I have angels for midwives, and I could ask for no better. I thank you, Lord, for the privacy and shelter this stable provides so I do not have to give birth alongside the dusty road. I thank you for these animals so the babe will not be chilled as He comes into this world. I thank you for my strong and loving Joseph, so I am not alone this night. I thank you for entrusting me with this sweet child, for I feel His strong presence already.

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