

Celebrate the Lord of the Nations

Invitation Skit to the 41st Biennial LWML LA-MS District Convention
April 26-28, 2024 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Bossier City, LA

Characters: **Joy**, a bubbly upbeat personality, excitable as a puppy and always looks on the bright side or silver lining
 Mallory, a curious but cynical personality, wary of pitfalls, traps, and things that sound too good to be true, who plods through life with shoulders a bit slumped from worry

Additional Note: Joy needs to be able to sing at least part of the chorus to “Celebration” by Kool & the Gang or else play a recording of it (not too loud) when required & have Joy “sing along”; both characters will be required to “dance” a bit to the song

Props/Costumes:

JOY: should wear something purple and bright (preferably advertising LWML and/or sparkly) wearing at least 1 string (preferably 2-5) of Mardi Gras style beads or party necklaces

A small table

She should wear, hold, or have at hand the following additional items (you may want to have a small table available at her side):

- some party paraphernalia (streamers, hats, party horns/blowers, etc)
- 2024 convention brochures / flyers to use as “invitations”
- A Bible (preferably a small light weight edition)

MALLORY: should wear something duller in a neutral color (preferably black or gray, but brown or cream works)
she could be carrying something that seems to weigh her down like a satchel or backpack holding the following items:

- Stain stick, first aid kit, extra shoes, power cord/charger, emergency radio, etc.

Setting: 2 neighbors who have very different outlooks on and expectations of the world meet at a garden gate along the sidewalk;
Joy is singing and dancing with more exuberance than style near her garden gate as Mallory walks up on the sidewalk heading to unhappily run errands

Joy: *(singing to herself & dancing around hands in the air)*
“Celebrate good times, come on. ... Let’s Celebrate. It’s Alright. ... Cel-e-bra-tion! Let’s all celebrate and have a good time. ... Yahoo!”
(punches air, or jumps or kicks – really punctuate it)

Mallory: *(unhappily walking by to do errands stops abruptly at the “Yahoo!”)*
Woah! Are you shouting at me? What’s gotten into you Joy? Should I call your doctor?

Joy: *(laughs breathlessly)* Oh! Mallory, I am sooo happy to see you. I’m sorry if I startled you. I’m fine, better than fine, actually. I was just SO EXCITED, I couldn’t contain it in the house and had to come outside to let it all bubble out.

Mallory: *(eyes her carefully and says with a little skepticism)* Really? What has you so excited you are shouting on street corners?

Joy: Well, technically I was singing and dancing in my yard, not just shouting on street corners.

Mallory: *(a little snarkily, with maybe a head tilt and/or smirk)* Whatever.
(then more straight-faced) But seriously, what’s going on?

Joy: Okay, here it is ... I have my ticket to the hottest party of 2024 and that just put me in the celebrating mood.

Mallory: A party, huh? Is that why you look like ... *(dramatic pause)* that?
(waves hand indicating Joy’s overall party ready appearance)

Joy: Absolutely! There's only a few month's (*or weeks if doing skit closer to convention date*) left before it's time for the celebration and I wanted to exercise my Par-tay skills. (*blows a party horn, waves hands in air, or demonstrates partying in some way*)

Mallory: (*said as though humoring the crazy lady*) Right. (*exuding curiosity*) Sooo, what is this party you are so excited about, anyway?

Joy: (*in exuberant voice*) It's the 41st Biennial Convention of the Lutheran Women in Mission Louisiana Mississippi District, (*with building excitement*) and I have my ticket because I just completed my registration on the district website. (*claps hands*)

Mallory: (*with derision*) Phhtt... a convention? That does NOT sound anything like a party (*pauses*) or fun.

Joy: Then obviously you haven't been to one or you would know better.

Mallory: Well, no... I've never been part of the Lutheran Women in Mission. I know I see ya'll meeting together at the church each month, but it always looked like a pretty exclusive club.

Joy: (*in surprise*) We're not exclusive. In fact, all confirmed women of the Lutheran Church are technically members, whether their age is in the teens or the 100s. Not everyone decides to participate of course but all are welcome to join in our meetings and activities.

Mallory: Ok, maybe, but you still haven't said how a convention can be considered fun.

Joy: I would love to explain it, do you have time for a chat right now? You seemed to be heading somewhere.

Mallory: Just errands really, and I don't mind postponing that a bit. Go ahead and try to convince me of this great "fun". (*use air quotes*)

Joy: Well, let's start with some common ground. I know you always bring in can food when the church collects for the Food Bank, right.

Mallory: Of course, I love knowing that even as an ordinary person I can help those who aren't as blessed as my family. It makes me feel connected, if you know what I mean.

Joy: I certainly do, and that is the foundation of Lutheran Women in Mission and the convention. Every convention begins with a Gifts from the Heart ingathering benefitting a local organization that helps people who are struggling in life, and there is also a Servant Event, where we can make something or give blood to help others and lighten their burden. Then during the convention we get to select various Projects that will receive a Mission Grant out of the Mites we collect.

Mallory: Wait, Mites? You mean that loose change ya'll collect every month? How much can that actually do?

Joy: Yes, that's exactly what I am talking about, and you would be surprised. Remember it is not just our ladies collecting change, but ladies, and others, from all over our district, and even the country. Locally, it's tens of thousands, but nationally it adds up to millions of dollars. A lot can get done when you consider adding everyone's Mites together.

Mallory: (becoming slightly more animated) Wow. That is pretty cool. What else do you ladies do?

Joy: (with a grin) We spend a lot of time on the 4 F's! It's the Lutheran way.

Mallory: Huh? What's that? Please explain.

Joy: (holding up 1 finger) **First is Faith:**
We have Bible Studies to give us a foundation in the Word. We have Worship Services so we can thank God for all His blessings to us, praise His name, and pray for those less blessed. Mites in Action speakers share news of all the good past Mission Grants have done and how they have helped grow the Lord's Kingdom.

Mallory: Alright, I get that, but what's next?

Joy: (holding up 2 fingers) **Fellowship**: We have an opportunity to visit and share ideas and experiences with other Lutheran ladies from all over Louisiana & Mississippi. I tell you many a long term friendship has been born out of convention activities. In fact thanks to going to conventions, I have friends all over the state, and then some.

Mallory: Right, that's 2. And?

Joy: Well, then, of course, there is always the Food. (holding up 3 fingers)

Mallory: Wait, Food is one of the fundamental blocks of a convention?

Joy: Of course! In good Lutheran tradition, we build on all that friendship and fellowship by bonding over a shared meal. The food is pretty good at the convention hotel. But, obviously, the most important meal we share is the Lord's Supper during the opening Worship Services. It is always a moving experience.

Mallory: It IS really starting to sound pretty awesome. But didn't you say there were 4 F's?

Joy: Right you are. The last F is Fun, of course. Once you add together all that Faith, Fellowship, and Food, it is bound to lead to Fun. Especially when you throw in a couple of S's.

Mallory: You lost me again. (shaking her head confused)

Joy: Singing & Skits... No gathering of Lutheran Women is complete without a bunch of singing and the occasional skit. I know you like singing in the choir at church. (Mallory nods head) Well, ladies from all over the district volunteer to sing in the convention choir and their voices at the Worship Service are beautiful.

Mallory: (definitely more excited) Wow! I can see why you are getting excited. So, when and where is this shindig supposed to happen?

Joy: It is April 26-28, 2024 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Bossier City, Louisiana.

Mallory: Hmm... I've never been to that part of the state.

Joy: Yeah, I'm excited to have the opportunity to explore all the Shreveport-Bossier area has to offer. It's known as a vast source of history, culture, and natural wonders. There are art galleries, music events, great museums, nature parks, and even the American Rose Center. So much to do!

Mallory: You certainly make the convention seem like a great party weekend. But (wilts a bit and droops head), I bet not everyone is on the guest list. What do you have to do or bring to earn an invitation? Probably something more spectacular than I can manage. I have enough trouble just managing what I carry around with me every day.

Joy: Actually, I have a bunch of invitations right here. Everyone is invited. (Pauses to look closely at Mallory and her bag) But, now that you mention it, I did notice that you certainly seem weighed down today. Why don't you rest your bag on my table. What's in here anyway?

Mallory: Oh, just same things I carry along in case of emergencies, like (pulls items out as she goes through the list) an emergency radio, power cord, extra shoes, stain stick, first aid kit... you know, just the essentials. I'm always worried that I won't have what I need when I need it.

Joy: Woah! You are really carrying a lot of weight from worry. You don't have to have all this to join our party. Let's see if we can't lighten your load.

Mallory: If you say so, but I don't see how. (shakes her head)

Joy: First, let me tell you again that you don't have to do or bring anything to be invited to the party. Just like God's Gift of Grace the invitation is free. In fact, here is one just for you. It has the information you need to have about the convention so you can join us. All you have to do, is follow the instructions by registering, buying your food plan, and reserving a hotel room.

Mallory: (a little brighter) That seems doable.

Joy: And I can help you out with the hotel room because I could use a roommate, so we could share on that.

Mallory: (Looks up and grins) Really?!? You would share a room with me. That would be great, and even more affordable at that rate.

Joy: Exactly! So, let's put the invitation in your bag so you don't lose it. (puts convention flyer/brochure in the bag) Now, I am going to tell you the most essential thing to bring.

Mallory: (with skepticism) I knew there would be a catch... some crazy hat like the Grand Poobah... or some code book like a secret society, I bet.

Joy: (laughs) No, of course not, it's your Bible. I have one right here that would fit perfectly without being too heavy. (shows Mallory and puts in bag) Now you have the tools you need to join the party.

Mallory: (looks in bag) I don't know... seems kinda empty to me.

Joy: I promise; this is what you need. Now, of course you will *WANT* to bring other things to accessorize your weekend, after all, we all need the right party outfit. But these are the essentials.

Mallory: Wow, (stands up straight & takes a deep breath) I feel lighter.

Joy: I'm glad, and if you can spare a few more minutes, we can go inside and see about getting you registered for your very own ticket to the 41st Biennial Convention of the LWML Louisiana-Mississippi District.

Mallory: (grins big) I would love that. Thank you so much.

Joy: Actually, (leans back to look at Mallory) I forgot one more important item.

Mallory: Really, what?

Joy: (takes off 1-2 strings of beads and drapes around Mallory's neck) Girl, you need some party gear to go with your new party attitude.

Mallory: (looks down at her new necklace and then grins widely at Joy)

Joy: Now, let's go get you registered, and maybe we can chat about you joining us at church for next month's meeting.

(both ladies walk/dance off arm in arm humming "Celebration", when Mallory stops, throws her free arm in the air and yells...)

Mallory: YAHOO!!!