

Welcome!

By Steve Wren, pastor, Sparks Christian Church

(This is written for a man and women but the roles are not gender specific. Extras could be added to give the impression of a worship service.)

(Hopeful takes a seat in preparation for worship. This is Hopeful's first time at this particular church - perhaps his first time at any church. He picks a spot and looks around - maybe taking a moment to study the worship bulletin. Heritage enters and stands at the end of the pew looking at Hopeful.)

Hopeful: (Noticing Heritage) Good morning.

Heritage: (annoyed) May I help you?

Hopeful: (Not understanding) I'm sorry?

Heritage: Well I should think so.

Hopeful: I seem to be missing something.

Heritage: I know.

Hopeful: (Bewildered) What are we talking about?

Heritage: Your placement on this pew.

Hopeful: (Standing and embarrassed) I'm sorry, are these seats saved?

Heritage: This is the pew that my family and I sit in.

Hopeful: I truly am sorry. Of course I'll move. Unless...

Heritage: Unless what?

Hopeful: Well you see, I'm here alone. Do you think there would be room for me to sit with you and your family? I'd like to be part of a family. Can I stay?

Heritage: (Reluctantly) I suppose so.

(They both sit side by side. Hopeful looks around. Heritage looks forward waiting for worship to start.)

Hopeful: Where are they?

Heritage: (confused) Whom?

Hopeful: Your family.

Heritage: Oh goodness, they don't attend any more.

Hopeful: (Not understanding at all) I see.

Heritage: Oh, they *used* to come all the time. Why, they would never have *dreamed* of missing a Sunday. But now they're either too busy or uninterested or angry.

Hopeful: (meaning it) I'm sorry.

Heritage: Not your fault. Is this your first Sunday?

Hopeful: Yes, I was just passing by and thought I would visit. I have heard people talk about the "good news" for so long I thought I would come and find out what it's all about.

Heritage: Well, that explains it.

Hopeful: Explains what?

Heritage: You sitting in my pew. (point up) See that?

Hopeful: See what?

Heritage: That funny looking enclosed area. Up there.

Hopeful: Oh yes. It looks like a projection room.

Heritage: It's the choir loft.

Hopeful: But it's all closed up.

Heritage: (disgusted) They did that 10 years ago. The youth group is using it now for there meetings.

Hopeful: How nice.

Heritage: What is wrong with you? Can't you see they took a perfectly good choir loft and turned it into a youth room and added that awful projector.

Hopeful: I like that your church has an active youth group and that they are important to the congregation. And I like the pictures that are being projected.

Heritage: But it was a choir loft!

Hopeful: (looking around) Where does the choir sing from now?

Heritage: We haven't had a choir in 20 years!

Hopeful: I see.

Heritage: I guess we should be quite now. The new minister is going to talk.

Hopeful: (excited) You have a new pastor?

Heritage: Yes, she came in 83. (Pause) I preferred the interim.

Hopeful: Maybe after church we can talk more. I'd like to hear more about you and your church -

Heritage: (Panics as she looks around) Where is my hymnal? (Stands and shouts to any one who will listen) I can't find my hymnal!

Hopeful: Is this it?

Heritage: (snatches it) What are you doing with that? (thumbing through the pages making sure it's all in order) I have all my favorite hymns marked in it.

Hopeful: Why is your hymnal red? All the others appear to be blue.

Heritage: (disgusted) Those are the "new" books. I voted to keep the old one.

Hopeful: (Stands) I think I will make the pew available in case your family shows up. (not sarcastic) It was nice talking with you.

Heritage: (doesn't acknowledge his comment but immediately moves to where Hopeful had been sitting. This is her seat. She moves about getting comfortable - then smiles that all is the way it should be. And that is the END)