

Speaker 1: [00:15](#) [Music]

Katie Langston: [00:17](#) You're listening to an extra shot episode on the Project Zion podcast, a shorter episode that lets you get your project Zion fix in between our full length episodes. It might be shorter time wise, but hopefully not in content. So regardless of the temperature at which you prefer your caffeine, sit back and enjoy this extra shot.

Speaker 1: [00:55](#) [Music]

Linda Booth: [01:00](#) Merry Christmas Coffee Connect listeners. My name is Linda Booth and I'm your host. I served as Community of Christ apostle and director of communications for 22 years and I love a good story. So get your favorite brew. Sit close and listen to one of my favorite Christmas stories. I really don't remember if I read it or I heard it. I'm not even sure that my memory has the story precisely like I heard it or it was written. I don't even know if the stories about real people, but every Christmas I think of this story because it reminds me of a profound truth. The story takes place in a Midwestern town long ago when it was okay to have a Christmas pageant in the high school and when old timers gathered in that place, they frequently remember the night when the Christmas pageant became a legend.

Linda Booth: [02:08](#) Wallace Pearlene was the kind of boy that everybody liked. He was nine years old and in the first grade he towered above his classmates and was slow and movement and mind. You'd have thought his large size would have made him the first choice when the team captains were picking their teams for soccer or baseball, but he wasn't. The other children didn't make fun of him. They simply ignored him at times when plans were being made for the Christmas pageant, Wallace wanted to be a shepherd and carry his stuffed white lamb, but Mrs Lessing, the Christmas pageant director had another role for him. The innkeeper for after all, she reasoned Wallaces large size would be impressive as he sent Joseph and Mary away and he only had a few lines to memorize on night of the Christmas pageant, mothers and fathers, grandparents, aunts and uncles and towns, people gathered in the high school gym for the traditional reenactment of the first Christmas story, backstage was filled with little angels, little shepherds and wiseman and of course Mary and Joseph.

Linda Booth: [03:22](#) Mrs [inaudible] said later that she had to keep an eye on Wallace for fear that he would wander onto the stage before his time. Finally, the audience was quiet as Joseph and Mary made their way across the high school stage and stood before the end

store. Wallace should stiffly behind it. Joseph knocked on the door and Wallace with an exaggerated motion opened the door. What do you want? Yeah, ask Joseph said, sir, we're looking for a room to rent for the night. Wallace responded, there's no room at the end, but please, sir Joseph pleaded my wife. Mary is going to have a baby and we need a place to stay. The night. There was a long pause and the audience seemed to get nervous and finally Mrs Lessing whispered to Wallace, no, because no be gone. Wallace gruffly said, Joseph and Mary turned and slowly walked across the stage.

Linda Booth: [04:34](#)

Wallace stood in the doorway watching his mouth open, a small tear escaping from his eyes, and then this Christmas pageant changed. Mary! Joseph! Come back, shouted Wallace, you can have my room. Some people in the audience that night thought that the Christmas pageant had been ruined, but many more thought it was the best Christmas pageant ever. As you listen to the story, do you remember why it's one of my favorites and why I think about it every Christmas. It's not just that it's a sweet story, which it is, but I often think of Wallace when I'm decorating the house and bringing seven small Christmas trees upstairs when I'm addressing nearly a hundred Christmas cards when I'm shopping for the perfect gifts for grandsons and wrapping them. When I'm cleaning the house, cooking and baking for the family's arrival on Christmas morning, I'm reminded over and over again to make room during this busy sacred season for Jesus.

Linda Booth: [05:53](#)

If you're like me, it's very easy to let all the of Christmas become the center of Christmas, the reason for Christmas. But when Wallace Pearlene went off script and spoke from his heart, he got the story right. Make room for the Christ child this holiday season and every day of your life and always remember, give him room. As I was thinking of this story to share with you during this beautiful sacred season, I was reminded of a poem that my dear friend Danny Belrose wrote, and it's also published in a Herald House book called wave offerings. The name of the poem is making room for Jesus. A weary hand knocks on the door of an end and there is no room, no room, God of love for love to be born. Oh, how we need your gift of love, love of neighbor, love of enemy, love of self, healthy love, holistic love, healing love that melts the ice of alienation that warms each heart with the wonder of acceptance for every child that love has birthed.

Linda Booth: [07:17](#)

Surely there is room for love, love that seeks and saves love without strings. Love for Love's own sake. Uncaused uncalculated on requiring a weary hand, pounds on the door of

an end and there is no room, no room God of peace. For peace to be born. Oh hell we need your gift of peace. Peace, unwilling to sleep in the shadows, unwilling to live and die in speeches made and slogan said surely there is room for peace, peace beyond politics, power and position. Peace that wages, war against conflict, verence and in quality. In a world where peace for me and mine alone is not peace at all. Where are you hand hammers on the door of an end and there is no room, no room God of hope for hope to be born. Oh, how we need your gift of hope. Hope that finds a Holy in a blade of grass, a bird song and infant's cry.

- Linda Booth: [08:30](#) Hope that makes the future now that looks beyond what is and yearns for what can be. Surely there is room for hope, hope sprinkling its promise on the dark night of the soul. Hope for the harmony. Hope for one more. Try. Hope that justice will have its day. A weary hand wraps on the door of an end and there is no room, Derek God for your child to be born. No room in a world we're hungry, cries and innocence. Die where war is dressed in Angel's wings and rhetoric is King, but the miracle of Christmas is the church. Child comes anyway and love, hope and peace. Find room in every heart made larger by the joy of his coming. May the joy of this season spill out in word deed and song joy to the world, joy for the world. The Lord is come. Amen!
- Speaker 1: [09:55](#) [Music]
- Josh Mangelson: [09:57](#) Thanks for listening to Project Zion Podcast. Subscribe to our podcast on Apple podcast, Stitcher, or whatever podcast streaming service you use. And while you are there, give us a five star rating Project Zion Podcast is sponsored by Latter-day Seeker Ministries of Community of Christ. The views and opinions expressed in this episode are of those speaking and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Latter-day Seeker Ministries or Community of Christ. The music has been graciously provided by Dave Heinze.
- Speaker 1: [10:53](#) [inaudible].