



SAVING SALEM, M.I.

"LABOR DAY CONTEST"

Written by

David Speight

This episode is based on true events.

2416 Shelby Circle
Kissimmee, FL 34743
407.250.8700 cell
davidwriter@savingsalem.com
<http://www.savingsalem.com/ShowBible.pdf>
Copyright © 2020, 2024 by David Speight

SAVING SALEM MI
"LABOR DAY CONTEST"

TEASER

EXT. SALEM VILLAGE - DAY (PRESENT DAY: SEPTEMBER 1971)

Boxcars RUMBLE across train tracks. The last one clears, like a curtain parting. Quaint village, 1971, sits under clouds that want to burst, but they're moving too fast.

The DRAGON LAMPPOST roars. A sign: SALEM POPULATION 310.

DAVID (9) mischievous, but well-meaning, runs down the sidewalk ahead of--

Thin-athletic build, briefcase in hand, EVAN SMITH (40) straightens his tie, same way he's done since 1952.

EXT. FIRE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Spotting WARREN RODGERS (45), military type guy, washing a fire truck, Evan detours--

EVAN
Hey, Warren--

WARREN
Howdy, Evan... Was supposed to tell ya about the para--

Placing a hand on the side of the fire truck--

DAVID
Wow! It sure is sparkling clean, Mr. Rodgers.

WARREN
(half ignoring David)
Parade's coming up and there is a matter of concern--

He starts to unfold a NOTICE when Evan spots--

EVAN
Might want to set that crate up on the counter. Wouldn't want a critter climbing out of a piece of Kate's apple cake. Expecting a big crowd for the pot luck this year.

A TRUCK'S SCREAMING BRAKES, across the street, arouse Evan's and David's attention.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

A county truck pauses as TWO MEN unload a road barrier.

BARBRA DONAVAN (38), with a highfalutin vocabulary that matches her mannerism, runs out, scolding them, returns.

David tears away, presses his nose against the store window. Beyond the reflection of his Detroit Tigers t-shirt--

DAVID
Neato! A genuine Brooks Robinson
Fielder's Glove.

The Rawlings mitt sells for \$8.30.

Evan grabs a newspaper.

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

TEA LADIES seated around a table gossip. BETSY BREWER (60), church secretary, assures the others--

BETSY
Someone's got to tell him about...

The BELL on the door JINGLES. Evan steps in. David follows.

CHATTER drops. Betsy turns her chair away, almost hiding.

David raises two fingers, the gesture, his "signature wave." It's not a "peace sign," which some adults might object to, yet indicative of his way of sticking a toe over the line.

DAVID
Hi, Mary Ann...

A smart high school grad, MARY ANN BAKER (17), long bangs hiding her face and intentions, abruptly looks away pretending not to notice.

Stepping up to the counter--

DAVID
I... saw the nifty glove in the
window. How many dimes would I need
to buy that, Mrs. Donavan?

BARBRA

My special rate for the item is eight dollars and thirty cents, David. You'd need eighty-three.

Attempting to count with his fingers--

DAVID

Eighty-three? That's a whole bunch of dimes.

BARBRA

Perchance you might think about counting dollar bills instead?

Barbra rings up Evan's paper. Opening his briefcase, he proudly pulls out a handmade poster.

EVAN

Was hoping you wouldn't mind placing this in the window. Wanted to extend an invitation to folk-- for the church's Labor Day events.

Barbra examines it closely like a veterinarian about to make a fatal prognosis.

BARBRA

As you recall, our village does have their own celebration--

EVAN

Yes, the church has a float in the parade. But our event is on Sunday, the day before--

BARBRA

Pending there is no conflict...

Evan and David exit.

Mary Ann shifts toward Barbra who mulls over the poster.

BETSY

You didn't tell him about the parade...

Annoyed, Barbra folds Evan's poster and tucks it under a stack of paper bags.

MARY ANN

Hope I'm there when he finds out you moved the parade up a day, and it's on Sunday too.

Betsy shakes her head at Mary Ann's glee.

BARBRA

The entirety of this village
shouldn't revolve around THAT
church... Salem needs saving from
that past.

With a devious sparkle in her eye, Barbra turns, picks up a
knife and quarters an apple.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

THE HARPER BOYS on a hay wagon, SHOUT greetings, passing Evan and David.

DAVID
Mister Gold's house.

ASHTON HARPER (17), dirty blond hair, jumps off the wagon.

EXT. GOLD HOME - CONTINUOUS

Small Pasadena style home, enclosed porch.

Evan catches up to David who bangs on the door.

ALEX GOLD (42), nerd-like, his beard squished by a box, presents an ice cream maker.

ALEX
It's new. Electric crank.

EVAN
Some hand-turned ones might be nice to have too... Just in case the power goes out.

Ashton pushes his way through the door--

ALEX
Ashton! Kelly's out back.

ASHTON
Cool beans!

Changing direction, Ashton knocks the box from Alex's hand.

ALEX
I'll bring it to the church later.

EXT. GOLD HOME, SIDE YARD - DAY

Rocking in a swing, Kelly turns, stands up.

ASHTON
Sit... sit back down. Just stopping by to give the low-down--

KELLY

Ashton, it's Labor Day Weekend. And so much to get ready for. I do hope the weather cooperates. Why there's the parade and the--

ASHTON

So many events. More than you should take on... in your condition. Kelly, don't you think it's better to *SHARE*?

KELLY

Share? Share what?

ASHTON

My time. I'll go to the church event with you and then for the parade, I'll go--

KELLY

Ashton Harper! You are going to be right by my side the whole weekend. For every event. Or I'll... I'll...

ASHTON

You'll what, Kelly?

KELLY

I'll... I'll tell the whole town you got me pregnant and that you you're trying to abandon your duty.

Ashton folds his arms, leans his shoulder into the tree.

EXT. WOODWARD HOME - DAY

Evan stops puts his shoulder into a slightly bent post, straightening it firm. David peeks over the fence.

DAVID

Will you be going to church next Sunday, Mr. Woodward? My dad says everyone's got to be there.

INSIDE THE OPENED GARAGE: MR. WOODWARD (50s) polishes a classic Buick Riviera.

MR. WOODWARD

Next Sunday?... Isn't there a game then, David? Go Tigers!

EVAN

Impressive automobile, A fifty...

MR. WOODWARD
Fifty-two.

EXT. PARSONAGE - CONTINUOUS

CLOUDS and SUN battle coverage of the sky over Evan and David entering the updated late-1800s farm house.

INT. PARSONAGE, DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

LORETTA (40), with a beehive hairdo typical of the era, irons shirts when David comes bounding in, excited.

DAVID
The store! They have a for-real
Brooks Robinson baseball glove.

LORETTA
What about the glove you borrowed
from the gym at the church?

Showing the old glove in hand--

DAVID
This? It's worn out and yucky. Now
that I'm nine and old enough for
Little League, I'll be needing a
real glove.

LORETTA
Christmas is just a few months--

DAVID
All I gotta dig up is eighty-three
dimes. Mrs. Donavan suggested that
you pay my allowance in dollars...
That way I can save up faster.

LORETTA
It's an awful lot. You'd have to
save up for that.

Setting his briefcase and paper on the table--

EVAN
Loretta, when I was at Wheaton
College, Dr. Ivans once told me
"The Lord gives us small test
before moving us onto bigger
things." You think we might finally
be able to reach most of Salem with
all the holiday events planned?

Loretta's turns the paper over, notices--

LORETTA

I love your visionary outlook... I suspect that small test just got a notch bigger.

Evan takes a look at the headline: "SALEM LABOR DAY PARADE -- NEW DAY -- SUNDAY 2:00 PM."

EVAN

On Sunday?... Barbra's gotta be behind this.

LORETTA

Could move the ice cream thing--

EVAN

And compromise what Sunday is all about in our village?

(frustration builds)

Half the town have never set foot in our doorway. Even Mr. Woodward who lives--

LORETTA

Evan, how many neighbors do you think you'll win over by being bullheaded?

EVAN

(standing ground)

If she's planning on opening for business on--

Loretta nods toward the children in the next room.

INT. PARSONAGE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

David's sister, SUSAN (7), with pigtails as cute as "Cindy Brady," fluffs a pillow on the floor where she watches an episode of "The Banana Splits Adventure Hour."

David hangs his head, joining his sister by the TV.

DAVID

Susan, how many dimes do you have?

SUSAN

Get a job D-mutt. Or maybe try selling something.

COMMERCIAL on the TV set. Like a car salesman--

TV ANNOUNCER

That's right kids. Jerry needs you to raise money, for muscular dystrophy. Use our kit to put on a carnival and then send the money back in to help the children get medical supplies they need.

You can see the dollar signs in David's eyes. He throws the old baseball glove down.

DAVID

A carnival...

TV ANNOUNCER

For a FREE FUNDRAISING CARNIVAL KIT, complete with game guide, tickets and signs... Call now. And kids, be sure you have your parents' permission.

David turns to Susan.

DAVID

That's it! We'll get the kit and kick out a groovy carnival . The whole neighborhood will buy tickets and I can use the money for my baseball glove.

SUSAN

But the TV said you have to send the money back.

DAVID

How will they know?

David calls toward the Dining room.

DAVID

Mom, can I put on a carnival?

LORETTA

A carnival?

DAVID

After the parade. A few kids come over, buy a ticket to play games, and "ding," I save enough for my baseball mitt.

LORETTA

Only people we know. And who's
going to tackle cleaning up?

David runs off excited.

EVAN

(speculating)

That might workout well, get people
back this way after the parade, for
my ice cream event.

INT. FIRE STATION - DAY

It's a 50s style, concrete block, two engine garage. Plain
white, nothing creative. Warren and Bart recoil a hose on one
of the engines. Arriving, Evan steps around.

WARREN

Afraid this hose gonna need
replacin' soon. Couple more fires
and she'll be split open wider than
a watermelon.

EVAN

Hi, fellows. How are things going
around town this week?

Evan almost knocks over a couple boxes, papers poking out,
begging to be rescued. He stops to examine.

BART

Ladies found those stashed in a
kitchen cupboard over in the town
hall. Bunch of old photos. Probably
decades old. Was going to circle
round to the dump in the morning.

EVAN

Why not hold onto them for a few
days? Might be a history buff
around who--

BART

(scoffs)

In this town?

Securing the end of the reeled-in hose--

WARREN

Maybe a teacher down at the school
would take 'em off our hands.

EVAN

Noticed that the Labor Day parade's been moved up a day...

Bart looks down-- it's obvious no one wanted to be the one to tell Evan.

WARREN

Yeah. County's gonna repave Six Mile Road Tuesday. They're puttin' the barriers out Monday. Barbra was all cranked up 'bout them bein' in the way of her parade.

EVAN

Don't you think this might keep the neighbors we're reaching out to... from coming to the events WE have planned on Sunday?

BART

If the Viet Cong invaded, the "regulars" in this town would still show up for church, Reverend.

Fetching a folded NOTICE, handing it to Evan--

WARREN

Appears Barbra is trying to sneak a liquor license for her store. Found this in her dumpster while checking around after that shooting a couple weeks ago.

BART

Aren't those supposed to be posted in the store window?

EVAN

Any store selling alcohol or open on a Sunday won't be getting my pennies. I expect you'll be putting your foot down with your wives, too. Right?

Feeling the guilt they quickly agree.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

At the TEA TABLE, KATE RODGERS (44), a housewife who takes care of three boys, packs apples and other ingredients into a bag while Betsy and Mary Ann whisper to her.

Barbra arranges scones on a platter. When she glances their way, they look down. She knows they're talking about her.

Finally, marching over to the table with a pot--

BARBRA

Your teas appear to be in need of replenishment, ladies.

Kate folds her arms with a frown.

KATE

Oh, no thank you. We're just finishing up...

MARY ANN

(getting up)
About to jam...

BARBRA

Sit, Mary Ann. Kate! Enough drivels.
This is my best brew-- It's on me.

Barbra quickly refills their cups. Then she reaches back to the counter for a plate of--

BARBRA

May I present... caramel-apple scones. Have you ever tasted a scone more delicate than these?

MARY ANN

I had a scone once... in a shop in Ann Arbor.

Reaching for one--

KATE

Should we tell her, Betsy?

Pulling up a chair for payment--

BARBRA

Enlighten me, Kate.

KATE

Reverend Smith ain't happy about the parade being on a church day.

BETSY

And he's spread the word that a good Christian would never shop at a store that's open on Sunday.

MARY ANN
Sounds like he's boycotting you.

Standing up, pretending to be offended--

BARBRA
Why I am beside myself. It's the county that rescheduled the road work... The holiday is my largest intake of revenue for the summer.

The Ladies nod, feigning shock.

BARBRA
Why "Labor Day" itself implies work. Not church.

KATE
Not like it's Easter Sunday.

MARY ANN
'Cause you're a woman. He loathes a women in the work place--
(cutting Betsy off)
Unless you're a secretary.

Betsy throws a condescending look.

BARBRA
This preacher is no different than the last. Using religion to control everyone, put us women -- put ALL women down.

MARY ANN
Exactly why we need these new laws.

BETSY
(almost shocked)
You're not part of that Women's Liberation thing?

MARY ANN
I think the ERA is long overdue.

KATE
Why if I hinted that I supported such a thing, Warren would have us in a counselling session with the preacher before the next train whistle blows.

BARBRA
Precisely why I'm not backing down.

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Barbra Donavan positions a large A-frame sign in front of the store. She steps back to examine it.

BELL JINGLES as Reverend Smith exits, stack of letters in hand. TRIPPING over the newly placed sign, Evan reclaims his footing. He repositions an easel that reads--

"LABOR DAY BRUNCH: SUNDAY 10:00 A.M."

EVAN

On a Sunday?

BARBRA

Not everyone in this town attends your church... or boycotts...

EVAN

How many wish for the ways of the city to overtake our village? A neighbor tells me that you applied for a permit to sell alcohol?

BARBRA

Are you really dismayed by the city or terrified of progress?

EVAN

You'd prefer a town overrun by hippies, drunk teenagers and protestors looting?

BARBRA

(offended)

Reverend, people have to eat. Not like we're having a big Hoop-Dee-Doo for the hoodlums.

Evan marches away with a scowl.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, OFFICE - DAY

In one of TWO CONNECTING OFFICES, Betsy pecks at keys, typing a letter on a manual typewriter when Evan bursts in.

Taking his jacket off and hanging it up, he moves into the--

PASTOR'S STUDY

Scribbles on a small chalkboard read, "310 - 145 = 165." Evan plops down at his desk and swivels around.

Bookshelves paint a library from ceiling to floor. A thin volume, almost hidden, grabs his attention. He pulls out the "Billy Book" a copy of "20 YEARS UNDER GOD" and places the story about Billy Graham on his desk.

EVAN

(talking to book)

If I can't reach a small town of
310 people, Billy-- How will I ever
move onto greater things like you?

Settling in, he calls toward the adjoining room--

EVAN

This was supposed to be our year to
bring 'em all in, Betsy.

BETSY (O.S.)

You can't force everyone to come to
church, ya know.

EVAN

(chuckle)

Why not?

Getting up and moving into--

BETSY'S OFFICE

EVAN

I was hoping we'd hit at least 200.
With the parade moved, we'll be
lucky to see half that. Did you
know the store's gonna be open on
Sunday? Can you believe that?

Betsy pulls the completed letter out of the typewriter and
slides it toward him with a pen.

BETSY

Heaven's galore, Reverend, no need
to get all ruffled up. I'm sure
things 'll be back to normal again
next Labor Day.

Examining the letter, he signs it with a flair of bitterness.

EVAN

She's even opening earlier than usual for a brunch... directly competing with our Sunday service.

BETSY

People will still come to church.

EVAN

This is Salem, not Livonia. It's things like this that erode away-- She's put a big sign out on the sidewalk advertising it...

Betsy winds a new sheet of paper into the typewriter, trying to keep uninvolved.

EVAN

(devious plotting)

Advertising! What a swell idea. What time does the paper close?

BETSY

Fanny's there until three-- Perhaps you should just lay low on this.

EVAN

We'll put up a sign too. A tad bigger than hers.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - DAY

A ladder RAISES UP over the front door. It stretches toward the steeple above. In combat mode, Evan marches down the stairs to greet--

Bart Baker and son, CALVIN BAKER (18) long hair. They step up carrying tools.

EVAN

Bart. Calvin. Thank you for stopping over to help out on such short notice.

BART

(with a salute)

Proud to be your first line of defense. Right, Calvin?

CALVIN

Yeah, Mr...

(Bart nudges him)

Yes, sir, Pastor Smith.

Calvin cocks his head, reading the large sign laid out across the lawn. A corner flips in the breeze:

"CHURCH 11 AM, POT LUCK 1 PM, HOMEMADE ICE CREAM 3 PM."

CALVIN

Isn't that cutting it a bit close?

EVAN

Forgot, parade's at two. Better revise that last time.

BART

I'd make it Oh-seventeen hundred.
Just to be safe.

Evan grimaces, takes a brush to the sign, changing the three to a five. It's not perfect.

EVAN

I'll touch it up, later, after the paint dries.

They thread rope through holes, preparing to hang the banner.

BART

You can always depend on this soldier, Evan. We'll be here Sunday morning.

EVAN

Barbra's brunch may draw in the backsliders and drunks... But I think she'll find, most of us are decent Christians here.

Evan climbs the ladder as Bart hands a corner of the sign.

Tying off the upper corner of the banner, Evan looks out over the town, toward the store. The banner dwarfs the distant sidewalk easel.

EVAN

Do you think the sign's too big?

BART

Nah... it otta encourage the women-folk as to where they need be puttin' their loyalty.

ACROSS THE STREET: Polishing his car, Mr. Woodward pops up--

MR. WOODWARD

Awfully big sign there, Reverend...

Disappointed, Calvin tugs at Bart's shirt.

CALVIN

Dad, you said I could hang out at the parade.

BART

Well, after the pot luck, perhaps. That would be appropriate, you think, Reverend?

Stepping off the ladder--

EVAN

We're not asking people to boycott the parade.

CALVIN

Groovy.

EVAN

We just don't want to support commercialism on Sunday.

CALVIN

Cool. Hope you won't mind me cutting out from the ice cream thing a tadpole early... When it's time for the pie eating contest?

Bart drops his jaw, unsure what to say.

INT. PARSONAGE, KITCHEN - DAY

A large envelope sits on the table.

Fascinated eyes, level with the table, stare. Finally--

DAVID

It's here!

Susan wanders into the kitchen, setting an empty glass on the table, reaching for the package.

DAVID

It's addressed to me!

Snatching the envelope, David tears it open. Thrilled as Christmas morning, he pulls out the tickets, signs, and badges for the carnival.

SUSAN

You said I could help.

DAVID

Not now.

Jerking the package from her reach, a return envelope leaps out. It's addressed:

"FUNDS FOR MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY CARNIVAL."

David folds it, quickly hiding it under the other materials, for now.

Susan grabs a carton of milk from the fridge. At the table she pours a glass, paying little attention at her aim.

SUSAN

What is that thing?

David reaches for the drifting milk carton, securing it.

DAVID

Watch it. You'll mess up my new carnival kit.

A doubled-over sign draws his attention. Unfolding it--

DAVID

WOW! Dig this poster! It'll attract everyone. I might be able to haul in enough for a new baseball too.

SUSAN

Mom said you could have a couple friends over, not the whole neighborhood.

DAVID

Jeepers! Can't you keep a secret?

Susan glances an unimpressive stare his way.

Thumbing through the "HERE'S HOW TO RUN YOUR CARNIVAL" booklet, David notices a sketch of Ronald McDonald, looking into a crystal ball. An idea--

DAVID

If you keep quiet, I'll let you be--

SUSAN

The ringmaster!

DAVID

Who ever heard of a GIRL ringmaster? You can be the Fortune Teller Lady.

SUSAN
(disappointed)
What's she gotta do?

DAVID
You make up things. Tell people
what you think they'll become in
the future... You'll be the star of
the show... like Jeannie on TV--

SUSAN
That sounds weird...

Evan and Loretta enter.

EVAN
You know how these small town
things go. A dozen farm tractors
and two fire trucks. Thing will be
over in 15 minutes.

David quickly stuffs elements of the kit back into the
envelope, hoping his parents won't discover its origin.

SUSAN
Can I be in the parade?

Evan and Loretta chuckle.

LORETTA
Maybe when you're older.

SUSAN
(pouting)
Everyone else is doing something...

Grabbing the milk and pouring himself a glass--

EVAN
I've an idea, Susan. We need
something to draw in more folks to
the homemade ice cream event. Maybe
you could put together a "History
of Salem" display.

Susan sits up, excited.

SUSAN
History is my *bestest* subject.

EVAN
There's a box over at the fire
station... filled with photos and
newspaper clippings.
(MORE)

EVAN (CONT'D)

Do some people good to remember the
past and preserve those values.

LORETTA

I'll take Susan over there later.

SUSAN

Groovy. And way more important than
a stupid carnival.

David makes faces back at her.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Carrying a rolled-up poster, David briefly stops at the store
window to check on that baseball glove.

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

Behind the counter Barbra makes pies as TODD DONAVAN (19)
longish hair, preppy-dressed, demands--

TODD

Mom, can we get in? Band's waiting
to go upstairs.

She rummages through a drawer producing a key.

BARBRA

Try to keep it down, for my--

The JINGLE of the door catches Barbra's attention. On a
mission, David plops a poster on the counter.

DAVID

Hello, Mrs. Donavan.

BARBRA

What may I get for you today?

DAVID

It would be cool if I could please
hang this poster in the window.

Barbra examines it.

The top part of the pre-printed poster has been cut off and
replaced with a homemade section that announces: "CARNIVAL --
AFTER PARADE."

DAVID

It would be swell if everyone came to my carnival... so I can raise money for the baseball glove. The one there in your window.

BARBRA

(under breath)

Like father, like...

Ready to refuse the request, a devious plot idealizes--

BARBRA

Considering the matter, I may be able to align the placard directly next to your new glove. But such special prominence would require your cooperation on the matter.

DAVID

Sure, Mrs. Donavan. How can I do "operation" on the matter?

BARBRA

"Cooperation." Promise me that when your guests exit your little carnival, you'll direct them back over here for my events.

DAVID

Yes. Cooperation.

BARBRA

(extending hand)

We have a deal then.

Hesitant, David shakes her hand. Gleefully he skips out.

TODD

Minister's kid, right? Got his dad on your payroll too?

Todd departs twirling the keyring on his finger.

Barbra places the CARNIVAL POSTER in the front window--

EXT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

Finishing up, Barbra repositions a display that was in her way, returning to the register.

Mary Ann stops at the window examining the sign. She scrunches her face. Something's not right.

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

Mary Ann marches up to the counter.

MARY ANN

That sign out there... the one
about the Carnival... Where is it
being held?

BARBRA

Oh my, I think David may have
forgotten to properly label the
locational address.

MARY ANN

Preacher's kid David?...

Barbra nods.

Mary Ann ponders the situation.

MARY ANN

Looks like a knockoff of a poster
on the tube. Not to get all
uptight, but... David IS raising
the money for muscular dystrophy?

Barbra shrugs, pretending she doesn't know for sure.

Mary Ann returns to the window to examine the poster better.

MARY ANN

Something's been chopped off the
top. But the copyright says
muscular dystrophy... printed there
at the bottom.

BARBRA

Suppose you would have to ask him
about it.

Mary Ann notices the baseball glove next to the poster. She
glances back to Barbra, who looks away.

MARY ANN

Certainly he wouldn't be a ding-a-
ling and use the charity's
materials for something else?

Barbra takes the poster down and crumples it up.

BARBRA

Should've known.

Then she rearranges the display, moving the baseball glove back, while positioning a soccer ball more prominently.

BARBRA
Baseball season is over anyway.

Mary Ann slyly sneaks the crumpled poster into her bag.

INT. FIRE STATION - EVENING

Warren demonstrates to Evan how to check out the vehicle. They walk around the red FIRE ENGINE with a clipboard.

EVAN
Got it. Always check that the gas tank is full.

WARREN
Without gas, ya ain't gettin' to none of them fires.

EVAN
And always check that the water tank is full.

EVAN AND WARREN
Without water, you can't put out none of them fires.

As they chuckle, Loretta and Susan appear.

EVAN
Forgot to mention, Loretta wanted to borrow some of those old photos. Thought we'd add an historical display with the ice cream event. To draw in more people--

SUSAN
We're here... for the box of Salem.

WARREN
I'd say help yourself, except Bart took the box over to his place. He was going to take it down to the school, see if anyone there--

Susan's face drops three inches.

WARREN
Betcha, if you went over there right now, he might still have 'em.

LORETTA
Thanks, Warren.

Loretta and Susan wander off toward Bart's place.

WARREN
(questioning)
Sounds like a contest is developin'
between the church and the store...
for people's attention on Sunday.

Warren hangs up the keys in a box by the office door.

EVAN
Don't you see this more as a
statement-- as to where folks'
hearts reside?

WARREN
Never been a business in this town
open on a Sunday before. If Pastor
Thomas were still here--

EVAN
I'm thinking that perhaps we just
need to put on a bigger show--

WARREN
You sure ya won't risk becoming too
commercial-- like the commercialism
we're fighting?

EVAN
Once we get them in, they'll see
God's way and change... And want
the same things we do.

WARREN
When ya said "embrace everyone,"
was gonna tell ya I was worried
we'd end up with Virgil showing up
with his bottle, or worse, some of
them hippie-liberation types.

They CHUCKLE.

EVAN
Bring em in. With God anyone can
change. Look at Billy Graham, he
does it every week.

WARREN
We've done told everyone we could.

EVAN

Maybe someone could "unofficially"
activate the "Prayer Phone Chain?"

WARREN

The EMERGENCY phone chain?

EVAN

Put out the word that THIS Sunday
could be more important than
Christmas this year.

Departing, Warren turns out the lights.

EXT. BART'S HOUSE - EVENING

A pillow falls from the wooden porch swing where Ashton makes
out with Mary Ann. He wants to go further.

Clearing her throat, Loretta walks up with Susan.

Mary Ann quickly gets up, brushes wrinkles from her jeans.

MARY ANN

Mrs. Smith. Pleasant surprise.

LORETTA

Is Mr. Baker home?

MARY ANN

My dad's over at the Harper's Farm.
Can I get you an iced tea?

Susan steps up on the porch.

SUSAN

We came for the box of photos.

LORETTA

Was hoping to ask your dad--

MARY ANN

Let me find the box for you.

LORETTA

You're certain he won't flip his
lid, if we borrow it?

Stepping inside for the box--

MARY ANN (O.S.)
Nah. He was just asking us if we
knew anyone that wanted them.
Nifty timing.

Reappearing, Mary Ann hands the box over. Loretta turns to
head back, when--

MARY ANN
Can I ask you something, about
David's carnival?

LORETTA
Sure, of course.

Loretta hands the box down to Susan, who curiously stands on
her tip toes.

LORETTA
Careful with it...

MARY ANN
I noticed his advertisement in the
store window was using a muscular
dystrophy poster. Is he sending the
ticket sales to them?

LORETTA
Muscular Dystrophy?

MARY ANN
They send out materials for free
each year-- to people who want to
organize a neighborhood carnival
and raise funds for them.

Loretta glances down to Susan, who looks away. Trying not to
appear incompetent--

LORETTA
Ah. Might be time to put the kibosh
on someone's plans.

Loretta and Susan leave.

Mary Ann returns to the swing.

MARY ANN
I knew it. This is too good to keep
a secret.

Surprised, making a face--

ASHTON
Knew what?

Mary Ann reaches inside, through the window, grabs the telephone and starts dialing.

MARY ANN
Hello... You are not going to believe this... David took the carnival materials that were supposed to be for that charity, and instead, he's using them to make money for himself.

Ashton gets closer, she pushes him away.

MARY ANN
Of course we're going to boycott. The little pipsqueak treats women like... Start dialing people and spread the word.

ASHTON
Just so you don't boycott me...

INT. PARSONAGE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Pieces of the carnival kit carpet the floor. Various games turn the living room into a miniature circus.

A very long phone cord stretches from the kitchen into the living room. Talking while testing out the RING-A-DUCK game--

DAVID
But, Jake, I was counting on you to sell the comic books.

Coming home, Loretta ducks under the phone cord. Continuing in she observes.

LORETTA
A lot of work going into this carnival for just a FEW friends...

DAVID
(to Jake)
Gotta go. I'll see you Sunday.

After setting the receiver in a shoebox, David picks up a sheet of tickets and begins cutting them out.

Picking up a page of pre-printed badges--

LORETTA

Curious... where did you get all
these hunky-dory tickets and signs?

DAVID

From the carnival kit on the TV.
You said I could call and order it?

Loretta picks up the instruction booklet that clearly has the
purpose labeled.

LORETTA

And what is the Muscular Dystrophy
Association getting in return, for
sending these expensive materials?

David stops cutting the paper. Realizing he's been caught,
his face turns beet red.

DAVID

Well, I was going to send them half
the dimes.

David grins, hoping Mom will buy his new story.

LORETTA

Don't you think they're expecting
all the money?

DAVID

But, Mom, I'm doing all the work...

LORETTA

That's how charity works. Most
people volunteer their time. I
can't make you send in all the
money. But I hope you listen to
your conscience.

David SLAMS the tickets into a shoe box.

LORETTA

Perhaps I could help out. We should
have a couple adults--

DAVID

I'm nine now. I'm almost an adult.

He storms upstairs to his room.

Loretta sits on the sofa next to an empty inflated kiddie
pool. A rubber duck stares back.

Visualizing helping, she pretends to take a ticket, picks up a stack of rings and tosses one. It misses the duck.

An ALTERNATING BEEP TONE emits from the phone. Loretta returns the phone to its cradle in the--

INT. PARSONAGE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Arriving home, Evan removes his jacket. He can't help but notice the trail of carnival materials leading from the kitchen table.

EVAN

Looks like the ringmaster has taken over the whole house.

Loretta holds up the Muscular Dystrophy booklet.

EVAN

And you talked to him about it?

LORETTA

A carnival of this magnitude could use an extra adult to help out.

Evan rummages through the fridge finally settling for a package of fig bars and Chiffon.

EVAN

Awful lot of things needing my attention this weekend...

LORETTA

Can't you see why he's doing this?

EVAN

For a baseball glove?

Loretta sits down across from him.

LORETTA

He sees all the events you organize... Wants to be like you. Don't you think you can spend an hour helping out?

EVAN

Might not be a carnival anyway. Heard from a church member today that kids are planning a boycott.

LORETTA

That would just crush him.

Buttering the last fig bar, he unintentionally references the Chiffon margarine jingle.

EVAN

With all the events going on-- Hope mother nature cooperates.

The phone RINGS.

Grabbing the receiver--

EVAN

(into phone)

Salem Church... Great to hear your voice... This Sunday? Tomorrow?... We look forward to seeing you.

Loretta shrugs, waiting for the explanation.

EVAN

Fireworks may start before noon. Pastor Thomas, the former minister of the church... before me. He's coming to services tomorrow. Heard things are outta hand here...

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Barbra sets up tables for the Sunday Brunch.

EXT. TOWN HALL - DAY

DRIVERS line up floats for the parade.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - DAY

Centered between the two front doors of the church, PASTOR THOMAS (50s), stern faced, adjusts the brim of his fedora.

Evan hurries up the stairs, juggling his briefcase while searching his pockets for keys. He's not sure why, but he thinks he's in trouble.

EVAN

Why hello, Pastor Thomas. What a privilege to have you stop by--

PASTOR THOMAS

I had expected the doors to be open an hour ago. How is one to come early and pray?

Nervously fumbling with the keyring, he launches his shoulder into the door. It finally gives way.

EVAN

Just making sure the church is kept safe from all the riff raff--

PASTOR THOMAS

When I was minister here, things weren't all locked up like a warehouse in the city.

Propping the door open, noticing a box inside--

EVAN

The bulletins. Hope they printed the correct state for the church address this week.

INT. SALEM CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Evan unpacks the box, arranging bulletins on a table, handing one to Pastor Thomas.

PASTOR THOMAS
Couldn't help but notice that the
General Store was open today.

EVAN
Road construction caused the
Monday parade to be moved up--

PASTOR THOMAS
Church doors are locked and the
store is open. Is this the new
Sunday in Salem?

Overhearing, SAMANTHA GOLD (46) arrives, snatches a bulletin, stuffs it in her purse.

SAMANTHA
I think Barbra's brunch fizzled.
From my binocul-- porch, it
appeared no one was there.

PASTOR THOMAS
Brunch? Tell me she's not cooking
on Sunday too?

SAMANTHA
Pastor Thomas, such a pleasure to
see you again. I suspect most the
God-fearing people, like myself,
will be here in church.

Reaching out and shaking her hand--

PASTOR THOMAS
My dear, Samantha. If only everyone
in this town were the exemplary
Christian you are. Always promptly
on time and in proper dress.

As PARISHIONERS stream into the auditorium, Evan makes his way outside--

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Evan shakes PARISHIONERS hands.

On a ramp placed over the stairs, an USHER pulls an ELDERLY PERSON in a wheelchairs.

With a gulp, David watches. A TONE CHIMES in his head poking his consciousness about the carnival funds for MDA.

JAKE RICHARDSON (10), on bicycle, abruptly stops next to him.

JAKE

That ramp would make a cool launch
for my bike. Don't ya think?

Groups of people move inside. The sun rises high, reaching the tip of the steeple with a glint.

INT. SALEM CHURCH - LATER

Anticipating time, David checks over his shoulder. The hands reach noon on a wall clock.

Finishing his sermon--

EVAN

And let us not forget to share with
others. Amen. I am concluding my
sermon early, so we may set up for
the "Labor Day Pot Luck."

People begin to exit.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, GYMNASIUM - DAY

A long serving table begins to fill up as people bring various dishes. CONGREGATION MEMBERS stream in, drop off food contributions and leave.

With Loretta at his side, Evan marches in, excited to start the celebration--

EVAN

Wonderful to see a full church. I
knew I'd beat Barbra at her--

Noticing the nearly empty room, they stop cold.

LORETTA

Almost forgot the mashed potatoes.
Running next door to grab them.

Calvin and Ashton finish placing chairs.

CALVIN

Pastor Smith, we finished setting
up.

(MORE)

CALVIN (CONT'D)

Ashton and I are heading on over...
to help my dad out with the parade
float.

ASHTON

Save me a piece of Mrs. Rodgers'
apple cake.

Bart sets down a Pyrex dish of baked beans, explaining.

BART

My contribution. I'm driving the
church float in the parade... Need
to have it in position by....

EVAN

Don't want to cut it too close...

BART

Church has always participated in
the parade... And Warren, he has to
drive the fire truck...

EVAN

(nodding)
I understand.

KELLY GOLD (16), awkwardly sets a dessert down, giving an
excuse.

KELLY

I'm helping with the... too.

Evan pulls up a chair and sits near the center of the table.
An empty room with a spread of delicious food stares at him.

A VOICE from a table, back of the room, grabs his attention.

PASTOR THOMAS

Mason Parks led our Missionary
Conference last week. He helped us
double our giving.

EVAN

Always liked him. Mason's a great
teacher and leader too.

PASTOR THOMAS

He's sent this crate of relics from
Africa to help with the displays.
Said for you and Loretta to pick
something out for your home too.

Rushing in, interrupting--

DAVID

Dad, can I go to the parade?
Please! All the cool guys are
already there.

EVAN

(long sigh)

Even my own son... All right, come
home right after.

DAVID

Faster than a banana peels.
Besides, that's when my carnival
rolls out.

David takes off, snatching a cookie on the way out.

Beaten, Evan slinks back in the chair. His stressful exhale
ruffles a tinfoil cover where his murky reflection crinkles.

PASTOR THOMAS

Hope more people than this come to
your Missionary Conference.

Standing, cutting him off--

EVAN

Why don't we grab a couple plates
and head over to the parsonage.
Loretta is probably just finishing
up the mashed potatoes and no need
for her to lug them all the way
over here...

Evan starts fixing a plate.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - DAY

Kelly catches up, pulls on Ashton's shirt--

KELLY

Ashton! We have to talk--

ASHTON

Later, Babe. It's a holiday.

KELLY

Exactly and if you can't start
payin' me and your baby some
attention, I... I just might scream
the whole situation out to
everyone, louder than those drums.

Ashton takes a step back, brings Kelly to the stairs where she can sit.

ASHTON

I told you I'd take care of it.

KELLY

You talk like its your car. This is a human being. Can't you start acting like a father, at least for one day? Today.

ASHTON

Geez. Let's just go to the parade.

With flyers in hand, David tears down the stairs, almost stepping on Kelly.

The PARADE bounces in motion.

A line of CLASSIC AUTOMOBILES, glurping out horn honks of eras past, beg CHEERS from the SPECTATORS.

Jake parks his fancy new bike with sissy bars on the wooden handicap ramp, turned backwards, showing it off.

DAVID

(admiring)

Nifty bike. Where did you get that?

JAKE

Told ya at my birthday party last week, Dweeb. Shipping was delayed. How could you forget--

DAVID

Out-of-sight sissy bar. Maybe one day I'll get one--

JAKE

Thought you'd be inside. Your dad let you outta the joint... Or did you sneak out?

Whipping out a flyer, offering it--

DAVID

You're coming to the carnival later, to help out, right?

JAKE

Only if everyone else doesn't boycott it.

Worried but shrugging it off--

DAVID

Don't be a zipper-head. I'm giving half the money to charity.

JAKE

And the other half? Gonna pocket it and buy a baseball glove I hear...

DAVID

Am not!

David takes off, looking--

EXT. ACCROSS THE STEET - CONTINUOUS

He notices a lady pushing a kid in a wheelchair. A perception of his selfishness CHIMES in his head again.

EXT. WOODWARD HOME - CONTINUOUS

Sitting on the porch, Mr. Woodward enjoys the parade. David pauses, leaning over the fence--

DAVID

Hello, Mr. Woodward. You coming for ice cream at the church later?

MR. WOODWARD

Don't believe the game will be ov--

DAVID

We're having history photos. I saw your house and a real old car in one of them. Except some other guy was driving -- way younger.

Mr. Woodward thoughtfully places a finger to his chin as David moves on.

EXT. SIX MILE ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Across the parade route, EMMETT WYATT (12), handicapped kid, stares at the street in a state of depression.

A worn shoe sets the brake on his rusted wheelchair.

A PARADE CLOWN, with a bundle of balloons, detours, forcing one into Emmett's hand.

EMMETT'S MOTHER attempts to produce a dime from her coin purse. Miming, the clown adamantly refuses, moving on.

Emmett looks up, smiling at the balloon for a second. Then, he lowers his head back down, returning to his former state of depression.

He lets go of the balloon.

David reaches out-- he wants to rescue it.

So does Emmett's mother. But it's gone.

David pushes through the crowd to the clown. He pulls out a dime, torn in thought. With conviction he exchanges it for a blue balloon.

He darts across the street. Patting Emmett on the back, he ties the balloon to his wheelchair. The boy perks up a tad.

Returning to the other side, he observes, contemplates.

As he focuses on Emmett, he can't hear the passing wagons and bands. Instead, a MELODY OF GUILT pounds in his head as he realizes who needs the carnival funds most.

The flyers he holds, announcing "fifty-percent to charity," no longer seem enough. He crumples one.

INT. PARSONAGE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

David is grinning in the center photo atop a spinet piano where Pastor Thomas finishes playing the chorus of "Standing on the Promises."

Evan sips his coffee when Loretta comes in.

Getting up and moving to the sofa--

PASTOR THOMAS

Lovely piano, Loretta. We didn't think one would fit in this small room, when Emma and I lived here.

LORETTA

You play well.

A radio squawks in the background.

RADIO (O.S.)

Slight chance of a stray shower this evening with a low of 52.

(MORE)

RADIO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*We now take you to Yankee Stadium
for the Detroit Tigers' game.*

In the distance, out the window beyond the piano, the parade passes by.

LORETTA
I'll finish up here. Go on over to
the parade.

Loretta reaches for Evan's nearly empty coffee cup. He grabs the saucer, stopping her.

EVAN
With Barbra there? Nah. I'll help
you clean up--

A slight tug, the cup falls, coffee puddles on the rug.

LORETTA
(almost in tears)
I try to be the perfect pastor's
wife... keep the house in order...

PASTOR THOMAS
It was just an accident. Your house
is perfect--

LORETTA
There's an abandoned carnival
sitting in my backyard...
(to Evan)
Why did we have to plan so many
events on the same day?

EVAN
We're reaching our neighbors.

LORETTA
Your contest with Barbra has
divided half of them...

Loretta grabs a towel to mop up the coffee.

LORETTA
While we sit singing about the
promises-- How many people are you
reaching in here... instead of
being out there?

Sitting back in the chair--

EVAN

It's the principal of the matter.
People might get the wrong idea and
think that I support--

LORETTA

Can you really minister to ALL the
people in Salem by only recognizing
ideas from one side of the tracks?

Loretta sets the coffee cup on the side table next to a
mimeographed list of names.

LORETTA

The "Emergency Phone Chain..." You
didn't activate that for your--

EVAN

Just trying to save Sun--

PASTOR THOMAS

(looks shocked)

Evan...

Like the kid caught with his hand in the cookie jar, Evan
slinks back in his chair.

EVAN

It kinda was an emergency...

LORETTA

How do you plan on saving all of
Salem when you won't even speak to
some of its neighbors?

Perturbed, Loretta folds her arms.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

The PARADE tumbles down the street. Nearing the store with
Pastor Thomas, Evan spots Barbra. He swallows.

PASTOR THOMAS

(to Evan)

Perhaps, we need to refocus back to
our defined mission. To protect our
ideals of it...

EVAN

It's the people I need to focus on,
not some mission statement.

Arranging the leaves of a hanging plant by the door, Barbra looks up.

PASTOR THOMAS
Barbra... Big crowd today.

BARBRA
It is conceivably surprising to notice who turns up when there is a properly organized event.

EVAN
(forced)
You know, Barbra, I was thinking maybe we could work together. It is Labor Day. I'd like to offer--

BARBRA
NOW that most have chosen to attend my event? Reverend...
(shaming him)
You may cast a spell over the villagers on Sunday morning, but beyond those doors--

PASTOR THOMAS
Evan, look! There's a couple seats over there.

Evan and Pastor Thomas step out to cross the street when--

The church float sails along, pulled by a tractor. Its driver, Bart, slows to a stop. Tipping his hat, he allows the ministers to cross.

ON THE FLOAT: LANCE SINGER (40), balding song leader, directs a QUARTET SINGING, "When the Roll Is Called Yonder."

The float jars back into gear as the quartet step up their vigor to impress the ministers.

EXT. SALEM TOWN SQUARE - LATER

A local HIGH SCHOOL BAND marches, playing a FANFARE.

A MAN films the parade using a small Kodak movie camera.

QUICK SHOT: Actual Super 8 footage from Salem 70s parade.

To get a better view, David runs behind the stands. Starting to climb the crossbars, he notices--

RICK KENNY (9) light brown hair, an impression of his older brother, usually misbehaving.

DAVID
Groovy view up this way, if you
wanna see the parade...

RICK
Beat it! Get outta here spaz.

DAVID
Haven't seen you around before.

RICK
'Cause we just moved here nerd.

Climbing down, extending hand--

DAVID
I'm-- David.

RICK
I'm-- supposed to be keeping watch.

Further beneath the riser, David notices a couple boys trying to light up.

Holding a cigarette, LARRY KENNY (16) Rick's brother, looks up, startled. The other boy, Calvin, with matches in hand, stops cold.

LARRY
Who's the kid?

CALVIN
He's the preacher's son.

Letting out a big HUFF--

RICK
Now we're busted...

CALVIN
Chill out. David's a cool kid. You
won't say anything, right?

David ponders a finger to his chin.

DAVID
Can I try one?

LARRY
I'm not even letting my brother
near one. Else we'll all be beaten.

DAVID
Gosh doggit. You're coming to my
carnival, right?

CALVIN
(to David)
Sure. Now lay low and help Rick
keep watch?

RICK
I don't need a sponge around.

DAVID
Just until the parade ends.

Rick leans against a beam trying to ignore him.

A final float clears the stands as villagers fill the street.

DAVID
Let's blow this popsicle stand.
Carnival time over at my house!

David steps into the street, offering flyers to SPECTATORS.
They scrunch their faces, avoiding him.

DAVID
Out-of-sight carnival starts now!

A distant balloon in the crowd RESONATES a reminder and
prompts a new approach.

DAVID
ALL the money going to charity.

People seem to change their favor, accepting the flyers, now.

DAVID
A mind-blowing 100 PERCENT of
carnival funds going directly to
Muscular Dystrophy.

As more people take flyers, Calvin and Larry emerge.

LARRY
You were a great distra-- look-out.

RICK
I'm Rick. Slap me five.

Rick holds out his palm and David slaps it.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Sitting on the parked float, Evan notices villagers heading toward the parsonage. He jumps up--

EVAN
David's fair... Yes!
(announcing)
Carnival right this way!

QUICK FLASHBACK: Barbra taking his poster.

He pauses, paces the other way.

EVAN
Barbra will accuse me of stealing
her crowd...

Pacing back toward the house--

EVAN
It must be the Lord's will!

QUICK FLASHBACK: Loretta folding her arms in disgust.

Switching directions again--

EVAN
Then how will I reach...

Rushing by waving flyers in hand--

DAVID
Dad! Their all coming back. See!

Evan nods, conflicted feelings tug.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Todd emerges from the door followed by Barbra. She gives a lookover of disapproval to Calvin who leans against a post sharing the cigarette with Larry.

CALVIN
Gonna win me that big ribbon this
year, Mrs. Donavan.

TODD
Mom, everyone is leaving in droves.

Spotting Bart Baker--

LARRY

Is that your dad, coming this way?

Calvin ducks, drops the cigarette. They spurt into the crowd to escape, as Barbra reaches out hoping they'll stay.

BARBRA

Where are they all going?

TODD

That way... toward the church.

Todd hands Barbra one of the flyers.

BARBRA

Just like him to put David up to this.

Stepping out into the street, YELLING--

BARBRA

Wait! The pie eating contest starts next... The tradition is an utmost requirement...

The end of the crowd funnels toward the church.

TODD

(pouting)

They're all gone. How am I supposed to look good in front of my friends now? We were supposed to be playing our instruments in front of the whole town...

BARBRA

Go collect your friends... I'll figure this out.

Todd wanders off, head hung, dejected. He kicks an empty riser as he passes.

BARBRA

(pouting)

They used to love my pies...

(shouting back)

They're my neighbors too.

Mary Ann slithers from the store.

MARY ANN

They'll be back.

A confused Barbra looks at her in disbelief. Mary Ann holds up a crumpled poster.

MARY ANN

Didn't someone make you a promise?

Barbra's eyes twinkle with the new conniving strategy.

FADE OUT.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. PARSONAGE, BACKYARD - DAY

A needle wobbles atop a prime condition 1950s RCA stereo phonograph. CARNIVAL MUSIC blasts from two small speakers.

TOWNSFOLK jubilantly participate in carnival games.

Upset, Jake comes at David shaking a handful of comic books.

JAKE

You said I could keep half of what I sold.

DAVID

That was before we decided to give it all to charity...

JAKE

WE? Better watch you back. What goes around, comes around.

Interrupting the argument--

EVAN

David... Is that how we treat our neighbors?

On a mission, pushing through the crowd and ducking under a rope, Barbra searches.

David notices her and maneuvers to leave. But turning around, he ends up smack in front of her-- caught.

DAVID

Neato. That is, that you came, Mrs. Donavan.

Bending down to his ear--

BARBRA

I just wanted to remind you about our deal... to send everyone back to the store for my events.

DAVID

What about my dad's ice cream--

Evan steps over.

EVAN

Barbra?

Startled, she jerks up, palming her chest.

BARBRA

Thought I'd observe how this end of the sidewalk was fairing. Scarcely, have I the time...

EVAN

I am happy that you decided to--

BARBRA

Your son, David, organized all of this? You must be so proud...

David slyly slithers away pretending to fix a tablecloth.

EVAN

He can be a bit ambitious.

Evan offers her some rings to play RING-THE-DUCK. She politely pushes them away.

BARBRA

I was just reminding David to send his guests over for the pie eating contest... As he promised to do, when I agreed to advertise this event for him.

Barbra plops the carnival poster on the table exchanging it for a megaphone. She thrusts it at David.

EVAN

(disappointed)

Since you kept your part...

From the main entrance, Mary Ann smirks at David.

DAVID

(stuttering in megaphone)

Hello, everybody!... The pie eating contest is about to start...

Yanking the megaphone away--

BARBRA

The ANNUAL PIE EATING CONTEST starts in just TEN MINUTES.

TOWNSFOLK look over to Evan. He shrugs, looks down.

EVAN
(softly)
Go... if your heart leads...

Confusion paint the TOWNSFOLK's faces. Some argue.

Stepping up next to him--

LORETTA
Really? You're making people choose
while implying they're doing
something wrong if they leave?

DRUMS BEGIN.

Todd and COLLEGE BUDS, dressed in COLONIAL MILITARY JACKETS,
with DRUMS and FLUTE, march forward playing "Yankee Doodle."

EVAN
Looks more like the Fourth of July
than Labor Day...

Evan leans on the edge of the duck game. His image in the
water begs reflection. The "HISTORY & HOMEMADE ICE CREAM"
sign looms distantly.

A rubber duck floats over the reflection. It's grin almost
laughs at him.

The DISTANT CHATTER turns into LAUGHTURE in his mind.

Nearby Kate tugs at her objecting husband--

WARREN
I'd hang up my fireman's badge
before I'd go over there and
support a woman running things.

David tugs at Evan's shirt.

DAVID
Dad-- I didn't mean to--

Determined to set a better example, Evan marches over to
Barbra and gently wrestles the megaphone away.

EVAN
Barbra, I'm not going to be the one
to make them chose between the east
or west end of the sidewalk.
(into megaphone)
People! The pie eating contest is
starting at the store now.

He puts a hand on David's shoulder.

EVAN
It's okay, son.

Taken back, but believing she's won, Barbra abruptly turns and gracefully leads the group her way.

EXT. CHURCH, SIDE YARD - DAY

A slight breeze tears at vacant paper-covered tables.

Walking with Evan--

LORETTA
You know they're not coming back?

Evan nods. He looks up, knowing who has the final word.

EVAN
We'll have ice cream another day.

The last guests disappear down the walkway.

Running up to Evan--

DAVID
Dad, can I go get some pie?

EVAN
What about this mess that needs cleaning up?

DAVID
I'll go right after putting it all away... Slap me five, Dad.

Evan grimaces as David turns, starts picking up things.

EVAN
(to Loretta)
Perhaps the best way to reach the non-church folk out there, is to be a neighbor right here.

LORETTA
You did the right thing. You let the church folk go and shine their own light.

EVAN
Wanna help me lug some ice cream makers back inside?

LORETTA

Maybe we could crank out a batch...
in case anyone does return.

EVAN

David will be back for sure.

With a chuckle, they take the machines inside.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Barbra quickly arranges pies in the glass case to look perfect. Todd, sits with his college buds at the tea table.

MUSIC from the shelf-radio stops. An announcer comes on.

RADIO (O.S.)

*We interrupt this program to bring
you a WEATHER BULLETIN. A storm 35
miles west of Detroit is
developing. Expect heavy rain--*

Barbra clicks the radio off. Turning her back, looking up, perhaps at God, she whispers--

BARBRA

No... No one's going to rain on my
son's performance.

INT. PARSONAGE, KITCHEN - DAY

David and Susan drag in supplies from the carnival. Clouds build in the distance, outside the window.

David approaches a radio on the counter.

RADIO (O.S.)

*After four runs in the seventh
inning, the Tigers just couldn't
squeeze past the Yankees with a
final score of six to five.*

DAVID

No... the Tigers lost today--

RADIO (O.S.)

*And now for an urgent weather
bulletin. Expect heavy rain, strong
winds in excess of 60 miles per
hour, hail and the possibility of
tornado-like conditions. Be ready
to seek shelter in a safe place.*

David turns the volume down.

DAVID
I better look for Dad so he can
warn everyone. You stay here.

Susan's jaw drops as David darts out the door.

EXT. SALEM VILLAGE - DAY

A tumbleweed blows across the street. David pulls his jacket closer, tighter. He runs past Kelly heading onward.

Dark clouds in the distance tease. They seem to repeatedly chase after him, each time he glances back.

Down the sidewalk, heart pounding, David runs, toward--

EXT. SALEM TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

VILLAGERS crowd around the park where three tables rise on a platform. A HAND places a cherry pie in front of each chair.

TROY HARPER (14) and JAMIE HARPER (10) fight over chairs, finally settling.

A giant "1st Place" ribbon wobbles in a gust of wind. Calvin eyes it. Ashton nudges his brother Troy out of the center chair, taking it.

With whistle in hand--

BARBRA
Following the contest, pies at the
store will be ten percent off.

David frantically runs up to her.

BARBRA
(harsh whisper)
Not now, David.

DAVID
But a storm is com--

Stepping aside for a minute--

BARBRA
You wouldn't want to alarm people
and cause a panic, would you?...
Now go over there and observe.

Ashton's eyes are on Mary Ann while Kelly takes a seat. Mary Ann nods his attention toward Kelly.

ASHTON

Shoot. Time to get what I want.

(to Calvin)

You're gonna choke again, just like last year.

BARBRA

Now, the contest will commence. On my whistle...

Barbra sounds the whistle.

PIE EATERS, hands behind their backs, plow their faces into the plates.

MOMENTS LATER

Hands on a large clock move past the TWO MINUTE mark.

CENTER TABLE

Calvin and Ashton chew faster, each with pies half-eaten.

IN THE CROWD

David tugs on the shirt of Bart Baker.

DAVID

Mr. Baker, there's a killer storm coming. I heard it on the radio.

BART

Contest is almost over. Think Calvin will win?

David moves on.

PIE TABLES

The clock TICKS, nearing the FIVE MINUTE MARK.

Calvin's long hair gets in the way. He shakes pie from it.

Two Harper brothers, jealous of the third, tug at his plate, causing the pie to fall in his lap. Madder than a bumblebee, he jumps up, swatting at them.

IN THE CROWD

David pushes his way through the forest of adults, finally finding his new friend--

DAVID

Rick, there's a huge storm headed this way. Tornados too. But no one will listen.

RICK

Tornados? Groovy. Let's check it out from the roof on the store.

Rick grabs David's hand to pull him toward the store, but David tears away.

DAVID

Gotta warn everyone...

David turns to the crowd and yells--

DAVID

A STORM IS COMING!

His YELP drowned out by the CHEERING CROWD as--

PIE TABLES

Ashton stands up, his pie plate licked clean.

BARBRA

Ashton Harper... the winner.

Turning to Calvin--

ASHTON

Told ya.

Mary Ann runs up to him. Kelly moves in.

KELLY

Ashton!

ASHTON

(stepping aside)

Not going to spend the rest of my life being manipulated by your lies. Its over between us.

KELLY

Everyone's gonna find out.

ASHTON

Plan A, baby. Plan A.

Kelly folds her arms sinking back into her chair.

David hears, wants to know more, but Dark clouds billowing above tear his attention away. He finds Barbra again.

DAVID

The weatherman said there could
be tornados.

Todd overhears, turns to her.

TODD

Mother, what are we going to do?

Barbra looks around, worried, unsure. Then an idea--

BARBRA

(taking center stage)

Take cover! Pies will still be on
sale later.

Looking at the sky, then to Calvin beside him--

ASHTON

Storm looks bad. Where can this
many people shelter?

David steps up, hoping to save the day and keep his promise.
He tugs at Calvin's untucked shirt.

DAVID

There's a basement at the church.
And ice cream too!

CALVIN

(almost announcing)

Church has got a basement.

BARBRA

(unenthused)

Yes! Over to the church basement.

Everyone moves toward the church, some faster than others.

Rain begins.

Kelly fumes in the chair, drenching in the downpour.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - EVENING

Calvin leads the THRONG under a steeple piercing stormy
clouds. Lightning crackles. A vicious wind pounds, ripping at
the table cloths and blowing chairs over.

The EVENT BANNER tears loose.

CHILDREN scream.

Evan opens up a side door.

EVAN
Everyone! Into the basement.
Quickly. Inside! Everyone inside!

Trying to be helpful, a few people gather up some of the fallen chairs. They rush inside after the others.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, BASEMENT - EVENING

EXCITED CHATTER fills the large room. Some MEMBERS set up chairs. Others, unnoticed before, prepare the ice cream.

EVAN
Attention!... Welcome everyone!

The CHATTER calms.

EVAN
We are asking that you stay here until the storm passes. Ice cream is cranking out. We'll pass it around shortly.

Arriving, running down the stairs--

DAVID
I snagged our radio from the house.

EVAN
Good thinking, David. Why don't you plug it in and...

The lights go out.

More SCREAMS.

A flashlight comes on.

BART
There's candles in the kitchen.

Within seconds candles are distributed.

Lance Singer steps up to the front of the room.

LANCE
While the LADIES get things ready in the kitchen...
(MORE)

LANCE (CONT'D)
Let us sing "Old Time Religion."
Kind of reminds me of the days
before electricity.

Mary Ann HUFFS at the sexist remark. She's the only one to take offense, a reflection of the time.

LANCE
(singing)
Give me that old-time religion.
Give me that old-time religion.
Give me that old-time religion.
Yes, It's good enough for me.

MEN crank out the ice cream.

A LONE MAN examines the plug of his electric ice cream maker, no match for the hand-cranked ones.

LADIES pass bowls of the creamy stuff around, while everyone continues singing.

David grabs two bowls and takes off, leaving.

FADE OUT.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, GYMNASIUM - LATER

Evan flips a bank of switches.

EVAN
Power's back.

Tables arranged in rows display historic artifacts and photos of the town's history.

EXHIBIT ONE:

Framed photos of a destroyed church.

LORETTA
Fifty-five years ago, June 6th
1917, a tornado destroyed the first
Worden Church. Right here, see?

Betsy and Samantha lean in, examining the photo carefully.

LORETTA
It was rebuilt and Henry Ford
donated new leaded windows. But 19
years later it was struck by
lightning and burned to the ground.

EXHIBIT TWO:

Mr. Woodward inspects photos of antiquities. Picking up one David mentioned earlier, he reminisces.

MR. WOODWARD
My first automobile...

Susan stands on a chair, pointing to a photo.

SUSAN
The "baddest" train crash in the state of Michigan occurred in 1907... On the tracks at the end of our sidewalk.

BETSY
Baddest?

SUSAN
A train with 600 people riding to Belle Isle collided with a freight train and 34 people were killed. It was even reported in the *New York Times*. See!

Susan holds up news papers with photos of the horrific event.

BETSY
Some say ghosts still roam the area and those tracks are cursed.

Evan basks in the moment as everyone appears to be caught up with recalling the town's history.

Todd marches in with a box, setting it next to Evan.

TODD
A blown compressor during the power outage caused one of our freezers to malfunction. Mother thought we could contribute this ice cream.

EVAN
Much appreciated. Please make yourself at home.

TODD
Indeed I will.

Todd looks around, disinterested. Then he takes it upon himself to announce--

TODD
(raising voice)
Attention, people! Attention! Now
that the storm has diminished,
there will be a fireworks-like show
at the store. In 20 minutes.

Dumbfounded, Evan's jaw drops. He clenches his fist, but
restrains himself. Loretta rushes to his side.

EVAN
(a whisper)
He's gonna grow up to be just like
his mother...

LORETTA
Now Evan...

EXT. GENERAL STORE - NIGHT

Chairs and tables are blown about from the storm. Barbra and
Todd are trying to reset them.

David discards the first bowl of ice cream he's eaten. He
notices Kelly, drenched, the only person still sitting in the
a chair.

DAVID
Are you ready for the fireworks?

Kelly starts to cry.

DAVID
Here you can have my other bowl of
ice cream. Ice cream always makes
things happier.

She clams, takes the bowl.

DAVID
Heard you breaking up earlier. What
did he mean by "Plan A?"

KELLY
Plan A. "A" for abortion.

She convulses into more tears.

BLACK.

END ACT FOUR

TAG

FADE IN:

EXT. SALEM VILLAGE - DAY

A COUNTY TRUCK passes, slowly. A WORKER leans out, dropping cones onto the pavement.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

David drops the MUSCULAR DISTROPHEY ENVELOPE into the mail slot of the closed door.

BEHIND THE WINDOW

David focuses on the baseball mitt. His daydream interrupted when Barbra starts placing new price tags.

His eyes grow big when she plops down a new tag for the item, covering the \$8.30 with \$8.90.

DAVID

Fooley! Now I'll never get that baseball glove...

Barbra shrugs.

BARBRA

(muffled, from inside)

Things change ankle-biter. Not much you can do to save Salem from progress...

Shoulders drooping, David turns back.

EXT. GOLD HOME - CONTINUOUS

A shout from the porch--

ALEX

Church's lawn boy left for college yesterday. I'd calculate, there's about three more mowings left in the season. Pays three bucks each.

DAVID

Can I, can I, Dad?

Evan shrugs, agreeing.

EVAN

Mr. Parks sent a crate over for the
missionary conference next month.
Said we could pick one thing out
for our home.

DAVID

Oh boy! Can I?

Evan nods. David Takes off.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, GYMNASIUM - DAY

David enters the large room, flickering sunlight shinning
down toward a lone table in the back corner.

Running, David slows, his steps weighed down by a TONE in the
air. A CREEPY VOICE calls--

HANYO (O.C.)

(low growl)

Saaaaave Haaanyooo.

Reverently approaching the crate, he slides the top off.

INSIDE THE CRATE: Carved wooden Giraffes, an elephant,
necklaces, beads surround another wooden box.

David pulls out the meticulously carved box, carefully
inspecting it.

Unsure how to open it, David fiddles, finally discovering the
front panel slides up.

An awesome carved mask stares out.

David JUMPS BACK. The mask's sinister look scaring him.

With a sigh of realization, he sets the box down.

Ready to close it up, the mask's mouth opens--

HANYO

DEAAATH...

BLACK.

END OF SHOW