

The Announcement

By Scott R. Mealey

[The cast of this sketch consists of 5 people who could be of any age or gender. It will probably run between two to three minutes My suggestion is that person reading the scripture should go by their actual name (i.e. Brother Ewald or Sister Rikki) to increase the level of surprise in the congregation. The parishioners could either be scattered throughout the seated congregation or, to increase comfort levels, seated in the front two rows. The Announcement Giver (A.G.) should be begin with the legitimate weekly announcements and then immediately launch into the script.]

Announcement Giver (A.G.): [Following the regular announcements] Finally, I'd like to remind everyone we have a petition at the back for everyone to sign opposing any further involvement with the "Star Wars" missile defence system. And now I'd like to invite (Brother/Sister) _____ up to give a scripture reading....

[Brother/Sister _____ comes to the pulpit as the following occurs]

Parishioner #1: [interrupting] Hold on a second! [Stands] Did you just ask us to sign another petition?

A.G.: [taken aback] Uhh, yes...

Parishioner #1: Here we go again. Didn't you ask us to sign a petition six months ago?

A.G.: Um, yes, I think I did.

Parishioner #1: And wasn't there another one a year ago?

A.G.: Maybe... [confused] I'm not really sure what this is about.

Parishioner #1: What it's about, is the fact that I don't recall anything happening from the first two petitions, so why are we bothering again?

A.G.: Well, I'm not sure if nothing happened...and I'm not sure this is the appropriate moment...

Brother/Sister ____: [meekly] ... actually, maybe I should just read this...

Parishioner #2: [Begins to stand] You know (he/she - #1) has a good point. No one ever listens to us anyway! It seems the more we try to make a difference the more the wrong people get power and the evil get richer. If no one wants to hear, why do we keep talking?

A.G.: ...O.K., we need to come to order... or something...

Brother/Sister ____: ... if I could just read this for you maybe...

A.G.: ...Could we all just stop talking? There is too much talking...

Parishioner #3: [Also standing. Even more emotional than the others] You're right there's too much talking and not enough solutions! What are we actually fixing with all this peace talk? Don't people have a right to be safe? Don't we need to give them some reassurance, some hope, that they and their children will be protected?

A.G.: [clearly losing it] The petition isn't a waste of time! Please sign the petition!

Brother/Sister ___: CAN WE PLEASE JUST LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD? [Pause for stunned silence. Begins to speak again, slightly embarrassed] Maybe it would help...

A.G.: That's probably an excellent idea. Brother/Sister _____ will, um, now read today's scripture reading. [Everyone sits grumpily/awkwardly]

Brother/Sister ___: Today's reading comes from the book of Ecclesiastes. I'll be reading from chapter 8 verse 16 to chapter 9 verse 1 as well as chapter 12 verse 13 and 14:

“When I applied my mind to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done on earth, how one's eyes see sleep neither day nor night, then I saw all the work of God, that no one can find out what is happening under the sun. However much they may toil in seeking, they will not find it out; even though those who are wise claim to know, they cannot find it out. All this I laid to heart, examining it all, how the righteous and the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God; whether it is love or hate one does not know”.

“... Fear God, and keep his commandments; for that is the whole duty of everyone. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.”

How was that?

A.G.: I think it's a great place to start.

[All exit]