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My Favorite Things: Staff Member Wins, then Donates

Becky St. Clair

Andrews University, stclair@andrews.edu

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[EDUCATION NEWS]

Andrews Academy performs play titled 'Words by Fanny Crosby'

Michigan—"Fanny, listen to this, please." William Doane moves to the piano and plays the melody to the chorus of "Safe in the Arms of Jesus." Fifteen minutes later, Fanny Crosby has written the words for what became a well-loved hymn.

Bennett Shelley, senior, playing Doane in the above scene, and Kayla Troup, performing the adult Crosby role, were just two of the eight Andrews Academy students who were enrolled in Literary Interpretations class which produced and performed the play, "Words by Fanny Crosby," during a chapel service at the school.

This thought-provoking play highlights how many of her best-known hymns came to be written, interspersed with flashbacks to her childhood. Blinded before she was two months old, the child Crosby, played by Chrystal Porter, chooses not to let her handicap control her attitude but begins her love of creating uplifting poetry, including her first one at age 8: "Oh, what a happy child I am, although I cannot see! I am resolved that in this world, Contented I will be!"

Her teen years, performed by Anna Rorabeck, are filled with challenges, including the time her headmaster, Kundani Makimu, forbids her to write poetry for three months in order to concentrate on her other studies.

Another scene has an incredulous, cynical reporter, portrayed by Kaitlin Litvak, unwilling to see how Crosby could possibly be helping the derelicts and down-and-out street people, represented by Martha Benko and Zoe Myers, an experience which led her to write "Rescue the Perishing."

During the course of her life, Crosby wrote in excess of 8,000 hymns, using more than 200 pen



Fanny Crosby meets her husband as a young adult. Pictured are Bennett Shelley and Anna Rorabeck



An incredulous, cynical reporter is unwilling to see how Fanny Crosby could possibly be helping the derelicts and be such a humble composer. From left: Kayla Troup, Bennett Shelley and Kaitlin Litvak.



Fanny Crosby's teen years are filled with challenges, including the time her headmaster forbids her to write poetry for three months in order to concentrate more on her other studies. Pictured from left: Kundani Makimu and Anna Rorabeck

names to dictate many still well-known hymns such as "Pass Me Not," "Tell Me the Old, Old Story," "Take the Name of Jesus with You," "Redeemed" and "Blessed Assurance."

This inspiring presentation prompted numerous positive comments from the audience, including



Fanny Crosby helps the derelicts and down-and-out street people, an experience which led her to write "Rescue the Perishing." Pictured from left: Kaitlin Litvak, Kayla Troup, Zoe Myers, Martha Benko and Chrystal Porter

the following: "Just a quick note to tell you how thrilled I was last night at the AA chapel as I sat and watched the moving story of Fanny Crosby. It was a masterpiece presentation, and the performance came out so well that I long to see it again. All the students were on top of their game, and I was thrilled at the display of talent by each of the actors. If a recording was made of that play, I would be happy to buy a copy. I know a lot of time was put into that play but it was not in vain. Tell each of the students that the Lord used them powerfully to successfully relay an important story which bears significant spiritual lessons."

Jeannie Leiterman, vice principal,
Andrews Academy

Photos by Steven Atkins