

# Worship

## Reformation: Formed in His Image—Reformed in His Love

### A Reformation Youth Service

By Jim Anderson and Mike Charron

**Notes for the director:** This story is designed to be as flexible as possible. The actual charm of the piece should come from its very simplicity. It relies heavily on the audience's imagination. No scenery is required, and costumes and props should be minimal. Any open area in front of the altar will be best for a performing space. It is not necessary for characters to enter and leave the performing area, although it is an option. Characters may simply stand at the back watching the action or stand faced away from the audience. They "enter" by stepping into the main performing area.

The story is also flexible according to the size of the group performing it. Performers playing the parts of Mr. G's machine can also play the parts of Mr. Slick's machine by simply putting on the hats and sunglasses and taking them off. The number of parts of the machine may also vary according to need. "The Littlest Part" is suitable to be performed by almost any age group.

#### Invocation

Leader: We are here in the name of the Father,

Congregation: Who created us in His image.

L: In the name of the Son,

C: Who redeems and reforms us in His love.

L: In the name of the Holy Spirit,

C: Who gives us faith. Amen.

#### Opening hymn

"The Church's One Foundation" (*Lutheran Service Book 644*)

#### Confession

L: The Reformation begun by Martin Luther in 1517 was the beginning of new hope and a celebration of God's precious Word. However, we have not lived as the children God has called us to be. We need a reformation in our own lives.

C: Gracious God, You love us, but our love is still so weak. We have walked away from people in need, unconcerned with their problems. We have been greedy, lustful, selfish, and rebellious.

L: Reform our lives, O Lord.

C: Move us toward mercy, humbleness, and love. Forgive our shortcomings, Jesus, and help us toward a reformation of our lives.

#### The Absolution

L: Hear the Good News. If anyone is in Christ he is a new creature—fresh and new. Your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel.

#### The Readings

Genesis 1:26-27 - God formed man and woman in His image and blessed them.

Romans 12:1-2 - We are called to transform and be renewed in our lives as people made in His image.

#### Hymn

"Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word" (*Lutheran Service Book 655*)

#### Message

"The Littlest Part"- Drama, written by Michael J. Charron

Narrator: Once upon a time not so very long ago, not so very far away, there lived a wise old inventor, who invented many wondrous things.

1: His name was Mr. G.

Mr. G: Well, that's me.

2: One day he invented something brand new.

3: It was a grand and wonderful machine.

4: And he was very proud of it. *(Mr. G arranges players as different parts.)*

Mr. G: Power on! *(Players make machine sounds and motions.)* Power off! Ah, what a grand and wonderful machine. Boy, am I proud of it. *(yawns)* And boy am I pooped. Time for rest. Good night, grand and wonderful machine. *(Mr. G exits)*

5: Is he gone?

4: Viewfinder, take a look. *(I looks around)*

2: Computer center, what's the word?

Computer Center: Coast is clear.

6: All right! Let's party! *(Music begins. Parts begin stylized machine dancing.)*

4: Man, we're one grand and wonderful machine.

Computer Center: Yeah, we're pretty grand, all right.

6: Yeah, and wonderful too!

Littlest Part: Yeah! *(All other parts stop, look at the Littlest Part, then continue dancing)*

7: Hey, what do you think we make?

5: Beats me.

1: It must be something very special. Otherwise we wouldn't be so wonderful. *(Music fades)*

4: *(flexing muscles)* Yeah, it must be something very grand or Mr. G wouldn't have made such a wonderful part like me for strength.

6: *(running in place quickly)* Or such a fast and speedy part like me.

7: *(primping)* Or such a beautiful part like me. I'm very important.

1: *(looking around, using hands like binoculars)* Oh yeah, what about me, the sharp-eyed viewfinder?

Computer Center: How about something really important like such a super intelligent computer center?

2: *(moving arms in large circles)* You wouldn't get anywhere without power.

3 & 5: *(squatting down, then standing up)* Hey, don't forget about us spark plugs!

Narrator: Hey, you're all grand and wonderful but you can't do a single thing without flipping the on/off switch.

Littlest Part: Yeah! *(All other parts stop, look at the Littlest Part, then laugh)*

4: You? What do you do?

Littlest Part: Well, I do this: plink, plink.

*(The other parts laugh)*

1: Is that all?

2: That's not very important.

4: Are you strong like me?

Computer Center: Are you smart like me?

7: Or beautiful like me?

6: Or speedy like me?

2: Mr. G made a mistake.

3: *(S)*he's not important

5: *(S)*he just goes plink, plink *(All the parts laugh)*

Computer Center: Hey, you've got to be important to be part of a grand and wonderful machine like us.

All parts: Yeah! *(They mock the Littlest Part, then laugh)*

4: Go on, beat it.

Narrator: And so the Littlest Part went away all alone to find a place where *(s)*he was important and needed. *(Mr. G's machine exits)*

Littlest Part: I'm not strong, I'm not fast, I'm not smart, I'm just small and go plink, plink. I'm never going to be important. *(A new character enters, wearing a felt hat and sunglasses)*

Slick: Sssay, what makesss you sssso sssad?

Littlest Part: I'm useless.

Slick: Ssso I can sssee. Ssso, Mr. G messed up again.

Littlest Part: You know Mr. G?

Slick: Sssure, we're old palsss, you could sssay.

Littlest Part: Really?

Slick: Cccertainly. He makesss mistakes like you consstantly.

Littlest Part: Oh. Who are you?

Slick: The name isss Ssslick, but you can call me Missster Ssslick.

Littlest Part: Missster Ssslick.

Slick: Excccellent! Now let me sssee. *(He walks around Littlest Part)* You're not important. Everyone elssse doess sssomething ssspecial. You don't fit. You're ussseless.

Littlest Part: Yes, how did you know?

Slick: Classic cassse.

Littlest Part: What can I do?

Slick: I have a sssensssational idea. You are ussseless.

Littlest Part: Yes.

Slick: You are a misstake.

Littlest Part: Yes.

Slick: You aren't ssspecial.

Littlest Part: Yes.

Slick: And Mr. G should never have made you?

Littlest Part: Definitely!

Slick: Hey, kid, cheer up. I can help.

Littlest Part: You can?

Slick: Sssure! You sssee, I know a lot of partsss jusst like you, all invented by that sssilly old man G. But I have my own machine made up of partsss with the sssame problem ass you.

Littlest Part: Really? Oh Mr. Slick, do you think I could fit in there?

Slick: Well, it'll be difficult. You do look pretty ussseless, but with a few minor changes here and there we might be able to sssqueeze you in. Are you ssure you want to try?

Littlest Part: Oh please, I'll do anything to fit in.

Slick: Ssensssational. Let'sss sssee, firsst we need a little of thiss *(puts a hat like his on Littlest Part)* and a little of that *(puts sunglasses like his on Littlest Part)*. Oh yesss , and we can't forget thiss *(puts a scarf like his on Littlest Part)*. Perfect!

Littlest Part: Wow, I look like you.

Slick: Of course; if you're going to be important, you've got to look the part.

Littlest Part: Even Mr. G wouldn't recognize me now.

Slick: Let'sss hope not.

Littlest Part: Huh?

Slick: Nothin', kid. Let'sss go.

Littlest Part: Where?

Slick: What are you, sstupid? Back to my laboratory and my machine!

Narrator: So Mr. Slick took the Littlest Part back to his laboratory and put her (him) to work in his machine.

*(Mr. Slick 's machine parts all are wearing the same style hat, sunglasses, and scarf. None of them look happy.)*

Slick: Alright kid, sslide in here. Okay, power on! *(Mr. Slick's machine makes harsh sounds and has more violent and angular movements than Mr. G's. The Littlest Part does her (his) same old "plink, plink")*

Slick: Wait! Sstop! *(to Littlest Part)* What do you think you're doing!?

Littlest Part *(timidly)*: Plink, plink.

Slick: Don't be sstupid. *(He looks at the other parts who then all force laughter)* You're no longer that pieccce of trash Mr. G invented. I reformed you. You're my trash now. You now go ssslap! Ssslap! Now get back to work. Power on! And keep working! *(Mr. Slick exits. Machine works for several moments.)*

Slick Part 1: Break! *(Littlest Part breathes heavily)*

Slick Part 2 : Work! *(All resume working. Littlest Part struggles to keep up.)*

Littlest Part: I can't keep up!

Slick Part 3 : You'll learn,

Littlest Part: How do you do it?

All Machine Parts: Slick power! *(Machine works on for several moments before Slick returns)*

Slick: POWER OFF! Very nicccee. Yesss. You sssee to fit in nicccely.

Littlest Part *(mournfully)* Do you really think ssoo? *(She/ he is surprised by the s's in his/her voice.)*

Slick: *(pleased)* Without a sssingle doubt. Now sssleep while you can. You get one hour of ressst and then 23 hours of work. *(Mr. Slick exists. The rest of the machine has already assumed sleeping positions)*

Littlest Part: This isn't right. I'm even more unhappy than I was before. I want to get out of here, but there' s nowhere for me to go. I'm very sss...unhappy. I don't understand.

Slick Part 4 : Hey, don't sssweat it, kid.

Littlest Part: Huh?

Slick Part 4: I ussed to be jusst like you. You'll get ussed to it. It getsss easssier the longer you're here.

Littlest Part: Oh. *(Slick Part 4 goes back to sleep. Littlest Part tries to remove the scarf and hat but isn't strong enough. She/he sits dejected and begins to sing softly)*

Far away, lost and alone

I feel the sadness in my sigh.

Where can I find someone to lift me up,

To wipe the tear from my eye?

I'm not special, I'm worth less and I'm small

I'm not important, I'm no one. Nobody at all.

Narrator: Meanwhile, back at Mr. G's workshop... *(The parts of Mr. G's machine takes the place of Mr. Slick's machine as they talk among themselves.)*

4: Sshh, here comes Mr. G! *(Machine pretends to be off)*

Mr. G: Ahh! It's a beautiful day. And how is my grand and wonderful machine? Are we ready? Today we are going to make our new grand and wonderful product.

Narrator: And then Mr. G turned on his wonderful machine. *(Machine parts start normal action that quickly becomes jerky and finally runs down)*

Computer Center: Malfunction, malfunction.

Mr. G: What? What? What has happened to my grand and wonderful machine? Let me see... Power? Okay. Spark plugs? Okay. Computer Center? Okay. Littlest Part? Littlest Part? Hey, where is my littlest part? The one that goes plink, plink.

4: Excuse me, Mr. G?

Mr. G: Ahh! A talking machine. I'm a better inventor than I thought.

2: Sir, um, we didn't know we needed that little one.

Computer Center: It was so little and hardly did anything at all.

3: Couldn't you just fix us to work without it?

5: Yeah, it's not like you lost an important part like one of us.

Mr. G: You silly machine. Every part of my machine has an important purpose. You think that because it was little it wasn't important? Now I have to go out and find our little part or this grand and wonderful machine will never ever work. It will just be a heap of junk!

All Parts: Oh, no!

Mr. G: Oh, yes!

All Parts: Oh, no!

Mr. G: Oh, yes, yes, yes!

Narrator: So Mr. G went looking for the Littlest Part. *(As Mr. G travels through the audience looking for the Littlest Part, Mr. Slick's machine replaces Mr. G's machine on stage)* At last he found the Littlest Part stuck in Mr. Slick's machine. *(Mr. Slick's machine is in motion. Mr. G waves his hand and the machine stops)*

Mr. G *(to Littlest Part)*: Hello.

Littlest Part *(ashamed)*: Hello.

Mr. G: Don't I know you from somewhere?

Littlest Part: Uh-huh!

Mr. G: I kind of recognize you, but you look different.

Littlest Part: I know.

Mr. G: Are you happy now?

Littlest Part: Yesss—no!

Mr. G: You look pretty silly.

Littlest Part: I know.

Mr. G: What are you doing here?

Littlest Part: I'm being important. What are you doing here?

Mr. G: Well, I'm looking for something very, very important. You see, I invented this grand and wonderful machine. Oh, you should have seen it; it was so wonderful.

Littlest Part: And grand?

Mr. G: Yeah, that too. But it won't work now.

Littlest Part: Gee!

Mr. G: It won't work because it's missing a very important part.

Littlest Part: Can't you replace it?

Mr. G: There's only one like it in all the world.

Littlest Part: Oh!

Mr. G: I've been looking everywhere but I can't find it. It's pretty small. Oh about this big *(he indicates the height of the Littlest Part)* and goes "plink, plink." But I guess I'll never find it.

Littlest Part: Gee that's too bad, maybe you should—wait—that's me. I go "plink, plink," but I can't be important, I...

Mr. G: Now you're really silly. Did you think you're not important because you're not strong or speedy? Then how come my machine is kaput? You think plink, plink is not important, but the strong part can't do it, the Computer Center can't do it. Not everyone knows right away what makes him or her special.

Littlest Part: Oh, Mr. G, if only I could go with you, but I'm stuck in Mr. Slick's machine, and I'm not strong enough to get out.

Mr. G: You're not strong enough, but I am! *(Mr. G removes the hat, glasses, and scarf from the Littlest Part)*  
You're all free ! *(Mr. Slick's machine looks puzzled, then, as it dawns on them that they are, indeed, free, they throw their hats into the air and exit)*

Littlest Part *(hugging Mr. G)*: Thanks, Mr.G.

Mr. G: Now get yourself and your little "plink, plink" back to my workshop and get back to work.

Narrator: And so they went back to Mr. G's workshop, where the other parts were very happy to see them.

1: Hey, everybody, there's Mr. G.

4: And he has the little guy with him.

Mr. G: Hey, look what I brought home!

All Parts *(to Littlest Part)*: I'm sorry, we're sorry...

Mr. G: Now listen and listen good. You are all important, you all do different things. And nobody is more important than the other. Got it?

All Parts: Yes, Mr. G!

Mr. G: Now let's get working.

All Parts: Hurray!

Mr. G: Power on! *(All parts make the machine sound and do motions.)* Power off! *(All freeze)*

Narrator: In the beginning we were made in God's own image. Therefore we were indeed beautiful. But Satan in his jealousy and hatred of God's wonderful creation attempts to convince us that we are not special or important in God's sight, and through sin and doubt, he tries to reform us in his image. Satan knows that if he can convince us that we are no good, then he will have robbed God of His most precious treasure in His kingdom. But God sees us, and recognizes us, and saves us from our despair. In Jesus, His Son, He lifts the burden of sin from us and reforms us anew in His glorious image.

All Players *(singing as they gather around the Littlest Part)*:

We're all special  
in the loving eyes of God  
We're all important when we stand  
At the foot of the cross.  
Why do we always forget the ones  
Who seem to us so small,  
When God with His holy hand on us  
Has a purpose for us all?

Congregation joins on chorus:

We're all special  
in the loving eyes of God  
We're all important when we stand  
At the foot of the cross.

All Players : I praise you because I am fearfully  
And wonderfully made;  
Your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well.

Congregation joins on chorus:

We're all special  
in the loving eyes of God  
We're all important. When we stand  
At the foot of the cross.

Littlest Part: And they lived happily everlasting!

**Hymn**

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" (Lutheran Service Book 656,657)

**Responsive Litany**

(Divide congregation into two parts)

1: We are the body of Christ and each one of us is a part of it.

2: The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts.

1: God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as He wanted them to be.

2: All the parts are important.

1: All are called to serve.

2: Help us, Lord, not to be passive,

1: But to be active as servants called to serve;

2: To truly care for each other in our needs, hurts, and sufferings.

1: Help us not to conform to the world,

2: But be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

1: Help us to reform our sinfulness to godliness.

2: And through Your Spirit, be reformed in Your love.

1: Where there is evil,

2: Let us do good.

1: Where there is unforgiveness,

2: Help us to forgive.

C: Unite us to walk together, images made in Your love. Amen.

**Benediction**

L: Go and serve. As you exit the walls of this church remember the Spirit, who empowers you, is with you, to guide and direct you as you enter the mission field as His servants.

C: We go, reformed in His love. Amen.

**We're All Special**

J. L. Gsus4

Why do we al - ways for - get the ones who seem to us so small?  
Far - a - way lost and a - lone I feel the sad - ness in my sigh.

D G D G

When God with his ho - ly hand on us has a  
Where can I find some - one to lift me up to wipe

A G D A

pur - pose for us all. We're all spe - cial in the  
a tear from my eye? I'm not spe - cial. I am

G A Asus4 D A

lov - ing eyes of God. We're all im - port - ant when we  
worth - less and I am small. I'm not im - port - ant. I'm no

G D

stand at the foot of the cross.  
one— no - bod - y at all.

Originally published in Youth Ministry Quarterly 90.4.

Updated for youthESource in September 2016

youthESource is published on the Web by the LCMS Office of National Mission—Youth Ministry. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; 1-800-248-1930; www.youthesource.com. Editor: Sherrah Holobaugh Behrens. VOL. 13 NO. 9. September 2016.