National Junior High Sunday 2019
“Strong and Courageous” based on Joshua 1:9 (NRSV)

Drama: Places! (Based on Joshua 1:9)
by Frank Ramirez

Characters:
Angel Stage Manager
Joshua

ANGEL
(Enter Angel Stage Manager with clipboard, looking around anxiously, stopping in middle, and calling out in a loud voice:)
Places!
(No response. Pause. Repeats:)
Places!
(Short Pause)
Joshua!

JOSHUA
(Entering hurriedly, puzzled)
Yes?

ANGEL
Where have you been? I called for you twice?

JOSHUA
You called for me once.

ANGEL
I called out Places twice!

JOSHUA
My name is Joshua, not places.

ANGEL
Places is what you when the show is ready to begin. It means, get in your places. Everyone. Lights! Stage! Sound! Actors! Music! Everybody! Everything!

JOSHUA
(looking around)
Where's everyone else? I'm the only one here.

ANGEL

They're all in their places.

JOSHUA

Who? What?

ANGEL

Look all around you. The sun is in the sky! That's lights. The birds are in the trees. That's music. You're on the desert sand, there's the Jordan River, and on the other side is the green, green grass of the Promised Land. That's the set!

(pointing to all the Junior High students)

Over there are all the people ready to follow you into the Promised Land. You step out in faith. They follow you. The waters of the Jordan part, you walk on through, there's some kind of ceremony, say, stacking rocks so everyone remembers this big day, and there we are! Done and done!

(Pause)

Places!

(Pause)

What are you waiting for? I said places.

JOSHUA

Uh, someone's missing.

ANGEL

(flipping through pages of script)

No. No, it looks like everyone's here. Time for you to make your big entrance and lead everyone across the Jordan! Places!

(Joshua does not move)

Places!

JOSHUA

(begins calmly but by the end he's going to get a little hysterical!)

Where's Moses? Moses is not here. You remember Moses. Moses gets saved from the wicked Pharaoh's order to kill all the male slave babies because they put him in the basket on the Nile River and Pharaoh's daughter finds him and thinks he's "so cute" and Moses' sister arranges for Moses' mother to raise him up in Pharaoh's house and he gets big and strong and famous and kills an Egyptian overseer beating a Hebrew slave so he goes into hiding and is a shepherd for many years until God speaks to Moses out of a burning bush so he and his brother Aaron tell Pharaoh to "Let My People Go!" and throws down his staff and it turns into a snake but the
Egyptian magicians can do the same thing so Pharaoh says no and Moses says yes and Pharaoh says no and Moses says yes, and then there are the Ten Plagues, frogs and bugs and big old sores all over the bodies of the Egyptians and the Nile River turns red as blood and you can't drink the water and things go dark and hailstones as big as rocks fall down and finally there's death and destruction and ruin and Pharaoh says, "Go! Go! Go!" and the people Go! Go! Go! but then Pharaoh goes after them with the chariots and is going to wipe them all out but the Red Sea parts and the people walk through on the dry land and get to the other side safe and sound, but when Pharaoh and all the chariots and all the soldiers follow, well,

\[
\begin{align*}
Oh, \textit{Mary}, \textit{don't you weep, don't you mourn}, \\
Oh, \textit{Mary}, \textit{don't you weep, don't you mourn}, \\
\textit{Pharaoh's Army got drownned} \\
Oh, \textit{Mary don't you weep}
\end{align*}
\]

And then the people complained about the lack of food and water and there was manna from the heavens and water from the rock and then I was one of the twelve spies that snuck into Canaan and ten of the spies said we couldn't take these guys, they were like giants, but Caleb and I said we've got Moses and we've got God, we can do this thank, come on, guys! We can do this thing! And now forty years have gone by and we're finally done with the journey and we couldn't have done it without Moses and now we're finally here, we're finally here! And you're expecting us to cross over into the Promised Land without Moses but Moses was like a giant, there has never been another Moses, the Bible says there has never been a prophet like Moses who talked to God face to face and I'm just Joshua and I'm not even on God's Twitter Account and we're not Friends on Face book or anything, We need Moses! We need Moses!

\((panting, out of breath)\)

ANGEL

Quite through?

JOSHUA nods

Need a drink of water? A wafer of manna, maybe?

JOSHUA shakes head

Very well. Take a deep breath.

JOSHUA takes a deep breath

And another. And another. Good. Okay, listen carefully.

(Pause)

Moses is not here. Moses is not coming.

JOSHUA

Where is he?

ANGEL

Remember that trip Moses took up the mountain by himself a day or two ago? Well, Moses has officially checked out. He has retired. He walks with the Creator. Moses rode off into the sunset.
He's earned his wings. He laid his burden down. Moses is now gathering by the river. He is taking a dirt nap. He is having Breakfast with Bernie. Moses is now part of the heavenly choir.

(pause)
Do I may myself clear?

JOSHUA

When you say that he is having breakfast with --

ANGEL

(Interrupting)
He's not here. He's not coming. Joshua, if anything is going to happen, it's up to you.

JOSHUA

Me? But I'm no Moses. Moses was always in charge. He's the one who has done everything? We could always count on Moses to get us out of trouble, like that whole Golden Calf thing where I kind of goofed up. Who will I turn to?

ANGEL

And Moses was no Joshua. Look, Joshua, it's not like Moses invented the Internet or anything. Now I heard God talking to you while I was busy getting everything and everyone else in their places. What did God say to you?

(pause)
What did God --

JOSHUA

(blurting it out)
Be strong and courageous.

ANGEL

Again.

JOSHUA

Be strong and courageous.

ANGEL

Three times, wasn't it? God said three times

JOSHUA

(measured)
Be strong and courageous. Yeah, you're right. It's going to be tough, isn't it?

(ANGEL, flipping through pages of script)
Yes. Tough.

(JOSHUA)
And there's going to be times when I'll want to just give up. And quit. But I won't be alone.

(ANGEL, indicating youth)
There'll be a cast of thousands. Okay, hundreds. And no matter how bad it gets, there'll be no winter. And no dragons.

(JOSHUA)
No winter. No dragons.

(ANGEL)
You're the Superhero now.

(JOSHUA)
I'm the superhero now.

(ANGEL)
And can I let you in on a little secret? Moses was the leader, but he had his doubts. He wasn't sure he could get the job done. But Moses had one thing that you've got too. Moses has --

(JOSHUA)
GOD!

(ANGEL)
God!

(Pause, then walking off)
Places!

(JOSHUA, to youth)
You hear that? Places! Let's do this!