

A Second Helping's Stage Full of Warm Spirits Takes the Chill Out of Winter Nights

by **MARTHA KERAVUORI AND CHUCK GALE** • JANUARY 13, 2019



*Temple Theatre of Sanford will stage *A Second Helping* on Jan. 10-Feb. 3 (photo by Ben Bashinski)*

Typically, sequels do not live up to the standards set by the original in plays and movies. ***A Second Helping: The Church Basement Ladies Sequel***, on stage now at the **Temple Theatre of Sanford**, is well performed and directed; but the material lacks the depth of the first one. There are several areas in which it is weak, but we're not going to enumerate them. **Temple Theatre** artistic director **Peggy Taphorn** and her staff of supporting artists and her cast make the show well worth enjoying.

A Second Helping was written by **Greta Grosch**, inspired by the books of **Janet Letnes Martin** and **Suzann Nelson**, with music and lyrics by **Drew Jansen** and **Dennis Curley**.

Director **Peggy Taphorn** has chosen the same cast as in the March 2018 production and also designed all the costumes again. Her team also remains the same.

Taphorn's direction is snappy, fast-paced, and lively. Her cast are professional quality performers who find every drop of entertainment to express, singing, dancing, being funny and being serious. They are a joy to watch.

Music director **James Clark, Jr.** gets vocal expression of superior quality from this cast of four women and one man. And choreographer **Jacob Toth** blends lively and energetic movements up and down and across and around the kitchen island.

Set designer **Tab May** recreates the March of 2018 set of the church basement kitchen, still homey, warm, and sturdy. Three doors and an accordion window provide access to what is going on in adjacent rooms.

Taphorn, in her role of costume designer, captures the outrageous garb of 1969-70, replete with polyester disco suit for the pastor and psychedelic blouse for Mrs. Engelson's pantsuit. And lighting designer **Dallas LaFon** enhances the story and flow with appropriate gobo shadow lights.

Jeanne Adams-Koonce, who plays Mrs. Snustad, uses her operatic voice to good advantage, mostly for fun, but the timbre is unmistakably there. She also has impeccable comic timing, and an uncanny ability to represent that not-so-much forgotten past so many of us combine with a resistance to change.

Pastor E.L. Gunderson is in the capable personage of **Gus Allen**, who sort of emcee's the show while shepherding the home-town sheep and missionaries visiting from afar. Allen has a boatload of talent, great timing — he's a song-and-dance man with plenty of stage presence.

Kathy Day brings us Mrs. Gilmer Gilmerson, the lady who really knows her way around the kitchen, as well as what's going around. Day also spills over with energetic dance and song. She is a true second helping of love.

Mrs. Elroy Engelson, about to be a grandmother, and filled with feminist ideas, is well represented by **Shirley Proctor**, who will not be content unless her daughter rises above farm-wife status and exercises her American-made Freedoms. She belongs in this group of talented song-and-dance ladies, because her own talents are solid and obvious.

Theresa McGuirk is the pregnant daughter, Beverly Signe Hauge, who transitioned from happy expectant mother to overweight, complaining, pregnant, farmer's wife, all the while singing and dancing up a storm in the ensemble.

Here's a stage full of warm spirits to take the chill out of winter nights.



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The Temple Theatre of Sanford presents A SECOND HELPING: THE CHURCH BASEMENT LADIES SEQUEL at 2 p.m. Jan. 17, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Jan. 18, 7:30 p.m. Jan. 19, 2 p.m. Jan. 20, 2 p.m. Jan. 24, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Jan. 25, 7:30 p.m. Jan. 26, 2 p.m. Jan. 27, 2 p.m. Jan. 31, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Feb. 1, 7:30 p.m. Feb. 2, and 2 p.m. Feb. 3 at 120 Carthage St., Sanford, North Carolina 27330.

TICKETS: \$25 (\$14 students and \$21 Lee County teachers/educator and active-duty military personnel), except \$21 for adults on Thursday nights and \$21 per ticket for groups of 10 or more.

BOX OFFICE: 919-774-4155, boxoffice@templeshows.com, or <https://www.vendini.com/>.

GROUP RATES (10+ tickets): 919-774-4155, boxoffice@templeshows.com, or <http://templeshows.com/ticketinfo/group-packages-sales>.

SHOW: <http://templeshows.com/showsandevents/2018-19/second-helping-church-basement-ladies-sequel> and <https://www.facebook.com/events/1410397222425666/>.

VIDEO PREVIEW: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LRuy6aitSg>.

2018-19 MAINSTAGE SEASON: <http://templeshows.com/showsandevents/2018-19>.

PRESENTER/VENUE: <http://www.templeshows.com/>, <https://www.facebook.com/TheTempleTheatre>, and <https://twitter.com/TempleTheatreNC>, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_Theatre_\(Sanford,_North_Carolina\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_Theatre_(Sanford,_North_Carolina)), and https://www.youtube.com/user/templetheatrenc?feature=results_main.

DIRECTIONS/PARKING/MAP: <http://templeshows.com/visit>.