

The Little Prince
By Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
Adapted for Church by Rev. Olivia Holmes
Sunday, February 28, 2010

The Players:

St. Exupéry	Ken Koerber
The Little Prince	Chris Soule
His Rose	Linda Ashford
The Fox	Olivia Holmes
St. Exupéry Narrator	Brian Kugel
Little Prince Narrator	Doug Weckstein
Rose Narrator	Kristin Nelson
Fox Narrator	Bob Wright

All 4 Narrators: *(LP, Fox, Rose, St. E come from the pulpit side of chancel and take their places behind the chancel table, in this order)*

St. E.: *(Walks to chancel, sits on his chair, next to his airplane, takes a thoughtful position (elbow on knee, head in hand?))*

St. E. Narrator: Once when I was six I saw a magnificent picture in a book about the jungle, called *True Stories*. It showed a boa constrictor swallowing a wild beast. In the book it said: “Boa constrictors swallow their prey whole, without chewing. Afterward they are no longer able to move, and they sleep during the six months of their digestion.” Inspired, I drew a picture. I showed the grown-ups my masterpiece, and asked them if my drawing scared them. Here is a copy of my picture. *(He holds up drawing Number One)*. The grown-ups answered, “Why be scared of a hat?” My drawing was not a picture of a hat. It was a picture of a boa constrictor digesting an elephant. Then I drew a picture of the inside of the boa constrictor, *(St. E takes 2nd sheet from floor and draws)* so the grown-ups could understand. They always need explanations. My drawing Number Two looked like this: *(He holds up drawing Number Two)*.

St. E Narrator: The grown-ups advised me to put away my drawings of boa constrictors and apply myself instead to geography, history, arithmetic, and grammar. *(St. E. puts picture down, and stares at his airplane)* So having given up a promising career as an artist simply because grown-ups never understand important art, I became a pilot instead, which is how I came to be here, *(St. E points to the plane, and his water supply)* in the middle of the Sahara Desert...with engine troubles and only enough water for eight days. I’ll bet even grown-ups would understand how serious this situation is!

St E Narrator: The first night I went to sleep on the sand, a thousand miles from any inhabited country. So you can imagine my surprise when I was awakened at daybreak by a funny little voice saying, *(LP approaches St. E, hands extended in entreaty)*

LP Narrator: “Please...draw me a sheep.”

St.E Narrator: “What?” I said, stunned, looking for the body that belonged to that funny voice. *(St. E. acts stunned)*

St. E.: *(Turns toward the prince in great surprise, but doesn’t see him just yet.)*

LP Narrator: “Draw me a sheep...please.” *(LP reaches out in request a second time)*

St.E Narrator: It was just then that I saw the little man. (*St. E. sees the prince now, in astonishment*) He seemed neither exhausted nor dying of thirst. Remember, I was 1000 miles from anything at all. He didn't look lost, either, though his clothing was, well, a bit odd. In the face of such an overpowering mystery, I dared not disobey. Since I had never made a drawing of a sheep, I drew for him one of the two drawings I knew how to make: drawing Number One. I held it up for him to see. (*St. E. holds up drawing Number One for the prince*) He said, (*LP mimes shaking his head, pointing at the drawing and miming fear of boa constrictors, and the big size of an elephant*)

LP Narrator: "No, no, I don't want an elephant inside a boa constrictor. A boa constrictor is very dangerous, and an elephant would get in the way. Where I live, everything is very small. (*LP mimes very small round planet*) Please, draw me a sheep."

St. E. Narrator: So I drew him a sheep and showed it to him. (*St. E. holds up drawing # 3 for the prince*) He looked at it carefully and, shaking his head, he said,

LP Narrator: "No. This one is already quite sick. Draw me another one." (*LP mimes sick sheep, shaking his head*)

St.E. Narrator: So I tried again. (*St. E. picks up drawing # 4, mimes drawing, and shows the prince a new sheep*) (*The prince studies it*) After his careful study of my drawing, he said,

LP Narrator: (*LP mimes old sheep*) "No. This one is too old. I want a sheep that will live a long time."

St.E. Narrator: So then, since I was impatient to start work on my engine, which any grown-up would understand, but not this little prince, I drew my final drawing, showed it to him, (*he picks up drawing # 5, the crate, and shows it to the prince*) and explained: "This is just the sheep's crate. The sheep you want is inside." My young critic's face lit up, (*LP mimes great glee*) and he said:

LP Narrator: "That's just the kind I wanted. Do you think this sheep will need a lot of grass?" (*LP mimes thoughtful question, looking at St. E.*)

St. E. Narrator: "Why?" (*still holding drawing, St. E. mimes asking why*)

LP Narrator: "Because where I live, everything is very small..." (*LP mimes very small planet*)

St.E. Narrator: "There's sure to be enough. I've given you a very small sheep." At this, the Little Prince peeked inside the crate (*LP mimes looking closely into the crate*) to see for himself, and he said: (*LP shakes his head, and points into the crate, looking at St.E.*)

LP Narrator: "Not so small as all that...Look! He's gone to sleep...you'd better put him down so he won't be disturbed" (*LP sits down next to St.E.*)

St.E. Narrator: With that, the Little Prince came to sit down beside me. (*St. E. leans drawing against the side of his plane, and regards the prince thoughtfully*) It took me a long time to understand where he came from. He wasn't always good at answering questions; though he was excellent at asking them, as all children are. When he asked me what my airplane was, (*LP points to plane*) I explained that I'd been flying, and, more or less, fell out of the sky. (*St. E. points heavenward and mimes landing his plane*) He found that hilariously funny, which annoyed me no end, and then he said, (*LP gives a big laugh, then points to the heavens*)

LP Narrator: So you fell out of the sky, too. What planet are you from?

St.E. Narrator: That was my first clue, and ultimately I decided, after much thought, that he must have come from Asteroid B-612, a very small planet indeed, way up in the sky, approximately over there. (*St. E. points to an imaginary star*). His planet was so small, in fact, that he told me that one day, when he was feeling very sad, he watched the sun set 44 times, just by moving his chair full circle around his planet. (*LP mimes watching sun set, moves his chair a bit, watches again, etc.*) He told me he wanted the sheep to eat the first sprouts of any baobab tree that sprouted on his planet, because they grow so big their roots would burst his planet apart. Then, as he was thinking about his sheep, he said:

LP Narrator: “If a sheep eats seedling baobab trees, does it eat flowers, too?”

St.E. Narrator: “A sheep eats whatever it finds.”

LP Narrator: “Even flowers that have thorns?”

St.E. Narrator: “Yes, even flowers that have thorns.” And I turned my attention ferociously to unscrewing a bolt jammed in my engine. (*St. E. works on engine*)

LP Narrator: “Then what good are thorns?” (*LP stretches his hands out in question*)

St.E. Narrator: I didn’t know. I ignored the question and continued to work on my engine. But he never let go of a question, once he’d asked it.

LP Narrator: Stamping his foot, (*LP impatiently stamps his foot*) he repeated his question: “What good are thorns?”

St.E. Narrator: Frustrated now, I turned toward him and I said: (*St. E. looks up at the prince in frustration*) “Thorns are no good for anything – they’re just a flower’s way of being mean.”

LP Narrator: (*LP steps back in astonishment*) The Little Prince was taken aback, and said: “Oh!” But then, after reflection, he lashed out at me angrily planting his fists on his hips, “I don’t believe you! Flowers are weak. They’re naïve. They reassure themselves whatever way they can. They believe their thorns make them frightening...” He paused, then looked at me hard and long and said, “So you think flowers...”

St.E. Narrator: I gruffed, (*St. E. huffs up, then points to his plane*) “I don’t think anything at all; I just said what came into my head. I’m busy here with a very serious problem,” and I turned back to my plane.

LP Narrator: The Little Prince bristled visibly (*LP bristles*) and said, “Serious problem? Serious problem? You talk like grown-ups!”

St.E. Narrator: That made me a little ashamed. But the little prince was just warming up. He said,

LP Narrator: You confuse everything... You’ve got it all mixed up!” He was very annoyed, and tossed his golden hair in the air. (*LP tosses his head*) “I know a planet inhabited by a red-faced gentleman. He’s never smelled a flower. (*LP mimes smelling a flower deeply*) He’s never looked at a star. (*LP looks to the heavens, pointing*) He’s never loved anyone. (*LP mimes a hug*) He’s never done anything except add up numbers. (*LP mimes adding up numbers*) And all day long he says over and over, just like you, ‘I’m a serious man! I’m a serious man!’ and that puffs him up with pride. (*LP mimes puffing up*) But he’s not a man at all. He’s a mushroom.

St.E. Narrator: Well, that got my attention, and I said, wagging my finger at him: “Now, now, young friend, my faith teaches me that we shouldn’t speak badly of mushrooms.” (*pause for laughter, if any*) But the Little Prince was on a roll:

LP Narrator: I was mad now, and I said to this grown-up: “For millions of years flowers have been producing thorns. *(LP draws thorns as though attached to his torso)* For millions of years sheep have been eating them all the same. *(LP mimes eating a flower)* And it’s not serious, trying to understand why flowers go to such trouble to produce thorns that are good for nothing? *(LP opens arms and glares at St. E)* It’s not important, the war between the sheep and the flowers? Suppose I happen to know a unique flower, one that exists nowhere in the world except on my planet, one that a little sheep can wipe out in a single bite one morning, just like that...that isn’t important? If someone loves a flower -- of which there is just one among all the millions and millions of stars -- that’s enough to make him happy when he looks at the stars. *(LP looks up at the heavens)* He knows his beloved flower is up there somewhere. *(LP points toward his star)* But if a sheep eats it, then for him it’s as if all the stars just went out. And that isn’t important?” He couldn’t say another word, and he just burst into tears. *(LP covers his weeping eyes and sobs visibly)*

St.E. Narrator: Night had fallen. What did my broken airplane matter? There was a little prince to be consoled. I put my arm around him to comfort him, *(St. E pauses, thinks, then reaches out to comfort the prince)* Then I said, “The flower you love is not in danger...I’ll draw you a muzzle for your sheep. I’ll draw you a fence for your flower.” *(pause)* I just didn’t know what to say; it’s so mysterious, the land of tears. Eventually, as I held him, the Little Prince told me about his flower. He stood and backed away a little, as he spoke. *(LP wipes his eyes, stands, then mimes telling a story about his flower.)* He said he had first noticed her when she was developing her bud. *(Rose walks to front of chancel and preens, prince turns to watch her in awe)* She was so different from anything he had ever seen before on his planet. Not knowing whether she was just a new mutated form of baobab, he watched her carefully every day. But she just became more beautiful as her bright green bud grew, and then, slowly began to open, *(rose opens beautifully)* each delicate and profoundly pink petal just showing its tips in tantalizing gloriousness. Finally she came into full flower. The prince was astonished. *(LP mimes astonishment)(St. E. Narrator hands microphone to Rose narrator) (St. E. goes back to work on his plane)*

LP Narrator: I said to my flower, “How beautiful you are,” to which the flower responded.

Rose narrator: “Am I not? *(pause for laughter, if any)* I was born the same time as the sun.”

LP Narrator: The Little Prince realized she was none too modest, but he didn’t care, she was so dazzling. She began to preen, then she said:

Rose Narrator: *(Rose preens, then indicates hunger)* “Oh, I am hungry, and it is breakfast time, is it not? Would you be so kind as to tend to me?”

LP Narrator: It was not long before she began tormenting him with her rather touchy vanity. One day, for example, pointing to her four thorns, she said: *(Rose indicates thorns with her hands)*

Rose Narrator: “I’m ready for tigers, with all their claws!”

LP Narrator: I replied: “There are no tigers on my planet. And besides, tigers don’t eat weeds.” The rose responded with deep hurt: *(Rose mimes being very hurt)*

Rose Narrator: “I am not a weed. I am not afraid of tigers, but I have a horror of drafts. Would you make me a screen to protect me?”

LP Narrator: I scratched my head, then remembered a screen I had just over here. I went to get it, and gently placed it behind her. *(LP scratches his head, mimes getting a screen and putting it around her, then steps back, studying her)* I didn’t think it very good for a flower to be afraid of drafts. *(pause for laughter, if any)* I found her very complicated.

Rose Narrator: *(Rose gestures as follows)* “After dark you will put me under glass. How cold it is where you live...quite uncomfortable.” She broke off, somewhat embarrassed...she realized she’d arrived as a seed, and couldn’t have known anything about where she came from. *(she mimes embarrassment)**(Rose narrator hands microphone back to St. E. Narrator)*

LP Narrator: The Little Prince tended to her needs, ever so gently, *(LP mimes weeding around her feet, watering her, giving her fertilizer, etc.)* But he also came to mistrust her, though he loved her dearly. You see, she just made stories up to suit her needs, with no particular regard for him, or for his love and gentle tending to her needs.

St. E. Narrator: And that, my friends, is why he left his planet. He loved his beautiful rose, tended her so carefully, and she bruised his heart in return, never letting him know how much she really did love him. And that is how he came to be in the desert with me. *(Rose sits down in the first pew; LP returns to his stool by St. E)* The Little Prince came and sat back down beside me. And when he spoke about his rose to me, after all the time of his travels to think about their relationship, he said:

LP Narrator: “In those days, when I left her, I didn’t understand anything. I should have judged her according to her actions, not her words. *(pause)* She perfumed my planet and, well, she lit up my whole life. I should never have run away! I ought to have realized the tenderness underlying her silly pretensions. *(LP thinks)* Flowers are so contradictory! *(pause for laughter, if any)* But I was too young to know how to love her.”

St.E. Narrator: After he left home, the Little Prince visited a number of planets *(LP mimes exploring, walking, stopping, walking again,)* before coming to earth in the middle of the desert. He visited a king, a very vain man who always needed lots of compliments, the businessman he told me about, a lamplighter, and a geographer, who never went out to do his own research; that was for the explorers to do...it was work, after all. When the Little Prince arrived on earth, he wandered a long time, but all he saw was sand and rocks and, yes, snow...until one day he wandered into a rose garden. *(LP walks to the vase of roses on the Joys and Sorrows table)**(St. E Narrator hands microphone to Rose Narrator)*

LP Narrator: Every single flower looked just like his beloved rose at home. Astounded, he asked, “Who are you?”

Rose Narrator: “We’re roses.” *(Rose Narrator hands microphone back to St. E. Narrator)*

LP Narrator: The poor little prince was very unhappy. *(LP mimes getting ready to weep)* His rose had told him she was the only one of her kind in the whole universe. And here were thousands of them, all just alike, in one garden. He said to himself, “She would be very annoyed if she saw this...she would cough terribly and pretend to be dying, to avoid being laughed at. And I’d have to pretend to be nursing her; otherwise, she’d really let herself die in order to humiliate me.” *(pause)* And then he said to himself, “I thought I was rich because I had just one flower, and all I own is an ordinary rose.” And he knelt down in the grass and wept. *(LP kneels down and weeps)*

St.E. Narrator: It was then that the fox appeared. *(Fox arrives from beyond the pulpit...stopping at a little distance from the prince)* *(St. E. Narrator passes microphone to Fox narrator)*

Fox Narrator: “Good Morning,” said the fox. *(LP straightens up, then stands, looking around but not seeing the fox.)*

LP Narrator: The Little Prince straightened up, then stood. He looked around, and even though he hadn’t seen the fox yet, he politely responded, “Good morning.”

Fox Narrator: The fox wanted to help, and said, “I’m here, under the apple tree.” (*Fox points to the pulpit pillar, as though it were an apple tree*)

LP Narrator: Never having seen such a creature before, the Prince said, “Who are you? You’re very pretty...” (*Fox preens*)

Fox Narrator: The fox preened prettily, then said, “I’m a fox.” (*fox points at self, and twirls*) The Little Prince was intrigued, and said,

LP Narrator: “Come and play with me.” (*LP reaches out to the fox in invitation to play*)

Fox Narrator: The fox, holding her reserve, said, “I can’t play with you. I’m not tamed.” (*Fox folds his arms and shakes his head.*)

LP Narrator: The Prince didn’t understand, and asked, “What does ‘tamed’ mean?”

Fox Narrator: “It’s something people too often neglect...with other people and with us as well. It means to create ties.” (*Fox mimes creating a knot*)

LP Narrator: “Ties?” I asked.

Fox Narrator: (*Fox mimes as follows*) “That’s right. For me you’re only a little boy just like thousands of other little boys. And I have no need of you. And you have no need of me, either. For you I’m only a fox like thousands of other foxes. But if you tame me, we’ll need each other. You’ll be the only boy in the world for me. And I’ll be the only fox in the world for you.

LP Narrator: I’m beginning to understand. (*LP sits back on his chair, thinking, and looking toward his rose*) There’s a flower...I think she’s tamed me...”

Fox Narrator: “My life is pretty boring: hunters chase me, I chase chickens. But if you tame me, my life will be filled with sunshine. I’ll know the sound of footsteps that will be different from all the rest. Other footsteps send me back underground. Yours will call me out of my burrow like music. And then, look! (*Fox points toward Pleasant St.*) You see the wheat fields over there? I don’t eat bread. For me wheat is of no use whatsoever. But once you’ve tamed me, the wheat, which is golden, will remind me of your hair. And I’ll love the sound of the wind in the wheat...” The fox fell silent for some moments, and stared at the little prince for some time. Then she said, “Please...tame me.”

LP Narrator: And so, each day, at exactly the same time, the Little Prince came to sit on a rock to wait for the fox. The fox came just a little closer every day, until finally, she just sat down by the Little Prince’s feet, and the Little Prince rubbed her beautiful fur, right between her ears, which the fox just loved.

LP Narrator: One day, while the fox slept, the Little Prince tiptoed away and went back to look at the roses in the rose garden. (*LP gets up, goes back to look at the roses on the joys and sorrows table*) When he looked at them carefully, he could see that they were not at all like his rose. He said to them, “You’re not at all like my rose. No one has tamed you yet. You’re not yet tied to anyone. My rose is more important to me than all of you together, because she’s the one I’ve watered and tended and listened to” The Little Prince paused for a moment, then looked way off in the distance, imagining just exactly where his rose was at the moment. Then he went on to say, “and well, yes, she’s the one I love.” And still thoughtful, he tiptoed back to the fox and scratched his head again, at which the fox stirred and stretched and sat up.

LP Narrator: The Little Prince looked tenderly down at the fox and said, “It’s time for me to leave now. I need to say good-bye.”

Fox Narrator: The fox looked up at him and said, “I will be sad when you are gone, but happy that you tamed me; I will have such wonderful memories, every time I look at the wheat in the fields. Let me tell you my secret. It’s quite simple, really. *(short pause)* One sees clearly only with the heart. *(short pause)* Anything essential is invisible to the eyes. *(short pause)* It’s the time you spent on your rose that makes your rose so important. *(short pause)* People have forgotten this truth, but you musn’t forget it. You become responsible, forever, for what you’ve tamed. You’re responsible for your rose...”

LP Narrator: The Little Prince reflected, “Yes, I understand that now; I’m responsible for my rose.” Then he waved good-bye to the Fox, and began the long walk back to his pilot and his airplane.

Fox Narrator: The Fox waved good-bye to the Prince, and slowly walked away. *(Fox walks off chancel and goes to sit down)**(Fox Narrator hands microphone back to St. E. Narrator)*

LP Narrator: As the Little Prince made his way back to the airplane, he realized he was very thirsty. So he stopped dead in his tracks and sniffed the air very carefully. Sure enough, he realized, he smelled water. He took two steps to the right, stirred the sand with his foot, and there in the dry sand he discovered a little spring flowing with fresh, sweet water. He bent down and scooped the water up in his hands, drinking deeply. Refreshed, he walked the rest of the way back to the pilot, whom he found wiping sweat from his brow, exhausted by all his work on the plane’s engine.

St. E. Narrator: Talking to himself, for he hadn’t yet seen the Little Prince return, the pilot said, “This situation is very serious; I’ve finished the last of my water, I have none to give the Little Prince; we’re both going to die of thirst. It’s hopeless.”

LP Narrator: The Little Prince had heard this, and jumped with joy, saying: “Oh, no we’re not, my friend the fox told me...”

St. E. Narrator: I stared at this excited Little Prince, very annoyed. “Little fellow, this has nothing to do with a fox! We have no water. We will die.”

LP Narrator: “I think it’s good to have a friend, to have tamed someone and been tamed, even if you’re going to die. I will always cherish my friendship with the fox. And you will not die, for I have found a spring with the purest, sweetest water, just over here. Come, I’ll show it to you.”

St. E. Narrator: And the Little Prince took me by the hand and walked me to his spring. I knelt down and drank my fill...I was so parched, and so relieved. The water was a miracle to me, and so was this Little Prince. When I’d drunk enough, we knelt down together, there by the spring, to rest. Looking up at the stars, the Little Prince spoke:

LP Narrator: “The stars are very beautiful, especially when you know that tonight, right above us, there is a star with a rose, a rose unique in all the world, MY rose. People where you live grow thousands of roses in one garden...yet they don’t find what they are looking for...and yet what they’re looking for could be found in a single rose...or a little water.” Tonight it is one year exactly since I came here. My star is right overhead. If I am to go home to tend my rose, I must leave you now. Draw me the muzzle for my sheep that you promised, please.”

St. E. Narrator: (St. E. takes a piece of paper and a pencil out of his pocket and draws a muzzle) So I took a piece of paper out of my pocket, and sketched a muzzle for his sheep, and gave it to him. Then he spoke again.

LP Narrator: It was very near here where I landed one year ago today. I met a snake where I landed, and he said he'd help me get home. I can't go with this body, it's too heavy. (*thoughtful pause*) I must admit I am afraid. But I want to be with the rose I love. My rose.

St. E. Narrator: I realized I couldn't bear the thought of never hearing his laughter again. But he said to me:

LP Narrator: "When I am gone, I will look at the stars, and I will see you there. I will see the fox, too. (*short pause*) You will fix your plane, you have plenty of water now. After I'm gone, at night, you'll look up at the stars, and you will think of me. It's too small, where I live, for me to show you where my star is. It's better that way. My star will be...one of the stars, for you. So you'll like looking at all of them. They'll all be your friends."

St. E. Narrator: And then he laughed that laugh I had come to love so well. "Ahh, little fellow, I love hearing you laugh."

LP Narrator: "When you look up at the stars at night -- since I'll be living on one of them, since I'll be laughing on one of them, so very happy to be tending my beloved rose again -- for you it'll be as if all the stars are laughing. (*short pause*) And when you are consoled after I leave -- everyone eventually is consoled, after all -- you'll be glad you've known me. You'll always be my friend. You'll feel like laughing with me. And you'll open your window sometimes just for the fun of it...and your friends will be amazed to see you laughing while you're looking up at the sky."

St. E. Narrator: Then the Little Prince laughed one last time, and said:

LP Narrator: "It is time. I must go. Do not come. It will look as though I'm suffering, as if I'm dying. Don't come to see that."

St. E. Narrator: "I won't leave you. Come, give me your hand and we will walk together toward your destiny." (*Holding hands, St. E. and LP slowly begin to walk down the center aisle*) (*St. E. Narrator hands microphone to Rose Narrator*)

Rose Narrator: And as the boy and the grown-up walked together toward their destiny, one particular rose, unique in all the universe, was looking toward the stars, wondering as she had so many times, when her beloved Little Prince would come back to her. She knew she loved him now. She was a little sad he had to leave her for her to learn this. She would be so glad to see him again. (*The rose comes to center aisle, preening sweetly and looking at the heavens, hoping her Little Prince will soon return*) (*Rose Narrator hands microphone to Fox narrator*)

Fox Narrator: And somewhere in the desert, there was a fox. She came to where she could see the wheat fields, and looked longingly at the wheat dancing in the wind, remembering her joy at being tamed by the Little Prince. (*Rose Narrator hands microphone back to St. E. Narrator*) (*The Fox and the Rose walk down center aisle, hand in hand*)

St. E. Narrator: (*wait until fox and rose are at back of sanctuary, then say:*) It's been six years now, since that night. It was over quickly; just one quick flash of the snake, and it was over. I'm somewhat consoled by now. I know he got back to his planet, because when I looked in the morning, his body was nowhere to be found. (*short pause*) And I love to look at the stars at night. I think of the Little Prince tending his one beloved rose, looking after his sheep, weeding his baobab trees, and every single star shines more brightly because he tamed me. (*St. E. Narrator places microphones back in the pulpit. Narrators silently leave chancel, taking their music stands with them to put by piano and then walk down center aisle*)

