

**‘ACTING THE BIBLE’**

**at**

**Beckley School**

**THE PASSOVER SUPPER,  
ARREST & PETER’S DENIAL  
(John 13:1-38b, 18:1-18, 25-27)**

**7 March 2024**

**Joint Benefice of**

**The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley St. Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover  
St. Barnabas, Horton-cum-Studley St. John the Baptist, Stanton St. John**

The Four Parishes 'Acting the Bible' team (previously known as 'Open the Book') leads assembly once a fortnight in Beckley School. The team take stories fresh from the pages of the Bible, and make them into mini dramas, to be acted out by themselves, together with Beckley schoolchildren. Through this, it is hoped that the Bible stories are brought alive, and remembered by the children, especially as they too are involved in the acting.

The team is led by Betty Dye, a Licensed Lay Reader, and includes members from Forest Hill, Stanton St John and Beckley. They meet once a fortnight to write the scripts, with the aim of adhering as closely as possible to the original Bible texts. This often involves comparing different Bible translations and even reading the New Testament in the original Greek!

## **THE PASSOVER SUPPER, THE ARREST, PETER'S DENIAL**

Taken mostly from John 13:1-38b and 18:1-18, 25-27

**Cast:** JESUS; PETER; JOHN; JUDAS; SCENE CHANGER; TEMPLE GUARD; NARRATOR: 9 x OTHER DISCIPLES; 3 x ACCUSERS

**Introduction:** Please imagine that this space here in front of you becomes 3 different areas. First of all, it will be the room where Jesus and his disciples have their last supper together – it was a feast called Passover. Then it will become the Garden of Gethsemane full of olive trees and finally it will be a courtyard outside the house of the most important priest, in which Jesus was tried for imaginary crimes.

### **SCENE 1.**

*IN CENTRE SPACE A TABLE, 10 SEATS SQUEEZED AROUND IT.*

*ENTER JOHN AND ANOTHER DISCIPLE WHO BUSILY PREPARE THE BREAD, WINE AND MEAT ON IT.*

**NARRATOR:** It is night time. In the upper room John and another of the disciples have prepared a fantastic Passover feast of roast lamb, wine and freshly baked flat bread, so that Jesus and the rest of his disciples, who are just about to arrive, can celebrate the feast together.

*LOUD KNOCKING. JOHN RUN TO CURTAIN*

**John:** Welcome Jesus, welcome Peter, welcome friends, come in!  
We have prepared the Passover meal here for us all.

*JESUS, JOHN AND PETER ENTER AND REMAIN STANDING. THE 9 DISCIPLES STREAM IN, SIT AROUND THE TABLE AND EAT THE BREAD.*

**Jesus:** (HAND ON THE SHOULDER OF ONE DISCIPLE)

I have so longed to have this last meal with you all before I leave you. (*PAUSE WHILE THEY EAT*).

Now, where is that bowl of water, there is something I must do for you?

*PETER AND JOHN SIT DOWN. JESUS PICK UP THE BOWL AND TOWEL, GO AND KNEEL DOWN NEXT TO A DISCIPLE AND START TO WASH HIS FEET, THEN TO ANOTHER AND THEN COME TO PETER.*

**Peter:** Jesus, no, I will not let you wash my feet!

*JESUS STAND UP*

**Jesus:** If I do not wash you, Peter, you will have no share with me.

**Peter:** If that's the case, then don't just wash my feet, Jesus, but my hands and my head too!

*(JESUS LAUGHS AND WASHES PETER'S FEET)*

**Jesus:** I will wash your feet, and the feet of everyone here. I know that servants normally do this job, and that leaders are usually served by others, but by washing your feet I, as your leader, am setting you all an example to show that you must serve one another.

*JESUS SITS DOWN WITH THE OTHERS*

**Jesus:** One of you is going to betray me.

**John:** (*LEANING OVER TO JESUS IN NEARLY A WHISPER*)

Not me, Lord! Who would do such a terrible thing?

**Jesus:** Watch! The one to whom I give this piece of bread has chosen to betray me.

*JESUS LEAN OVER TABLE AND TAKE A PIECE OF BREAD. TEAR OFF A PIECE AND HAND TO JUDAS.*

**Jesus:** Judas! Go now, and do what you have chosen to do.

*JUDAS GET UP AND SCURRY OUT TO HALL DOOR.*

**Jesus:** Soon I am going to a place that you can't come to at the moment but later on, when I have made it ready, you will come and join me there.

**Peter:** Why can't I come Lord? Wherever you go, I will follow you, even if I have to die.

**Jesus:** Oh Peter, you think that you would be willing to die for me, but I tell you that before the cockerel crows tomorrow morning, you will have denied 3 times that you even know me. (PAUSE)  
Now we must go outside and have some time to pray.

*ALL STAND UP, WRAP CLOAKS AROUND THEMSELVES AND GO BACK BEHIND CURTAIN.*

*STAGE MANAGER AND HELPERS REMOVE TABLES AND CHAIRS.*

## **Scene 2**

**Narrator:** It is still night time. Jesus and his disciples walk over to the Garden of Gethsemane. It is very dark.

*JOHN LEAD THE WAY OUT FROM BEHIND THE CURTAIN. ALL SPREAD CLOAKS ON GROUND AND SIT DOWN LOOKING EXHAUSTED.*

**John:** Jesus, it is the dead of night and we are so tired. Why have you brought us here to the Garden of Gethsemane? What must we do now?

**Jesus:** You must watch and pray. I am going over there to pray because I am deeply troubled.

*JESUS WALK TOWARDS THE HALL DOOR AND KNEEL DOWN. DISCIPLES ALL FALL ASLEEP.*

**Jesus:** Please let this cup pass from me, Father, but whatever you ask me to do, I will obey.

*JESUS GET UP AND WALK TO SLEEPING DISCIPLES.*

**Jesus:** Can you not stay awake for just a few minutes? (PAUSE)  
Oh look, the temple guards have come. They have swords and sticks. And there is Judas.

*JUDAS AND GUARD COME FROM HALL DOOR. DISCIPLES LEAP UP AND SURROUND JESUS.*

*PETER DRAW A SWORD*

**Judas:** Guard, watch me! The one I will greet with a kiss is Jesus of Nazareth. He is the one you have been told to arrest.

*JUDAS GO UP TO JESUS*

**Jesus:** Oh Judas, friend, would you betray me with a kiss? Peter, put down your sword.

Guard, I am the one you want. Let all these others go free.

*GUARD GRAB JESUS AND MARCH HIM OFF. DISCIPLES CREEP OFF BEHIND CURTAIN.*

### **Scene 3**

**Narrator:** Now it is almost morning. Jesus has been taken to the house of the High Priest where they have set up a courtroom and are even now accusing Jesus of crimes against God. Peter and another man are the only 2 disciples who have followed. Peter is standing by a fire in the courtyard.

*STAGE MANAGER BRING ON FIRE? PETER COME FROM BEHIND CURTAIN AND STAND BY FIRE WARMING HANDS. ACCUSERS STROLL UP FROM BEHIND CURTAIN.*

**Accuser 1:** I recognise you! You are one of Jesus' disciples, aren't you?

**Peter:** I am not!

**Accuser 2:** You have the same northern accent as Jesus. I am sure that you are one of Jesus' disciples!

**Peter:** I most certainly am not!

**Accuser 3:** I was there in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was arrested. I am absolutely certain that I saw you there with him!

**Peter:** I don't know what you are talking about. I swear that I wasn't there. I've never met Jesus!

*CROWING OF COCKEREL (BETTY).*

*PETER LOOKS HORRIFIED AND WALKS OFF WEEPING.*