

‘ACTING THE BIBLE’

at

Beckley School

TWO MIRACLE BABIES

(Luke 1 and 2)

23 November 2023

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!

TWO MIRACLE BABIES. Luke 1 and 2

Cast: NARRATOR; ZECHARIAH; GABRIEL; ELIZABETH; MARY, CHORUS, plus 4 children

Narrator: In Israel, there had been many, many years when the Lord God seemed to be very quiet, but suddenly, He began to do some amazing things.

Scene 1. Gabriel and Zechariah. ENTER GABRIEL

Gabriel: My name is the Angel Gabriel. I stand in the presence of Almighty God. He has sent me with a message for an old priest called Zechariah, who lives in Jerusalem with his wife Elizabeth. They have been praying for many years for God to give them a baby and now God has given me good news for them. Shh, I can hear Zechariah coming now.

GABRIEL TURNS HIS FACE AWAY TOWARD THE WINDOW. ZECHARIAH ENTERS, WALKS INTO THE TEMPLE.

Narrator: This day it was Zechariah's turn, as priest, to go into the very holiest place in the Temple of God to light the incense and pray for God's people.

ZECHARIAH ACTS OUT LIGHTING THE INCENSE AND PRAYING, GABRIEL TURNS TOWARDS HIM AND SUDDENLY ZECHARIAH IS AWARE OF HIM, IS TERRIFIED AND FALLS BACK.

Gabriel: Don't be afraid Zechariah. Your prayers have been heard. Now your wife, Elizabeth, will have a baby boy and you must call him John. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born and will be a great man of God. His job will be to get the people ready to meet God himself.

Zechariah: How can I believe such a thing? Elizabeth and I are far too old to be able to have a baby.

Gabriel: I am Gabriel and I stand in the presence of Almighty God. He himself sent me to give you this message of good news. But, because

you have not believed it, you will be unable to speak until the day when everything I have said comes true.

GABRIEL AND ZECHARIAH LEAVE, ZECHARIAH WITH HIS HAND OVER HIS MOUTH.

Chorus: God has promised to Zechariah and Elizabeth a miracle baby called John, who will get everything ready for the Lord's visit.

Narrator: It happened just as God said, and when Elizabeth was 6 months pregnant, Gabriel was given another task.

Scene 2. Gabriel and Mary *ENTER GABRIEL*

Gabriel: The Lord God has told me to give another message of good news. This time to a young woman called Mary, who lives in the town of Nazareth. Shh, I can hear her coming now.

GABRIEL TURNS AWAY THEN AFTER MARY WALKS IN, TURNS TOWARDS HER.

Gabriel: Greetings Mary! God himself is with you and has especially blessed you.

Narrator: Mary was very afraid and couldn't understand.

Gabriel: Don't be afraid Mary. God the Father is sending his one and only son to visit the earth and he will come as a baby. God is pleased with you and has chosen you to be his mother. You must call him Jesus. The Lord God will make him the ruler of all his kingdom and he will be king over it for ever.

Mary: How this is possible? I don't have a husband.

Gabriel: 'The Holy Spirit will bring this about. Your baby will be holy because he will be the son of God himself. Also your relative Elizabeth, who thought she was too old to have a baby, is actually pregnant right now. Nothing is impossible for God!'

Mary: I am the Lord's servant. Let it happen to me exactly as you have said.

GABRIEL AND MARY EXIT

**Chorus: God has promised to Mary a miracle baby called Jesus!
God's one and only Son is coming to visit!**

Narrator: It happened just as God said and very soon Mary became pregnant. She decided to travel down to Jerusalem to visit her old relative Elizabeth.

Scene 3. Elizabeth and Mary ENTER MARY

Mary: *(Calling loudly)* Elizabeth!

Elizabeth: *(Entering)* Mary! Is it really you?! It's amazing - when the baby inside me heard you call me, it leapt for joy! I am honoured by your visit Mary because you are pregnant with the Son of God. And you are very blessed because you believed that the angel Gabriel's message would actually happen.

Mary: My spirit is so full of joy because of what the Lord is like and what he has done. He has done a miracle for me, his humble servant. We don't deserve it, but he is coming to visit us!

MARY AND ELIZABETH EXIT

Narrator: Three months later, Zechariah and Elizabeth's miracle baby was born.

**Scene 4. Zechariah and Elizabeth with John ENTER ELIZABETH
AND ZECHARIAH**

Elizabeth: *(Looking at the baby)* Oh Look, Zechariah, our miracle baby. What joy the Lord has given us!

**Chorus: What are you going to call him? You should call him
Zechariah after his father.**

Elizabeth: No, his name is John.

**Chorus: But nobody in your family has that name! Zechariah, we
know that you can't speak but write down what you think.**

ELIZABETH HANDS HIM SOMETHING TO WRITE ON AND ZECHARIAH WRITES 'HIS NAME IS JOHN' AND SHOWS EVERYONE.

Zechariah: *(Full of surprise is able to talk)*

I can talk! Praise the Lord our God! You, baby John, have been chosen to go before God's very own son to prepare everyone for his visit to us on earth.

BOTH EXIT

Scene 5. Mary with Jesus

Narrator: Within a few months, Mary was also ready to give birth to her miracle baby. But things were not easy for her and her fiancé Joseph, for just days before the baby was due to be born they had to travel the long and hilly path all the way from Nazareth in the North to Bethlehem in the South. And when they got there, look what happened.

FOUR CHILDREN WALK ON, CHORUS GETS UP AND WALKS ON TO STAND BEHIND THEM

CHILD 1: The town is so full of visitors there was NOWHERE for them to sleep.

CHILD 2: The only place offered to them was a stable.

CHILD 3: So Mary's baby boy, little Jesus, was born in a stable and she wrapped him up, nice and warm, and laid him in a manger.

CHILD 4: Then a great choir of angels visited shepherds out on the hillside with the joyful news of Jesus' birth. They told the shepherds to leave their sheep, to go and find the baby, and to worship him.

Chorus plus the 4 children: So they went, and they found the UNEXPECTED BABY! THE MIRACLE BABY! THE WONDERFUL BABY! They found JESUS and worshipped him.

MARY WALK ON HOLDING A BABY AND SIT DOWN