



“What do you get if you combine Facebook, Twitter and Youtube?” was the gag that formed the basis of SWAG’s rendition of Our Lord’s Nativity in “Join the Angels” on December 22nd 2017. A group of 21 young people formed cast and crew in St Edwards Theatre for a night and presented this well told story in a unique and engaging way showing respect for this unique event with a balance of humour and creativity.



How did they do this? Well, God wanted more than the story to be told and he said he wanted something new and different. The angels were way ahead of him and with Jesus’ encouragement; they had anticipated a need for responding to change. Headed up

by the geeky and somewhat bonkers Chief Angel in Charge (aka CAIC), they persuaded the Liturgy Committee in Heaven to think outside of the box, or “laterally” as Mary coaxed, and permitted the young angels to illustrate how they might re tell



the same story we all think we know so well. But do we? Do we think about Mary’s journey to her destination in Bethlehem both physically and emotionally? Do we consider how frightened she might have been? The angels did and showed the assembled audience how she was nearly there, how she needed to continue to trust in God, how her prayers and our prayers would be answered.

When we listen to the story of the baby being born in a stable, do we understand with a renewed form of enlightenment what this means? The angels helped us to do this with use of mime and repetitive actions to illustrate how amazed the shepherds were, how joyful the angels were, how God had sent his Son down to earth to be our King. From moving and poignant images to foot tapping and energised celebrating, the angels presented an alternative way to listen to this true story.



God was impressed and also aware that it's easy to do this for a captive audience but what about the people beyond this privileged group? He asked CAIC how the story could be told to them. The answer isn't difficult but it does need to have taken into consideration the "new" tools at our disposal. So



whilst CAIC and the team used voice and word (plus a megaphone and a very jaunty depiction of Go Tell it on the Mountain) their message to use social media as well was clear. This is what the next generation communicate with.

God approved and cleverly manoeuvred the Liturgy Committee into a general consensus to try this which was a challenge as there will always be some who are reticent to change and in "Join the Angels", Angel G and JB were these people, asking CAIC to make it happen with their full support.



SWAG (St Swithun Wells Acting Group) put this performance together and helped to raise £300 for their chosen charity Simon Says, a local charity supporting bereaved children which was a

very applaudable achievement from a production lasting a mere 40 minutes. Together, they shared ideas, helped and supported one another, made new friends, learned a little more about a story they will have heard from an early age and had a huge amount of fun. They have now raised a grand total of £1700.00 for Cafod, Brendoncare and Simon Says over three performances in ONE year. Well done SWAG!!!