

News Release

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**Leeds Parish Church premier for powerful new community play**

Local amateur actors will be combining with professionals to stage an imaginative premier of a powerful new play on the theme of tyranny and power in the unusual setting of *Leeds Parish Church* at the end of January.

*The Lone and Level Sands*, being performed at **Leeds Parish Church on 28th, 29th and 30th of January** at 7.30 pm, is a community play written by Dan Ingram Brown and directed by Simon Brewis which explores the life and times of King Herod the Great. Producers say that the performance will include the imaginative staging of a ‘construction site’ in the central aisle of the church with the audience on either side. Towering edifices will be built over the course of seven episodes, each depicting the growing power of Herod and drawing parallels with other tyrants down through history such as Idi Amin, Adolf Hitler, Mark Antony, and the Godfather.

The cast of *The Lone and Level Sands*, who also contributed to the writing process, are drawn from theatre and community groups across Leeds, including Pointed Arrow Theatre Company, Leeds Parish Church, the Leeds Church Institute (LCI) and Arts@Trinity in Boar Lane, Leeds. Playing the evil King Herod will be the Vicar of St Augustine’s Church Wrangthorne, Leeds, the Revd David Calder.

The play has been written from both a humanist and Christian perspective and producers say it explores the boundaries of faith and the secular world, aimed at both church and secular audiences. Sponsorship of the play include Leeds Literary and Philosophical Society, The Cooperative Community Fund, Wades Charity, and Wrigleys Solicitors as well as Leeds Church Institute and the Leeds Christian Community Trust.

*The Lone and Level Sands* is being staged during Epiphany – a season in the church’s calendar when it is more usual to remember the wise men who visited Jesus. But the plays producers say that it will not be a quaint and comfortable story, instead reminding audiences that King Herod who met the wise men was both violent and brutal.

Director Simon Brewis, a self professed humanist, who drew the different community groups together, says that the play combines great works of literature, bible stories, historical accounts and autobiography to explore the life and times of King Herod the Great. “Whether it is learning about Adolf Hitler in History lessons or a Sermon describing King Herod’s ‘Slaughter of the Innocents’, stories that portray those who make terrible choices like James Bond Villains teach us nothing about the nature of evil. The truth is that evil is something that human beings do and if we want to understand and learn from their mistakes we need to see these people as human, even if we would prefer not to.”

*The Lone and Level Sands* to be performed at Leeds Parish Church on 28th, 29th and 30th January at 7.30pm. All tickets £5. Contact 0113 2243801

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