

Ohio's Only Outdoor Passion Play Begins 50th Season June 14

CAMBRIDGE, OHIO (June 4, 2024) – This summer marks 50 years of faith as Ohio's ONLY Outdoor Passion Play, The Living Word Outdoor Drama, begins its 50th season on June 14 in Cambridge, Ohio.

Designed for the theatrical telling of the last days of Christ, the Living Word Outdoor Drama offers a stunning and breath-taking drama of the life and death of Jesus Christ. The Biblical Account of Jesus Christ unfolds for audiences on a spectacular 400-foot panoramic amphitheater and is considered America's most authentic re-creation of Old Jerusalem.

"The drama is a nationally recognized outdoor theater where the audience is drawn into the dramatic story," explained Cambridge/Guernsey County Visitors & Convention Bureau Executive Director Debbie Robinson. "It is through stunning lighting, special effects, sound, and authentic costumes that Jerusalem comes alive. Live animals are also used in the production, including a donkey and an authentic horse-drawn Roman chariot."

It is the only drama of its kind that invites the audience and visiting groups to be a part of the performance. Audience members may participate as an 'extra' for the evening and experience the Passion of Christ in a very close and personal way.

Performances take place on Friday evenings beginning June 14 through September 27 in 2024. (Performances will be closed July 5 and August 30 for holiday weekends.) Throughout the season special theme nights have been created to encourage different groups to attend, ranging from youth nights to family events to church gatherings.

Ticket prices are \$18 for adults (13-59), \$16 seniors (60 and up), \$6 children (4-12), and free (4-under). Purchase tickets at the box office (opens at 6 p.m.), call 740-439-2761 or buy online at www.livingworddrama.org. All seating is general admission. Parking is free.

Guests are welcome to take a behind the scenes tour beginning at 6:30 p.m. the night of each performance (donations accepted). Front set tours are also available beginning at 7 p.m. and are included with admission.

For younger audience members, a special event is scheduled for Saturday, August 17 called The Jerusalem Experience. Parents are encouraged to bring their children for a day of costume making, carpentry, games, food, animals, Shofar lessons and more! It is a day (2-5 p.m.) kids won't forget. This is an event geared toward children and is similar to an outdoor Vacation Bible

School. Cost is \$10 for adults (13-up) and FREE for children (3-12). (There will not be a drama that evening. No other discounts will be applied to this event.)

This summer, see The Living Word Outdoor Drama and take a journey like no other. To learn more, visit www.livingworddrama.org or call 740-439-2761.

For more information on area attractions, events and overnight packages, contact the Cambridge/Guernsey County Visitors & Convention Bureau office at 627 Wheeling Avenue, Suite 200 in downtown Cambridge, call 800-933-5480, email info@VisitGuernseyCounty.com, or log onto VisitGuernseyCounty.com.

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About The Living Word Outdoor Drama

The Living Word Outdoor Drama was founded in 1974 by Biblical dramatist Frank Roughton Harvey and his wife Hazel. The idea was the result of a dream given by God in 1957 to build a permanent outdoor amphitheater for the annual presentation of the gospel.

While enrolled in seminary at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, Frank was able to study Biblical archaeology under eminent scholars both at Emory and in the Holy Land. While in seminary, he developed the script for an outdoor drama. His thesis project for his MFA was to extensively research, design and build a scale model complete with scenery for an outdoor theater.

In 1968, Frank had the opportunity to bring to life his script during the Civil Rights movement. The drama was entitled *Behold the Man*, and was produced in Atlanta Stadium using an interracial, interdenominational cast of 500 actors ranging from amateur to professional. The Rev. William Holmes Borders portrayed the role of Christ in the one night only performance that drew an audience of 48,000 people. The event was dubbed by newspapers as 'the miracle that saved Atlanta' because of the peace that seemed to permeate the city of Atlanta during production despite the racial riots taking place around the United States at that time.

Years later, the Harvey's had relocated to a farm in Cambridge, Ohio, which proved to be the site where their permanent amphitheater was to be built. Along with hundreds of volunteers, a temporary stage was built using the old scenery left from the *Behold the Man* production. The experimental venture that first year was an outstanding success, and the following year permanent construction of the set began following Frank's original model design he had prepared years earlier.

