

Norwich Passion Play

Resource Sheet for Small Groups



At Easter 2022, the Norwich Passion Play was staged by a group of Norwich churches, ecumenical charity Celebrate Norfolk and the professional Christian Saltmine Theatre Company.

The play tells the story of the final week in the life of Jesus Christ in a contemporary way through a drama played out while moving across the city streets, watched by thousands of people.

A 13-minute free video was also produced to enable the story to be shared even further, including in church small group settings. The best time to use it, is in the couple of weeks leading up to Easter.

The video

The video is 13 minutes long and includes helpful sub-titles to establish the context. You can find it on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/9MFZyrsc388> and it is free to use.

We suggest you start off your session by setting the scene using some of the background details below about the history of Passion Plays and about the Norwich Passion Play itself. Then play the video and use the following questions to stimulate thought and discussion.

Passion Plays background

Since Medieval times Passion Plays have dramatised the last week of Jesus' life, depicting the events that led up to his crucifixion and resurrection.

Passion Plays use theatre to bring the words of the Gospel to life. They show how the message of second chances, forgiveness and new opportunities has the potential to speak life and hope into communities struggling with poverty, crime, addiction or hopelessness and boredom.

The Norwich Passion Play was watched by thousands of people who were captivated by the dramatic scenes acted out on Hay Hill and Millennium Plain and inside St Peter Mancroft church. It is a modern interpretation and aims to engage the crowd in the production itself.

Questions to discuss

- Why do you think they are called Passion Plays?
- Do you think a Passion Play in a modern setting helps to better convey the relevance of the story of Jesus today or not?
- What struck you about the play – what were the most memorable bits?
- What does the play say about the importance of women in the life of Jesus?
- Do you think the immersive nature of the performance in which the boundaries between actors and spectators are blurred helps people to be able to engage with the performance and make it seem more realistic?
- What do you think are the lessons we can draw from the Norwich Passion Play?

You can find out more at: christianity.org.uk
Video produced by: celebratenorfolk.co.uk

