**Gabriel’s message**

*This is a monologue. Gabriel stands at the front and addresses the audience. The last bit, when the audience need to join in, is optional and is an introduction to a separate dramatised reading, “Angels, shepherds and sheep”*

I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God most high. I bring good news of great joy. Open your ears and your hearts, and listen!

God is on the move! He is putting plans into place. I don’t know what they are, but be ready! The Spirit is bubbling with excitement. All of heaven is watching and waiting.

I knew something was up about 6 months ago, when I was sent on a secret mission. A faithful old man and his wife had longed for a child for years, and I had good news – their prayers had been answered. What could be simpler or happier?

What is it with these humans? The pray in faith, and then they’re surprised when God says “Yes!” Terrified, he was, as if he’d seen a ghost! I gave him the full message – his son would prepare the way for the Lord. He just stood there, staring at me. Eventually he whispered, “I don’t believe it.”

For a moment, I was dumbstruck. He didn’t believe God! He needed a lesson, so I gave him one. But I also gave him the password – John. I hope he remembers to use it.

Goodness gracious me! Look at the time. It’s time for choir practice. So pleased you could all make it. Are you ready? Let’s begin.

First of all – angels. Listen to this:

(*sings, from the Messiah*) Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest. And peace on earth. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

Let’s all give it a go! (*ad lib for practice until they get it right*) Excellent, plenty of enthusiasm – practice for when you get to heaven. I’ll give you a script later. A lot of the time you just sing the first three words, but sometimes you carry on a bit further.

Next, shepherds:

(*sings, from Roger Jones*) Sheep! Sheep! Is there anything more to life than sheep? Sheep! Sheep! Is there anything more than sheep?

Can you manage that? (*ad lib for practice*) Depressed, the shepherds are, or bitter. So mournful or angry. Until I give them the good news, when they perk up and change the words. I’ll give you the script too.

Finally, the sheep:

(*sings, from the Messiah, with additions*) All we like sheep (baa), all we like sheep (baa). Baaaa!

Nice and short. Plenty of bleating. Have some fun!

Now, you all know all the parts. Let’s see, who should take which part? (*allocates each of the three parts to a section of the audience*) All will be revealed later, but in case you’re wondering, we’re going to be bringing a story to life. Enjoy! (*Exit*)