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# A Celebration of Salvation

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# A Celebration of Salvation

## First Annual Andrews Passion Play

Around the Christmas holidays, we are reminded that “Jesus is the reason for the season.” However, we are now entering into another season that Jesus—not a furry rabbit with a basket of chocolate eggs—is the reason for: Easter.

To counteract the commercialism and secularism that abound at Easter, Andrews University is beginning a new tradition this year. On Sabbath, Apr. 19, the day before Easter, you are invited to witness the events of the weekend that changed the course of the world forever. The first annual Easter Passion Play will begin by reviewing current events in the Pioneer Memorial Church with Dwight Nelson, senior pastor. The following five scenes, dramatically presented at different locations around campus, will remind us that no matter what happens to be on the front page of the newspaper or the lead story on the six o’clock news, we have hope.

Ron Whitehead, director of the Center for Youth Evangelism and the Easter Passion Play, is excited about this endeavor. “We see this as our Easter gift to the community,” he said. As head of Pathfinder camporees, Whitehead has facilitated several passion plays in the past. “We seek to make this experience as real as it can be.” Bustling marketplaces and Roman guards on horses are just a small example of how far Whitehead is going in order to make the experience real.

Nearly 450 youth are currently preparing and practicing to be guides, beggars, angry mobs, disci-

ples, and government officials. The outdoor scenes will include one of the healings Jesus performed, the betrayal in Gethsemane, Pilate’s judgment hall, and the crucifixion. A sound-and-light show in the Johnson Gymnasium will end the play with Jesus’ resurrection.

The Easter Passion Play is unique to the southwest Michigan area. No other group within a wide radius does anything similar, and Andrews University anticipates that this incomparable opportunity will have a big draw. “We want to show the community the beautiful story of Jesus,” Whitehead said. He estimates that about 4,000 people will have the chance to be part of the drama. A tour will begin every 20 minutes from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m., and about 400 people will be included in each tour group. The entire play will last about an hour.

Free tickets are available now by calling (800) YOUTH2U or (269) 471-8380; or by e-mailing [cfye@andrews.edu](mailto:cfye@andrews.edu). Include your name and the number of tickets you will need. Keep in mind that the Easter Passion Play corresponds with Andrews University’s alumni homecoming weekend, so reserve your tickets early. No matter what the weather, the play will go on.

The Easter Passion Play is sponsored by the Center for Youth Evangelism, the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Pioneer Memorial Church, the Lake Union Conference, the Adventist Book Center, WAUS 90.7-FM, and WFRN 104.7-FM. For more information, visit: [www.PassionPlay.andrews.edu](http://www.PassionPlay.andrews.edu).

Jesus is the reason for the Christmas season, the Easter season, and for winter, spring, summer, and fall. Come celebrate our salvation!

*Katie Shaw, University Relations news writer*