

SBU THEATRE PRESENTS "GODSPELL" ON APRIL 15-18

BOLIVAR, Mo. – [Southwest Baptist University Theatre](#) will present "Godspell" at 7 p.m., April 15-17, and at 2 p.m., April 18, in Pike Auditorium on the Bolivar campus. This marks the fourth and final production of SBU Theatre's 2020-2021 season titled "Perseverance."

Written and composed by John-Michael Tebelak and Stephen Schwartz in 1971, the musical "Godspell" tells the parables of Jesus according to the Gospel of St. Matthew. "Godspell" emphasizes the teachings of Jesus and the formation of one community through love by using a variety of songs from all different genres of music ranging from pop and rock to gospel and Vaudeville. The show, which is directed by Jonathan Wehmeyer, assistant professor of theatre at SBU, features the importance of unity and how people from different communities can find peace and harmony together through faith.

Freshman theatre major, Ava Andersen, wants audiences to know that this show is fun.

"We've been given a lot of creative liberty to interpret our characters and improvise lines where we see fit," Andersen said. "It's been a very different show experience from most shows I've worked on, but I've had a great time."

Taylor Bates, who is playing an exaggerated version of herself, said, "It's important to go into this show with an open mind and the readiness to see the Gospel in a way you never have before."

"I hope that the audience leaves the theatre rejoicing, shouting with us: 'Long Live God,'" said Jessie Paxton, who also is playing herself.

As in all previous productions this year, all performers will be wearing masks, as required by the SBU Coronavirus safety guidelines. The use of face coverings on the lower portion of the face have encouraged actors to depend on physical movement and vocal inflection, rather than facial expressions, to communicate emotion.

SBU Theatre students have found that COVID-19 protocols are almost second nature at this point. They look forward to the day that theatres all around the world can safely open their doors to a full house of eager audience members, but for now, SBU's Theatre must only open its doors to 300 people at a time, therefore each performance is limited to a 300-seat capacity with masks required for all attendees.

Tickets for the production may be purchased in person at the box office in the Jester Learning and Performance Center, online at www.sbuniv.edu/theatre, or by calling (417) 328-1691. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$8 for students, senior citizens and SBU alumni, and \$6 for current SBU students.

For more information about SBU Theatre and upcoming productions, visit www.sbuniv.edu/theatre or call (417) 328-1691.

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