

FIVE MINUTES WITH TOM MOOTY

Column Number 2207

"HERE WE GO AGAIN"

Please forgive me for using this precious space in a shameless act of promotion of The Lord's Work.

On second thought, no forgiveness is requested because this is what this space is all about!

As a kid, I remember my mom directing religious dramas at Christmas and Easter down at the Methodist Church down in downtown. If memory serves, she bought the scripts from "The Eldridge Company"; although it is entirely possible that my memory is not serving me very well anymore.

Anyway, I was never on stage in one of those productions. I was always behind the scenes helping dad with the primitive lights, sound effects, and stage settings we were able to muster; but I always felt I was a part even way back then. For fear of forgetting someone, I will refrain from mentioning the names of the young and adult people that inhabited the various casts each year; but you know who you are - and so do I - and so does The Lord. Every part of The Lord's Work is important; and remembered, and will be rewarded!

So, it was just natural that I would couple that early training with that of my Elementary School teachers; and Miss McMahan's Classes in High School, and work with The Kiwanis Kapers, The Business Women's

Club, and The Theater Guild and begin to incorporate the dramatics into the ministry when I began my pastoral ministry.

I wrote my first Easter Program in about 1972-73; and it was entitled "The Rich Young Ruler"; and, primitive equipment, elemental staging, and amateur dialog notwithstanding (the "thunder" for the crucifixion scene was a piece of roofing tin being shaken), we were off and running with our Dramatic Programs at West End Baptist Church.

It was misunderstood, to say the least. One preacher got on the radio and laughed about "churches playing with the Gospel"; but we knew he had never seen one of our dramas and was speaking from ignorance. If we were doing anything, it was NOT "playing with The Gospel"; that's for sure.

Needless to say, others have done tremendously good work in these unique presentations of The Gospel at Christmas and Easter. I think of the wonderful work Bobby Parker and Jana Ragan have done in this field; and several folks have borrowed scripts that we have written to rework and produce their own programs; and I say, "Praise The Lord, and Go for It" to them.

I have never sent any of them off to be considered for publishing; and neither have we legally had any of them copywritten.

Well, after a rather lengthy hiatus because of COVID, we are back; and plan on presenting The Gospel in dramatic form this Easter. We believe The Lord is leading us; and we plan on doing this once again.

It actually was written in record time; and rehearsal has already begun: and we would love for you - all of you - to make plans to come be with us on either Palm Sunday Afternoon, Easter Friday Evening, Easter Saturday Evening or Easter Sunday Evening to experience this year's presentation.

With the aid of even more modern sound and smart lighting systems than last time, more effective audio/visual techniques, beautiful costumes and stage settings; and a cast, choir, and crew filled with energetic, interested members, we plan on taking you through The Gospels to present this beautiful narrative of The Lord Jesus Christ in song and spoken word - at West End Baptist Church on the above given dates, with a "matinee" on Palm Sunday at 2:00, and the three evening performances at 7:00 PM.

Please make a special effort to come be with us; and invite and bring your friends. Hey, bring your entire church. We are adding two presentations to this year's schedule to accommodate your being able to "space yourselves out" if you prefer (but not required). We are very confident that you will be blessed and challenged by experiencing it.

God bless you; and may God add His Blessings to this amazing work of Gospel Presentation!

Tom Mooty serves as Very, Very, Very, Most Definitely Senior Pastor to Newport's West End Baptist Church; and writes this column for the Wednesday and Weekend Editions of "The Newport Plain Talk". Address all comments to Mooty at P.O. Box 851 in Newport or e-mail tommooty15@gmail.com.