

Script

THANK

[Music begins on Andrew's cue – introduction to
Angels from the realms of glory]

CARRIE Welcome to our Greenbelt Act of Communion 2023.

DAVID Standing or sitting, or doing the hokey-cokey, let's sing together.

SONG

Angels from the realms of glory

Angels from the realms of glory,
Race through every field and town
Tell the world that Christ's arrival
Turns creation upside-down!
Come and worship, worship with the angels,
Gloria in excelsis Deo

Office, field and factory workers,
Working hard by day and night,
God has now moved in beside us
Making every burden light!
Come and worship, worship with the angels,
Gloria in excelsis Deo

Every child in every nation
From the greatest to the least
seek in Christ the hope of nations,
all are welcome at the feast:
Come and worship, worship with the angels,
Gloria in excelsis Deo

Though an infant now we see him,
he will share his Father's throne,
gather all the nations to him;
every knee shall then bow down:

Come and worship, worship with the angels,
Gloria in excelsis Deo

In the great creator's vision
There will come a glorious day
Tears and hurt will be forgotten
Love will have the final say.
Come and worship, worship with the angels,
Gloria in excelsis Deo

CALL TO WORSHIP [Rhythmic]

CARRIE	Our God is here
CROWD	The Spirit is with us
DAVID	We will not fear
CROWD	The Spirit is with us
CARRIE	We are surrounded by love
CROWD	The Spirit is with us
DAVID	We defy injustice
CROWD	The Spirit is with us
CARRIE	We live in hope
CROWD	The Spirit is with us
DAVID	We travel in faith
CROWD	The Spirit is with us
CARRIE	We belong in eternity
CROWD	The Spirit is with us
CARRIE & DAVID	Our God is here
CROWD	The Spirit is with us

LINK

DAVID Oh yes! Please sit down.
Welcome to our Greenbelt Act of Communion 2023. I'm David Grant...

CARRIE ...and I'm Carrie Grant.

DAVID Greenbelt is something we make together. It is not a performance or a product – it is the sum of everything we all bring. And this Act of Communion is something we're going to make together too.

CARRIE During the weekend some Greenbelters have been meeting to write prayers and music, and over the next hour we are going to use some of them in our worship.

DAVID We are all part of it – young, old; gay, straight; newcomers and old-timers. Whatever spectrum you are on, and wherever you are on it, you are welcome here.

CARRIEeven if you're just Ken.

DAVID *Especially* if you're just Ken.

CARRIE The field is full of angels today. Not Greenbelt angels – proper angelic messengers. Maybe there are some sitting right near you. Say hello to the people around you – the ones you know and the ones nearby who you are meeting for the first time.

[BRIEF HIATUS]

DAVID The movement in an Act of Communion is a swooping, swirling movement; from God in Jesus, to God's crazy diverse people, and around and between and amongst us, and then out to the world beyond. Almost like the flight of an angel....

WE'RE LOOKING FOR AN ANGEL

CARRIE Speaking of which...we have a team of AIs with us this morning – Angel Investigators. They're going on an angel hunt. If you see them, please join in by repeating everything they say.

AIs We're looking for an angel
CROWD *We're looking for an angel*

AIs Have you seen an angel?

CROWD *Have you seen an angel?*

Als What does an angel look like?
CROWD *What does an angel look like?*

Als Is it like a fairy?
CROWD *Is it like a fairy?*

Als Is it like a Pokémon?
CROWD *Is it like a Pokémon?*

Als Is it like a human?
CROWD *Is it like a human?*

Als I don't know
CROWD *I don't know*

Als (Whisper) Tell me if you see one
CROWD *Tell me if you see one*

Als (Shout) Shout out loud
CROWD *Shout out loud*

INSTANT ANGEL

CARRIE Today we are celebrating fifty years of Greenbelt. We have commissioned Greenbelter and digital artist Emma Major to help us create a unique angelic artwork for this Sunday morning, filled with our prayers of thanks. Here's Emma to explain it to us.

VIDEO [Emma Major video]
Hi. I'm Emma Major, and I'm a Greenbelter just like you. I'm not well enough to be there this year, but it's an honour that Greenbelt have asked me to create a piece of art for our prayer in worship this morning. I'm a digital artist, and I create using my iPad down to almost one pixel in quality, and I have created a piece of art prayerfully, with God guiding me as I go. And you are going to bring this piece of art to life.

Now those of you who have been to Greenbelt many times will know that there's a brown paper bag in your group or near you somewhere. Take a look to your left or your right and you will find a brown paper bag in a group that you can join. I'll give you a few seconds to find your nearest one join that group for our activity.

I need you, whoever is in charge of that brown paper bag to empty it out. And inside you will find a piece of tissue paper much like this. It may be red, yellow, blue or green. And there are enough pieces of tissue paper for every single one of you here. That means the one year olds get one, and the ninety-one year olds get one, and everyone in between. And if it's a bit windy, as it is here today, you might need to hold it between two hands.

This piece of tissue paper is where we're going to focus our prayers this morning. And we're going to give prayers of thanks, of joy, of hope – thanking God for the way he's been with us in our lives; giving thanks for those moments of joy we've noticed; giving thanks for how even in the hardest times we have not been alone. And we're going to capture those prayers, and we're going to gather them together into our tissue paper until we make a flower. Every single one that you create will be different; as different as I am to you and you are to the people sitting around you. And they are perfectly made; full of the prayers of hope and thanks.

And these flowers of prayer we're going to gather, and we're going to make a piece of art. And to do that you're going to place your flower into the brown bag which the tissue paper came from. So let's all find our local bag. Place our flower full of prayers into that, and then we're going to pass it forward, where an amazing team of people are going to bring our prayers to life in a piece of art that will be revealed to you later.

[Emergency script at the end of this document if video falls down.]

[People in the crowd will have time to pray and collect tissue paper flowers, which are brought to the front in bags. We may need David to encourage or remind people. If so, please add the following.]

When you have folded your prayers of thanks into a tissue paper flower, please put all the flowers from your group back into the brown paper bag. Then as we sing our next song, please pass the bags to the front of the stage.

VIDEO

[The Angels Say video]

SONG

The Angels Say (Fischy)

*Anger of the prophets longing for a change
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Centuries of waiting for a Christmas Day
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
You're not alone, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah
You're not alone, the angels say*

*A priest called Zechariah felt fear and doubt that day
Don't be afraid, the angels say
John, your son will tell us, God is on the way
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
You're not alone, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah
You're not alone, the angels say*

*Mary, she was willing to raise God's little boy
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Through the years he brought her sorrow and great joy
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
You're not alone, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah
You're not alone, the angels say*

*Heavy hearted Joseph finds courage in a dream
Don't be afraid, the angels say
A different kind of family: love is still the same
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
You're not alone, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah
You're not alone, the angels say*

*Shepherds on the hillside, choirs in the sky
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Ordinary people, frightened and surprised
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
You're not alone, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah
You're not alone, the angels say*

*Wise men search and study, follow shifting stars
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Caught up in the danger of other people's wars
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
You're not alone, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah
You're not alone, the angels say*

*Sharing Christmas stories, both human and divine
Don't be afraid, the angels say
In the light and darkness, in our changing times
Don't be afraid, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
You're not alone, the angels say
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah
You're not alone, the angels say*

CONFESSIO

CARRIE [READER 1] and [READER 2] are going to lead us in a prayer of confession. When you hear the words *We are the people who God loves* please respond *We are the people who God loves*. Let's pray.

READER 1 We are the people who God loves
CROWD ***We are the people who God loves***

READER 2 We are the people who turned away
And put ourselves first in every way
But we are the people who God loves
CROWD ***We are the people who God loves***

READER 1 We are the people who turned away
And put ourselves first in every way
And cheated our neighbours and let down our friends
Although we are the people who God loves
CROWD ***We are the people who God loves***

READER 2 We are the people all stiff and proud
Who wanted to be ahead of the crowd
And felt what we had was never enough
But wanted more money and power and stuff
So we are the people who turned away
And put ourselves first in every way
And cheated our neighbours and let down our friends
Although we are the people who God loves
CROWD ***We are the people who God loves***

READER 1 We are the people, selfish and greedy
Who closed our eyes to the poor and needy
And poisoned the rain and emptied the seas
And built the walls and cut down the trees
And burnt the fuel that heated the sky
That made the land all barren and dry
That caused the people to fight each other
Sister and sister and brother and brother
Who couldn't survive and were forced to flee

Far from their homes over land and sea
We are the people stiff and proud
Who wanted to be ahead of the crowd
And felt what we had was never enough
But wanted more money and power and stuff
So we are the people who turned away
And put ourselves first in every way
And cheated our neighbours and let down our friends
Although we are the people who God loves

CROWD

We are the people who God loves

READER 2

We are the people wealthy and strong
With food to eat and a place to belong
Who choose the leaders, who give the orders
To turn the strangers from our borders
We are the people, selfish and greedy
Who closed our eyes to the poor and needy
And poisoned the rain and emptied the seas
And built the walls and cut down the trees
And burnt the fuel that heated the sky
That made the land all barren and dry
That caused the people to fight each other
Sister and sister and brother and brother
Who couldn't survive and were forced to flee
Far from their homes over land and sea
We are the people stiff and proud
Who wanted to be ahead of the crowd
And felt what we had was never enough
But wanted more money and power and stuff
So we are the people who turned away
And put ourselves first in every way
And cheated our neighbours and let down our friends
Although we are the people who God loves

CROWD

We are the people who God loves

READERS 1 and 2

We pray today that our God will forgive
The choices we make and the ways that we live
Because we are the people who God loves.

CROWD

We are the people who God loves

SHARE

SHARING PEACE

CARRIE We're moving into the second act of our worship – sharing.
Saint Paul wrote this to the new Christians at Colossae.

DAVID *Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*

CARRIE God makes peace within us
CROWD ***Let's claim it.***

CARRIE God makes peace between us
Let's share it.

DAVID Let's stand or sit or move around to offer each other the hi-5 of peace.

[Brief pause]

SONG

Angels (Robbie Williams)

I sit and wait
Does an angel contemplate my fate
And do they know
The places where we go
When we're grey and old
'Cause I have been told
That salvation lets their wings unfold

So when I'm lying in my bed
Thoughts running through my head
And I feel the love is dead
I'm loving angels instead

And through it all she offers me protection
A lot of love and affection
Whether I'm right or wrong
And down the waterfall

Wherever it may take me
I know that life won't break me
When I come to call, she won't forsake me
I'm loving angels instead

When I'm feeling weak
And my pain walks down a one way street
I look above
And I know I'll always be blessed with love
And as the feeling grows
She breathes flesh to my bones
And when love is dead

I'm loving angels instead

And through it all she offers me protection
A lot of love and affection
Whether I'm right or wrong
And down the waterfall
Wherever it may take me
I know that life won't break me
When I come to call, she won't forsake me

I'm loving angels instead

And through it all she offers me protection
A lot of love and affection
Whether I'm right or wrong
And down the waterfall
Wherever it may take me
I know that life won't break me
When I come to call, she won't forsake me
I'm loving angels instead

DAVID

Please sit down.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR AN ANGEL

Als

We're looking for an angel

CROWD *We're looking for an angel*

Als Have you seen an angel?
CROWD *Have you seen an angel?*

Als What does an angel look like?
CROWD *What does an angel look like?*

Als Is it like a fairy?
CROWD *Is it like a fairy?*

Als Is it like a Pokémon?
CROWD *Is it like a Pokémon?*

Als Is it like a human?
CROWD *Is it like a human?*

Als I don't know
CROWD *I don't know*

Als *quiet* I think I've seen one
CROWD *I think I've seen one*

Als What does it look like?
CROWD *What does it look like?*

Als *louder* I think I've seen one
CROWD *I think I've seen one*

Als What does it look like?
CROWD *What does it look like?*

Als *louder* I think I've seen one
CROWD *I think I've seen one*

Als What does it look like?
CROWD *What does it look like?*

Als *very loud* It looks like you
CROWD *It looks like you*

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

WORKSHOP CAST Yesterday a group of Greenbelters met to read a passage from the Bible together. This is the passage we read, from Luke's gospel, chapter 8.

One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, he fell asleep. A storm came down on the lake, so that the small boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger.

The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!"

He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. "Where is your faith?" he asked his disciples.

In fear and amazement they asked one another, "Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him."

With that passage in one hand and a newspaper in another we wrote some prayers. So let's pray together.

[PRAYERS]

ACT OF COMMUNION

CARRIE Thank you. We're going to join in an act of communion, just like millions of believers have done for thousands of years. Please place the bread in the middle of your group, and pour the juice into a cup.

DAVID The world is broken and we are broken too. What shall we do?
CROWD ***Let's party.***

CARRIE What can we bring?
CROWD ***Everything we have.***

DAVID God has given us bread
CROWD ***This will be God's body***
(Reach hands toward the bread)

CARRIE God has given us wine
CROWD ***This will be God's blood***
(Reach hands toward the wine/juice)

DAVID God has given us a song
CROWD ***This will be our song***

CARRIE [David and Carrie lead the crowd singing *Holy Holy* as a round to the
tune *London's Burning*.]

Holy holy x2
God almighty x 2
Hosanna x 2
In the highest x 2

DAVID The night before he died, Jesus met with his young friends.
They were laughing and joking together.
Then things got more serious.

CARRIE Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to you, God.
He broke it into pieces, and gave it to everyone.
"This is my body," he said. "It's a gift for you. Eat this, and receive
me."

DAVID Jesus is alive

ALL ***And we are alive in Jesus.***

CARRIE Later, he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to you.
He shared it with them, and said "This is my blood. It brings new life.
Drink this, and know that I am with you."

DAVID Jesus is alive

ALL ***And we are alive in Jesus.***

CARRIE And so, remembering Jesus, who died,
was raised to new life by you,
and is alive forever,
we are glad to share that life and live in him.

DAVID Jesus is alive

ALL ***And we are alive in Jesus.***

CARRIE Send your Holy Spirit
so that this bread and wine
can be for us the body and blood of Jesus.

DAVID God is broken for us in this bread;
God is poured out for us in this wine;
and in God's brokenness, we find ourselves made whole.

CARRIE Let's share the bread and juice together in our groups. Make sure no
one is left out. And when we've shared, join in this song of
commitment.
[PAUSE as groups share bread and juice. After a short pause Stephen
begins the song Speak Up. Introduce by saying it was written with/for
Christian Aid]

SONG Speak up, speak up, use your voice (x 3)
Speak for equality

 Stand up, stand up, stand your ground (x 3)
Stand for dignity

 Rise up, rise up use your power (x 3)
Rise for justice now

 Step up, step up, find a way (x 3)
Love will find a way

 Sing up, sing up, use your heart (x 3)
Sing with us today.

GIVE

CARRIE Now we are moving into the third act of our worship – giving.

DAVID We are meeting at a time when many people in the UK are feeling insecure and fearful about the future. We're tempted to keep what we have, to guard our borders, to look inwards, and to hedge against a scary future.

CARRIE But in God's economy things work differently. It's all gift. So in our third act we're going to ask what is Greenbelt's gift to the world?

DAVID What have we been given, as individuals and together as a community? What do we as a community want to give away? We're not just talking about money here, but hope, beauty, vision for the life of the world. And not just today at the festival either, but in the next 50 days, 50 months, 50 years?

CARRIE On the edge of your service sheet is a detachable slip. If you like, you could use it to remind of something that has come to you as a gift from God – and what God is calling you to do. You could put it in your Bible, or on your computer screen or on a mirror – wherever you look most often(!) – to remind you of all that we have been given, and all that we have to give.

[Music starts: *Freely, freely*]

DAVID At the very first Greenbelt festival at Prospect Farm in 1974 we all sang a new song that had only just been written. It was based on the words of Jesus in Matthew chapter 10: *Freely you have received, freely give.*

We will keep a period of quiet as the band sing that fifty year-old song to us. And as we do, let's open ourselves to God to speak to us about the things we have been given: houses, money, voices, connections, time and so much more. What have we been given? What will we give? Let's pray.

[Band sings *Freely freely* Meditative period]

*God forgave my sin in Jesus' name,
I've been born again in Jesus' name;
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share His love as He told me to.*

*He said: 'Freely, freely, you have received,
Freely, freely give;
Go in My name, and because you believe
Others will know that I live.'*

*All power is given in Jesus' name,
In earth and heaven in Jesus' name;
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share His power as He told me to.*

*He said: 'Freely, freely, you have received,
Freely, freely give;
Go in My name, and because you believe
Others will know that I live.'*

DAVID

What is God calling Greenbelt to give to the world?

[At the end of the song]

CARRIE

One of the ways we can give is through money. Over the fifty years of this beautiful gathering, Greenbelters have released around a million pounds through our communion offerings. This year we are sticking with the fifty theme for our communion giving. We're going fifty/fifty.

Fifty percent of what you give today will be used by Greenbelt to keep this show on the road and to keep the festival as accessible as we can in these challenging times.

The other fifty percent we're going to give away – in a four-way split reflecting our consistent campaigning and programming focusses during our time at Boughton House.

DAVID A group of Greenbelters met yesterday in the Village Hall. We thought about all the gifts we have been given, and all that we have to share. And we thought about the things that stand in the way of our sharing. And we turned them into a song. Most of this song is less than 24 hours old. We're going attempt to sing together now. Please join in with the chorus.

OFFERING SONG [Band to teach chorus and explain how the song 'works'!]

I will give... (Developed on site)

ARTWORK REVEAL

CARRIE Earlier on we collected all of our prayers of thanks into coloured tissue paper. A team of Greenbelters has been weaving them together into a single offering, recreating a design by artist Emma Major. The image is complete now – and this beautiful angelic image is our offering of thanks and praise together.

[Pause to reveal instant angel. If there isn't a cheer – invite one!]

DAVID With thanks and praise in our hearts let's stand or sit or dance as we sing our final hymn.

SONG

*Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee.
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!*

*Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore Thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
which wert and art and evermore shalt be.*

*Holy, Holy, Holy! though the darkness hide Thee,
though our sinful human eyes Thy glory may not see,
only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
perfect in power, in love, and purity.*

*Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity.*

CLOSING PRAYER

CARRIE	May God gift us with angels to bump into us in surprising places to get our messy lives organised to be our shelter in the storms and to tickle us with their wings when we need it.
DAVID	and may the blessing of God the creator, God the saviour, and God the inspiration, be with us all today and for the next fifty years.
CROWD	Amen.