

# crafts and evangelism

## make a giant angel

### AIM

To describe and illustrate how to make a giant angel for Advent/Christmas or any other time of the year as a communal project.

### INTRODUCTION

There are many ways of telling God's story and telling Our Story. A good way of doing this can be to get a whole group of people involved in a communal craft project at a particular time of year. This material explains how to make a giant angel for Advent/Christmas as a communal project. However, as angels can pop up at almost any time of the year then you will never regret having made one and can use it at other times. Moreover, making an angel is just one option. Once you've got the idea you can make any number of giant figures like this and use them in creative story telling and evangelism.

### You will need

Some chicken wire – how much will dictate how big an angel you can make;

Wire cutters and gloves to protect your hands;

Old newspapers, PVA glue (you can use this diluted slightly with water if you prefer) and brushes, masking tape;

White paper (flip chart, tissue or kitchen paper);

Cotton cloth, feather, raffia, string or wool;

Spray paint.

Refreshments, especially biscuits.

### MAKING THE STRUCTURE

Step 1: Make a chicken wire frame as the basis for your angel figure. In the first photograph you will see that it can help to have something to mould the figure round at this stage. It gives it a bit more stability – so we used an old chair under the wire, so to speak. You can remove the chair later. To make our angel we used three lengths of chicken wire: one for the base, one for the middle of the body and head and one for the wings. There's no pattern you just cut and squash as seems appropriate. Use gloves to protect your hands while pushing the wire into shape. Use masking tape to hold the bits of wire together if necessary or to put on the sharp ends of the wire so participants do not spike themselves. By the end of stage 1 you should have a figure that looks kind of like an angel in outline and will stand up by itself.

Step 2: Tear up pieces of newspaper and begin to apply them all over the chicken wire body in a layer using the PVA glue and brushes. Putting on the first bits of the papier-mache layer can be difficult as there is little for it to stick to. Poke the newspaper into the chicken wire and use plenty of glue. Cover the whole model with the newspaper layer (see photo 3). When this first layer is dry cover the newspaper layer with a layer of white paper using either tissue paper, flip chart paper or kitchen paper depending what you have most of. This is just to cover up the print of the newspaper. Once the whole thing dries this will make a light but reasonably durable body (photo 4).

Step 3: Using some cotton cloth cover the whole model in white cotton. This can be thick

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or thin depending on what you have. You could use recycled cotton, like an old sheet or table cloth, or new fabric again brush the fabric with glue. This first layer is just to cover the paper up. Once that layer is dry begin to 'dress' your model according to your preferred fashion for angels. Again use cotton cloth and PVA glue to enable you to mould the cloth into the shape of a garment or effect you want. Use feathers on the angel's wings if you like. You may want to make the features of the face with a bit more detail by using tissue paper.

Step 4: Once the whole model is dry, the easiest way to paint it is with cans of spray paint, maybe silver or gold. But you can use white poster or acrylic paint mixed with some PVA applied with a brush if you prefer. Place your finished angel in position – not outside as it will not withstand rain or snow. However placed inside in a window or doorway so it can be seen outside can be very effective.

### WHAT ABOUT THE EVANGELISM THEN?

Opportunities for Evangelism arise when

1. planning how to make an angel and with whom – quote for one 16 year old 'We were never allowed to do this before'.
2. making an angel together – quote from two 9 year olds 'Yeh and the angel came to see Mary and told her she would have a baby – Yeh and it came back later to tell the shepherds to go and visit the baby...' – quote from some 7 year olds 'Do you know any stories about angels?' 'I know the one about the angel who told Mary about Jesus'; 'Yes I know what one – I was in it yesterday!'.
3. at any angel based event, especially where eating biscuits is involved – 'So what's with the angel then?' or 'Is it the Angel of the North?' (obviously this is unlikely to be true in the south), 'Where shall we put the angel?' etc.
4. Remember: Angels – the surreal thing! Quote from the Headmaster to the Chaplain about the angel making project 'You get more surreal everyday!'

### Thinking ahead...

Keep the angel for next year and make some more figures in the same way to complete your giant nativity set.

### Prayer: About this time of year

*Unto us a birth is announced, new life is given,*

*declaring change for individuals and communities;*

*named Life giver, Wonderful listener, Peace maker;*

*One of endless presence and hope filled company*

*(rewrite of Isaiah 9:6-7).*

About this time of year there are angels visiting,

which is just as well for those of us who

have slipped up or down.

They come with surprising news in unlikely circumstances

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which is just as well for those of us who

have to make difficult decisions.

They come with a message of reassurance and hope

which is just as well for those of us who

are feeling hopeless or fearful.

You may be struggling to believe in angels at all

but look closely at the next message bearer,

the next wound healer, the next hope sharer

and you might find your very own angel.

**May God's love and peace**

**be a haven of security and hope**

**this Advent and Christmas.**

### EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

### THE NEXT STEP

If you want more seasonal Evangelism ideas please visit the website and click on SEASONAL. Making a series of wooden Nativity figures is described under Bible Year:

### Acknowledgements

This material has been prepared by Janet Lees and Gwen Smithies to whom copyright belongs and who have given permission for it to be used by Vision4life. This particular angel was made at Silcoates School Wakefield where Janet is the part-time temporary Chaplain.

### HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group and the coordinator about general issues via the website or at [admin@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:admin@vision4life.org.uk)

Website issues can be dealt with through [web@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:web@vision4life.org.uk)

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about other V4L years you can email: Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: [evangelism@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:evangelism@vision4life.org.uk)