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REUNITING VOICES, HONORING A NAVY HERO:

LOCAL COMPOSER'S ROCK OPERA CELEBRATES 30 YEARS IN SCHOLARSHIP TRIBUTE

WARMINSTER, PA — October 4, 2025 — On Saturday, October 4, 2025, at 2:00 PM, the stage at Archbishop Wood High School will come alive with the spirit, energy, and heart of a homegrown musical that has inspired thousands: *The Word: A Gospel Opera*.

This special **30th Anniversary Concert** is more than just a musical celebration — it's a **reunion** of cast members spanning three decades in a powerful, one-day-only concert performance. Featuring music that blends **rock, gospel, reggae, funk, and folk**, the event honors not only the artistic legacy of the show but also the memory of **Michael Shamus Monaghan**, an original cast member and U.S. Navy serviceman who tragically lost his life in a Search and Rescue mission in 1998.

A MUSICAL LEGACY ROOTED IN FAITH, FELLOWSHIP, AND TRANSFORMATION

Written by Bucks County composer **Bill Monaghan**, *The Word* first premiered in 1995 and quickly became known for its genre-defying score and emotionally charged storytelling centered on the life and teachings of Jesus. Over the years, the show has involved **more than 200 young adults**, many of whom credit the experience with shaping their **faith, friendships, and futures**.

For this anniversary event, former cast members will reunite to perform fan-favorite songs including *"Blessed and Happy," "Taste and See,"* and *"Lullaby: Close Your Eyes"* in a two-act concert version of the show.

All proceeds from the performance will benefit the **Michael S. Monaghan Scholarship Fund**, continuing the show's legacy of inspiration and opportunity.

CRITICAL AND AUDIENCE ACCLAIM

The Word: A Gospel Opera has drawn comparisons to classics like *Godspell* and *The Who's Tommy*. It's been praised as "timeless and refreshingly modern" (*Catholic Standard & Times, Philadelphia Inquirer*), and audiences describe it as "electric," "moving," and "surprisingly powerful."

"I didn't expect to need tissues at a rock opera — but I did."

"The harmonies are full, the guitar riffs are electric, the drums thunder, and the singers croon, belt, and sweetly resonate the treasured messages of Jesus' love and salvation."

THE SPIRIT OF REUNION

Many cast members, now adults with families of their own, are returning for this performance not just to sing, but to **reconnect with something bigger** — a message, a mission, and a community. One former performer shared:

"I remember hearing the music for the first time when I was in elementary school and being immediately captivated. Now, I'm experiencing it in concert with my own kids — and they're already singing the songs."

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EVENT DETAILS

What: *The Word: A Gospel Opera* – 30th Anniversary Concert

When: Saturday, October 4, 2025 at 2:00 PM (approximately 2 hours with intermission)

Where: Archbishop Wood High School Auditorium

655 York Road, Warminster, PA 18974

Admission: General Seating – *Suggested Donation: \$15 (at the door)*

All Ages Welcome

Proceeds Benefit: The Michael S. Monaghan Scholarship Fund

For more information, visit:

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