

These Altar Boyz friendly to Christianity



By Alan Charlton. Originally printed in the *B.C. Catholic*, January 26, 2009

With the holiday season becoming a distant memory, it is time to return to the usual round of activity; one hopes that will include some entertainment in the form of theatre or film.

One delightful theatrical surprise has come along in the shape of **ALTAR BOYZ**.

This musical entertainment started out life off Broadway in 2005 and garnered several awards. Since then it has been performed all over the western world. Designed as a spoof of young Christian rock singers, it boasts a lively book, music, and lyrics, telling the story of the Altar Boyz, a quintet of singers who bring their Christian message to the audience.

Using an electronic machine to indicate the number of unrepentant sinners in the audience, Matthew, Mark, Luke, Juan, and their Jewish friend Abraham set out to bring the entire audience back from sin.

If all this sounds as though it going to be a thinly concealed attack on Christianity, do not be misled. This is a thoroughly good-natured show, which, despite its idiom, is quite orthodox in its message.



David Cooper / Arts Club Theatre Company
Charles MacEachern, David Hurwitz, Jeremy Crittenden, Geoff Stevens, and Vincent Tong star in Altar Boyz.

There are songs which tell one what to do in Church, which proclaim the determination to "wait" until marriage, and which tell one to come out of the closet and publicly admit one is Catholic.

In the Arts Club production directed by Bill Miller, with choreography by Sara-Jeanne Hosie, the music is lively, performed by a small group of talented musicians, while the cast of five young men perform with frenetic energy as they brilliantly sing a series of upbeat songs and enthusiastically perform inventive dance routines.

It may not be the greatest musical ever written, but it is certainly pleasant that something friendly to Christianity has come along. Perhaps the best thing of all is that the show is touring the province prior to its appearance in the summer at the Arts Club in Vancouver.

With performances currently in Surrey, and coming to West Vancouver (Feb 2), Mission (Feb 3), Burnaby (Feb. 4 and 5), Maple Ridge (Feb. 6 and 7) and Coquitlam (Feb 10-14), it should be easy to attend this decidedly delightful show.