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“This is Advent: Script Bundle”

By
Andrew Kooman

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What

This is Advent series will help your church experience the heart of Christmas all over again. Five scripts on the themes of Hope, Joy, Peace, Love, and Grace designed to be performed over several weeks leading up to Christmas but each could also stand alone.

Hope: We don't receive them very often anymore, but a kind letter that arrives in the mail jolts the heart with hope. This reading is a reminder that the gospel is God's love letter to us, and that Jesus was sent to bring us hope

Joy: Like the Wise Men, it sometimes feels like there's a whole desert of dryness to travel before landing in the joy of Christmas. This reading reminds us that joy is ahead of us and that Jesus goes before us.

Peace: What: "Hey Siri, define PEACE." Our phones do a lot for us, but they can't give us peace. When we power them down and look up at Jesus, it's incredible how much peace can flood our busy lives.

Love: Thanks fuels our hearts with love for God. This advent reading is a rousing prayer of thanks that focuses on the goodness of God in the midst of all circumstances. It's a reminder that no matter what we face, the love of God surrounds us.

Grace: Our houses were once just empty—four walls and a floor. Then we furnished and styled them to make them homes. This advent reading is about how God similarly fills our lives with grace.

Themes: Christmas, Advent, Hope, Reader's Theatre, Provision, Encouragement, Joy, Home, Dreams, Encouragement, Disappointment, Overcoming, Peace, Phones, Technology, Humor, Habits, Distraction, Social Media, Busyness, Refreshing, Thanks, Thankfulness, Thanksgiving, Declaration, Prayer, Grace, Traditions, Home, Gifts, Decorating

Who

Reader 1

Reader 2

Reader 3 (*Joy, Love, Grace*)

Monologue option for each included

When Present Day

Costumes Wear the clothing you'd wear to church on any other Sunday

Props Hope: Envelope with a handwritten note

Candle

Lighter

Joy: Jar filled with sand

Candle

Lighter

Peace: Cell phone

Candle

Lighter

Love: Candle

Lighter

Grace: Christmas ornament

Candle

Lighter

Why Romans 5:5, Hebrews 12:1-3, Psalm 36:7-9, Isaiah 26:3, Psalm 107:1, Proverbs 24:3-4

How Both a Reader's Theater version and a Monologue version are provided. Can be memorized or read off the page directly to the audience. Use black folders and/or music stands if not memorized but be familiar with the text for better audience connection.

Time Approximately 3 minutes per script or 15 minutes all together

This is Advent - Hope

Reader's Theater Version

**Performance notes: If you are reading, read the script with emotion, in a way that's true to you. It's important to be yourself. Don't be afraid to take your time. Readers should look at the audience and at their fellow co-Readers. Be playful and feed off the energy and style of your co-reader, reacting to their lines. For example: Reader 1 can sound sad and slowly recover as they hear Reader 2 share that kids today may have never received a letter. Etc.*

Reader 1 holds up a letter in an envelope.

Reader 1: This is hope.

Reader 2: Well, actually it's a letter.

The **Reader** opens the envelope and pulls out a handwritten note.

Reader 1: It's an unfamiliar object these days, isn't it?

Reader 2: We're so used to sending messages on devices. Our pockets buzzing and beeping.

Reader 1: Messages sent between us, back and forth and around the world in less time than it takes to sneeze. A world of information and communication in the palm of our hands.

Reader 2: People used to communicate through letters, though.

Reader 1: Men on horseback once raced across every type of geography, state by state, and through every kind of weather to deliver letters via the Pony Express.

Reader 2: Pen pals shared stories of their lives across oceans.

Reader 1: Young people fell in love and shared the deepest parts of their hearts, expressed through pen on paper.

Reader 2: Soldiers wrote from the front lines about what they saw on the battlefield. All through letters. Have you received one lately?

Reader 1: Your utility bill doesn't count!

Reader 2: If you're young, there's a chance you've never received one at all.

Reader 1: Maybe your grandma still sends you a note on your birthday with a dollar bill or gift card slipped inside.

Reader 2: There's nothing quite like the challenge of trying to decipher the inked scrawl of a friend or family member with messy handwriting, is there? If you know, you know.

Reader 1: A personal note, thoughtfully written down by a friend, sent with affection, is a wonderful way to experience a little hope.

Reader 2: Did you know that the gospel used to spread through letters? And no matter how God's word and the wonderful news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection spreads today around the world today, the gospel remains God's great love letter to humanity.

Reader 1: It is God's message of hope to *you*.

Reader 2: And He wrote it with His very own hand.

Reader 1: The good news of the gospel is a story written through the whole history of the world that reveals His plan. A plan to set apart people to know Him and to be known by Him.

Reader 2: To put into motion a great rescue operation that would save us from our sin and despair. A message of love to each of us, for the deepest part of our hearts.

Reader 1: The good news that no matter who you are or what you've done, Jesus gave His life for you.

Reader 2: God has written us each a personal invitation to become part of His family and to leave sin and despair behind so that each of us can enter into real, vibrant hope.

Reader 1: A hope that won't disappoint you, because He pours his love into our hearts, changing them for good.

Reader 2: This Christmas, make sure you read His letter of hope that He has sent to you.

Reader 1: You will read this message of hope in the story of Mary who said "yes" to carry the Son of God in her womb.

Reader 2: You will read this message of hope in the story of the Wise Men who came to worship the Christ child.

Reader 1: You'll read it in the story of the shepherds who left their flocks to witness the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Reader 2: Like them, may you see that Jesus brings true hope, for He connects us, forever, to the loving hand of God.

Reader 1 *lights the Advent candle.*

Reader 1: Today, as we light the advent candle, let's remember that God has written a beautiful letter to us.

Reader 2: Let it fill your hearts with hope.

Lights fade to end the play.

This is Advent: Hope

Monologue Version

**Performance notes: If you are performing a monologue, make use of the stage. Perhaps you can place the letter down in different moments to maintain the metaphor. Think about how you can be creative with how you hold it, move it, where you place it.*

The **Actor** holds up a letter in an envelope.

Actor: This is hope.

Well, actually it's a letter.

The **Actor** opens the envelope and pulls out a handwritten note.

It's an unfamiliar object these days, isn't it? We're so used to sending messages on devices. Our pockets buzzing and beeping. Messages sent between us, back and forth and around the world in less time than it takes to sneeze. A world of information and communication in the palm of our hands.

People used to communicate through letters, though.

Men on horseback once raced across every type of geography, state by state, and through every kind of weather to deliver letters via the Pony Express.

Pen pals shared stories of their lives across oceans. Young people fell in love and shared the deepest parts of their hearts, expressed through pen on paper. Soldiers wrote from the front lines about what they saw on the battlefield. All through letters.

Have you received one lately? Your utility bill doesn't count!

If you're young, there's a chance you've never received one at all.

Maybe your grandma still sends you a note on your birthday with a dollar bill or gift card slipped inside.

There's nothing quite like the challenge of trying to decipher the inked scrawl of a friend or family member with messy handwriting, is there? If you know, you know.

A personal note, thoughtfully written down by a friend, sent with affection, is a wonderful way to experience a little hope.

Did you know that the gospel used to spread through letters?

And no matter how God's word and the wonderful news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection spreads today around the world today, the gospel remains God's great love letter to humanity.

It is God's message of hope to *you*. And He wrote it with His very own hand. The good news of the gospel is a story written through the whole history of the world that reveals His plan.

A plan to set apart people to know Him and to be known by Him. To put into motion a great rescue operation that would save us from our sin and despair. A message of love to each of us, for the deepest part of our hearts. The good news that no matter who you are or what you've done, Jesus gave His life for you.

God has written us each a personal invitation to become part of His family and to leave sin and despair behind so that each of us can enter into real, vibrant hope. A hope that won't disappoint you, because He pours his love into our hearts, changing them for good.

This Christmas, make sure you read His letter of hope that He has sent to you.

You will read this message of hope in the story of Mary who said "yes" to carry the Son of God in her womb.

You will read this message of hope in the story of the Wise Men who came to worship the Christ child.

You'll read it in the story of the shepherds who left their flocks to witness the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Like them, may you see that Jesus brings true hope, for He connects us, forever, to the loving hand of God.

Actor *lights the Advent candle.*

Today, as we light the advent candle, let's remember that God has written a beautiful letter to us.

Let it fill your hearts with hope.

Lights fade to end the play.

This is Advent: Joy

Reader's Theater Version

**Performance notes: If you are reading, read the script with emotion, in a way that's true to you. It's important to be yourself. Don't be afraid to take your time. Readers should look at the audience and at their fellow co-Readers.*

Reader 1 holds up jar of sand.

Reader 1: This is a soul. *(hold up the jar of sand)*

Reader 2: At least sometimes this is how it looks and how it feels.

Reader 3: Dry, like a desert.

Reader 2: Thirsty and in need of joy.

Reader 1: Sometimes I feel like my life is the second half of that dream Joseph interprets for Pharaoh. You know, when all the skinny little cows appear and eat up all the fat ones. I want abundance, but everything feels scarce.

Reader 2: I'm so grateful for how, even when my soul feels dry, that God whispers words into my heart. Like a scene in a nature documentary when it finally rains in a desert, and out of nowhere, a flower blooms.

Reader 3: It's at times like these, when I feel dry, that I turn to God's word. If my soul feels like a desert then God's word prompts me to imagine that the dryness is just the miles and miles of sand that the Israelites walked before they entered the Promised Land.

Reader 1: If my spiritual life feels dry, then I imagine it's dry like the starkly beautiful dunes the Wise Men traveled across on their way to meet the Messiah.

Reader 2: If you're walking through a difficult season, be encouraged today. You're not alone. Others have walked the journey before. The desert ends!

Reader 3: Think of those Wise Men.

Reader 1: They must have doubted themselves. Some night, when they set camp, half way between the Eastern land they called home and the foreign place they hoped to worship Heaven's king. Away from all their comforts. Pitching tents in the desert.

Reader 3: The threat of jackals and other animals, the threat of thieves.

Reader 1: They were on their way to one of the most joyful experiences of their lives, but they had difficult, unfamiliar terrain to travel through first.

Reader 2: If Christmas feels different this year because of the circumstances you're going through, if you feel like you are going through tough terrain, please take heart, my friend.

Reader 3: Your Savior set out on a journey too. His earthly life was even more of a dangerous adventure than the journey of the Wise Men. He left all the comforts of heaven to make a way for you.

Reader 2: He came to earth with so much joy set before Him, even though it included a cross.

Reader 1: "For the joy set out for Him he endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of God."

Take a moment to let the words land with the audience.

Reader 3: This Advent season, even if you feel far away from the joy of Christmas, remember the example of those who have walked before us. Of Israel, to the Promised Land. The Wise Men to Bethlehem. Jesus, from the manger to the cross.

Reader 2 *lights the candle.*

Reader 1: Today, as we light the candle of Advent, let us especially remember our Savior Jesus, and the difficult journey He made so we can *all* know true joy.

All: Amen.

Lights fade to end the play.

This is Advent: Joy

Monologue Version

**Performance notes: embrace the sentiments of the text to best connect with your audience. Play with speeds, slowing down moments that resonate with you and speed up areas where you feel the fire. Be a wind chime through which the Spirit moves and makes some sweet noise.*

Actor: This is a soul. *(hold up the jar of sand)*

At least sometimes this is how it looks and how it feels.

Dry, like a desert. Thirsty and in need of joy. Sometimes I feel like my life is the second half of that dream Joseph interprets for Pharaoh. You know, when all the skinny little cows appear and eat up all the fat ones. I want abundance, but everything feels scarce.

I'm so grateful for how, even when my soul feels dry, that God whispers words into my heart. Like a scene in a nature documentary when it finally rains in a desert and out of nowhere a flower blooms.

It's at times like these, when I feel dry, that I turn to God's word. If my soul feels like a desert then God's word prompts me to imagine that the dryness is just the miles and miles of sand that the Israelites walked before they entered the Promised Land.

If my spiritual life feels dry, then I imagine it's dry like the starkly beautiful dunes the Wise Men traveled across on their way to meet the Messiah.

If you're walking through a difficult season, be encouraged today. You're not alone. Others have walked the journey before. The desert ends!

I think of those Wise Men. They must have doubted themselves. Some night, when they set camp, half way between the Eastern land they called home and the foreign place they hoped to worship Heaven's king. Away from all their comforts. Pitching tents in the desert. The threat of jackals and other animals, the threat of thieves.

They were on their way to one of the most joyful experiences of their lives, but they had difficult, unfamiliar terrain to travel through first.

If Christmas feels different this year because of the circumstances you're going through, if you feel like you are going through tough terrain, please take heart my friend.

Your Savior set out on a journey too. His earthly life was even more of a dangerous adventure than the journey of the Wise Men. He left all the comforts of heaven to make a way for you.

He came to earth with so much joy set before Him, even though it included a cross.

"For the joy set out for Him he endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of God."

Take a moment to let the words land with the audience.

This Advent season, even if you feel far away from the joy of Christmas, remember the example of those who have walked before us. Of Israel, to the Promised Land. The Wise Men to Bethlehem. Jesus, from the manger to the cross.

Actor *lights the candle.*

Today, as we light the candle of Advent, let us especially remember our Savior Jesus, and the difficult journey He made so we can *all* know true joy.

Lights fade to end play.

This is Advent: Peace

Reader's Theater Version

**Performance notes: If you are reading, read the script with emotion, in a way that's true to you. It's important to be yourself. Don't be afraid to take your time. Readers should look at the audience and at their fellow co-Readers.*

Reader 1 holds up a smartphone.

Reader 1: This is a phone.

Reader 2: You may have seen one before.

Reader 1: It's your calendar and your calculator. It's your window into a thousand worlds. A camera and notebook. A map and a search engine. A personal assistant and, well, let's be honest...

Reader 2: ...a companion that you touch and interact with more than any other individual in your life.

Reader 1: It counts your steps and how many calories you've burned.

Reader 2: It beeps to remind you to take your pills and to notify you when the package you ordered arrives at your door.

Reader 1: It times how long you boil your eggs in the morning and serves as your alarm clock to wake you up and drag your too-tired body out of bed.

Reader 2: You cast your morning work out video from it and listen to the morning podcast. It's in your hand and ear and in front of your eyes before your first coffee.

Reader 1: And you've looked at it more than a dozen times before you crack open those hard-boiled eggs and sprinkle them with pepper and salt.

Reader 2: Or ketchup.

Reader 1: Or hot sauce.

Reader 2: Where you go it goes.

Reader 1: You might post funny memes from the bathroom.

Reader 2: Comment between bites of your meal.

Reader 1: Walk through grocery aisles while you loud-talk on speakerphone.

Reader 2: Please, don't do that.

Reader 1: It's got all the apps you'll ever need. To deliver your dinner. And your groceries. Hail a ride. Close the garage door. Set up a blind date. Look up a word.

Reader 2: Book a hotel. Leave a review. Read a book.

Reader 1: Binge watch almost anything.

Reader 2: Subscribe and save.

Reader 1: And we haven't even mentioned TikTok or Instagram, where you can scroll and scroll for days. Where you can let yourself get lost in a labyrinth of funny pranks and hyped-up trends. Gawk at comments from friends you haven't seen since high school.

Reader 2: Let your jaw drop at sensational news stories that, for some reason, even though you know better, you click and click and click again until your blood pressure is high and your blood sugar is low.

Reader 1: Before you know it, it's almost lunchtime and you shake out of your scroll-induced daze only to remember that this whole time you meant to open your Bible App to read the verse of the day.

Reader 2: But your mother has texted you twice now, and she's started to use emoticons and—

Reader 1: This is *my* phone.

Reader 2: And it goes everywhere with me and I go everywhere with it. I stand with it in lines at the bank or while I wait for the nurse to call my name.

Reader 1: I consult it while watching movies, and eating dinner with family and friends.

Reader 2: While I walk the dog.

Reader 1: When I'm in meetings at work.

Reader 2: It's my connection to the world. And yet it disconnects me from the world, from myself, and from God. Not always. But, if I'm honest...

Reader 1: ...a lot.

Reader 2: It does most things for me, but it doesn't give me peace.

Reader 1: This is a phone and you're allowed to turn it off. Put it down. Leave it on its own.

***Reader 1** holds up the phone and reveals a picture of a candle on the screen.*

*After a moment, **Reader 1** powers down the screen and places the phone down.*

Reader 1: There's a difference.

Reader 2: When we stop. When we unplug. When we turn off our pixels and turn to the real light.

Reader 1: Let's take a moment together. To close our eyes. To take in a deep breath. Exhale.

Reader 2: When was the last time you felt true, deep, quiet peace?

Reader 1: God keeps in perfect peace anyone and everyone who fixes their mind on Him.

Reader 2: This Christmas, let us turn our hearts and attention to Jesus, who came as the light into the world so that we may truly know peace.

Reader 1: Tune out the world a little more. Put down the phone. Tune in to God.

Reader 2 *lights the advent candle.*

Reader 1: Today we light the candle of Advent. To remember that Jesus is our Prince of Peace.

Lights fade to end the play.

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This is Advent: Peace

Monologue Version

**Performance notes: embrace the subtlety and humor of the opening gesture when you show the phone. This is something everyone in the audience may have a connection to. And don't rush powering down the phone at the end, or the lighting of the candle. Not rushing makes it more profound and helps the audience take time to imagine shutting down their own phones so that the candlelight shines brighter.*

The **Actor** holds up a smartphone.

Actor: This is a phone.

You may have seen one before.

It's your calendar and your calculator. It's your window into a thousand worlds.

A camera and notebook. A map and a search engine. A personal assistant and, well, let's be honest, a companion that you touch and interact with more than any other individual in your life.

It counts your steps and how many calories you've burned. It beeps to remind you to take your pills and to notify you when the package you ordered arrives at your door.

It times how long you boil your eggs in the morning and serves as your alarm clock to wake you up and drag your too-tired body out of bed.

You cast your morning work out video from it and listen to the morning podcast. It's in your hand and ear and in front of your eyes before your first coffee. And you've looked at it more than a dozen times before you crack open those hard boiled eggs and sprinkle them with pepper and salt. Or ketchup. Or hot sauce.

Where you go it goes.

You might text at traffic lights. Post funny memes from the bathroom. Comment between bites of your meal. Walk through grocery aisles while you loud-talk on speakerphone. (Please, don't do that).

It's got all the apps you'll ever need. To deliver your dinner. And your groceries. Hail a ride. Close the garage door. Set up a blind date. Look up a word. Book a hotel. Leave a review. Read a book. Binge watch almost anything. Subscribe and save.

And we haven't even mentioned TikTok or Instagram, where you can scroll and scroll for days. Where you can let yourself get lost in a labyrinth of funny pranks and hyped-up trends. Gawk at comments from friends you haven't seen since high school.

Let your jaw drop at sensational news stories that, for some reason, even though you know better, you click and click and click again until your blood pressure is high and your blood sugar is low.

Before you know it, it's almost lunchtime and you shake out of your scroll-induced daze only to remember that this whole time you meant to open your Bible App to read the verse of the day.

But your mother has texted you twice now, and she's started to use emoticons and—

This is *my* phone.

And it goes everywhere with me and I go everywhere with it.

I stand with it in lines at the bank or while I wait for the nurse to call my name.

I consult it while watching movies, and eating dinner with family and friends.

While I walk the dog.

When I'm in meetings at work.

It's my connection to the world.

And yet it disconnects me from the world, from myself and from God.

Not always. But, if I'm honest, a lot.

It does most things for me, but it doesn't give me peace.

This is a phone and you're allowed to turn it off. Put it down. Leave it on its own.

Hold up the phone and reveal a picture of a candle on the screen. After a moment, power down the screen. Place the phone down. Pick up the candle.

There's a difference.

When we stop. When we unplug. When we turn off our pixels and turn to the real light. Let's take a moment together. To close our eyes. To take in a deep breath. Exhale.

When was the last time you felt true, deep, quiet peace?

God keeps in perfect peace anyone and everyone who fixes their mind on Him.

This Christmas, let us turn our hearts and attention to Jesus, who came as the light into the world so that we may truly know peace.

Tune out the world a little more. Put down the phone. Tune in to God.

*The **actor** lights the advent candle.*

Today we light the candle of Advent. To remember that Jesus is our Prince of Peace.

Lights fade to end the play.

This is Advent: Love

Reader's Theater Version

**Performance notes: If you are reading, read the script with emotion, in a way that's true to you. It's important to be yourself. Don't be afraid to take your time. Readers should look at the audience and at their fellow co-Readers.*

Reader 1 lights a candle and holds it up.

Reader 1: This is love.

Reader 2: Well, actually it's a candle, burning on the wick.

Reader 1 places the candle on the pulpit and looks at the audience, scanning the room.

Reader 3: How do you keep a fire burning? How do you keep love alive?

Reader 1: During Advent we light candles to symbolize that Jesus is the light of the world. Today, as we prepare our hearts for Christmas, let our hearts be aflame with love for Christ and let that flame burn brightly through giving *thanks*. Thanks is our fuel.

Reader 2: Many of us face challenges in different areas of our lives. Our families, our health, our relationships at work and at home. No matter what we face, we thank you God for healing us, for strengthening us, and for encouraging us.

Reader 3: Thank you, Lord, that you are always with us and that you always lead and guide us. By your Spirit and through your word.

Reader 2: Thank you for your Word, God.

Reader 3: Thank you that you, Jesus, have made a living way to be right with the Father through your advent and birth.

Reader 2: Through your life and your death.

Reader 1: Through your resurrection.

Reader 3: Thank you that we have access to your word, written down through the centuries, which is always available to us to guide and instruct us in the way that we should go.

Reader 1: Today we rest in you, God, and we activate our faith. We believe in you. We trust you. We long for your presence and to walk in your ways.

Reader 1: Thank you for going before us. That you lead and you guide us.

Reader 2: Thank you for your comfort.

Reader 3: Thank you for your empowering grace and for your constant provision.

Reader 1: Thank you for making all things new, God! That your word never returns to you void. And that it does a new thing.

Reader 2: In us. Around us. In our hearts.

Reader 1: In our lives.

Reader 3: In every situation.

Reader 1: Thank you that we are taking the shape you want us to take because you are the Potter and we are the clay.

Reader 2: We thank you that you can do anything. For nothing is impossible for you.

Reader 1: Thank you for your patience with us.

Reader 3: Thank you for your commitment to us.

Reader 1: For your undeniable, immeasurable, and indescribable track record of faithfulness and generosity toward us.

Reader 2: We're so blessed to belong to you.

Reader 3: Thank you for loving us first!

Reader 1: Thank you for not giving up on us, for calling us into your kingdom of light.

Reader 2: Thank you for changing us and renewing us, day by day.

Reader 1: Thank you for every answered prayer in our lives. Too many to count.

Reader 3: Thank you for protecting us and directing us.

Reader 2: Thank you for searching our hearts and convicting us of sin. Thank you for cleansing us and correcting us. For counseling us and consoling us.

Reader 1: Thank you that you are who you say that you are and that you do what you say you will do.

Reader 3: Thank you for letting us approach you and for receiving us.

Reader 2: We love you God. We truly love you!

Reader 1: Everything that we have is because of you.

Reader 3: All our hope is in you.

Reader 1: Jesus, we stop in the busyness and complexity of our lives, no matter what situation we are in,

Reader 2: No matter what we face or what we fear,

Reader 1: We stop and in this moment we acknowledge that because of your life we live.

Reader 3: Because you came to earth we can be accepted and made whole by the Father.

Reader 1 *takes the candle and holds it high.*

Reader 2: Today our hearts burn with love for you, God. This candle of Advent is a symbol of the love that you have given to us, that burns in us.

Reader 1: We are fuelled by your love and we fuel our hearts with thanks for all that you've done.

All: Amen.

Lights fade to end the play.

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This is Advent: Love

Monologue Version

**Performance notes: this is your moment to let loose. Be passionate and lean into the power of the prayers. Punch the alliteration like staccato notes. Play with speeds, slowing down moments that resonate with you and speed up areas where you feel the fire. Be a wind chime through which the Spirit moves and makes some sweet noise.*

The **Actor** lights a candle and holds it up.

Actor: This is love.

Well, actually it's a candle, burning on the wick.

The **Actor** places the candle on the pulpit and looks at the audience, scanning the room.

How do you keep a fire burning? How do you keep love alive?

During Advent we light candles to symbolize that Jesus is the light of the world. Today as we prepare our hearts for Christmas, let our hearts be aflame with love for Christ and let that flame burn brightly through giving *thanks*. Thanks is our fuel.

Many of us face challenges in different areas of our lives. Our families, our health, our relationships at work and at home. No matter what we face, we thank you God for healing us, for strengthening us and for encouraging us.

Thank you, Lord, that you are always with us and that you always lead and guide us. By your Spirit and through your word.

Thank you for your Word, God.

Thank you that you, Jesus, have made a living way to be right with the Father through your advent and birth. Through your life and your death. Through your resurrection.

Thank you that we have access to your word, written down through the centuries, which is always available to us to guide and instruct us in the way that we should go.

Today we rest in you, God, and we activate our faith. We believe in you. We trust you. We long for your presence and to walk in your ways.

Thank you for going before us. That you lead and you guide us.

Thank you for your comfort.

Thank you for your empowering grace and for your constant provision.

Thank you for making all things new, God! That your word never returns to you void. And that it does a new thing. In us. Around us. In our hearts. In our lives. In every situation.

Thank you that we are taking the shape you want us to take because you are the Potter and we are the clay.

We thank you that you can do anything. For nothing is impossible for you.

Thank you for your patience with us.

Thank you for your commitment to us.

For your undeniable, immeasurable and indescribable track record of faithfulness and generosity toward us.

We're so blessed to belong to you.

Thank you for loving us first!

Thank you for not giving up on us, for calling us into your kingdom of light.

Thank you for changing us and renewing us, day by day.

Thank you for every answered prayer in our lives — too many to count.

Thank you for protecting us and directing us.

Thank you for searching our hearts and convicting us of sin. Thank you for cleansing us and correcting us. For counseling us and consoling us.

Thank you that you are who you say that you are and that you do what you say you will do.

Thank you for letting us approach you and for receiving us.

We love you God. We truly love you!

Everything that we have is because of you.

All our hope is in you.

Jesus, we stop in the busyness and complexity of our lives, no matter what situation we are in. No matter what we face or what we fear. We stop and in this moment we acknowledge that because of your life we live.

Because you came to earth we can be accepted and made whole by the Father.

*The **Actor** takes the candle and holds it high.*

Today our hearts burn with love for you, God. This candle of Advent is a symbol of the love that you have given to us, that burns in us.

We are fuelled by your love and we fuel our hearts with thanks for all that you've done.

Amen.

Lights fade to end the play.

This is Advent: Grace

Reader's Theater Version

**Performance notes: If you are reading, read the script with emotion, in a way that's true to you. It's important to be yourself. Don't be afraid to take your time. Readers should look at the audience and at their fellow co-Readers.*

Reader 1 holds up a small Christmas ornament.

Reader 1: This is grace.

Reader 2: Well, actually it's an ornament that you hang on a Christmas tree.

Reader 3: Does your family have a special tradition at Christmas?

Reader 2: Maybe you watch a movie as you wrap presents, the same one every year. You know it so well you can recite the lines together.

Reader 1: Or maybe you do an advent calendar. A little surprise every day in the lead up to Christmas. A new Lego everyday, or a special bag of tea, or better yet, chocolate. Do the parents in your household get an advent calendar too, or is it just the kids?

Reader 2: Maybe your tradition is to buy a special ornament (*hold up the ornament*) like this one, to mark the year. Your tree is a map of memories marking out your family history. Whenever you look at the tree it's like you're looking at part of the Christmas story and the history of your family, both at the same time.

Reader 3: These little traditions matter. They help us to shape meaning into our celebrations. Christmas to Christmas, year to year, grace to grace.

Reader 2: This advent season, take some time to walk through your home and to just look at all the things in it. The stuff you've gathered up over time. Furniture and bookshelves. Trinkets and souvenirs. Picture frames and coffee mugs and plant holders.

Reader 3: If you've already decorated for Christmas, take a few moments to really look at the ornaments and the objects you set up to bring some beauty into your rooms.

Reader 1: If you're older, it may be stuff from over a lifetime.

Reader 3: And yes, you may realize you need to purge.

Reader 1: If you're younger or starting over, you may just be starting to decorate a space or starting up some new traditions.

Reader 2: So think through how to fill your space with meaning.

Reader 3: But look closely at all the practical and decorative things in your home.

Reader 2: Because there was a day when those rooms were empty. Just four walls and a floor.

Reader 3: But *you* filled the space and made it yours.

Reader 1: My friends, God has done the same with you. Your life, just like that once-empty room, has been filled with good things from God.

Reader 3: Isn't that a wonderful thought?

Reader 2: What has he filled your heart and home with? Year to year, Christmas to Christmas, grace to grace?

Reader 1: Take an inventory of all the ways God has placed his goodness in you: answered prayers.

Reader 2: Victories, little and small.

Reader 3: Light in the darkness.

Reader 2: Grace where it wasn't deserved.

Reader 1: His Son Jesus lives in you and He fills you up with good things.

Reader 2: However you feel this Christmas,

Reader 1: and however prepared you are,

Reader 3: remember that God has furnished your life with wonderful things.

Reader 2: He's the God who cleans and polishes you.

Reader 1: He repairs and restores you. He clothes and washes you.

Reader 3: And adorns you with new clothes. Clothes of righteousness.

Reader 2: He holds you in his hand.

Reader 1: So whatever tradition you have in your home,

Reader 2: or whatever new tradition you will start this year,

Reader 1: may it help to remind you of grace.

Reader 3 *lights the candle.*

Reader 2: Today as we light the candle of Advent, we declare that God has filled the world, and our lives, with grace.

Lights fade to end the play.

This is Advent: Grace

Monologue Version

**Performance notes: embrace the subtlety and humor of the opening gesture when you feature the ornament. This is something everyone in the audience may have a connection to. Take time to pause and the moments that resonate with you, to breathe, and to look audience members in the eye for effect.*

The **Actor** holds up a small Christmas ornament.

Actor: This is grace.

Well, actually it's an ornament that you hang on a Christmas tree.

Does your family have a special tradition at Christmas?

Maybe you watch a movie as you wrap presents, the same one every year. You know it so well you can recite the lines together.

Or maybe you do an advent calendar. A little surprise every day in the lead up to Christmas. A new Lego everyday, or a special bag of tea, or better yet, chocolate. Do the parents in your household get an advent calendar too, or is it just the kids?

Maybe your tradition is to buy a special ornament (*hold up the ornament*) like this one, to mark the year. Your tree is a map of memories marking out your family history. Whenever you look at the tree it's like you're looking at part of the Christmas story and the history of your family, both at the same time.

These little traditions matter. They help us to shape meaning into our celebrations. Christmas to Christmas, year to year, grace to grace.

This advent season, take some time to walk through your home and to just look at all the things in it. The stuff you've gathered up over time. Furniture and bookshelves. Trinkets and souvenirs. Picture frames and coffee mugs and plant holders.

If you've already decorated for Christmas, take a few moments to really look at the ornaments and the objects you set up to bring some beauty into your rooms.

If you're older, it may be stuff from over a lifetime. And yes, you may realize you need to purge. If you're younger or starting over, you may just be starting to decorate a space or starting up some new traditions. So think through how to fill your space with meaning.

But look closely at all the practical and decorative things in your home. Because there was a day when those rooms were empty. Just four walls and a floor.

But *you* filled the space and made it yours.

My friends, God has done the same with you. Your life, just like that once-empty room, has been filled with good things from God. Isn't that a wonderful thought?

What has he filled your heart and home with? Year to year, Christmas to Christmas, grace to grace?

Take an inventory of all the ways God has placed his goodness in you: answered prayers, victories little and small, light in the darkness. Grace where it wasn't deserved.

His Son Jesus lives in you and He fills you up with good things.

However you feel this Christmas, and however prepared you are, remember that God has furnished your life with wonderful things. He's the God who cleans and polishes you. He repairs and restores you. He clothes and washes you. And adorns you with new clothes—clothes of righteousness. He holds you in his hand.

So whatever tradition you have in your home, or whatever new tradition you will start this year, may it help to remind you of grace.

*The **Reader** lights the candle.*

Today as we light the candle of Advent, we declare that God has filled the world, and our lives, with grace.

Lights fade to end the play.