

ONE MOMENT
An Advent Meditation

by Ruth Buchanan



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SYNOPSIS: Four readers give depth and breadth to the event that Advent anticipates: the birth of Jesus. In that one moment, God’s plan for redemption was finally revealed. This program adds a special touch for ushering in the Advent season. Scripture, music, and reflections lush and lyrical shape our understanding of the Messiah’s role—why he had to be born and what it means in our redemption. The congregation is led on a path from the cradle to the cross, which encourages them to meditate on enduring themes such as worship, holiness, glory, Christ, and evangelism. The readers’ “vocal instruments” swell and whisper, overlap and enunciate to lift these words from the script, sending them into the hearts of your congregants. No memorization needed—a plus in this busy season.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 female, 1 male, 1 either)

READER 1 (f/m)

READER 2 (f/m)

READER 3 (f/m)

READER 4 (f/m)

(ALL LINE COUNTS ARE APPROXIMATE)

DURATION: 10-30 minutes (depending on musical interludes.)

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PRODUCTION NOTES

STAGING:

All four Readers are gender flexible. The parts are recommended for mature voices.

The ends of some speeches overlap with the beginning of the next speech, meaning that the Readers sometimes speak their lines in sync with one another, and occasionally all Readers speak in unison. These transitions should be practiced until they are natural and seamless, providing a flawless overlapping effect.

MUSIC:

Interspersed throughout the script are places for six musical interludes. These could be choral pieces, congregational singing, or instrumental meditations. If you choose to use licensed music, it is your responsibility to ensure proper permissions. In order for the music to flow naturally with the narrations, the recommended theme for each interlude is given.

The following are merely suggestions. Most of these songs fit an Advent/Christmas theme and may be found in hymnals or Christmas songbooks. Please substitute titles of your choosing, provided that they fit the individual song themes outlined. You could use other hymns or current songs of the praise and worship genre.

1. Worship—Chorus from “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (second time: “For he alone is worthy”)
2. Holiness—“Holy, Holy, Holy”
3. Glory—“And the Glory of the Lord” from Handel’s *Messiah*
4. Christ—“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”
5. Evangelism—“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”
6. Joy—“Joy to the World”
- 7.

SCRIPTURE:

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1 **READER 1:** On the night of Jesus' birth, everything changed.
2 Because the Father could not allow the birth of his Son to go
3 unheralded, (*Scripture begins.*) an angel of the Lord stood
4 before the shepherds, and the glory of the Lord shone around
5 them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them...

6 **READER 1 and READER 2:** Don't be afraid...

7 **READER 2:** For look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that
8 will be for all the people: Today a Savior, who is Messiah the
9 Lord, was born for you in the city of David. This will be the sign
10 for you: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in cloth and lying in
11 a feeding trough."

12 **READER 2 and READER 3:** Suddenly—

13 **READER 3:** There was a multitude of the heavenly host with the
14 angel, praising God and saying...

15 **ALL:** Glory to God...

16 **READER 4:** In the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people
17 he favors! (*Luke 2:9-14*).

18 **READER 1:** Though he lost no glory in coming to earth, in that one
19 moment, Jesus voluntarily went from having all power to being
20 a powerless infant. From limitless to limited. From infinite to
21 finite.

22 **ALL:** And yet, he came to us.

23 **READER 1:** In that stable, in that moment, the God of the universe
24 intersected our timeline, allowing us to do more than just wander
25 and yearn.

26 **READER 2:** Through Christ and Christ alone, we are able to *know*.

27 **READER 3:** Because of his Advent, we are now able to know Christ
28 and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing
29 in his sufferings, and become like him.

30 **READER 4:** And what is the natural human response to witnessing
31 the majesty of God in the flesh?

32 **READER 1:** The only appropriate response...

33 **ALL:** Is to worship.

34

35 **MUSICAL INTERLUDE:** (*Any number with the theme of worship.*)

1 **READER 2:** Once the prophet Isaiah, who foretold the coming of
2 the Messiah, was permitted to appear in the throne room of the
3 Most High. He wrote, (*Scripture begins.*) In the year that King
4 Uzziah died...

5 **READER 1 and READER 2:** I saw the Lord...

6 **READER 1:** Seated on a high and lofty throne, and his robe filled
7 the temple. Seraphim were standing above him; each one had
8 six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his
9 feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another:

10 **ALL:** Holy, holy, holy...

11 **READER 1:** Is the Lord of Hosts; his glory fills the whole earth. The
12 foundations of the doorways shook at the sound of their voices,
13 and the temple was filled with smoke. Then I said: Woe is me
14 for I am ruined because I am a man of unclean lips and live
15 among a people of unclean lips, and because my eyes have
16 seen the King, the Lord of Hosts (*Isaiah 6:1-5*).

17 **READER 2:** Like the prophet Isaiah, falling to his knees overcome
18 with unworthiness in the presence of a holy God, we too—when
19 confronted with the reality of who Christ is—should fall to our
20 knees in witness of his majesty.

21

22 **MUSICAL INTERLUDE:** (*Any number with the theme of holiness.*)

23

24 **READER 3:** Isaiah may have visited the throne room of God in
25 heaven, but is heaven really the only place where we may find
26 ourselves in the presence of God? The real question, in the end,
27 is not where God *is*, but of where God *is not*.

28 **READER 4:** God is everywhere equally present at all times.

29 **READER 3:** Although wonderful, this concept is difficult to
30 comprehend. Even the poet David struggled for the words to
31 explain God's omnipresence: (*Scripture begins.*) Where can I go
32 to escape your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I
33 go up to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you
34 are there. If I live at the eastern horizon or settle at the western
35 limits, even there your hand will lead me; your right hand will
36 hold on to me" (*Psalms 139:7-10*). Simply put...

37 **ALL:** God is everywhere.

38 **READER 1:** (*Scripture begins.*) Heaven is his throne.

1 **READER 2:** Earth is his footstool (*Isaiah 66:1*).

2 **READER 3:** He rides on the clouds.

3 **READER 4:** His spirit dwells in the heart of every believer.

4 **READER 1:** By him, the universe is held together.

5 **READER 2:** Although God is everywhere continually and fully
6 present, our awareness of him is dependent on our cooperation
7 with the Spirit, who stands waiting to open our eyes to reality.

8 **READER 3:** As Christians cooperate with the witness of the Spirit,
9 the reality of his presence is magnified.

10 **READER 4:** In this way, God truly does inhabit the praise of his
11 people.

12 **READER 1:** Every time we lift our voices together in worship of the
13 triune God, the true glory of his presence radiates outward.

14

15 **MUSICAL INTERLUDE:** (*Any number with the theme of glory.*)

16

17 **READER 1:** Our triune God is eternal. Although Jesus did not begin
18 his existence in the manger, he did begin his earthly ministry
19 there. His spectacular ministry which brought sight to the blind,
20 food to the hungry, strength to the weak, and life to the dead,
21 began right there in Mary's arms, as she looked down at her tiny
22 newborn and thought...

23 **READER 1 and READER 2:** *This is the Most High.*

24 **READER 2:** He not only descended from heaven to wrap his glory
25 around frail human bones, but he also began his incarnate
26 existence as the lowliest and weakest of the human race: as an
27 infant. In these weak and quiet moments, we witness the
28 foreshadowing of Paul's admonition to...

29 **READER 2 and READER 3:** (*Scripture begins.*) Make your own
30 attitude...

31 **READER 3:** That of Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God,
32 did not consider equality with God as something to be used for
33 his own advantage. Instead he emptied himself by assuming the
34 form of a slave, taking on the likeness of men. And when he had
35 come as a man in his external form, He humbled himself by
36 becoming obedient to the point of death—even to death on a
37 cross.

38 **READER 3 and READER 4:** For this reason...



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