



Resource Centre

From our Churches

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Waiting for the Unexpected **A Christmas Play**

This play centers around the theme of waiting. As the Christmas season approaches we wait for all sorts of things to happen, or be over. Sometimes, in all this fullness we have no energy to wait with joy and peace for the joy, peace and hope that comes with Jesus.

Adapt to your congregation. Originally, this play involved pre-school children through youth, as well as a few adults. A class of grade 5 children developed the ideas and actions in scene 2.

Before the play begins, the pre-school children sing their songs, followed by the kindergarten children who each show a letter while reciting the following "words:"

- W – What are we waiting for?
- A – Are we really ready?
- I – Is there any room?
- T – Today we tell the story
- I – Immanuel, Jesus is here
- N- Not what we expected
- G – God with us

The first 4 scenes happen in close succession with as little movement as possible.

Scene One (2 people)

A boy is sitting down playing with his DS when two friends walk by.

- 1 "What are you doing sitting over here? Why don't you come with me and join the other guys who are playing football at the park? *(tosses the ball to his friend)*
- 2 "I can't. I'm waiting"
- 1 "What are you waiting for.....Christmas?"
- 2 "Ha...ha.. *(sarcastically. Then after hesitating for a moment he says)* "Well, maybe.... sort of...."
- 1 "It's October... what are you talking about?"
- 2 I know, but I'm waiting for my mom who is in the store buying all sorts of stuff to get ready for Christmas – including the *(rub hands together)* new i-phone I hope to get at Christmas.
- 1 "Whatever. Can't you play football while you wait?"
- A "If I am not here when mom comes back she is not going to be happy; especially since she's in there buying what I am waiting for.

Scene Two (5 people)

Small classroom with 3 or 4 students and a teacher

- T Okay students, how many more school days until it is holiday time?
- S1 16.
- S2 That's 224 hours.
- T Very good mental math Logan. Today for drama class we are going to play charades. Each student gets to act out one thing they are waiting for this Christmas. Who wants to go first?
- S3 I do, I do.
- (S3 get's up and starts acting - unwrapping candy and eating it.)*
- S2 You're cleaning your finger nails?

S4 You're sucking a soother?

S1 You're eating candy!

S3 *(nodding)* Yes!

S1 Can I go next?

T Sure.

(S1 starts acting - a plane, swimming and putting on sun tan lotion.)

S4 It looks like you are a bird.

S2 You're a seal?

S4 You have chicken pox?

S3 You're going to Mexico!

T S2, why don't you go next.

(S2 starts acting - unwrapping gifts)

S3 Are you building something? *(S2 stops and shakes his head.)*

S1 You're conducting....no.... you're unwrapping presents!

T Well done, everyone..... S4, it's your turn.

(S4 starts acting - holding a baby, being a shepherd in the field afraid of the Angels, and wise men bringing gifts. Everyone just watches, with blank looks on their faces and then the scene freezes, while S4 "holds" the baby again.)

Scene Three (3 people)

(Men are standing around drinking coffee.)

1 I can't wait for this all to be over. We have a party here, another one there. Then there is the family gathering, followed by the work gathering and every time we have to make one more trip to the store to pick something up.

2 I'm bracing myself for another round of getting all the outdoor decorations in place. Hopefully it isn't really cold this weekend. Years ago we started off with one string of lights over the door, now we are lighting up the neighbourhood.

3 I'm waiting for the season to be done, so I can leave all the festivities behind and get out on the ski trails – nothing like peace and quiet.

- 1 Isn't that the truth. There is so much hype around all the performances. First, the piano recital and then the school play followed by the Sunday school program at church. Sometimes I wonder if it is all a bit much.
- 2 All of Advent we talk about waiting for the coming of the Messiah.
- 1 If it is supposed to be a time of anticipation, why do I feel so tired?

Congregation Song: HWB 178 - Come thou long expected Jesus

Scene Four (2 people)

(A child is playing with pieces of a nativity set. As this is happening the "life size nativity" sets itself up around the church just like the small nativity. An older child (or youth) comes in and watches the child for a moment.)

- Y What's going on? Why did you take all the pieces out of the stable? Mom is not going to be happy – you know how obsessive she is about keeping things neat before Christmas. I'm waiting for Christmas to end so things will get back to normal.
- C All of these guys are waiting too. The shepherds are waiting. Mary and Joseph are waiting. The
- Y Who is this.....
- C A Kid
- Y A kid?
- C Yeah, the Innkeeper's kid.
- Y He had a kid?
- C Sure.... and he is waiting to, for everyone to get out of town.

The play now "moves" to the first night of Christmas.

Scene Five (1 Person monologue – the Innkeeper's child)

It's been crazy in this town ever since Caesar ordered everyone to go back to their home town to be counted. There are people and animals everywhere. It's crowded, and smelly and people keep coming to our house wanting a place to stay. We have no more room – My dad is so soft-hearted – he doesn't want anyone to stay outside in the cold - I only have a little corner to sleep in...The nights are really cold. I'm waiting all right – waiting for it to get warmer and waiting for all the people to leave.

Congregational Song: HWB 191 - O little town of Bethlehem

Scene Six (3 shepherds)

- S1 Do you think if we waited long enough the sheep would ever be quiet? Baa, baaaa... don't you ever get sick of it?
- S2 I don't really notice the noise but I do get tired of waiting for these stupid sheep to follow us. God really didn't give them much of a brain!
- S3 Well you can't really stuff too much more brain in such a small head. Maybe God could have started with a bigger skull?
- S1 I think God has more important things to think about. Like fixing a few things so that people would start to respect us and the work we do.
- S2 *(very sarcastically)* Right. Look at us – neat, clean shaven, respectable folks who chase after sheep who can't manage on their own. You're right, people should respect us.
- S3 You make us sound so unimportant.
- S2 Well, are we important? I don't think so... but who knows, maybe something will happen that might make me feel differently.
- S3 I'm just waiting for the night to end. I'm really cold.
- S1 Wouldn't it be nice to hear some singing instead of baaaa, baaa.

Congregational Song:

Scene Seven (2 people)

(Mary and Joseph are making their way to center stage. As they walk they are having a conversation.)

- M I'm tired of waiting.
- J I'm so sorry Mary. Why don't we stop and you can sit down and rest a while.
- M No, I'm not tired. I'm tired of waiting.
- J Waiting for the baby?
- M Yes. *(Looking down at her tummy.)* But I'm also waiting to know more. What will he look like? Will he be happy? Will he know who he is?

J I can't wait to get away from people's questions about your pregnancy and our marriage.

M I'm sure that God isn't done with us yet. I am waiting to find out what is next.

J Me too... but right now let's find a place to stay and wait out the night.

(Mary and Joseph sit down in the "stable" which is center stage and marked by a manger.)

Congregational Song: HWB 193 - Silent Night

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:6-7

Scene Eight (2 speakers)

(Angels – which are the youth singers are gathered together, whispering to each other.)

A1 Is it time?

A2 Almost, but not yet. Let those shepherds get a few more minutes of sleep.

A1 But I can't wait anymore.... This is very exciting. God coming to be with the people!

A2 *(Looks around and then turning to the fellow angels says)* "Are you all ready?" *(shaking of heads)* It doesn't get any better than this. Don't hold back....let those gloria's fill the sky." *(Turning to A1)* Okay.... You're on, and we are right behind you.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:8-14

Youth singers or Congregational song:

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:15-16

Youth singers: Go tell it on the mountain

Scene Nine (shepherds – still in the field)

S1 What are we waiting for? Let's go to Bethlehem!

S2 I feel a little under dressed.

S3 Are you kidding, the angels came to us. Look at how sleepy the town is. We are the first to know. Doesn't that tell you something?

S4 Maybe it's what I was waiting for.

(The shepherds leave and head to the place of the nativity. As they make their way, so do all the people involved in all the other scenes. Except for the child of the Innkeeper – s/he stands a little off to the side and observes the scene developing. While this is happening, the congregation sings.)

Congregational Song: HWB 212 – O come all ye faithful

Scene Ten (1 Child – monologue)

Wow. Something interesting is going on over there. It seems so peaceful. So different from the rushing about in the rest of the town. Look at their faces. Some look surprised, some look happy, the father looks relieved. There must be something very special about the baby. It's like they just received a gift they were waiting for!

(7 people (1 from each scene) step to the front of the group to speak one line each.)

W – We were waiting for the wrong thing.

A – Are we ready now?

I – Is there any room?

T – Today we tell the story

I – Of the birth of Immanuel

N- Not what we expected

G – God with us

(One person leads out (maybe the monologue speaker, or one of the angels, or the piano player)):

“O come let us adore him. O come let us adore him. O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!”

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:17, 20

(Shepherds leave the stable area and move out into the pews.)

Congregational song: HWB 318 - Joy to the world