



**Mennonite  
Church  
Canada**

Resource Centre

# From our Churches

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## **Flood of Mercy** **Advent Series of Readers' Theatre Scripts**

*Based on the 2012 Advent Worship materials in [Leader, Fall 2012](#) magazine.*

**Note:** *For each voice we had the readers face towards the pulpit with each of their Advent names printed on a piece of paper fastened to their backs (each speaking into microphones). The narrator and voice of Christ (reader with a white shirt and crown of thorns) spoke from the pulpit.*

### **Cast:**

Voice 1(Worry): Skeptical.... Worry stands in the way of Hope  
Voice 2 (Fear): Pleases Worry... Fear stands in the way of Love  
Voice 3 (Peace): devote believer  
Voice 4 (Joy): Child-like  
Christ Coming Voice  
Narrator/Scripture

### **Advent 1: Wading in Faithfulness**

Narrator: Advent is a time to celebrate the expectation of God's benevolent work being fulfilled in this world...as shown in the coming of Jesus, as a babe born innocently in a humble manger. This expectation...

Voice 4: ...Or "waiting", do you mean?

Narrator: Yes...expectation...or *waiting*..., but it doesn't matter because *really* we know all of this has already come. Just like it is written in Jeremiah 33:14-16: <sup>14</sup>*The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the*

*house of Judah....I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.... Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety.*

Voice 4: We are safe and sound.

Voice 1: But *I'm* still waiting...

Narrator: Waiting for what? God's will has been done. Don't you see? Jesus the babe was born and all was set right.

Voice 1: What do you mean? I don't see how this can be true.

Voice 2: Yeah, yeah...Where is the justice...and rightness in our world?

Voice 3: Righteousness. Where is the righteousness?

Voice 1: Yeah,... more like "rightness". Righteousness? Who talks like that anymore?

Voice 2: Yeah...who knows what that is anymore? Righteousness? Anyhow with all the wars and disasters and atrocities happening all around the world...how is Jeremiah's prophecy hold any truth? Who is saved? Who really lives in safety these days?

Narrator: Well...well...I only meant that Advent is a time to be... *happy*...to be happy that Christmas is coming...you know...everyone likes Christmas.

Voice 4: Yes...Like you know...Christmas Spirit!

Voice 3: Perhaps we need to wade into faithfulness.

Narrator, Voice 1, Voice 2: Huh? What! What do you mean?

Voice 3: Perhaps what we *see* around us today is not the only thing we want changed. Yet we are waiting for *that* to happen... But perhaps there is something we are expecting that we are overlooking.

Voice 4: I want peace in the world. But humanity is still fighting in different parts of the world. But I *did* make up with a friend I had a fight with last week.

Voice 3: That's kind of what I'm getting at...your longing for peace starts to show in how you live. Good. So perhaps...there is something we long for...something we want God to intercede in...something that dwells in all of us...maybe this "something" is related to faith.

Voice 1: That's preposterous! That's just a bunch of religious mumbo jumbo.

Voice 3: You know *faith* is not necessarily about *being* religious, like being right or wrong, or about following this or that ritual... More importantly it is about surrendering to God's word...to God's way...

Voice 4: Or...or...maybe put another way, faith is about *waiting* in the "right here right now"...*waiting* for God to help us see *that* "*something*" which we could not see on our own...

Narrator: Hmmm....I wonder if that is sort of what the psalmist is getting at in Psalm 25?  
*<sup>4</sup>Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. <sup>5</sup>Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.*

Voice 4: Yeah! So Advent can be a time to reflect on the possibilities of God dwelling *fully* in and amongst us. Immanuel...God with us... !

Voice 1: I don't know...

Voice 2: I heard someone say that scriptures also say we're just *waiting* for the end of the world when God will destroy everything!

Narrator: Yes. Luke 21:25. Says something like that: <sup>25</sup>*"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. <sup>26</sup>People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*

Voice 1: There! Can't you see! The powers of heaven are being shaken! Religion is being shaken.

Voice 2: It's upon us. Can't you see there is a flood coming! The end of the world is coming! Oh my! I never *expected* this.

Narrator: Well... I don't know... when you put it that way. But maybe you're right.... Yes. Yes. I can see!...What should we do? Run for the hills?! Build a bunker?!

Voice 3: Wade into faithfulness.

Voice 4: Yeah! Wade into faithfulness!

Voice 1: Now's not the time for your flakiness. We got no time to sit and meditate.

Voice of Jesus Coming: No. Now more than ever is the time to look into the places neglected for far too long. Now more than ever you should wait...wait in the darkness...wait for the coming light...be disciplined and expectant...wait for God's leading...*God's* light...wait...wait... wade...wade....wade into faithfulness...wade...wade...

## Advent 2: Refined by Fire

Narrator: Our scripture for our second Sunday of Advent is from the prophet Malachi, chapter 3, verses 1-20. It says: *See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, ...indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. <sup>2</sup>But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup>he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver,...*

Voice 2: I don't like the sound of that!

Narrator: The sound of what?

Voice 2: Of that scripture. I don't like the sound of somebody being refined by fire... Is that what we should expect with the end of the world coming?!... I'm not sure I'm up for that!

Voice 1: Yeah...maybe being washed with fuller's soap... but not being refined by fire ...you know being melted by extraordinary heat...could ruin my complexion.

Narrator: Alright, alright. I know we got a little worked up last week about the end of the world, like some sort of metaphorical flood was about to hit us but...I think...

Voice 2: It could be a *real* flood! Look around at the signs! Do you know that the ocean levels are rising. And not only that, there is war and suffering all around us. It doesn't look good.

Narrator: I know about all the calamity happening in the world...it does look like the world is about to crumble...but what about being faithful...faithful to God's work in world...I told myself I wouldn't get caught up in your worrying...But I'm getting a bit confused again.

Voice 4: I'm getting concerned that you are letting your worry get in the way of Hope. And your fear get in the way of seeing Love in the world.

Voice 3: Yes. I can understand your fear of how things are wrong in the world, but being refined, like the scriptures say is nothing to be afraid of.

Voice 1: What! Can you hear yourself speak? You think that holding onto some outdated beliefs about a God I can't even prove exists is going to keep me from all the hurt and destruction in this world. Well, you're wrong.

Voice 2: Really. Is there any hope? What will save us then?

Voice 1: I don't know... I just know that people have believed in Jesus Christ and his God for thousands of years and still we have liars and cheaters and wars... and...and bad things...still in the world...so why should we expect "God" to save us?

Voice 2: Liars and cheaters and wars...oh, my!

Voice 3: But being refined by the Great “unseen” God of ours is a life changing experience...God changes our hearts for the better...yes, it is scary to think of being changed.

Narrator: Actually the word apocalypse really just means, a big “change”

Voice 3: And, yes, there are still liars and cheaters and wars...

Voice 2: Oh, my!

Voice 3: ...but there are also dreamers and leaders and love. These are all ways we can look to “see” God’s refining. We may not be able to see (and therefore scientifically prove) God...but we can point to where God has been and therefore is! It’s like a light...that can be seen in darkness.

Voice 4: Yeah. I can see God in doctors and nurses, teachers and counselors, mechanics and store clerks, in music and sports...

Voice 3: We can build up, build homes, care and share... fix and modify, plumb and electrify...

Voice 1: Still there is deception, perversion, impulsion, expulsion,

Voice 2: Hitting and harming, cutting and maiming, killing and spilling

*(Voice 3 leads with “But there is...” and all read their parts at once...giving a chaotic effect. The Christ voice fades in saying his first line twice (the second time without the other voices). All voices say their bit twice.)*

Voice 1: ....dictators, oppressors, abusers and “distress-ers”. The poor, the underpaid, the people that other people want to lock away. Refugees, fugitives, people that have to run away Stress and anxiety, ulcers and over- worked workers working on holidays. Pollution and global warming; toxic things that have no warnings....	Voice 2: Liars and Cheaters and wars...oh, my! (repeat)  <i>[Fade out with others]</i>	Voice 3: <b>But there is</b> creation, composition, colours and the question “why?”. There’s diplomacy, trade, peaceful protest and mountains that stand real high. There’s hieroglyphs from humanity’s past, planets that we have never been past, and people that look to join the future to the present to the past.....	Voice 4: ... pastors, computer technicians, people that bake pies. Trees and flowers with leaves that change the sun into air that gives us the sky. There’s families of all sorts, different colours, stripes and shades...related by blood or by marriage or by the simple desire to follow the love that God has made .....
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Coming Christ: (John 12:35-36) *“Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. <sup>36</sup>While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.”*  
(John 8:12) *‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’*

### **Advent 3: Repentance, Renewal, Restoration**

#### **Cast:**

Voice 1 (Hope) – Worry is transformed

Voice 2 (Fear)

Voice 3 (Peace)

Voice 4 (Joy)

Christ Coming Voice

Narrator/Scripture

Voice 1: I'm exhausted.

Narrator: Exhausted? Well, yeah. All of this waiting can wear one out.

Voice 1: Yeah...all of this *waiting*... whatever we are *waiting* for...it sure can be overwhelming.

Voice 2: Like a flood.

Voice 3: Yeah, It can be difficult and somewhat frightening to wait for something you aren't sure will happen ...

Voice 1: Or you're waiting, not sure **what** will happen!

Narrator: Listen to this... the scriptures for the third Sunday of Advent reads:  
*"the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. <sup>16</sup>On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak."* (Zephaniah 3)

Voice 2: Fear.

Voice 4: Do *not* fear.

Narrator: And it says in Isaiah 12: *"O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, and you comforted me. <sup>2</sup>Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might"*

Voice 2: Huh..."for though you were angry with me..."

Voice 1: ..."your anger turned away..."

Voice 3: "...and you comforted me."

Voice 1: That's some love...

Voices 2, 3, 4 and Narrator: That's some love.

(Pause)

Voice 1: So...Where do we go from here?

Voice 2: Well... I was going to go home and have some lunch...you can come if you want...

Narrator: I believe he means, what should we do now that we...we...

Voice 4: Lived through a flood?!

Voice 3: ... do you mean ... a flood ...as in a metaphorical flood... as in experiencing God's refining...

Voice 2: Or it could be a *real* flood. Either way when we wait... through chaos and turmoil...  
...and...and...it seems...that *as* we make it through the chaos and turmoil...of.. of life...that  
this is like surviving a flood... metaphorical or *real*....and through that, God has...has...

Voice 4: Refined us.

Voice 2: Yeah!

Voice 4: ...that God can make us wiser, more in tune to God's presence.

Voice 2: Yeah, yeah!

Voice 1: OK...alright...so what? I am being "refined".

Voices 2, 3, 4 and Narrator: Pardon?!

Voice 2: ...Fine I'll admit it. Maybe there is something bigger than myself that is working on  
my life. (*changes label*) Maybe there is a Great Spirit of sorts influencing my being.

Voice 3: I think you are repenting.

Voice 1: What? What's that? It sounds so...so...***theological***.

Narrator: Repenting is just another way of saying that you are turning your life around back  
towards God. Repentance is a process of realizing we need God...we need God to...

Voice 4: Refine us!

Voice 3: Restore us.

Voice 4: Renew us!

Voice 1: Sometimes, I tell you, I get so tired of being so sure of being ***unsure*** about  
*everything*...so maybe...just maybe...there is something to seeking God's dreams for us...

Voice 2: yeah yeah...maybe there is something to looking for God with us...



Voice 4: Or put another way, maybe there is something to looking for Christ's light...

Narrator: "...so to never walk in darkness and have the light of life." – as Jesus says in the Gospel of John

Voice of Coming Christ: As you turn to my light, as you seek to follow my star...you will be renewed... Seek my coming light... seek Immanuel, "God with Us"...seek God's desire to restore the world and those around you.

## **Advent 4: Carried on a Flood of Reversal (Part 1)**

### **Cast:**

Voice 1(Hope):

Voice 2 (Love): Fear is transformed by Love

Voice 3 (Peace):

Voice 4 (Joy):

Christ Coming Voice:

Narrator/Scripture:

Voice 1: I got it! I mean...I mean...I'm getting it. For so long I have been letting my fear get in the way of seeing God's love in the world...from letting me **love** in this mixed up world. This waiting thing has actually been a good experience. You know at first I thought, "Oh, no. Here we go again with this church-y ritual and spirituality smuttzy-puttzy...but now that I've struggled with it... *and waited* with it ...I feel like *there is* a flood coming!

Voice 2: Oh, no! A flood! I thought that it was just a figure of speech! I just got over being afraid about the end of the world! Now I will become a wreck...again! What am I to do!? Again!

Voice 3: I think he is just using a figure of speech.

Voice 2: Oh. Good. Whew.

Narrator: Are you just using a figure of speech, right?

Voice 1: Well, yeah.

Voices 2, 3, 4 and Narrator: Whew.

Voice 1: Uh...or maybe not.

Voices 2, 3, 4 and Narrator: Ahh...ohh

Voice 1: I...I...don't know. All I know is that, now that my eyes are looking and waiting for God's coming light...one moment I think I see it... here!...and another time... there! I'm beginning to see God's possibilities in the people and world around me...and I feel like a flood *is* about to burst forth...a flood of God's mercy and love...

Voice 2: What does it look like...these moments of seeing God's light?!

Voice 1: It might look like somebody planting a garden or a tree to care for the earth... or it can look like someone comforting a person in grief ... or it even might be seen in people coming together to sing a song ...

Voice 1: Huh.

Voice 4: Or it may be seen in a handshake or a hug.

Narrator: Well...wait a minute...the scriptures for this Advent Sunday talk a lot about God restoring...time and time again it is written about how God will lift up people...

It says in Micah 5:1-5: *5Now you are walled around with a wall; siege is laid against us; <sup>2</sup>But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, <sup>4</sup>And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; <sup>5</sup>and he shall be the one of peace.* And in Luke 1:46-56 (also known as the Magnificat) it says: *"My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant....<sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name....<sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. It seems these people understood what this "flood" of God's love and mercy looks like.*

Voice 3: Yeah and scripture tells of how a great "flood" once *happened*... and it looked like a baby born in a barn to a poor family.

Voice 2: It sounds like God's flood is a lot about making things right... and helps those that are afraid, not to fear anymore...**[changes label to Love]** I'm starting to like this idea of a flood! **God's** flood that is...not a **real** flood!

Voice 4: I like to think that Christmas time is a time for God's flood of mercy to wash over me...and wash over those people that need God's love. You know there are a lot of people and places that could use a good washing in pure Godly love...metaphorically speaking of course!

Voice 1: Yeah, a lot of scrubbing with "metaphorical" fuller's soap, I'd say.

Voice 2: Oh come on... remember not to throw the "metaphorical" baby Jesus out with the "metaphorical" worldly bath water!

Voice of the Coming Christ: Come! You are on your way to finding the light at the end of the metaphor...I...I mean...Finding the star shining over the stable...Come prepare for the coming flood of God's love into the world...come and find the baby born in the barn...uh...bathing in worldly bath water... ...Come follow the light!

## Christmas Eve: Carried on a Flood of Reversal (Part 2)

Voice 2: Hey, you guys! You know how we were talking last week about God's flood of love and mercy ...and what it looks like? Well, I was looking at the scriptures and found the story of when Jesus Christ was born in the stable in Bethlehem.

Narrator: Uh, hum...that would be in the Gospel of Luke chapter 2. *"Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem... He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn."*

Voice 2: Yeah, yeah...but do you know what happens next?! There were these shepherds out in the fields...

Narrator: Uh, hum...Luke 2 verse 8: *"In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night."*

Voice 2: But...but then...

Narrator: Ah, huh..." <sup>9</sup>*Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.*

Voice 2: And...and..

Narrator: <sup>10</sup>*But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people.'*

Voice 2: Ha! So here were some dudes hanging out minding their own business when...WHAM! God hits them with a "flood of mercy and love". Well, they don't know that at first but as they seek this "call from God"...like HELLO! Angels and Light...kind of obvious...unless you're scared out of your wits. But they followed! It's all so clear to me. Sometimes we need to journey through our fear to make it to God's love!

Voice 4: You know I think you are right! And isn't it great that God adds a few words of comfort while scaring us out of our wits... my favourite line is "I'm bringing you good news of *great joy* for all people"!

Voice 3: And mine is the line "Glory to God, in the Highest Heaven and *peace* on earth."

Voice 1: Yeah, but it was only a baby! What's that got to do with anything? I mean...I mean...there is great hope in the potential of a newborn...but why all the fuss over this one?

Narrator: Well, the birth of Jesus Christ kind of finds its power in a retrospective way.

Voices 1, 2, 3, 4: Huh?!

Narrator: Well, the Gospels were written with the understanding that people knew about the amazing life of Jesus. For example, The Gospel of Matthew begins linking Jesus, through genealogy, to King David of the Hebrew scriptures.

Voice 1: I like that. It's like Jesus is the Hope for the continued revealing of God through scriptures...which go back to the beginning of time.

Narrator: Yes. And the Gospel of Mark, jumps into Jesus' story when he first was baptized and began his ministry of bringing "the Good News".

Voice 4: That's my style. Get right down to the joy of bringing the Good News to everyone.

Narrator: And the Gospel of John...well he gets kind of mystical about Jesus...but like Mark he begins with Jesus as a grown man.

Voice 2: Isn't that the Gospel where it says that God Loves the world...so much that he sent Jesus?

Narrator: Yeah.

Voice 2: I like...no.. I love that one!

Voice 3: I still like the Gospel of Luke...with its peace message from the angels.

Narrator: You see. It is with all of this understanding of Jesus' life on earth bringing...

Voice 1: Hope.

Voice 3: Peace.

Voice 4: Joy.

Voice 2: Love.

Narrator: ...with all of this understanding of the story...of God's story of "flooding" us with mercy and love.....we find the birth of Jesus to be so powerful.

Voice 4: Something to celebrate!

Voice 1: Yeah. That makes sense.

Voice 4: Merry Christmas.

Voice 3: Merry Christmas.

Voice 2: Merry Christmas.

Voice 1: Merry Christmas.

Narrator: Merry Christmas

Voice of the Coming Christ: You have come so far. You have journeyed four weeks. Now you have arrived...you have found the babe wrapped in swaddling cloth lying in the manger..."What has come into being in him was the life, and the life was the light of all people." .... Peace be with you...Merry Christmas!