

THE SEASONS OF ADVENT

by Lisa Johnson



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The Seasons of Advent

A through-the-year candlelighting collection

by Lisa Johnson

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INTRODUCTION

These scripts for the four Sundays of Advent use the four seasons to depict topics of relevance to the pre-Christmas time of year.

The series starts in the winter with **Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room**. It's just Super Bowl Sunday, but it's already time to prepare for next Christmas. The second Sunday's script, **What to Expect When You're Not Expecting**, is set in the springtime, where a discussion about fertility issues in the doctor's office touches on Mary not expecting to be pregnant. Next is **Christmas in July**. Summertime finds some siblings making their Christmas lists early and checking them twice — and wanting their gifts *now*. **Sneakin' around the Christmas Tree** concludes the series. Arrival of fall? Check. Thanksgiving? Check. New gifts under the tree? Much too tempting for some eager kids in the middle of the night!

The casts include many roles for women, with some recurring characters showing up each week for continuity.

The Advent wreath is used each week. Place a wand-type lighter near the wreath for the Reader's lighting of the candles.

We hope you will enjoy this blending of the climate-based seasons with the Advent season of the church calendar.

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Week 1 — Winter

Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room

Cast of Characters:

Cassie

Sophie

Darla

Reader

(All are in their twenties to early forties. SOPHIE should be played by the youngest actress.)

Time: February, Super Bowl Sunday. Action takes place during the game. Could use sounds of men watching the game Off-stage.

Set: Cassie's living room. You will need a Christmas tree and some boxes sitting around. Women are taking the decorations down.

Props: Christmas ornaments, Nativity set.

Costumes: All may wear casual clothing. If desired, some or all may wear football jerseys from the professional football team that is located closest to your area.

SOPHIE: Cassie, I can't believe that it's already February and you still have your Christmas decorations up!

DARLA: Yeah. At our house, the annual Christmas decoration removal takes place on December twenty-sixth, and then we all go to the mall to return our gifts. It's a family tradition.

CASSIE: You girls have no Christmas spirit. I'd leave my Christmas decorations out all year if Jim would let me.

SOPHIE: They would clash with your Valentine's, Easter, Fourth of July, and _____ *(insert Halloween or fall)* decorations. *(CASSIE packs up the manger scene in a box, but she leaves the baby Jesus out.)*

DARLA: Cass, you forgot to pack the most important person in the manger scene.

CASSIE: No, I didn't. I leave him out all year long. He sits on my mantel to remind me.

SOPHIE: Remind you of what?

CASSIE: He reminds me to be prepared.

DARLA: To be prepared for next Christmas? I do that all the

1 time. I already have Christmas presents for Todd's
2 mother and his sister.

3 SOPHIE: Really?

4 DARLA: Yeah. I kept the gifts Todd gave me this year
5 instead of exchanging them. I figure someone from his
6 family might love the gifts he picks out. It must be sort
7 of a genetic defect.

8 SOPHIE: Won't he be hurt when he sees his family
9 unwrapping the gifts he gave you?

10 DARLA: Next year? He won't even remember, and even if he
11 does, he'll be pleased that I'm being so frugal.

12 CASSIE: Actually, my being prepared has nothing to do with
13 presents or with being one step ahead with decorating.
14 It has to do with being prepared in my heart.

15 DARLA: Prepared for what?

16 CASSIE: We need to be prepared to share the gift of Christ
17 all year long — not just on December twenty-fifth. We
18 never know when we will have an opportunity to share
19 the message.

20 SOPHIE: Sort of like what you're doing right now?

21 CASSIE: Sort of.

22 SOPHIE: You know, I think my baby Jesus would look really
23 nice on *my* mantel too.

24 DARLA: All this talk of getting prepared has made me really
25 hungry. How about we *really* get prepared in advance
26 and make our Christmas cookies for next year? I know
27 a great tip for preventing freezer burn! (*ACTRESSES*
28 *freeze in place while the READER comes out.*)

29 READER: 2 Timothy 4:2 instructs us to " ... be prepared in
30 season and out of season." Perhaps having gifts and
31 cookies prepared in advance is not what Paul was
32 referring to. Like Cassie said to her friends, we need to
33 be prepared to share the news about the gift that God
34 gave us at Christmas time over two thousand years ago.
35 The sharing of this good news does not need to be
36 limited to the Christmas season, which to department
37 stores is anytime after the back to school sales are
38 finished. We need to be prepared to share Christmas

365 days a year — 366 on leap year. (*READER lights the first Advent candle.*)

Week 2 — Spring

What to Expect When You're Not Expecting

Cast of Characters:

Sophie Reynolds — Same actress from last week

Melinda Tyler — A woman in her late thirties

The Nurse — Any age woman

Reader

Time: Early April, the beginning of spring.

Set: Doctor's office waiting room. There should be a sign saying "Dr. Lane, Obstetrician," and two chairs for the women.

Props: Slip of paper

Costumes: Scrubs for the NURSE and perhaps a stethoscope around her neck, and casual clothes for the other two. MELINDA needs Band-Aids on her inner elbows.

(*Scene opens with NURSE walking SOPHIE back to her chair.*)

SOPHIE: (*Sarcastically*) Well, that was pleasant.

NURSE: We like to get the hard part over with right away.

SOPHIE: Do we have to do that every time?

NURSE: I'm afraid so.

SOPHIE: And you actually get people to come back? Couldn't you just put a plus sign on the chart instead of a number?

NURSE: We need to know how much weight you've gained.

SOPHIE: Why? So you and the rest of the staff can have a good laugh after I walk out the door?

NURSE: Most of us have been there. (*MELINDA enters.*) Melinda, have you been to the lab yet? (*MELINDA rolls up her sleeves and shows that she has Band-Aids on both of her inner arms from drawing blood.*) Not very cooperative today, huh? I'll go call for the results.

MELINDA: Take your time. I just want to enjoy the next few minutes. (*She sits down in the chair next to SOPHIE.*)

- 1 SOPHIE: Rough morning?
- 2 MELINDA: Rough six months.
- 3 SOPHIE: Wow! You're six months along? I'm only three, and
- 4 I look bigger than you. What's your secret?
- 5 MELINDA: (*Leans over and whispers in a stage whisper.*) I'm not
- 6 pregnant.
- 7 SOPHIE: What?
- 8 MELINDA: I've been trying for ten years to get pregnant.
- 9 I've been seeing Dr. Lane for infertility treatments for
- 10 over a year, but I can't seem to get pregnant. Dr. Lane
- 11 never held out much hope for me, but the last six
- 12 months we've been trying something new to help me.
- 13 Trouble is, you can only use it for six months, then
- 14 you're done. No more hope.
- 15 SOPHIE: I'm sorry. I shouldn't have assumed.
- 16 MELINDA: Don't feel bad. After ten years, you would think
- 17 I'd be used to it. Every month I take those little
- 18 pregnancy tests. Every month I expect to see the little
- 19 negative line. And every month, I do — and I expect
- 20 that's what I'll find out today.
- 21 SOPHIE: You should expect the unexpected.
- 22 MELINDA: What?
- 23 SOPHIE: I don't know. I hope you don't think I'm strange,
- 24 but as I was sitting here, I was reminded of Mary.
- 25 MELINDA: Mary who?
- 26 SOPHIE: Mary ... I don't know her last name. Mary, Mother
- 27 of Jesus.
- 28 MELINDA: She was a young girl, though, and she wasn't
- 29 married. I don't see how my situation is like hers at all.
- 30 SOPHIE: Well, you said you never expect to be pregnant.
- 31 Neither did she.
- 32 MELINDA: But she wasn't married. She wasn't *trying* to get
- 33 pregnant.
- 34 SOPHIE: Isn't it amazing how God works? None of us know
- 35 what he's going to drop into our lives. Mary didn't have
- 36 a clue when she woke up that day that she would find
- 37 out she was going to be the mother of the Savior of the
- 38 world, but she was open to the possibility.

1 MELINDA: So you're telling me to be open to the possibility
2 that today —

3 SOPHIE: You may get some unexpected news. I certainly did.

4 MELINDA: What was that?

5 SOPHIE: I only expected to gain one pound this past month,
6 but I gained five! (*The ACTRESSES freeze in place as the*
7 *READER comes out.*)

8 READER: On the first Sunday of Advent, it was winter — just
9 after Christmas, in fact — and we discussed that we need
10 to be prepared for Christmas all year long. (*Lights first*
11 *Advent candle.*) Now we skip ahead to spring, and we hear
12 about expectations. In Luke chapter one, we meet Mary.
13 Like Sophie said, she probably didn't wake up that
14 morning expecting to learn that she would have a baby
15 in nine months. Luke chapter one verses 26-38. 'In the
16 sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a
17 town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a
18 man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's
19 name was Mary. The angel went to her and said,
20 'Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with
21 you.' Mary was greatly troubled at his words and
22 wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the
23 angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found
24 favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to
25 a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be
26 great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The
27 Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,
28 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever: his
29 kingdom will never end.'

30 'How will this be,' Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a
31 virgin?'

32 The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon
33 you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow
34 you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of
35 God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a
36 child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren
37 is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with
38 God.'

‘I am the Lord’s servant,’ Mary answered. ‘May it be to me as you have said.’ Then the angel left her.” (As the *READER* presents the Scripture, the *NURSE* comes out with a slip of paper. She motions for *MELINDA* to come over. She shows her the slip of paper. *MELINDA* is shocked and delighted as she reads the news. The *NURSE* smiles and mouths “Congratulations” and hugs her. Then *SOPHIE* gets up and walks over to *MELINDA*. *SOPHIE* asks her a question. *MELINDA* nods her head and then hugs *SOPHIE*. This should all be done as the *READER* presents the Scripture reading. Then they freeze in place again.) It looks like Melinda got some unexpected news today. What unexpected news does God have for you? Be open to the possibilities. (*READER* lights the second Advent candle.)

Week 3 — Summer Christmas in July

Cast of Characters:

Cassie Reed — The same actress who played her during the first week of Advent.

Becky Reed — A girl from 11-13 years old (Cassie Reed’s daughter)

Benjamin Reed — A boy from 7-9 years old (Cassie Reed’s son)

Time: A hot July afternoon

Set: The deck of the Reed’s house. You will need two lawn chairs with beach towels draped over them.

Props: Cell phone, pile of mail, thick catalog, tray with two glasses of lemonade, pad of paper, pen.

Costumes: Summer attire — shorts, sunglasses, flip-flops, etc.

(Scene opens with *BECKY* sitting on a lawn chair talking on a cell phone.)

BECKY: Yes, this is Mrs. Reed ... A new MasterCard? ... Really? ... You couldn’t have called at a better time. We just filed for bankruptcy yesterday because we couldn’t make payments on our other seven cards. I was just wondering how I was going to pay for our Alaskan

1 cruise next week. Now I know. Thank you so — Hello?
 2 (*Frowns and looks at phone.*) Salespeople nowadays. No
 3 manners! (*She sets the phone down.*)

4 **BENJAMIN:** (*Enters carrying a pile of mail, including the “Wish*
 5 *Book.”*) Guess what came in the mail today?

6 **BECKY:** Your acceptance letter at the school for idiots and
 7 rejects?

8 **CASSIE:** (*Enters in time to hear that line. She is carrying a tray*
 9 *with two glasses of lemonade on it.*) Nah. We don’t expect
 10 that until sometime next week. I thought you two might
 11 like something cold to drink. It’s hot out here!

12 **BENJAMIN:** I know something that will cool us off. It’s the
 13 Wish Book!

14 **CASSIE:** Wish Book?

15 **BENJAMIN:** (*He drops the rest of the mail and holds up a*
 16 *department store Christmas catalog.*) Mom, it’s time to make
 17 the list! (*He runs Off-stage.*)

18 **CASSIE:** Uh-oh. Sounds like trouble.

19 **BECKY:** Good thing I just signed you up for a new
 20 MasterCard.

21 **BENJAMIN:** (*Enters with the Wish Book and a pad of paper and a*
 22 *pen. He sits down on his lawn chair. He begins leafing through*
 23 *the book.*) Page one. Awesome! Dirk’s Daring Diploid
 24 Dynamo Dragons. Totally digital! (*He writes that down.*)

25 **CASSIE:** Well, there’s one whole piece of paper.

26 **BENJAMIN:** (*Flips the catalog page with much gusto.*) Page two.
 27 Whoa! A handheld Clepto Rondo Vortex. (*He writes that*
 28 *down.*)

29 **CASSIE:** Whatever happened to Legos and Chinese
 30 checkers?

31 **BECKY:** Chinese checkers? Better watch it. That’s not very
 32 P.C. these days.

33 **BENJAMIN:** (*Flips the page again and again.*) Page six.

34 **BECKY:** What about pages three, four, and five?

35 **BENJAMIN:** That was some girl stuff. Totally cool! A Presto
 36 digitizer! (*He writes that down, too.*) Christmas is going to
 37 be so great this year! Mom, can we order this stuff
 38 today? It says next-day delivery. I could be playing with

- 1 this stuff tomorrow night!
- 2 BECKY: What a concept. Christmas in July.
- 3 CASSIE: That *is* a problem, isn't it, Ben?
- 4 BENJAMIN: It's not a problem for me if it's not a problem
- 5 for you.
- 6 CASSIE: We have to learn to be patient.
- 7 BECKY: What a stupid idea, sending the Christmas catalog
- 8 out in July.
- 9 CASSIE: I suppose from their point of view, it's brilliant
- 10 marketing. They get twice the profit if we buy
- 11 Christmas gifts now and again in December.
- 12 BECKY: Why would you buy gifts twice?
- 13 BENJAMIN: I want my Christmas presents now! (*Stomps his*
- 14 *foot.*)
- 15 CASSIE: For a little peace and quiet.
- 16 BENJAMIN: Mom!
- 17 CASSIE: I'll get mine the old-fashioned way. (*She covers*
- 18 *BENJAMIN's mouth with her hand.*) Duct tape.
- 19 BENJAMIN: Mom, how long is it until Christmas?
- 20 CASSIE: Almost five months.
- 21 BENJAMIN: You're killing me, Mom! I can't wait that long!
- 22 CASSIE: Do you remember the Bible verse we talked about
- 23 last night?
- 24 BECKY: Romans 12:12.
- 25 BENJAMIN: (*Says this line without any joy in his voice.*) "Be
- 26 joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."
- 27 What's affliction?
- 28 CASSIE: What you're going through now. It's painful to wait
- 29 for things you really want.
- 30 BENJAMIN: Excruciatingly painful.
- 31 CASSIE: But if they're worth having, they're worth waiting
- 32 for. Look how long the world waited for Jesus.
- 33 BENJAMIN: Was it longer than five months?
- 34 CASSIE: A little bit. Tell you what. Why don't we start
- 35 making your Christmas list? You can cut out the
- 36 pictures and glue them onto a piece of paper. That will
- 37 really help Santa to know what a Presto digitizer is.
- 38 BENJAMIN: Wow, Mom! How did you know what it was?

1 CASSIE: It wasn't that long ago I was a kid. (*CASSIE and*
 2 *BENJAMIN exit with his list and the Wish Book. Phone rings*
 3 *and BECKY answers it.*)

4 BECKY: Hello? Yes, this is Becky Reed ... I'm eligible for a
 5 Platinum Visa card? ... Sweet ... What is my monthly
 6 income? ... Well, if I do all my chores, I get ten dollars a
 7 week ... Hello? (*BECKY freezes in place while the READER*
 8 *enters.*)

9 READER: Time has passed quickly, and it's already July.
 10 This family is sitting back and soaking up the warm
 11 July sun. During the first week of Advent set in the
 12 wintertime, we talked about being prepared for
 13 Christmas all year long. (*Lights first Advent candle.*)
 14 During the second week of Advent skit, set in spring, we
 15 saw what it meant to expect the unexpected. (*Lights the*
 16 *second Advent candle.*) This week, even though it was
 17 summer and school was out, Benjamin Reed was still
 18 learning. It was a lesson in waiting patiently from a
 19 verse in Romans. There is another verse in the book of
 20 Romans that also speaks of patience. Romans 8:25 says,
 21 "But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for
 22 it patiently." What are you hoping for that you do not
 23 yet have? Take some time this week and discuss with
 24 God the things in your life that you've been waiting for,
 25 like some help controlling that temper of yours. Or
 26 maybe he could give you the knack to be able to love
 27 your neighbor, even though they lack the ability to act
 28 neighborly. How about asking God to help you develop
 29 the ability to wait patiently for him to act in your life?
 30 (*READER lights the third Advent candle.*) Who knows?
 31 Maybe he'll throw in a Clepto Rondo Vortex on the side.



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