



BE A STAR!

THIS CHRISTMAS TIME



WE ARE HERE

SCRIPT

(In walks the character 'Grumpy Jack')

Props: Need a Nativity scene in view

Oh, here you all are! Do you know how long I've been waiting at the bus station in town for my bus? 27 minutes! And then someone I know from school recognised me - which is quite something, as I haven't been to school in a long while, as you can tell! Well, he comes along and says, 'No buses today, Jack - it's Christmas!'

No buses? Do you know how long I've been sat in the cold at the bus stop? Honestly! So just because it's Christmas someone decides there's to be no buses! Is that because there were no buses in the first Christmas, or is just because people want yet another day's holiday?! I don't know what's got into me, I honestly don't, but I have to admit to feeling a bit grumpy. I was so looking forward to coming here today - the tinsel, the turkey, the pudding! But now I just feel cold, and all that waiting doesn't seem to have done me any good at all. I'm so sorry, I'm not normally grumpy - well, not often. It's just that I don't like waiting. Waiting takes patience, and to be very honest I don't have a right lot of patience. Never have and I guess I never will.

(Jack silently shakes his head and wipes away a little tear - then he looks over to the Nativity scene)

I've just realised something. There must have been quite a bit of waiting in the story of Jesus' birth. Firstly, Mary - blessed beautiful Mary - she had to wait nine months to meet her baby boy. Then there's Joseph, waiting to see what happens and how the story unfolds. Not sure I would have made a good Joseph, to be honest. Then there's the wise men who travelled a long journey just to meet Jesus. Wow, they must have been patient, all that bobbing up and down on a camel. But more than that, they do say that the people of Israel had waited a long time for Jesus to be born. You see, I've heard it said that he was their Messiah and they waited patiently for him coming. It kind of puts my waiting for a bus into perspective, doesn't it?



And I'm going to tell you something else, now I think about it. It was when I was walking here I felt something I hadn't felt before. It was the feeling that you would all have missed me if I hadn't turned up! That actually made me feel a bit grumpy. I thought I was just being silly, thinking people thought more of me than they really do. So I gave myself a telling off. But come to think of it, that walk felt like I was walking for a purpose. And do you know what, you were that purpose! Now I see it. We have to be here, we have to be together to celebrate today, because that's what joins us together, isn't it? Wow, I'm feeling a lot better now, and you haven't even said a word to cheer me up. It's just the thought of us being here today, celebrating the birth of Jesus. Well, that's all that matters. Not the waiting for a bus that was never going to come! The most important thing is that no matter how we got here today we are here! I get it now! We are part of the story today. And do you know what? I think Jesus is very happy that we are here. Don't you? Thanks for being patient with me, friends, and welcoming me in - I'm so blessed to call you my friends.

(Jack moves into the gathered group and sits down giving people high fives, hugs or waves showing that we are all here together and all welcomed.)

SHORT TALK

'The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.' (Isaiah 9:2 NIV)

How many people do you know enjoy waiting? Most of the time nobody enjoys waiting. We wait for all sorts of things: a new opportunity, a fresh start, a holiday, good news, or a change we've been longing for. We wait for health to improve, for relationships to heal, and for a more peaceful and hopeful world. Waiting can feel frustrating, especially when life seems uncertain and progress feels slow.

Advent reminds us that waiting need not be empty or pointless. The Christmas story begins long before Bethlehem, with generations of people holding on to hope that God was at work even when they could not see it. Their story suggests that some of life's most important developments happen quietly, beneath the surface, before they become visible.

'We Are Here' invites us to locate ourselves in the story of God. We are here, between what has been and what is yet to come; between our present challenges and our hopes for the future; between darkness and light. The people of Israel understood this experience well. They lived through uncertainty, hardship, disappointment and long periods of silence, yet they held on to the promise that hope was on its way. Through the words of prophets such as Isaiah came the assurance that a child would be born, a light would dawn, and a new beginning would arrive.

For Christians, Advent and Christmas is more than remembering a birth that happened over two thousand years ago. It is a season that encourages us to look forward with hope. It reminds us that God entered our world in Jesus and continues to be present with us today. In the midst of uncertainty, the Advent and Christmas season offers the reassurance that we are not forgotten and that light can still be found, even in difficult times.

So, where are we this Advent? We are here. Here in the waiting. Here in the hoping. Here in the space between what is and what could be. Whatever we are carrying, we do not walk alone. The

message of Christmas is that God is with us. As we wait, may we find peace, renewed hope, and the confidence to look for signs of light in our lives and in the world around us.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We are just so grateful that we are here today, able to be and share together in this place. Thank you for the people beside us, for the friendships we share, and for the gift of these moments spent together.

As we pause in your presence and take a moment to reflect, help us not to rush past this time of togetherness, but to be fully present with you and with one another.

Lord, we lift to you all those who, for whatever reason, are finding this season difficult: those who are feeling lonely, those carrying anxiety or worry, and those who are grieving the loss of someone they love. May they know that they are seen, known, and completely loved by you. Surround them with your comfort and strengthen them with your peace.

Fill our hearts with gratitude for the gift of today, for the blessing of being here, and for the hope, peace, joy and love that Christmas brings. As we celebrate Christmas, we thank you for the gift of Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.

Amen.