

WEEKLY SERMON

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The Advent Hush

I love going to the theatre, there is nowhere else quite like it. Whether it is empty or full, an old building with rows of red velvet chairs or a masterpiece of modern architecture, it is a place with an atmosphere of expectancy and emotion. So, when I read this tiny poem, it really spoke to me and delivered a renewed picture of the season and purpose of Advent.

“Advent is like the hush in the theatre between the houselights going down and the curtain going up.” Tiny Advent Poems - Amy Scott Robinson, engageworship.org

Let's imagine this moment. Busy excited chatter, the rustling of sweetie bags being opened, lots of “excuse me” as people find their seats, announcements reminding everyone to switch off their mobile phones, then the lights go down, and hush. The silence hangs in the air and settles for less than a minute before the heavy curtain rises. The eyes of the audience are fixed upon the stage.

The hush is a signal that what everyone is waiting for, is about to begin. The hush focusses everyone's attention. Surely, this is exactly what Advent does or should do?

Advent reminds us that the birth of Jesus, the coming of the Christ, is what we were, and are, waiting for. God's people had been waiting for years for the promised Messiah and as Jesus' followers today we are waiting for his promised return. The moment of hush in the theatre prompts the audience to focus on the main event. Not the busy chatter, the sweets, or the mobile phone. Of course, the main event for us is not the curtain lifting on a show, with an interval and a final bow. It is a transformational life changing event that lasts for eternity. In Advent we must make sure to find our seats and be ready to fix our eyes on Emmanuel.

Every year we are given the gift of Advent. If we think of it as the hush spoken of in the poem, then we will approach Christmas with a renewed sense of expectancy. We live in the knowledge that the show happened over 2000 years ago, and we live in the truth that the baby born in Bethlehem is our risen Lord. We live not waiting for the show to begin but for the most spectacular encore.

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