

Love Life Live Advent: Crib service talk outline

This outline shows how you might link some of the actions in *Love Life Live Advent* with the celebration of Christmas itself. Crib services can be noisy events, with much excitement and short attention spans, so often less is more – you might choose to use only one or two of the links to the LLLA daily actions, for instance.

You can adapt this script to your own circumstances, making sure you keep it interactive, and not too long!

We've just told the story of Christmas – and some of us have even acted it out. What an amazing story that we can be part of! As we shared this wonderful story, it's as if we've been pressing pause every so often – we've given ourselves moments to stop and think, to be still and pray.

Some of you may have been following the daily actions from *Love Life Live Advent* – in which case you might already have watched your favourite Christmas film. Have a think now, and see if you can picture in your mind a scene from that film – perhaps the scene that makes the film so special to you – a magic moment where everything feels just right? *[You may wish to get suggestions from the congregation – this links with the action on 19th December.]*

Or you might have been thinking about your favourite carol – run through it in your mind and see if there's maybe just one special line that says just what Christmas is about, and makes it all feel real for you. *[You may wish to get suggestions from the congregation – this links with the LLLA action on 12th December.]*

Or think about some of the Christmas cards you've received – the ones that show part of the Christmas story. Each one of them will have picked a special moment and turned it into a beautiful picture – it might be the star, the child in the manger, the shepherds, the angels, it might be Mary with Jesus on her lap.... If you were going to draw what Christmas means, which part of the story would you choose? *[You may wish to get suggestions from the congregation.]*

Or it might be that you can give yourself one of those moments just by pausing and really taking time to experience something ordinary: a pine cone, a holly leaf, the reflection in a tree bauble, a robin in the garden, patterned frost on the car windscreen... It's amazing what can happen when we stop... *[You may wish to invite people to share experiences they have had of such moments.]*

When you watch that film, or sing that carol, or see that picture, or even when you just keep them in your mind, those moments are a chance to press pause on all the frantic busyness. Those moments can remind us that there's something absolutely amazing at the heart of all we're doing, something that no matter what else is going on, we really don't want to miss – these are the moments when heaven touches earth for us – just as heaven touched earth for Mary and Joseph, for the Shepherds and the Magi, and countless people since.

This Christmastime, let's give ourselves plenty of moments when we can pause, stop, think, breathe, be still, and pray – pray our worries, pray our hopes, pray our love for those around us, pray our concerns for the world, and pray our thanks to the God who makes heaven touch earth, again and again. *[If you are using prayer gift tags for the tree, you may wish to link to them here.]*