

LUKE 1,2  
THE QUIET DRAMA

Who is your favourite most music star? *We ended with Clean Bandit!* Let's say that it has been announced that Clean Bandit is going to come to Juniper Green to do a gig in the park: what would happen? First, posters would go up to advertise the gig; there would be something on Facebook, telling us that Clean Bandit is coming and when, maybe months before it is due to happen; you get your ticket and it might be a very expensive ticket; on the day itself, the barriers go up to hold back the crowds; the stage would be put up in the park, but there are fences round it to make sure that the crowd does not get too near to Clean Bandit. There would be security – people in yellow jackets would be in the park to check the tickets and make sure you behave yourself; people in yellow jackets rule the world! The lights are up and you can see them from miles away – “what's going on in Juniper Green Park?” There would be a sound check that you can hear in Balerno, never mind Juniper Green. There might be a warm-up act, another band on the stage first to make sure you're happy and then finally Clean Bandit comes on stage and people scream and shout and clap and take photos and it's all wild! All this for a pop star!

So, when the Son of God comes to the world to be the Saviour, there will be even more fuss. There will be more security, more crowds, more barriers to keep the crowds under control, more posters, more likes on Facebook. There will be special effects greater than we see in the movies. There will be lights and cameras to record everything. It will be beamed live across the world on TV, 24-hour rolling news coverage. Yes? Surely! This is the Son of God, after all; the most important person on the planet, ever; there has to be a lot of fuss made about Him. Yes? No! When see the story, it is full of drama, but it is a quiet drama; there is no fuss, but God is at work in the story of Jesus.

There is an angel, Gabriel, who comes and comes to a young woman in Nazareth. It's a quiet town, a backwater, totally unimportant. Mary is a young woman who is engaged to the village carpenter; she's not famous, she's not important; she's not royalty, but the angel tells her that she is going to have a baby who is the Son of God and who will be a great king. Wow! This is great news, but given to one person only; she's not going to tell very many people because they might not get it and she might be misunderstood.

Bethlehem is full; it has been a royal town, where King David was born, but that was long in the past. Now it is full of people who have come to register for the Roman census; they are not very happy because this means having to pay tax. Joseph and Mary arrive unannounced; there are no rooms for them; the innkeeper is grumpy, perhaps, because it is late and they are just common people! There is a manger, an animal feeding box, not a soft warm bed! Quietly, in that out-of-way place, a baby is born, who is Christ the Lord; the quiet drama of God at work in world unfolds and God is at work.

God is at work in these quiet ways; oh yes, there are angels singing for the shepherds and wise men from the East see a star in the sky, but it's all very quiet; only a few people see. God is at work. God is doing something really important for the world and for us, but it is done quietly; there is no fuss. It depends on other people to tell the story, to tell others what they had seen, to play their part.

It is so good that so many people have taken part in our service today, so many voices, your voices, telling the story of Jesus in your own way: the children and young people giving words to the characters in the story; the choir singing songs about Jesus; people reading, and leading

prayers, in addition to all of our voices singing some favourite carols together. This is our own quiet way of telling the world the story of Jesus, this quiet drama of God at work to save the world and to save us from our sins. Thanks for adding your voices to that quiet drama of God.

There are all sorts of other quiet dramas going on in our street. When you get home, look at the houses in your street; I wonder what quiet dramas are going on behind the windows and the walls. People in tears, or people who are jumping for joy? People in pain, or celebrating something wonderful? Maybe some are people you know, and you know these dramas; maybe you don't know. Pray for people in your street, that God may be at work in their dramas and that over Christmas something of the love of Jesus may touch their hearts and their lives. We've got some cards to take away that remind us that Jesus is the heart of Christmas and that you can give away to "share the joy"; these are in the vestibule and in the coffee room. The quiet drama – God is at work; at work in us and at work in our world!

**Voices:**

I'm Liza; I'm the star. I can be seen from near and far. I am a bright star shining in the night sky. I shine more brightly than any other star to guide the path of the wise men to baby Jesus in the stable.

I'm Ross. My name is Joseph, but my friends call me Joe. I am about to be a father for the first time. I'm excited, scared, worried, terrified. Health care 2000 years ago leaves a lot to be desired. But most of all I'm full of awe and wonder at the birth of my baby boy.

I'm Lauren. Hi. I am Balthazar. I have a sore bum from this camel. The king in front of me is so slow. Now I am a real wise man, my camel racing days are over. I am travelling to Bethlehem to see baby Jesus and my gift of gold is so so heavy. We are following the star that is shining so bright in the sky. We are almost in Bethlehem and we are getting tired. I hope the palace has good wifi and I need to charge my phone. We are 2 minutes away but so far it is just dust and inns around. When we got there it was a stable that baby Jesus is staying, not what we thought it would be, but it was lovely. The baby was so so cute and it was very nice. But there was no wifi – that was sad – but it did not matter though, the baby Jesus was definitely worth it; we gave our gifts and they were loving it.

Hi I am Samara and I am the Innkeeper. I felt sorry for Mary and Joseph when I saw them at the inn because there was no room to give them. The only thing available was the stable.

I'm Euan. I'm the star. I've been chosen to be the brightest star in the sky. There is something very special happening in Bethlehem and three very strange men are looking at me through a telescope!

I'm Eilidh. I am one of the sheep. It has been an exciting night. First there was a big light in the sky which gave me a big fright, so I went " MAAAAAAAAA"! Next my shepherd dragged us into town to see a baby in a stable. It was nice in the stable, we got to snuggle with the other animals and luckily the baby didn't cry much!!

My name is Cailean, I am a shepherd looking after my sheep on a quiet and peaceful night. Suddenly angels appear praising God; they told me Jesus is born. I've got to see him, so off I went down the hills to Bethlehem. I didn't expect to find our new king in a stable with animals.

**17<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

My name is Ceit. I am an angel from God. I told Mary she was going to have a baby. When Jesus was born I told the shepherds that they would find him in a stable in Bethlehem.