

Dear Friends,

How do you feel about things that are about to happen?

Do you enjoy new possibilities; things that are unknown, uncertain, not yet planned?

I have to admit to having a tendency to feel more comfortable with what I know, what I think I can cope with, what I've already encountered but if I never did anything new, pushed myself, how would I know or grow?

Advent is just around the corner and although we know the ancient story of the child born in Bethlehem and every year prepare for his coming afresh into our hearts at Christmas time – I wonder if we too often dress the story up in a cosy, comfortable fashion so that fits us nicely without preparing ourselves properly for the startlingly amazing truth of God made flesh and dwelling amongst us.

Perhaps this year is a good year, amongst all the other uncertainties of the world, to embrace the challenge of Christ's coming, to open ourselves up – as fully as we are able – to be surprised, amazed, bewildered, redirected by this special 'waiting and watching time' that is the season of Advent. For in taking that step – might we not be more ready to celebrate the Christmas that it prefigures and really respond to the calling of God to be people of courage and hope in the world?

In that spirit, I offer you this poem I'm currently reading and reflecting on; it's written by Carla Grosch-Miller in her book 'Lifelines':

The Tender Shoot

*What tender shoot
pushes
greenly
through frosty soil?*

*What song,
buried in earth's womb,
tests its virgin voice
on the wind?*

*Now is the time
of awakened watching,
of sheltering and sighing,
of cherishing seeds of possibility.*

*For we know:
every bud does not flower.
Only those nourished by hope
and nurtured with courage
dare to bloom,

their beauty
first imagined
in the heart
of God.*

May your journey through Advent surprise you with hope and encourage you with God's grace!

Yours in peace, and love and light,
Sam.



Good News/Mission Resources

Watch the video to discover the power of a simple conversation

[Real conversations at Greenbelt 2022 | Hope & Anchor - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5i7vGomATNg)

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