

“The Candle and the Star”
By Rev. Lucas Bruder de Oliveira
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Readings:

Isaiah 9:2,6-7

Characters:

LUMI – a small, curious, and sensitive candle.

STELLA – an ancient and wise star.

(Stella is already on stage, trying to balance the plush star on her head.)

LUMI:

Careful... careful...

My flame is so small!

(hums "Silent Night" until he sees Stella looking at him).

Hey... you there! Are you looking at me or is it just my imagination?

STELLA:

Yes, I'm looking.

I'm Stella by the way.

LUMI:

I'm Lumi.

(the star falls and Lumi runs to help)

Oh no! Are you ok?

(As he runs, his flame flickers.)

I almost passed out from fright!

STELLA:

(She moves the star in different directions, as if pointing it somewhere)

Oh, I'm sorry! I didn't mean to.

Well, even stars fall.

But I'll tell you, you're attracting quite a bit of attention by insisting on shining on a cold and dark night like this.

LUMI:

Persistence is the right word.

Though the wind is doing everything it can to extinguish me.

I think the wind doesn't like Christmas.

But I'm here fighting to stay lit.

STELLA:

Good! Perhaps the wind is just testing whether your light is stubborn enough.

LUMI:

I'm stubborn!

Small, but stubborn.

(looks at Stella pointing in a direction, moving)

Hey, I spend all my time trying to protect this candle.

And you keep moving, almost falling all the time.

(Stella continues)

Hey... Hey...

Are you okay? Is that the girl holding you and not letting go?

If you need help, blink 3 times.

Heeeeyyyyyyy!

STELLA:

Oh, I'm sorry.

Don't worry. This girl's job isn't to hold me back - it's to point things out.

After all, tonight is no ordinary night - it is still Christmas!

Our little light needs to shine!

(Stella stands up and walks slowly, raising the star as if guiding someone. Lumi follows, careful not to get too close. Stella points to the manger.)

LUMI:

What are you pointing at?

STELLA:

This is where God decided to enter the world.

This is the night we remember that God chose to enter the world in an unexpected way.

LUMI:

Ahhhh....

(looks at the manger).

This filthy thing?

Are you saying God entered the world through this animal feeding trough?

STELLA:

(excited) Yes!

LUMI:

(disgusted) Eeewwwww! Whyyyyy?

If I were God, I would have chosen something more comfortable for Jesus to be born in.

Perhaps a castle.

Or at least a room with a heater.

STELLA:

(laughing) Thank goodness God doesn't think like us.

LUMI:

Thank goodness... hey, thank goodness for what?

Why a stable? Why a baby? Why so small?

Why so vulnerable?

God could have come in a grand way. Strong.

Bright as a thousand stars.

But he chose... a small way.

STELLA:

Because God didn't want to be admired.

He wanted to be touched. Carried.

Comforted.

He didn't come to impress us, but to accompany us.

LUMI:

So God wanted to know what it's like to need others?

STELLA:

Yes.

God chose to depend on human arms to sleep peacefully.

God wanted to learn to walk, to live under the weight of the human body.

He went hungry and cold.

He cried like we do.

He wanted to learn what it is to be held.

LUMI:

This is... strange.

Beautiful.

Strangely beautiful.

And beautifully strange.

I've always strived so hard to be independent and now you're telling me that God depended on others!?

STELLA:

Love is usually like that.

LUMI:

So when I'm struggling to keep my flame burning and afraid it will go out, does God understand that?

STELLA:

Yes! He understands and stays with you.

(Lumi thinks. As he moves, his flame flickers.)

LUMI:

Did you see that?!

Sometimes it seems like everything is
conspiring to turn off my light.

STELLA:

It was the same that night too.

LUMI:

Really?

(He thinks)

You were there, weren't you? That first
night?

STELLA:

I was. And I can guarantee: the entire sky
held its breath.

There was no applause.

It was cold.

And too many people saying there was no
place for God.

LUMI:

And God stayed here even though there was
no place for him?

STELLA:

(Stela responds by pointing to the manger)

He found his own place.

LUMI:

(putting the pieces together)

Oooooohhhhhhhhhhhh!

STELLA:

And we shone.

We shone to point the way for those who didn't need to be impressed, convinced, or bought.

We shone for those who needed companionship.

The baby's crying was God telling them: "I'm here. With you."

LUMI:

Interesting.

When you say the crying said "I'm here with you," do you think that's true for everyone?

STELLA:

Sure!

Even the shepherds, simple country folk, received the message that God was among us to accompany us.

LUMI:

Why? They weren't kings, nor wise men, nor important people.

That's strange. I only light candles when something special is happening.

I don't light candles for just any reason or for just anyone.

Why would God reveal himself to simple shepherds in the countryside?

STELLA:

God speaks easily to those who know how to listen.

LUMI:

So Christmas isn't about being important?

STELLA:

No. It's about being available.

LUMI:

Available... like me here, trying to bring in light and warmth?

STELLA:

Yes, like you!

Even small, you announce that there is life inside.

Even in the darkness, your light still shines.

And in the cold, your light still warms.

LUMI:

Sometimes I feel like I barely illuminate anything.

This is hard work!

Staying with the light on, is tiring!

STELLA:

Pointing out paths as well.

But it provides enough light so that someone doesn't feel alone.

LUMI:

What if no one follows your light?

STELLA:

I wasn't created to guarantee success.

I was created to be loyal.

(pause)

LUMI:

So Christmas isn't about getting everything right?

STELLA:

No.

It's about remaining.

LUMI:

Stella... have you ever been afraid?

STELLA:

Yes. Even the stars feel fear.

LUMI:

Fear of what?

STELLA:

To shine on my own and then fall.

LUMI:

So you understand when my flame flickers.

STELLA:

I get it.

And God also understands.

He trembled too, you know?

LUMI:

Really?!

Seriously?

Was God afraid?

STELLA:

Sure!

He cried. He felt pain. He felt abandoned. He even faced death!

But He never stopped loving.

LUMI:

Hey, thanks for that. That gives me courage.

STELLA:

That's why this story continues to be told.
That's why every year we remember the story of Christmas.

Because of this story, God is called "God with us".

His light shines within us and through us.

Christmas reminds us what the true light is.

The one that warms the heart.

LUMI:

Wow!

I feel warmer and stronger..

Stella... do you think that baby's cry is still heard today?

STELLA:

I think so. Every time someone chooses love over selfishness.

LUMI:

Or also every time someone forgives?

STELLA:

Yes! And every time someone welcomes you.

LUMI:

So... can I be part of this?

STELLA:

You already are.

Every flame lit against the darkness is a silent prayer.

LUMI:

I never thought I was a prayer.

STELLA:

God often uses simple things to convey profound meaning.

He speaks to those who know how to listen, and He uses our lives for this purpose.

LUMI:

Just as he spoke by choosing a manger.

STELLA:

And just as he speaks through a candle's flame.

LUMI:

Or through a star that never stops shining.

STELLA:

Exactly.

But there is one last thing: if we stay together, side by side, our lights will shine even brighter!

LUMI:

GET OUT!

STELLA:

Listen, we can try it right now!

Come closer!

(Lumi approaches Stella)

LUMI:

(surprised) NO WAY!

I can see so much better now!

STELLA:

I know!!!!

And there's more.

LUMI:

More???? Tell me!

STELLA:

If you share a little of your light with others,
we can shine even brighter!

LUMI:

Wow!

And then God will accompany even more
people!

Tell me, how do I do that?

(Stela looks at someone in the first row of
seats and begins to describe the person)

STELLA:

Can you see “that person...”

Go ahead, introduce yourself, and ask if you
can share your light.

(Lumi goes and talks to the person until the candle
is lit)

LUMI:

It worked!

STELLA:

Great!

Now ask that person to share the candle with someone else.

(They continue this until all the candles are lit).

LUMI:

Thank you, my star friend.

You made our light shine brighter!

This is beautiful!

STELLA:

You helped me too!

I almost fell when we met, but your light strengthened me.

No light is invincible on its own.

LUMI:

Merry Christmas Stella!

STELLA:

Merry Christmas, Lumi.

Keep shining.

The world still needs light.