

Ted Lasso Season 2: Episode 4—*Carol of the Bells* Discussion Guide



Are you looking for a way to bring friends and family together for a good laugh? Do you love a good holiday special? When you see the word: BELIEVE! Do you think of Santa? The Christmas Spirit? Or, Ted Lasso? If you answered yes, here's a lead Show Ted Lasso Season 2: Episode 4—Carol of the Bells and use this discussion guide.

For starters: Ted Lasso is Apple TV's massively successful sitcom about an American college football coach who moves to London to manage AFC Richmond, a struggling English Premier League football team.

Jason Sudeikis (of SNL) plays Lasso, a divorced dad who tries to win over the skeptical English market with his folksy, optimistic demeanor, despite having no experience coaching soccer.

One need not have seen other episodes to enjoy Carol of the Bells. It is worth mentioning however this episode has some adult language and content; it is not appropriate for children of a certain age

Fire up your eggnog, wear your ugly Christmas sweater or ugly soccer jersey for that matter and enjoy!

Plot summary says: "It's Christmas in Richmond. Rebecca enlists Ted for a secret mission, Roy and Keeley search for a miracle and the Higginses open up their home." —IMDB

Entry level questions. These are questions that are low stakes and easy to talk about. The show doesn't have the complexity, character development or depth of the other episodes, but that doesn't mean you can't add that to the discussion.

Christmas in August

- This episode was released on August 12. When do you start celebrating the Christmas season?
- Do you have any personal rules as to what and when you engage in "the most wonderful time of the year? e.g. the day after Thanksgiving? November 15? Not until two weeks before Christmas do any lights go up? etc.

The Gift of Music

- When is the last time you went Christmas caroling?
- What are songs of the season that are meaningful for you?
- This song lists two of my favorite Christmas songs—Little Saint Nick by the Beach Boys and "Fairytale of New York" by The Pogues (which brings me to tears for some reason). What is your favorite Christmas hit?



So many Christmas Movies!

- This episode references *Love Actually*, *Once*, *It's a Wonderful Life* and *a Christmas Story*. Do you have a favorite Christmas story or movie?
- Is there a Christmas movie you watch every year?

The next set of questions pertain to Ted Lasso as a series.

Friendship is an important theme—one that is demonstrated among several different characters. Friendship is portrayed in a very positive light between Ted and Coach Beard, Keely and Miranda and among teammates.

- What do you **want** to see in a Hollywood friendship?
- Take that idea of watching something on a screen (from a distance): What have you learned from the friendships that your parents have? Your siblings have? Your spouse? Your children?
- What have you learned about yourself in the friendships that you have?
- In the essay "For the Love of the Game," Richard Gaillardetz writes *Perhaps the only other human bond of communion that can match that between teammates is among soldiers. Many athletes will speak years later of the powerful bonds created among team members*

who spent hours each day in training, honing their skills and learning how to work cooperatively with one another as a seamless, efficient unit. We must not underestimate the strength of this bond. Describe some of the friendships you have made through sport. How would you characterize those friendships?

Positivity is a quality that first drew fans to the show. Launched during COVID, we needed examples of positivity, in spite of our struggles. Ted was one answer.

- Think of a positive person you know/are close to...
 - How do they do it?
 - What do they do?
- Is this something you work on? Need to work on?

Solidarity and Community is what draws one person to another. It moved Ted off of his sofa and on his way to deliver gifts with Miranda. It brings the team to the Hingisses' home, with a unique meal in their hands to share.

- In what ways do you find community during the holiday season?
- How do you extend it to others during this time of year? What makes that difficult?

Epilogue: The episode is but 30 minutes long. The discussion can last as long as you want. Maybe you will add your own question or comment. For example, I love that Lesley Hingiss acknowledged every athlete at his table. He said "To you and all your families back in Lagos, Guadalajara, Groningen, Cordon, Montreal, Benin City, Harare, Kingston... and Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Happy Christmas." I always remember where a person is from, and he nailed every locale. In him, I have a kindred spirit.

Out of COVID, I think we learned to not take the opportunity to come together for granted. And yet, the hectic schedules and busy time of the holiday season make that difficult for many of us. I hope this post might serve as an impetus to do so—to grow more positive and to help one another BELIEVE. Oi yeah!



"God bless me, everyone." —Jamie Tartt