



**December 17, 2023
Sunday Gathering
The Third Sunday of Advent
“The Gift of Being Present with Joy”**

.....

-SPECIAL MUSIC-

“What Can I Give Him”

Chris Prichard

-WELCOME-

-SINGING TOGETHER-

“What Can I Give Him”

WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM, POOR AS I AM?
IF I WERE A SHEPHERD, I WOULD BRING A LAMB;
IF I WERE A WISE ONE, I WOULD DO MY PART;
YET WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM?
I WILL GIVE MY HEART.

-OPENING THE GIFT-

-SINGING TOGETHER-

“What Can I Give Him”

WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM,
POOR AS I AM?
IF I WERE A SHEPHERD,
I WOULD BRING A LAMB;
IF I WERE A WISE ONE,
I WOULD DO MY PART;
YET WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM?
I WILL GIVE MY HEART.

-CALL TO WORSHIP-

Holy God, we come into this place
confident that you will meet us here.
WHERE THERE IS DESPAIR, BRING HOPE;

WHERE THERE IS TURMOIL, BRING PEACE;
WHERE THERE IS SADNESS, BRING JOY;
WHERE THERE IS RESENTMENT, BRING LOVE.

Let this place be a sanctuary, a safe place,
a home for holy words and songs and prayers.
UNWRAP OUR HEARTS AS A PRECIOUS GIFT.
REVEAL YOUR JOY IN US TODAY.

***-OPENING PRAYER-**

Holy God, we might need to confess that we have forgotten what this story is about. We've been confused, so we wrap ourselves with so much planning and shopping and gift giving, with so much decorating and card-writing and partying that we haven't any time left to sit in the dark, to sit in silence, to contemplate the Incarnation, to give thanks for this one life that changed the world. We have celebrated so many Christmases, and yet we still need you to remind us what this is all about, to turn us around and set us in the right direction. May the generosity that drives us this season be present all year. May the intentional reaching out to the far-flung and to the stranger continue past the holidays. May our hearts, so full of so much, be mostly full of love for you, for each other, and for ourselves. Heal us, we pray. Amen.

-GREETING ONE ANOTHER-

-SINGING TOGETHER-

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You"

JOYFUL, JOYFUL, WE ADORE YOU,
GOD OF GLORY, LORD OF LOVE;
HEARTS UNFOLD LIKE FLOW'RS BEFORE YOU,
OP'NING TO THE SUN ABOVE.
MELT THE CLOUDS OF SIN AND SADNESS;
DRIVE THE DARK OF DOUBT AWAY;
GIVER OF IMMORTAL GLADNESS,
FILL US WITH THE LIGHT OF DAY!

ALL YOUR WORKS WITH JOY SURROUND YOU,
EARTH AND HEAV'N REFLECT YOUR RAYS,
STARS AND ANGELS SING AROUND YOU,
CENTER OF UNBROKEN PRAISE;
FIELD AND FOREST, VALE AND MOUNTAIN,
FLOW'RY MEADOW, FLASHING SEA,
CHANTING BIRD AND FLOWING FOUNTAIN
PRAISING YOU ETERNALLY!

ALWAYS GIVING AND FORGIVING,
EVER BLESSING, EVER BLEST,
WELL-SPRING OF THE JOY OF LIVING,

OCEAN-DEPTH OF HAPPY REST!
LOVING GOD AND CHRIST OUR BROTHER,
LET YOUR LIGHT UPON US SHINE;
TEACH US HOW TO LOVE EACH OTHER,
LIFT US TO THE JOY DIVINE.

MORTALS, JOIN THE MIGHTY CHORUS,
WHICH THE MORNING STARS BEGAN;
GOD'S OWN LOVE IS REIGNING O'ER US,
JOINING PEOPLE HAND IN HAND.
EVER SINGING, MARCH WE ONWARD,
VICTORS IN THE MIDST OF STRIFE;
JOYFUL MUSIC LEADS US SUNWARD
IN THE TRIUMPH SONG OF LIFE.

-SCRIPTURE-

Luke 1: 41-55 (TIB)

As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why am I so favored, that the mother of the Messiah should come to me? The moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who believed that what our God said to her would be accomplished!"

Mary said: "My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior. For you have looked with favor upon your lowly servant, and from this day forward all generations will call me blessed. For you, the Almighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your Name. Your mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear you. You have shown strength with your arm; you have scattered the proud in their conceit; you have deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places.

You have filled the hungry with good things, while you have sent the rich away empty. You have come to the aid of Israel your servant, mindful of your mercy—the promise you made to our ancestors—to Sarah and Abraham and their descendants forever."

-THE MESSAGE-

"Joy"

Kenny Bishop

-SINGING TOGETHER-

"Emmanuel"

EMMANUEL, EMMANUEL,
HIS NAME IS CALLED EMMANUEL.
GOD WITH US, REVEALED IN US,
HIS NAME IS CALLED EMMANUEL.

-COMMUNION-

"Mary, Did You Know" - arr. A. Snyder

-OFFERING-

"Ding Dong Merrily on High Medley" – D. Wyrzten

-ANNOUNCEMENTS-

-THANKS TO THOSE WHO SERVE-

-INVITATION TO RESPOND-

-SINGING TOGETHER-

"Hark, the Herald Angels Sing"

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING,
"GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING:
PEACE ON EARTH, AND MERCY MILD,
GOD AND SINNERS RECONCILED!"
JOYFUL, ALL YE NATIONS, RISE,
JOIN THE TRIUMPH OF THE SKIES;
WITH TH'ANGELIC HOSTS PROCLAIM,
"CHRIST IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM!"
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING,
"GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING."

CHRIST, BY HIGHEST HEAVEN ADORED,
CHRIST, THE EVERLASTING LORD,
LATE IN TIME BEHOLD HIM COME,
OFFSPRING OF HIS MOTHER'S WOMB:
VEILED IN FLESH THE GODHEAD SEE;
HAIL TH'INCARNATE DEITY,
PLEASED WITH US IN FLESH TO DWELL,
JESUS, OUR IMMANUEL.

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING,
"GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING."

HAIL THE HEAVEN-BORN PRINCE OF PEACE!
HAIL THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS!
LIGHT AND LIFE TO ALL HE BRINGS,
RISEN WITH HEALING IN HIS WINGS.
MILD HE LAYS HIS GLORY BY,
BORN THAT WE NO MORE MAY DIE,
BORN TO RAISE US FROM THE EARTH,

BORN TO GIVE US SECOND BIRTH.
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING,
"GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING."

-BLESSING & BENEDICTION-

-SINGING TOGETHER-

"What Can I Give Him"

LOVE WILL BE MY TOKEN,
LOVE MY GIFT SO FINE.
YES, WHAT CAN I GIVE THEM?
I WILL GIVE MY HEART.

*Written by Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, "Hold Fast to What is Good,"
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