



December 24, 2023
Sunday Gathering
The Fourth Sunday of Advent & Christmas Eve
“The Gift of Being Present with Love & Light”

.....

-SPECIAL MUSIC-

“What Can I Give Him”

-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 LOVE AND LIGHT 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-

"Go Tell it on the Mountain"

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN,
OVER THE HILL AND EVERYWHERE.
GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN
THAT JESUS CHRIST IS BORN!

WHILE SHEPHERDS KEPT THEIR WATCHING
O'ER SILENT FLOCKS BY NIGHT,
BEHOLD THROUGHOUT THE HEAVENS
THERE SHONE A HOLY LIGHT.

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN,
OVER THE HILL AND EVERYWHERE.
GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN
THAT JESUS CHRIST IS BORN!

THE SHEPHERDS FEARED AND TREMBLED
WHEN LO! ABOVE THE EARTH
RANG OUT THE ANGEL CHORUS
THAT HAILED THE BABY'S BIRTH.

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN,
OVER THE HILL AND EVERYWHERE.
GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN
THAT JESUS CHRIST IS BORN!

DOWN IN A LOWLY MANGER
THE HUMBLE CHRIST WAS BORN,
AND GOD SENT US SALVATION
THAT BLESSED CHRISTMAS MORN.

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN,
OVER THE HILL AND EVERYWHERE.
GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN
THAT JESUS CHRIST IS BORN!

-SCRIPTURE-

Luke 2: 1-7 (CEB)

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

-SPECIAL MUSIC-

"Lo. How a Rose E're Blooming"

Margaret McGladrey

-SCRIPTURE-

Luke 2: 8-14 (CEB)

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."

-THE MESSAGE-

"When Love Came to Town"

Pam Lee-Miller

-SPECIAL MUSIC-

"When Love Was Born"

Timmy Smallwood

-COMMUNION-

"Silent Night" - arr. P. Keveren

-OFFERING-

"So This is Christmas" - Ono/Lennon

-ANNOUNCEMENTS-

-THANKS TO THOSE WHO SERVE-

-INVITATION TO RESPOND-

-SINGING TOGETHER-

"Silent Night"

SILENT NIGHT! HOLY NIGHT!
ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT
'ROUND YON VIRGIN MOTHER AND CHILD!
HOLY INFANT SO TENDER AND MILD,
SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE,
SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE.

SILENT NIGHT! HOLY NIGHT!
SHEPHERDS SHAKE AT THE SIGHT.
GLORIES STREAM FROM HEAVEN AFAR,
HEAVENLY HOSTS SING, "ALLELUIA!
CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN!
CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN!"

SILENT NIGHT! HOLY NIGHT!
CHILD OF GOD, LOVE'S PURE LIGHT
RADIANT BEAMS FROM YOUR HOLY FACE
BRING THE DAWN OF REDEEMING GRACE,
JESUS CHRIST, AT YOUR BIRTH!
JESUS CHRIST, AT YOUR BIRTH!

-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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