



December 3, 2023
Sunday Gathering
The First Sunday of Advent
“The Gift of Being Present with Hope”

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-SPECIAL MUSIC-

“What Can I Give Him”

Kenny Bishop

-WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS-

-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 HOPE 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-

"What Gift Can We Bring"

WHAT GIFT CAN WE BRING,
HOW CAN WE CONVEY?
WHAT WORDS CAN DESCRIBE IT;
THE JOY OF THIS DAY?
WHEN GRATEFUL WE COME,
IN OUR HOPE EVERY DAY.
WHAT SONG CAN WE OFFER
IN HONOR AND PRAISE?

GIVE THANKS FOR THE PAST,
FOR THOSE WHO WE KNEW,
WHO PLANTED AND WATERED
SO DREAMS COULD COME TRUE.
GIVE THANKS FOR THE NOW,
FOR THOSE WE CAN SEE,
FOR MISSION THAT BIDS US
TURN PRAYER INTO DEED.

GIVE THANKS FOR TOMORROW,
FOR SONGS WE CAN SING,
FOR KNOWING WHATEVER

TOMORROW MAY BRING,
GOD GIVES US THE WORD
THAT RISES ABOVE,
WE REST IN GOD'S KEEPING
AND LIVE IN GOD'S LOVE.

-SCRIPTURE-

Mark 13: 24-37 (TIB)

“But in those days, after that time of distress, ‘the sun will be darkened, the moon will lose its brightness, the stars will fall from the sky and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.’ Then they will see the Promised One coming in the clouds with great power and glory; then the angels will be sent to gather the chosen from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

Take the fig tree as a parable: as soon as its twigs grow supple and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that the Promised One is near, right at the door. The truth is, before this generation has passed away, all these things will have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

But as for that day or hour, nobody knows it — neither the angels of heaven nor the Only Begotten — no one but Abba God. Be constantly on the watch! Stay awake! You do not know when the appointed time will come. It is like people traveling abroad. They leave their home and put the workers in charge, each with a certain task, and those who watch at the front gate are ordered to stay on the alert.

So stay alert! You do not know when the owner of the house is coming, whether at dusk, at midnight, when the cock crows or at early dawn. Do not let the owner come suddenly and catch you asleep. What I say to you, I say to all: stay alert!”

-THE MESSAGE-

"Hope"

Kenny Bishop

-SINGING TOGETHER-

"Emmanuel"

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

-COMMUNION-

"Lullaby For the Christ Child" - Chuck Bell

-OFFERING-

"Do You Hear What I Hear?" – Regney/Shayne

-ANNOUNCEMENTS-

-THANKS TO THOSE WHO SERVE-

-INVITATION TO RESPOND-

-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.

LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS,
LOVE SO DIVINE;
LOVE WAS BORN AT CHRISTMAS,
STARS AND ANGELS GAVE THE SIGN.
LOVE WILL BE MY TOKEN,
LOVE MY GIFT SO FINE.
YES, WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM?
LOVE, MY GIFT SO FINE.

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.

I WILL GIVE MY HEART.

-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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