

“Christmas Eve”

Meditation Preached by The Rev. Jennifer Cameron
December 24, 2021 – St. Columba Presbyterian Church, Belleville

Hymns for Worship Video – December 24, 2021

“Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful” #159 in the Book of Praise V. 1

O come all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant
O come ye O come ye to Bethlehem
Come and behold Him
Born the King of angels
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
Christ the Lord

C. Frederick Oakeley / John Francis Wade
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“Away in a Manger” #149 in the Book of Praise

V. 1 Away in a manger no crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay

V. 2 The cattle are lowing the Baby awakes
But little Lord Jesus no crying He makes
I love Thee Lord Jesus look down from the sky
And stay by my cradle 'til morning is nigh

V. 3 Be near me Lord Jesus I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me I pray
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care
And fit us for heaven to live with Thee there

James Ramsey Murray / John Thomas McFarland / Martin Luther
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“Angels We Have Heard on High” #147 in the Book of Praise

V. 1 Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains

Chorus

Gloria

In excelsis Deo

Gloria

In excelsis Deo

V. 2 Shepherds why this jubilee
Why your joyous strains prolong
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song

Chorus

V. 3 Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ whose birth the angels sing
Come adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord the newborn King

Chorus

V. 4 See Him in a manger laid
Whom the choirs of angels praise
Mary Joseph lend your aid
While our hearts in love we raise

Chorus

Edward Shippen Barnes / James Chadwick

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“Joy to the World” #153 in the Book of Praise

V. 1 Joy to the world the Lord is come
Let earth receive her King
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing
And heav'n and nature sing
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing

V. 2 Joy to the earth the Saviour reigns
Let us our songs employ
While fields and floods
Rocks hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat repeat the sounding joy

V. 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found
Far as the curse is found
Far as far as the curse is found

V. 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love
And wonders wonders of His love

George Frideric Handel / Isaac Watts

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Scripture Texts: Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace

for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. ⁹ For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰ but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³ And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Meditation

“One Thing God Wants you to Remember at Christmas” Sharon Jaynes

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13 NIV).

With Christmas, it's easy to get so busy with the cooking, decorating and shopping that we forget why we're doing all this in the first place. Sometimes, the very people we love get lost in the hustle and bustle of packed schedules, holiday parties, and Christmas musicals.

Several years ago I wrote a Christmas version of 1 Corinthians 13 to help me keep my focus on what Paul deemed most important of all... love. As part of our family tradition, I pull it out and post it somewhere in our home as a reminder of what's really important during the holiday season. And since you are now part of the family, I'm pulling it out for you.

1 Corinthians 13 Christmas Style

©By Sharon Jaynes

If I decorate my house perfectly with lovely plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights, and shiny glass balls, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals, and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home, and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties, and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child.

Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the husband.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of your way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return, but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.

Love never fails.

Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust. But giving the gift of love will endure.

Let's Pray.

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, on that starry night in Bethlehem. I am still amazed at Your great love for me. May I never lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas, but celebrate Jesus' birth with joy! Help me to give as You gave—with love.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.¹

Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was

¹ https://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/christmas-devotionals/forgive-us-our-christmases-christmas-devo-dec-15.html?utm_source=Christianity.com%20Daily%20Inspirations&utm_campaign=Christianity.com%20Daily%20Inspirations&utm_medium=email&utm_content=5763960&recip=545220427&aps=f1ef14c97cef90d3a594edec8cb287c5cb273e461d4d72a3b652f3b757be2051

engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them