

## **Christmas Day 2022**

### **Luke 2: 8-20**

I am known for being earnest- probably to a fault. That I take things too seriously. I admit it. I do. Especially when I am striving so hard to have others feel what I feel, know what I know. Perhaps this is why I love Advent so much, because it is a time for depth, pondering deep and meaningful things. A time I can indulge in what I am most comfortable in.

But then comes the twelve days of Christmas. With angels singing their gloria's, shepherds glorifying and praising God for who God is- creator of all, loving God, mighty above all humans.

And during these twelve days I/we are called to celebrate. To rejoice! To squeal and do our happy dance, whether we feel like it or not. And so, I do. Because one of the gifts of the liturgical calendar is that it calls us to places we might not normally go, but which will help our walk of faith. So, this earnest man rejoices.

I rejoice that God came to us in the form of Jesus. Emmanuel- God with us. I proclaim that in him hope came into the world and that the response to this gift is to live like it is a musical and break out into song. To sing "Joy to the World the Lord is Come". That blessing has, in fact, flowed far as the curse is found. Thanks be to God!

Now, as people of God, we take seriously the sin, brokenness, and messiness in the world. We know that reality in our own lives and through what God in Jesus has experienced on the cross. We would never deny it. And yet...

We rejoice this day, this season. Knowing that enemies drop bombs on one another in Ukraine, that people will still die today from illness, accident, and intent. Knowing that life is not as God created it to be... still we rejoice this day. And again I say... rejoice! Because on this morn is born the one who frees us from sin, death, hate, disease. On this day over 2,000 years ago in that suburb of Jerusalem, the visible sign of God's love for us came in the flesh.

In the smiling, burbling, giggling, crying child of Mary.

And it goes beyond the fact that we are almost constitutionally unable to see a child without smiling, laughing, feeling hope. Any child. Just try it.

We rejoice in the child of Mary- with arms outstretched and laughter on our lips because we have already met the adult he will grow to be!

This is the Jesus who sits with us when we are scared. The Jesus who holds us when we mourn. Who encourages us when we are hesitant. Who looks us in the eyes and tells us he loves us, no matter what.

We rejoice, because we are warm and our family is around us. We rejoice, because we are here with other members of the body of Christ, in our PJ's!

What are you rejoicing for this morning?

We rejoice, because ultimately, despite my earnestness, that is who we are as people of God. We are people of hope, who rejoice in the fact that God in Jesus

Christ has claimed us in the waters of baptism and that means that death, disease, violence, and despair will not win.

We rejoice, not ignoring those things, but in the face of those things. Trusting that in this child born of Mary, all things will be made new. Trusting that there is hope for us and for this world.

There will be a time to look the realities of this world square in the eye and get to the work we have been called to. But not now.

Now, it is time to rejoice!