



Many people are struggling with the restrictions to daily life and particularly to Christmas celebrations – family & friends that may not be able to get together as they would normally. In our house we are trying to come to terms with the prospect of seeing a lot less of our grown-up children this year. But Christmas is about so much more.

The third Sunday in advent, Gaudete Sunday, is about rejoicing. Rejoicing because Jesus came. Rejoicing because Jesus brings hope to a broken world.

Listen to these words Paul writes to the Philippians
“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.”

Song

Oh little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above
While mortals sleep the angels keep their watch of wondering love
Oh morning stars together, proclaim thy holy birth.
And praises sing to God the king, and peace to men on earth.

Oh little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

Phillips Brooks

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Read Isaiah 9:1-7

Song

Jesus, hope of the nations
Jesus, comfort for all who mourn
You are the source of Heaven’s hope on earth

Jesus, light in the darkness
Jesus, truth in each circumstance
You are the source of Heaven’s light on earth

In history You lived and died
You broke the chains, You rose to life

You are the hope living in us
You are the rock in whom we trust
You are the light shining for all the world to see

You rose from the dead conquering fear
Our Prince of Peace drawing us near
Jesus our hope, living for all who will receive
Lord, we believe

Brian Doerksen

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Teaching

- The promise
- The light
- The person

Song

Light of the world
You stepped down into darkness
Opened my eyes, Let me see
Beauty that made this heart adore you
Hope of a life spent with you

Here I am to worship
Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that you're my God
You're altogether lovely
Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me

King of all days
So highly exalted
Glorious in heaven above
Humbly you came to the earth you created
All for love's sake became poor.

I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross

Here I am to worship
Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that you're my God
You're altogether lovely
Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me

Tim Hughes

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Communion

And is it true? And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on earth for me ?

And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissued fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,

No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare –
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine..

© John Betjeman: Christmas



Prayers

Pray for the light of the gospel to shine in the
Maldives and Senegal:

*The light shines in the darkness and the
darkness has not overcome it* John 1:5

We pray Lord Jesus that you will shine
through us to bring light into the darkness



Song

Lord, the light of your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us
Set us free by the truth you now bring us
Shine on me, shine on me

Shine, Jesus, shine
Fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze
Set our hearts on fire

Flow, river, flow
Flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth your word
Lord, and let there be light

Lord, I come to your awesome presence
From the shadows into your radiance
By the blood I may enter your brightness
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness
Shine on me, shine on me

As we gaze on your kingly brightness
So our faces display your likeness
Ever changing from glory to glory
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story
Shine on me, shine on me

Graham Kendrick

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Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.