

Morning Prayer – Saturday, December 19, 2020
St. George's Anglican Church, Cadboro Bay. www.stgeorgecadborobay.ca

Opening Words

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4)

In the midst of sorrow and challenge, loneliness and longing, contentment and ease, may I invite gratitude for life into my heart. May I give thanks for all that I am and all the relationships that sustain me. And may the joy of Jesus be with me, increasing my love for the world and for all beings, so that my joy might be complete.

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

2 Corinthians 7:13-16 (The Message)

And now, isn't it wonderful all the ways in which this distress has goaded you closer to God? You're more alive, more concerned, more sensitive, more reverent, more human, more passionate, more responsible. Looked at from any angle, you've come out of this with purity of heart. And that is what I was hoping for in the first place when I wrote the letter. My primary concern was not for the one who did the wrong or even the one wronged, but for you—that you would realize and act upon the deep, deep ties between us before God. That's what happened—and we felt just great.

And then, when we saw how Titus felt—his exuberance over your response—our joy doubled. It was wonderful to see how revived and refreshed he was by everything you did. If I went out on a limb in telling Titus how great I thought you were, you didn't cut off that limb. As it turned out, I hadn't exaggerated one bit. Titus saw for himself that everything I had said about you was true. He can't quit talking about it, going over again and again the story of your prompt obedience, and the dignity and sensitivity of your hospitality. He was quite overwhelmed by it all! And I couldn't be more pleased—I'm so confident and proud of you.

A moment of silence to reflect on the reading

Canticle

The songs of prayer lodge in our mouths.
Let us sing through the snow.
At the dinner table.
On the rooftop where we dance.
May these sounds heal our hearts
and those distant hearts that hear.

Hawksley Workman

**Poem “To Mrs. K___ on Her Sending Me an English Christmas Plum-Cake in Paris”
by Helen Maria Williams (1761-1827)**

What crowding thoughts around me wake,

What marvels in a Christmas-cake!
Ah say, what strange enchantment dwells
Enclosed within its odorous cells?
Is there no small magician bound
Encrusted in its snowy round?
For magic surely lurks in this,
A cake that tells of vanished bliss;
A cake that conjures up to view
The early scenes, when life was new;
When memory knew no sorrows past,
And hope believed in joys that last! —
Mysterious cake, whose folds contain
Life's calendar of bliss and pain;
That speaks of friends for ever fled,
And wakes the tears I love to shed.
Oft shall I breathe her cherished name
From whose fair hand the offering came:
For she recalls the artless smile
Of nymphs that deck my native isle;
Of beauty that we love to trace,
Allied with tender, modest grace;
Of those who, while abroad they roam,
Retain each charm that gladdens home,
And whose dear friendships can impart
A Christmas banquet for the heart!

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS, THE WORLD, AND ONESELF

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,
Master of both the light and the darkness,
send Your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.
We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.
We who are anxious about many things look forward to your coming among us.
We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom.
We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.
We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.
To You we say, 'Come Lord Jesus!'

Joel Mason

Sources

Celtic Daily Prayer: Book Two, Farther Up and Farther In, Northumbria Community, London:
William Collins Books, 2015.

Poem: "To Mr. K___ on Her Sending Me an English Christmas Plum-Cake in Paris"
by Helen Maria Williams (1761-1827), public domain.