



Mary Magdalene Gathering December 17, 2023

*Third Sunday in Advent * Celebrating the Winter Solstice*



Welcome

**Let us take a moment to silence our minds,
calm our bodies, and open our hearts.**



Opening **Dialogue**

Solo: Peace be with you

Unison: Acquire my peace within you.

Solo: Where do we find our peace?

Unison: Let no one lead you astray by saying “here it is,” or “there it is.”
Peace can be found within yourself.

Solo: Follow after it.

Unison: Those who seek it, will find it.

Solo: She who has a mind to understand, let her understand.

Unison: She who has ears to hear, let her hear.

From Low: An Honest Advent Devotional, John Pavlovitz

Recently, I was on a flight to Albuquerque, New Mexico, and I was enjoying the flight (as much as one can enjoy a flight when they're certain they will die on an airplane), when I was interrupted by the voice of the captain. I know it was the captain, because he said, "Uh, folks, Captain speaking here. I'm going to ask the flight attendants to suspend our beverage service and ask you to return to your seats and fasten your seatbelts, because we're about to hit a little chop ... It may get a little choppy."

"Choppy." I've heard that word before. It's never good news. Choppy is captain-speak for "We're about to be shaken like a snow globe in the hands of an angry toddler!" Choppy means I'm about to face my mortality once again while wedged between two strangers. Choppy means I am about to make a lot of promises to God about what I'll do if we land safely – none of which I intend to keep. The captain was telling us matter-of-factly: "Hold on. Prepare yourselves. Turbulence is coming."

This should be familiar territory for us. We are, at all times, experiencing the shaking of being human. I bet you can name exactly what and who the turbulence is for your right now. As Jesus readies his students for his physical

(cont.)

absence, he says to them (and to us), “In this world you will have trouble.” In other words, “Hold on. Prepare yourselves. Turbulence is coming.” But Jesus reminds us that he has overcome, and that we should not be shaken into hopelessness. He, much like the pilot of my plane, is not overwhelmed because he has the threat right-sized. We can do the same.

◦ The question isn't whether we will be placed in storms, but rather, how much of the turbulence we will allow to be placed within us. When we find ourselves in these storms or circumstances or troubling thoughts, we can rest in the knowledge that the things that cause our shaking, in the eyes of a God who sees and loves and accompanies us – are nothing more than a little *chop*.



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Acquainted with the Night

Robert Frost

*I have been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain - and back in rain.
I have outwalked the furthest city light.*

*I have looked down the saddest city lane.
I have passed by the watchman on his beat
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.*

*I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet
When far away an interrupted cry
Came over houses from another street,*

*But not to call me back or say good-bye;
And further still at an unearthly height,
One luminary clock against the sky*

*Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.
I have been one acquainted with the night.*

You, Darkness

Rainer Maria Rilke

You, darkness, that I come from
I love you more than all the fires
that fence in the world,
for the fire makes a circle of light for everyone
and then no one outside learns of you.



But the darkness pulls in everything-
shapes and fires, animals and myself,
how easily it gathers them! -
powers and people-



and it is possible a great presence is moving near me.

I have faith in nights.



Invocation to the Life-Giving Sun

Oh, absent sun,
the earth grows gold as we wait.
Our vigil fire is but a small spark
compared to your brilliance.
Our bones grow cold
awaiting your warmth.
Patiently we await your return
in the eastern sky.
Impatiently we await the first shard of light
piercing the eastern dawn—
the first sign of life's renewal.



Silent Night

Rebekah Myers

Silent night, longest night
Deep the dark; still and quiet
Though in shadow
our hearts still a-glow
Star-light glistens
on sparkling snow
Sleep and rest through the night
Sleep and rest through the night
Silent night, longest night
Shortest day, gone the light
Will the golden sun
ever return?

While in darkness,
what lesson to learn?
In the darkness is peace
In the darkness is peace
Silent night, longest night
Mother-God holds the light
Bright, Her love for us, mighty, yet mild
Safe within sleeps
her golden child
Morning sun will born
Morning sun will be born





Reflection and Discussion



Announcements & Prayer Requests



Closing Dialogue

SOLO: Are you aware of the light and the peace within you?

UNISON: We have the feeling and the movement. The passion for the well-being of all.

SOLO: Light spreads, just as love spreads. Are you willing to speak your feeling of light?

UNISON: Yes, indeed, we must speak the feeling. We must act the peace.

SOLO: Let us practice the feeling. Let us practice the peace.

UNISON: Let us dance the feeling. Let us dance the peace. Let us dance from the light.

SOLO: Let us move together in the light and the peace.

UNISON: Let us go forth in the power of the Spirit.



**Merry Christmas
Blessed Solstice
and a Happy New Year!**

Our next Gathering will be Sunday, January 28, 2024, time TBA