



*“Are You Ready  
for Christmas?”  
Luke 1: 39-56  
Dec. 20, 2009  
Rev. Shelley Lavenne*

As the days draw closer to Christmas day, people often say to each other: “Are you ready for Christmas?”

I find myself stumbling for an answer. What do people mean when they ask, “are you ready for Christmas yet?”

Am I being asked if the presents are all purchased and in some cases, all sewed up? Almost but not yet.

If they’re all wrapped and under the tree? Uh, no.

Is the tree actually up yet? Just yesterday.

That the house is all decorated? Kind of.

Are the groceries all purchased and the baking done? Is a menu planned for the family coming? No, not yet.

Most often, though, because I’m a minister -- when I hear “are you ready for Christmas?”, I think I’m being asked if all the Christmas services are prepared and ready to go. So being asked this question – depending on what time of December I’m asked – chances are you’ll see this look of sheer panic come over my face.

And yet for us as Christians – to be asked “Are you ready for Christmas?” should **not** cause panic. Should **not** cause anxiety. Should **not** cause us to fuss about all the items still on the “to do” holiday season list.

Are we ready to receive? It’s not about something else that we need to give. Are we ready to receive God fully into our lives again.

You see, if you look at the Christmas story, there isn’t much about giving of gifts. The only folks who brought gifts were the Magi. For everyone else – Mary, Joseph, the Shepherds, the angels -- they knew they were the recipients of a wonderful gift.

God with us. God born among us. God walking with us. We are not on this earth alone.

“Are you ready for Christmas?” OH yes! God, please come now. Come sooner than later.

Mary, too, was asked “Are you ready for Christmas?” And she responds to the angel with a resounding “yes.” And then she sings, rejoicing to God. She rejoices in a God who loves us all equally – no matter who we are, no matter our income, no matter mistakes we may have made. She rejoices that God is a very certain presence to her.

*There is a story of little boy in his first year of school. There comes the day that each one is to bring their father to school. Yet few Dads actually show up. The teacher goes around the room and asks each child what his or her father does for a living. The first child got up and said, “My father is a lawyer.” And the second said, “My father owns a store.” The third said, “My father is a pharmacist.” And so it went around the room in this wealthy suburban classroom, until it came to the turn of the little boy whose father was not socially prominent in business or profession. The little boy stood up and looked over at his father, not knowing quite what to say. But then he brightened and said, “My daddy is...my daddy is here!”*

*With the simple words, “My daddy is here” whole worlds of social standing and pressure simply evaporate....*

*Mary also says: “My God is here. I am blessed and the world holds no power over me anymore.”*

*(italics are referenced from an old sermon of my Dad’s and a clipping from the Christian Century – date and author not stated on the clipping)*

Are we ready for Christmas? May our answer be a resounding, “yes”!  
Let us simply open ourselves to receive God. Let us simply be open to receive the healing, the hope, joy, peace and love of our God.

Amen.