

Treasures Old and New

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Tonight we gather to remember loved ones we have lost through death, divorce, or separation. We also may be feeling anxiety as we see jobs eliminated as companies' down-size from the recent state of our economy.

In the midst of the pain we might be experiencing during this holiday season we have memories of things past and hope for our present and our future. We reflect on our memories – of the lives shared with us, people who helped shape who we have become.

In our readings for tonight we are reminded of treasures, both old and new. The treasures we have are the memories of the past. We have countless stories of a

loved one who is missed. We have physical reminders such as a card or a letter that are precious to us. Among these old treasures we also have new ones. New stories to be shared and stories that have yet to be written.

Our new and old treasures are part of who we are. It's helpful to acknowledge them as we journey through the holiday season. When we talk about past memories with families and friends they become treasures.

Our past memories are our old treasures. In my family, each Christmas we remember my husband's father. As we gather and celebrate Christmas together, one of us will comment that it is not the same without dad. From there we pause and we begin telling stories – sharing our memories- laughing and crying. Those stories have become our treasures. This year will be our 4th Christmas without dad. Each year we find ourselves telling the same stories over and over again. In the midst of sharing the old treasures, we also have the new – what we are all doing

and experiencing in our lives, our hopes and our dreams. We also pause to give thanks to God for the tiny baby who gives us hope.

In our reading from Luke, the shepherds shared their story. They were given great news – a child was born who was the Messiah, Christ the Lord. The shepherds went and saw Mary, Joseph, and the baby and shared with others what they had seen. Mary treasured the words and pondered them in her heart. Jesus is a treasure for all of us. He brings us hope.

Our treasures, both new and old are from God. As we gather with family and friends or are away from loved ones during this holiday season our past memories and the hope that Christ brings are rich treasures for us.

As we journey through life with old and new treasures, we have hope in the Christ child.

The peace of God which surpasses all human understanding be in your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus the Lord. Amen.