

## **ABOUT “THE CHRISTMAS GIFT”...**

Christmas gifts! What would Christmas be without the giving and receiving of Christmas gifts? From the wealthiest rich folks to the most destitute poor, gifts have played an important part in passing on the Christmas spirit. As God’s children, we know why gifts are so important. We know what it is took for God to give us a gift above all gifts. For only could one special gift satisfy our every need, and give to us the rich rewards of an eternity in heaven. Jesus was that gift, and God gave his dearest treasure to us on that Christmas night in Bethlehem so very long ago .

We celebrate the giving of God’s gift in our latest children’s Christmas worship service, “The Christmas Gift”. We guarantee that as this service unfolds, everyone, young and old, will clearly see the importance of this gift – from promise to fulfillment.

### **EDITING:**

All materials in this worship service have been written and edited by former Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod educators.

### **AGE LEVEL:**

This worship service will work well with any size group, preschool through grade eight.

### **NARRATOR AND SPEAKERS:**

The service includes a basic narrator-recitation style. Although there are five “Narrators” shown, you may adjust this to fit your situation. Wherever you see “Recitation” you will find a Scripture passage. We have also included “Questioners” who may be individual students, adults in the congregation, or entire classes. Please make any adjustments you wish.

### **THE GIFTS:**

Although it is not mandatory, this service works best when the five gift boxes are used in the front of church. Each of the boxes is wrapped differently, and opened with every new section. Please follow the directions in the Teacher Score for directions in unwrapping each box. A special instruction sheet for the five boxes has been included with this Teacher Score.

### **SPECIAL ATTACHED “GIFT CARD”:**

The 5<sup>th</sup> part of this worship service is titled “*Our Gift to You*”. This refers to a special card that has been attached to the back page of each worship bulletin. Prior to the service, each of the children write out their favorite Bible passage on cards. These are the gifts that the children are giving to those in attendance.

### **SONGS:**

The songs provided are optional. Feel free to use them as you see fit. You will notice that the “*Christmas Gift*” has been written just for this worship service. Also, “*Two Hands*” may be used with the hand signs diagramed at the back of this booklet.

**SPECIAL THANKS** to Mr. Charles Cushinery who arranged and recorded the accompaniments for each of the songs; to Tina Smith for her vocal solos on the sing-along songs; to Surround-In-Sound Studio for the CD recording; to Mr. Arlyn Boll for serving as editor.

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# The CHRISTMAS GIFT

**"Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift."** 2 Corinthians 9:15

**Processional:** *"Angels from the Realms of Glory"*

**Invocation:**

**Responsive reading between pastor and congregation/children:**

**Pastor:** At Christmas time our minds are filled with many enjoyable things,

**Cong./Children:** But Jesus, our Christmas Gift, gives us the greatest joy

**Pastor:** At Christmas time we join together to sing songs of happiness,

**Cong./Children:** But Jesus, our Christmas Gift, is our source of happiness

**Pastor:** At Christmas time we decorate our homes and offices with bright lights and candles,

**Cong./Children:** But Jesus, our Christmas Gift, is the true light that lights up our world

**Pastor:** At Christmas time we love to visit with friends and family,

**Cong./Children:** But Jesus, our Christmas Gift, is our best and dearest friend

**Pastor:** At Christmas time we set up Christmas trees as a sign of living joy,

**Cong./Children:** But Jesus, our Christmas Gift, is always alive in our hearts

**Pastor:** At Christmas time we give and receive many wonderful gifts,

**Cong./Children:** But Jesus will always be my greatest Christmas Gift!

**Responsive Psalm:** *Psalm 45*

**Christmas Prayer:** Dearest Lord God, how enjoyable it is for us to share this time of celebration of praise to you. You have blessed us at Christmas time with joy and happiness, with family and friends, with hope and peace, all because you sent to earth the greatest Christmas Gift of all, a baby who would one day sacrifice himself out of love for us. That Christmas Gift is truly indescribable! Tonight we gather together in your house to praise and thank you for that Christmas Gift, for without it we would be most miserable. To you we give praise and honor and glory and thanksgiving this day and forever. In the name of that Christmas Gift, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

**All Children:** *"The Christmas Gift"*

*In the chilled night air of winter, Bethlehem slept long ago.  
Never aware of one little prayer that came from the stable below.*

*God's Gift about to be opened, all through this one lowly birth.  
There in the hay a baby boy lay, the ruler of heaven and earth  
Ruler of heaven and earth.*

**REFRAIN**

*Gave us hope, gave us joy, all wrapped up in that one little boy.  
Gave us peace, gave us love; God's Gift from heaven above,  
Signed by the Father, "With love!"*

*Angels sang out with loud chorus, chanting the heavenly chords.  
Shepherds took flight into the night, hoping to find their dear Lord,*

*There in the manger before them lay but the infant so small.  
Yet, his word still, was peace and good will, for he was the Savior of all,  
He was the Savior of all.*

**REFRAIN**

*Humble the Gift's new beginning. Crown, gold and gems there were none.  
Yet, plainly see, this Gift is for me, God gave me his own precious Son.*

*Though my few thanks are so meager, yet with my voice I will lend,  
Unending praise sung all of my days, it's for the Great Gift that God sent,  
For the Great Gift that God sent.*

REFRAIN

## PART 1

### The PROMISED GIFT...do not open till later

**Narrator 1:** Gifts. I don't imagine there is anyone here today who does not enjoy giving and receiving gifts. And I also imagine that the idea of Christmas gifts has been on everyone's mind today as well. Gifts play a big part at Christmas time. Where would all the stores be without Christmas gifts? Where would all the wrapping paper printers be without Christmas gifts? Where would all the bow and ribbon manufacturers be without Christmas gifts? What would it be like if there were NO gifts at Christmas?

It's fun to get gifts, and even more fun to give them. We also give gifts for many reasons other than just Christmas. We give gifts at birthdays, we give gifts at Easter, and we give them at weddings too. We also give gifts for anniversaries, graduations, or other special events. Some people even give gifts for no special celebration at all.

**Questioners:** Are there gifts in those boxes?

**Narrator 1:** Yes, in a way we could call them gifts.

**Questioners:** Are they Christmas gifts?

**Narrator 1:** Yes, and tonight we will take a look at them one by one as we learn about the best Christmas Gift that was ever given.

**Questioners:** But why are there five gifts?

**Narrator 1:** To understand that, let me first tell you about the Greatest Gift ever given. We find the story about the gift right here in the Bible. *(Holds up Bible.)* From the very beginning to the very end of the Bible we hear the story about God's very special Christmas Gift.

**Questioners:** What's inside the first box?

**Narrator 1:** Let's see. *(Walks over to first box – wrapped in red - and removes card tied to ribbon.)* The card says, "This box contains the Promised Gift. It cannot be opened until later."

**Questioners:** But why can't we open it?

**Narrator 1:** We can't open it because it represents a gift that was coming in the future. People living in the Old Testament waited and waited for the gift, but they never got to see it. It all began when Adam and Eve lived in the beautiful Garden of Eden, but they sinned and went against God's command. Now they would die, and be apart from God forever. But God wanted to bring his people back to himself, so he gave them the promise of his Christmas Gift in Genesis 3:15 when he said to them:

**Recitation:** "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

**Narrator 1:** That was just the beginning of God's gift promises. Listen to what he told Abraham:

**Recitation:** "All the people on the earth will be blessed through you."

**Narrator 1:** And to Judah:

**Recitation:** “The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs.”

**Narrator 1:** And to Isaiah – (notice how the hints of God’s Christmas Gift became more definite)

**Recitation:** “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”

**Narrator 1:** Micah also wrote about the Christmas Gift that was to come:

**Recitation:** “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel.”

**Narrator 1:** Yes, God gave his people many gift promises over thousands of Old Testament years. He was setting the stage. He was getting his gift ready for the exact time and place. He was planning to give his Christmas Gift to the world. That’s why the gift couldn’t be opened. It had to wait. Can you imagine how anxious the people were to see this gift? Listen to what Paul wrote in Galatians 4:5:

**Recitation:** “But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.”

**Congregation:** “*Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel*” v. 1

PART 5  
The CHRISTMAS GIFT...our gift to you

**Narrator 5:** We have seen God's Christmas Gift. We have witnessed the people waiting many years for the Gift. We have seen the Gift being sent to this earth. We have seen the special gifts of thankfulness that people gave to Jesus, and we have seen that forgiveness of our sins and eternal life is the blessing of God's Christmas Gift, planned since the beginning of time.

**Questioners:** But there's still one box left. What's in the last box?

**Narrator 5:** *(Opens last box – wrapped in colorful paper - and takes out a rolled up scroll of paper).* There's only a sheet of paper in this box. It says:

**All School:** God gave us his Christmas Gift. Now we want to share it with you.

**Narrator 5:** *(To the congregation)* Please open the card attached to your service folder and read what it says.

**Children:** *(Last verse sung again by children)* "The Christmas Gift"

*Humble the Gift's new beginning. Crown, gold and gems there were none.  
Yet, plainly see, this Gift is for me, God gave me his own precious Son.*

*Though my few thanks are so meager, yet with my voice I will lend,  
Unending praise sung all of my days, it's for the Great Gift that God sent,  
For the Great Gift that God sent.*

*REFRAIN*

## **Benediction and Announcements**

**Recessional by congregation: "Joy to the World"**

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# THE CHRISTMAS GIFT

Words & Music by Reynold R. Kremer  
 Arranged by Charles Cushinery

Chords: C Em Dm C

Voice

Piano

6 Dm Em Dm C Dm Em

Pno.

1. In the chilled night air of win - ter  
 2. Ang - els sang out with loud chor - us  
 3. Hum - ble the Gift's new be - gin - ning

12 Dm C Dm Em Dm

Pno.

Beth - le - hem slept long a - go.  
 Chant - ing the heav - en - ly chords  
 Crown, gold and gems there were none

17 F C Dm Am Dm

Ne - ver a - ware of one lit - tle prayer that came from the  
 Shep - herds took flight of one lit - tle prayer that came from the  
 Yet plain - ly see, this gift is for night me, God Hop - ing to his

Pno.

22 D7 Gsus4 G C Dm

stab - le be - low. God's gift a - bout to be  
 find their dear Lord. There in my the man - ger are be -  
 own pre - cious Son. Though my few thanks are so

Pno.

27 Em Dm C Dm Em Dm

o - pened fore them All through this one low - ly birth  
 mea - ger Lay but the my in - fant so small  
 Yet with my voice I will lend

Pno.