

The Welcome and A reflection on the ancient themes of this day

Sutton park

Poem: early spring

Opening prayers

Be still

Be attentive to the divine presence

Today all things are in balance, dark and light,
winter and summer, day and night

God of beginnings and endings
as the year turns from dark to light

We come to you

as spring blossom buds promising autumn fruit

We welcome your life giving Spirit

as mortals made in your image

We welcome each other

Poem: daffodils

Song of Annunciation

The angel Gabriel from heaven came
His wings as drifted snow his eyes as flame
"All hail" said he "thou lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favoured lady," Gloria!

"For now a blessed mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honour thee,
Thy Son shall be Emanuel, by seers foretold
Most highly favoured lady," Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head
"To me be as it pleaseth God," she said,
"My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name."
Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emanuel, the Christ was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:¹
"Most highly favoured lady," Gloria!

Poem: Spring

A litany for Lady Day

(Based on the words of Gregory of Neocaesarea early 3rd Century
with medieval folk response for Lady Day)

Refrain: St Gabriel to Mary flies: this is the end of snow and ice

Today the choirs of heaven sing

as the light of Christ shines on earth

Today is our glad springtime

for Christ the sun of righteousness illuminates us

Today the whole circle of the earth rejoices (Emma)

for the dwelling of the Spirit is realized among us

Today David's vision is fulfilled

**the heavens rejoice and the earth is glad, the trees of the field are filled
with joy at the coming of our God.**

Today Gabriel came from God's side to Mary's,
announcing God's favour

Refrain: St Gabriel to Mary flies: this is the end of snow and ice

Today alone of all people was Mary chosen

that through her fruit the fall of Eve might be reversed

Today is Adam made anew among the angels

having winged his way to heaven

Today the mystery of hope kept hidden from eternity

shines openly through all wonders

Refrain: St Gabriel to Mary flies: this is the end of snow and ice

Poem: Kindly Spring

Mary's Song

My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, my spirit rejoices in you, my Saviour,
for you have looked with favour on your lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:

you, the Almighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your name.

You have mercy on those who fear you from generation to generation.

You, O God have shown strength with your arm

and scattered the proud in their conceit,

Casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly.

You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

You have come to the help of your servant Israel,

for you have remembered your promise of mercy,

The promise made to our forebears, to Abraham, Sarah, and their seed for ever.

Three Spring Poems: Because we Hunkered Down: Perpetual Spring: Spring (*if you are walking you may want to pause between poems and pick spots to hear the next one*)

Rowtons well

A song for the sowing of seed and giving our lives to God
(during this song seeds are planted or scattered)

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I would give a lamb
If I were a wise man I would do my part
But what I have I give him give my heart.

Unless a grain of wheat does fall into the ground and dies
It remains a single grain lest entombed in earth it lies
Those who seek to live for self will find their life in vain
But those who give their life in love will receive it back again

I heard the voice of Jesus say 'behold I freely give'
The living water thirsty one, stoop down and drink and live'
I came to Jesus and I drank of that life giving stream
My thirst was quenched my soul revived and now I live in him

I heard the voice of Jesus say 'I am this dark worlds light
Look unto me thy morn shall rise and all thy day be bright'
I looked to Jesus and I found in him my star my sun
and in that light of life I'll walk till traveling days are done

Poem: trees

Closing Blessing

And May the blessing of the God of life and death
In whom the seasons grow and fade
In whom all of us are held in love
Our Father and Mother who made us
Our Brother Jesus who mends us
Our Sustainer the Spirit who moulds us
Be upon us at this time
And in all times to come
Go in peace, God is with us

As Dark Gives Way to Light
An outdoor celebration
For
Lady Day and
the Spring Equinox