

***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:<sup>1</sup>  
"Most highly favoured lady," Gloria!

Poem: Spring

***A litany for Lady Day***

(Based on the words of Gregory of Neocaesarea early 3<sup>rd</sup> 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