

(Topics and Lead-in Below)

Almighty God Is Near!

A Responsive Hymn based on
Philippians 4:4-7

♩ = 100

*Leader

People

F B \flat Dm E \flat E \flat / \bar{G} B \flat B \flat / \bar{A} E \flat / \bar{G} E \flat B \flat / \bar{D} B \flat Cm7 Cm 9 F

1. Re - joice, for this will nev - er change: The Lord is near! The Lord is near!
2. No need to wor - ry - sim - ply pray. The Lord is near! The Lord is near!
3. No mat - ter who or where you are, The Lord is near! The Lord is near!

Leader

People

F B \flat Dm E \flat B \flat / \bar{D} B \flat E \flat Cm7 F 7 _{sus} F 7 B \flat B \flat / \bar{A} B \flat / \bar{G}

When trou - ble comes, the truth re - mains: Al - might - y God is near!
Just turn to Him and breathe His praise. Al - might - y God is near!
His peace can keep your mind and heart. Al - might - y God is near!

Refrain

All

F F \bar{E} / \bar{B} Cm7 B \flat B \flat / \bar{D} F C 7 _{sus} E \bar{b} $^{\text{add}9}$ / \bar{G} F 9 E \bar{b} / \bar{F} B \flat B \bar{b} / \bar{A}

Near to all who trust His name, Strong with - in, a Liv - ing Flame,

*"Leader" may be sung by soloist, choir, or half the congregation.

WORDS & MUSIC: Ken Bible

PHILIPPIANS 4
8.8.8.6.w.Ref.

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Gm $\frac{Gm}{D}$ Dm E \flat E \flat add9 $\frac{E\flat}{G}$ C m^7 $\frac{B\flat}{F}$ F 7 sus F 7 B \flat

Love that's ev - 'ry day the same, Al - might - y God is near!

TOPICS: Advent; Assurance & Comfort; God's Presence; Prayer

LEAD-IN: *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4-7, NIV)*

LEAD-IN DEVOTIONAL READING:

A Real Person

*I am always with you;
you hold me by my right hand.
You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will take me into glory.
Whom have I in heaven but you?
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.
(Psalm 73:23-25, NIV)*

The most moving, eye-opening, transforming point in my life came when I realized this one simple truth: God is a real Being. He is not a mythical figure, an impersonal force, or the creation of our minds. He is a real "person," a living Being. I can interact with Him. In fact, He delights to interact with me.

What's more, He loves me--He deeply loves me. He provides for me and works in my life. He patiently teaches me and changes me from the heart. He forgives me when I do wrong.

And He is with me. He is personally, constantly, intimately, actually right here with me, all the time.

For me, the real attraction of the Christian life is not the lifestyle, although I've found that it's the best, wisest, and most natural. What's compelling about being a Christian is Jesus Christ himself.

I find it so sad: when people hear the term "Christian," they too often think of stuffy religion or perhaps a certain political persuasion. They think of living by lots of rules. Or saddest of all, they think of people who sometimes seem self-righteous, narrow-minded, and condemning.

Being a Christian is none of those things. Believe me, it isn't. Christianity is simply this: knowing Jesus Christ as a real person, face-to-face.

Christianity is the simplicity and warmth of a personal relationship. It is knowing the One who created you. It is knowing the One who loved you from the moment He conceived you, long before you were born. It is knowing the One who suffered and died to remove the evil from within you. It is trusting an intimate Friend who is always loving, always wise, and always with you.

Walking with Him, step-by-step, is making my life more wonderful than I ever dreamed life could be. I can talk to Him anytime throughout the day and know that He hears me and is pleased that I'm talking to Him. When I'm concerned, I can turn to Him, talk with Him, and lean on Him. When I'm happy, I can thank Him. When I'm wrong, I can ask forgiveness, knowing He gives it gladly and completely.

In myself, I'm no more perfect than anyone else. But because He is with me and in me always, He is making me more loving. He is helping me love others at home, at work, and wherever I go.

He brings wonderful gifts to my life--genuine love, deep peace, a sense of security, a joy that isn't dependent on circumstances. But none of His gifts are as wonderful as He is. *He* is peace. *He* is beauty. *He* is life itself.

I have been reunited with the One who made me, and the reunion is marvelous.

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