

# **A Seasonal All Age Worship Service**

(SAAW014)

## **Christmas Day: The Treasure of Christmas**

© Jane Hulme 2016

**ALL AGE WORSHIP**  
**RESOURCES.ORG**



## CHRISTMAS DAY: THE TREASURE OF CHRISTMAS

### Service Aim:

To enable all ages to see that Jesus is the “treasure” of Christmas, and to encourage people to receive Jesus into their lives.

### Biblical Reference(s):

Luke 2:1-20, John 3:16, 14:16-17, 17:3, Romans 5:1, Colossians 1:19-20, Matthew 28:20

### Outline of Service:

Welcome:	Include lighting the Christmas candle
Opening Prayer:	
Opening carols:	<u>Opening carols</u> (See Appendix 1)
Sharing of gifts given:	
Warm up:	“Treasure hunt” with clue Luke 2:12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus is the “treasure” of Christmas</li> </ul>
Dramatized Reading:	Luke 2:1-20
Song:	<u>Song of worship</u> (See Appendix 1)
Talk 1:	Why is Jesus the “treasure” of Christmas? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Parcel 1 – “Love”</li> <li>2) Parcel 2 – “Forgiveness”</li> <li>3) Parcel 3 – “Peace with God”</li> <li>4) Parcel 4 – “Eternal life”</li> </ol>
Puppet script:	“No-hell, no-hell”
Songs:	<u>Couple of songs of worship</u> (See Appendix 1)
Talk 2:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5) Parcel 5 – “Joy”</li> <li>6) Parcel 6 – “Presence”</li> <li>7) Parcel 7 – “Hope”</li> </ol>
Response:	How can we receive the “treasure?” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer inviting Jesus into our lives.</li> </ul>
Prayers:	Prayers and Lord’s Prayer
Song(s):	<u>Final Carol(s)</u> (See Appendix 1) & handing out of gold coins.
Blessing:	

## Notes for the service:

General notes and instructions for the service are in black font.

**Prayers or responses said by the congregation together are in bold purple font.**

The full script of a talk or other activity is in purple font.

.....

## Before the Service:

Ensure that you have a nativity scene with baby Jesus in a manger somewhere in the church. You will also need to obtain a small “treasure chest.”<sup>1</sup> Fill it with seven gifts which have been wrapped up in metallic gold paper (and numbered for the service leader’s benefit!) The gifts are as follows:

- Parcel 1 contains a tube of “love hearts,”<sup>2</sup> to which is attached the word LOVE.
- Parcel 2 contains a large rubber, to which is attached the word FORGIVENESS.
- Parcel 3 contains a wooden dove<sup>3</sup>, to which is attached the word PEACE WITH GOD.
- Parcel 4 contains a packet of sunflower seeds, to which is attached the word ETERNAL LIFE.
- Parcel 5 contains a small tub of bubbles, to which is attached the word JOY.
- Parcel 6 contains a 9V battery, to which is attached the word PRESENCE.
- Parcel 7 contains a tiny crown<sup>4</sup>, to which is attached the word HOPE.

You will need the filled treasure chest for your talks so have it easily accessible. Place a table at the front of church where you can “unload” the treasure chest. You will also need enough gold chocolate coins so that every member of the congregation can have two.

## Welcome:

Welcome everyone to the Christmas Day service. If your church has a Christmas candle, either light it yourself or invite a child to light it. Then say:

*“I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”* (Luke 2:10b-11)

## Opening Prayer:

You may choose to use either:

- an informal prayer
- a prayer from the Church of England’s “Time and Seasons”<sup>5</sup> material
- or the following acclamation:

We celebrate Jesus,  
**Born to be our Saviour**  
 We celebrate Jesus,  
**He is Christ the Lord**

<sup>1</sup> You can purchase a large treasure chest (22cm W x 16cm D x 16cm H) for approximately £10 on ebay at [www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk)

<sup>2</sup> You can purchase love-heart sweets at <http://shop.lovehearts.com/pick-n-mix-love-hearts>

<sup>3</sup> You can purchase a wooden dove from Amazon at [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

<sup>4</sup> You can make a tiny card crown using a template found online

<sup>5</sup> “Times and Seasons” material can be found at <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/41153/tandschristmas.pdf>

## Opening Carols:

Opening Carols as per Appendix 1

## Sharing of Gifts given:

Using a “roving microphone,” invite the congregation to share with you what “treasures” they have been given this Christmas morning, by their friends and family.

## Warm up:

Who would like to go on a treasure hunt this morning? *(Choose a couple of volunteers)*

- Would you like to come and join me here? *(Volunteers join you)*

Finding treasure is exciting isn't it?

- The treasure we are looking for today is the greatest treasure of all.
- It is more valuable and precious than gold or silver or even diamonds.

Now in order to find the treasure, we need a treasure map.

- Fortunately we have one here *(Pick up a Bible and wave it around and then give it to your two volunteers)*

Your clue to where the treasure is hidden is a Bible verse, and it is Luke chapter two, verse twelve.

- When you have found that verse, read it out so that we can all hear it. *(Volunteers read out: “This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”)*

So where do you think the treasure is? *(In the manger)*

- That's right.....there is treasure in the manger.....would you like to go and find it? *(You want the volunteers to bring baby Jesus to the front of the church)*

Wow.....look at that. The treasure that *N (name of volunteers)* has found is a baby.

- It is baby Jesus...
- Jesus is the treasure of Christmas....and later on we are going to find out why He is the treasure.
- For now, let's hear what happened when Jesus was born as we have our dramatized Bible reading. *(send back volunteers)*

## Reading:

The reading is Luke 2:1-20. This can be read straight from the Bible or you could use the dramatized reading in Appendix 2.

## Song:

A song of worship as per Appendix 1

## Talk 1:

Earlier we said that Jesus is the treasure of Christmas. *(Hold up baby Jesus)*

- But why is that so?
- How can a baby be called treasure?

Well this baby is no ordinary baby.....

- Jesus is God's Son.....He is God, and He came to earth to give us some very precious and valuable treasures.

Inside this treasure chest are some of the treasures that Jesus came to give us and I need four volunteers to come and help me unwrap them. *(Pick four volunteers and then take out Parcel 1 from the treasure chest and hand to volunteer 1)*

What does your piece of treasure have written on the outside of it? *(Volunteer replies "LOVE")*

- Would you like to open it? *(Volunteer opens parcel)*
- What is the treasure inside? *(Volunteer replies "Love hearts")*

Thank you....

- The first treasure that Jesus has come to give us is His LOVE.

Each one of us is so precious to God the Father that He was willing to send His Son Jesus to earth for us.

- Jesus came with a message from our Heavenly Father.
- The message is "I love you" as these love-hearts say.
- He says that to each one of us.

But Jesus didn't simply come to tell us how much we are loved. He came to show us how much we are loved.

- Let's find out what He did as we un-wrap our 2<sup>nd</sup> treasure. *(Take out Parcel 2 from the treasure chest and hand to volunteer 2)*

What does your piece of treasure have written on the outside of it? *(Volunteer replies "FORGIVENESS")*

- Would you like to open it? *(Volunteer opens parcel)*
- What is the treasure inside? *(Volunteer replies "a rubber")*

The second treasure that Jesus has come to give us is FORGIVENESS

When the angels spoke to the shepherds, they said: *"Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you"* (Luke 2:11)

- A Saviour is someone who comes to our rescue...but why do we need a rescuer?
- We need one because we have all rebelled against God and done many wrong things, which the Bible calls sins.....
- As a result of those wrong things we cannot know our Heavenly Father and we are eternally separated from him.

Jesus came to earth to pay the price for our sins so that we won't have to.

- He did that when he was crucified on a cross, rising from the dead 3 days later.

If we choose to put our trust in Him.....it is like He takes a big rubber and rubs out all of the wrong things we have done....

- We are forgiven.....

Not only that, but He gives us something else.

- Let's find out what He gives us as we un-wrap our 3<sup>rd</sup> treasure. *(Take out Parcel 3 from the treasure chest and hand to volunteer 3)*

What does your piece of treasure have written on the outside of it? *(Volunteer replies "PEACE WITH GOD")*

- Would you like to open it? *(Volunteer opens parcel)*

What is the treasure inside? (*Volunteer replies "a dove"*)

The third treasure that Jesus has come to give us is PEACE WITH GOD

- Once we have been forgiven for our sins, we can enjoy a relationship with our Heavenly Father.....we have peace with Him,
- and a dove is a symbol of that peace.

All is now well between us and our Heavenly Father, as the angels said to the shepherds.... *"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."* (Luke 2:14)

- This is an amazing gift....but there is more.
- Let's find out as we un-wrap our 4<sup>th</sup> treasure. (*Take out Parcel 4 from the treasure chest and hand to volunteer 4*)

What does your piece of treasure have written on the outside of it? (*Volunteer replies "ETERNAL LIFE"*)

- Would you like to open it? (*Volunteer opens parcel*)
- What is the treasure inside? (*Volunteer replies "Packet of sunflower seeds"*)

Thank you....

- The fourth treasure that Jesus has come to give us is ETERNAL LIFE

So what is eternal life?

- This is what Jesus said: *"Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."* (John 17:3)
- Eternal life is about having a relationship with God not simply in this life, but for all eternity.
- We need no longer fear death, for the Bible promises us that one day we will be raised from the dead into God's eternal kingdom.
- These seeds can remind us of that promise....they might look dead, but when buried in the ground one day they will be raised to life and produce beautiful plants....

So four incredible treasures that Jesus has come to give us....

- The treasure of God's love
- The treasure of God's forgiveness
- The treasure of peace with God
- The treasure of eternal life

These are treasures that you can only find in Jesus.

- You can't find them anywhere else.
- Can you see now why Jesus is the treasure of Christmas?
- That is something that puppet James is discovering for himself.
- Volunteers do go and sit down and you can keep your "treasure"

## Puppet Script:

The puppet script is “No-hell, no-hell” (see Appendix 3). This script works with a boy puppet “James”<sup>6</sup> and an older man puppet “Grandad.” The aim of the puppet script is to show that Jesus came to restore our relationship with our Heavenly Father. The service would work without this puppet script, if puppets aren’t available to you.

## Songs:

A couple of songs of worship as per Appendix 1. You might choose to sing, “The first Nowell” as one of them.

## Talk 2:

Inside my treasure chest I have three more treasures that Jesus has come to give us and I need three more volunteers to come and help me unwrap them. *(Pick three volunteers and then take out Parcel 5 from the treasure chest and hand to volunteer 1)*

What does your piece of treasure have written on the outside of it? *(Volunteer replies “JOY”)*

- Would you like to open it? *(Volunteer opens parcel)*
- What is the treasure inside? *(Volunteer replies “Bubbles”)*
- Would you like to blow a few bubbles as I talk? *(You may choose not to do this!!)*

The fifth treasure that Jesus has come to give us is JOY

- When we know that we are loved and forgiven by God and are walking with him through life, we know joy deep inside our hearts.....
- Joy that bubbles up and out of us, like these bubbles that N is blowing now.

Joy cannot be taken from us even when we go through hard or difficult times,

- and one of the reasons for that is found in our next piece of treasure. *(Take out Parcel 6 from the treasure chest and hand to volunteer 2)*

What does your piece of treasure have written on the outside of it? *(Volunteer replies “PRESENCE”)*

- Would you like to open it? *(Volunteer opens parcel)*
- What is the treasure inside? *(Volunteer replies “A battery”)*

The sixth treasure that Jesus has come to give us is his powerful PRESENCE

Jesus has promised to always be with His followers. (Matthew 28:20)

- He has promised that the powerful Holy Spirit will come and live inside them. (John 14:16-17)

You could say that the Holy Spirit is a bit like a powerful “battery pack” for the believer.....

- He gives us all that we need to live the life that God has called us to live.
- He reassures us through the hard times that God has not abandoned us and is at work in our lives.

Let’s open our last piece of treasure. *(Take out Parcel 7 from the treasure chest and hand to volunteer 3)*

<sup>6</sup> You can purchase both a boy and a Grandad puppet from [www.onewayuk.com](http://www.onewayuk.com)  
© Jane Hulme 2016

What does your piece of treasure have written on the outside of it? (*Volunteer replies "HOPE"*)

- Would you like to open it? (*Volunteer opens parcel*)
- What is the treasure inside? (*Volunteer replies "a small crown"*)

The seventh treasure that Jesus has come to give us is HOPE

- One day Jesus has promised to return to earth.
- When he comes, he will reign over us all as King, which the crown reminds us of.
- In God's kingdom there is joy and peace, love and kindness....and so when Jesus returns there will be no more pain or death, no more suffering and evil.

Wow what amazing treasures Jesus offers to each one of us....

- Treasures of love, forgiveness, peace with God, eternal life.
- Treasures of joy, His powerful presence and hope.

All of these treasures are found in Jesus, who came to earth as a baby over two thousand years ago, and who is alive and with us today by His spirit.

Thank you helpers...do go and sit down....you can keep your "treasure"

## Response:

The four main points of the response would benefit from having a power-point picture to accompany them.

So how do we receive all of these treasures that Jesus has come to bring us?

- We simply need to **turn our hearts towards Jesus,**
- **Believe** that He is the Son of God,
- Choose to **turn away from our self-centred lives** and
- **Welcome** Him into our lives.

Let's be quiet for a few moments and think about how amazing it is that Jesus came to earth to offer us all these wonderful treasures.....PAUSE

John said this: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16)

If you would like to welcome Jesus and all the treasures He has come to bring you into your life this morning, please join in the responses to this prayer.

Lord Jesus, thank you for your great love for us.

**Thank you Jesus**

We believe that you are the Son of God who came to earth to rescue us.

**We believe**

We come to you as our Saviour and ask you to forgive us for all the wrong things we have done in our lives.

**Please forgive us**

We choose to turn away from living as we please and welcome you into our lives as Lord.

**We welcome you**



Thank you that you offer us the gift of eternal life which we gladly receive.

**We receive**

Please come and fill us with your Holy Spirit.

**Come and fill us**

**Amen.**

### **Prayers:**

You may want to continue with a short time of prayer ending with the Lord's prayer.

You may choose to use either:

- Informal prayers
- Prayers from the Church of England's "Time and Seasons" material (see below),

### **Song:**

Final carol as per Appendix 1. Introduce the carol by saying that you are going to give everyone two gold coins during the singing of the final carol. These coins are a reminder that Jesus is the "real treasure of Christmas." One of the gold coins is for them to enjoy and the other gold coin is for them to share the "treasure of Jesus" with someone else, because treasure is for sharing!

### **Blessing:**

You may like to end by saying something like:

As we come to the end of the service today, go out rejoicing in the treasure that Jesus has come to give you this Christmas,

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

## Appendix 1 - Ideas for Songs and Hymns:

i) Opening Carols. Ideas include:

- Angels from the realms of glory (J.Montgomery)
- Come and join the celebration (Valerie Collison © 1972 High-Fye Music Ltd)
- O come all ye faithful (John Francis Wade)
- Once in Royal David's city (Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander, Henry John Gauntlett)
- See Him lying on a bed of straw (Michael Perry © 1965 Mrs B.Perry/Jubilate Hymns)

ii) Song of worship. Ideas include:

- Away in a manger (John Thomas McFarland, Martin Luther, William James Kirkpatrick)
- Born in the night (Geoffrey Ainger © 1964 Stainer & Bell Ltd)
- Lord you were rich beyond all splendour (F.Houghton)
- Mary had a little baby (Andy Silver © 1986 Andy Silver)
- Silent night, holy night (Joseph Mohr)
- Songs of gladness (Michael Perry © Michael Perry/Jubilate Hymns)
- While shepherds watched (Nahum Tate)

iii) Song of Worship. Ideas include:

- From the squalor of a borrowed stable (Stuart Townend © 1999 Thankyou Music)
- In the bleak mid-winter (Christina G Rossetti)
- My Jesus, my Saviour (Darlene Zschech © 1993 Darlene Zschech / Hillsong Publishing)
- O little town of Bethlehem (Phillips Brooks)
- O what a gift! (Pat Uhl Howard © 1967 American Catholic Press)
- The first nowell (Patti Drennan)

v) Final Carol(s). Ideas include:

- Christmas, it's Christmas (Alan Price © 1995 Daybreak Music Ltd)
- Hark the herald angels sing (Charles Wesley, George Whitefield)
- Unto us a boy is born (Puer Nobis nascitur © OUP)

## Appendix 2 – Dramatized Luke 2:1-20

**Cast:** Emperor Augustus, Joseph, Mary, Angel Gabriel, Shepherd 1, Shepherd 2

**Props:** Scroll for Emperor, Map for Joseph, baby for Mary, tinsel halo for Angel Gabriel, toy sheep for Shepherds 1 and 2

**Directions:** The cast can either read out their words or learn them! Before the drama begins explain to the congregation that they are going to be the group of angels that praise God during the dramatized reading. Project the words, “*Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to all on whom his favour rests*” at the relevant point in the dramatized reading, and encourage the congregation to speak them out loudly!

.....  
(Enter Augustus carrying a scroll)

Augustus: I am the Emperor Augustus and I ordered that a census be taken throughout the Roman Empire. When this first census took place, Quirinius was the governor of Syria.

(Exit Augustus and enter Joseph and Mary.....Joseph carrying a map and Mary carrying a baby)

Joseph: Mary, my fiancée, and I had to leave Nazareth in Galilee to make the journey to my home town, Bethlehem so that I could register there, because I am a descendent of King David.

Mary: I was expecting baby Jesus, my firstborn at the time, and while we were in Bethlehem the time came for him to be born.

Joseph: There was no room for us to stay in the inn so Mary wrapped Jesus in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger

(Mary and Joseph move to one side. Enter Angel Gabriel wearing tinsel halo and shepherds 1 and 2 carrying sheep)

Shepherd 1: We were out in the fields near Bethlehem, keeping watch over our flocks at night when suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to us and the glory of the Lord shone around.

Shepherd 2: We were terrified!

Angel: I said to the shepherds: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

Shepherd 1: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God.

Everyone: (including the congregation)

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST AND ON EARTH PEACE TO ALL ON WHOM HIS FAVOUR RESTS.

*(Exit Angel)*

Shepherd 2: When the angels had left us and gone into heaven I said to the other shepherds: Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened – which the Lord has told us about.

Shepherd 1: We found Mary and Joseph and the baby who was lying in the manger.

Shepherd 2: Once we had seen baby Jesus, we went and told people what the angels had said to us about Him and everyone we told was amazed.

Mary: I treasured all these things up in my heart and thought about them often.

Shepherd 1: We returned to our sheep, glorifying and praising God for all the things we had heard and seen which were just as we had been told by the angels.

*(Exit Shepherds 1 and 2, Mary and Joseph)*

## Appendix 3 – Puppet Script – “No-hell, no-hell”

### Characters:



The script is a dialogue between a young boy puppet called “James” who wants to follow Jesus but keeps getting things wrong, and his wise old “Grandad” puppet who helps to sort him out. Each puppet is operated by one person from behind a screen and so it is essential that the voices are heard; radio-microphones are ideal. Puppets and puppet screens can be purchased from many sources including <http://www.onewayuk.com/>

*Enter James singing loudly to the tune of the carol, “Nowell, nowell”*

James: “No-hell, no-hell, no-hell no-hell,

*Enter Grandad*

Grandad: James, ssshhh.....what a noise! You’ll wake your parents if you are not careful and it is only three o’clock in the morning. What are you doing?

James: Oh Grandad, it is so exciting.....look at my stocking....it is absolutely full of presents.....

Grandad: I can see that it is full of presents....but they all seem to be unwrapped.....

James: I just couldn’t wait Grandad.....I have been awake most of the night and by two o’clock I could hear my presents calling out to me saying that they were fed up with being cooped up in all of that wrapping paper.

Grandad: I see.....so you just had to undo them all?

James: Yes Grandad....and it is really exciting....you won’t believe what I have got.

Grandad: Come on then James....tell me a few of the things you have been given.

James: A bouncy ball, a packet of felt tip pens, a whoopee cushion.....I’m going to have such a lot of fun with that with one of my teachers....Miss “Bossy boots.”

Grandad: I didn’t know you had any teachers called by that name James

James: We don’t...it’s what I call my Science teacher because she is always telling me off....well I shall have a lot of fun when she sits on my whoopee cushion in my next science lesson.

Grandad: Oh dear....you would have thought that Father Christmas would have known better than to have given you one of those. What else have you got?

James: Empty bags of maltezers, skittles, smarties, jelly babies and wine gums.

Grandad: Empty bags James?

- James: Grandad it's Christmas day.....the one day of the year when you can't get into trouble....so I ate all of my sweets in one go so that I wouldn't get into trouble for not sharing them with anyone.
- Grandad: Are you feeling alright James?
- James: A little bit sick but never mind.....I enjoyed my middle of the night sweet feast. And look Grandad.....do you like the colour of my toe nails?
- Grandad: What on earth have you done James.....they are all black?
- James: I painted them with my new poster paints.....don't they look just cool?
- Grandad: I'm just wondering what colour your sheets have become....your poor mum. Well I'm looking forward to a bit more sleep James....but before I go back to bed, can I ask you what you were singing when I came in....it sounded like "no-hell, no-hell?"
- James: It was Grandad....I didn't think that I could get into trouble for singing a carol.
- Grandad: No...and that is a wonderful carol....but it isn't "no-hell" James, but "nowell".
- James: Oh....I see Grandad....but what does "Nowell" mean.....it sounds like a very funny word to me?
- Grandad: Nowell means Christmas James.
- James: Oh...that makes sense now....and I love Christmas.....so many presents and lots to eat and the Nativity play.....that was fun.
- Grandad: I love Christmas too James.
- James: Why do you love Christmas Grandad because you don't seem as bothered about the presents as I am?
- Grandad: I love the fact that Father God sent us all a very special present.
- James: So you are bothered about presents after all Grandad?
- Grandad: This particular present James is so wonderful that of course I'm bothered about it.
- James: Go on Grandad....tell me what it is.
- Grandad: Father God sent us all the present of His precious Son Jesus.
- James: Jesus?
- Grandad: Yes James Jesus. Jesus came to earth to put right our relationship with Father God by dealing with our sin once and for all. He came to open the door of heaven for each one of us and that is very wonderful.

James: So if Jesus came to open the door of heaven for us, we don't have to go to hell even if we have done bad things Grandad?

Grandad: That's right James....we don't have to go to hell because Jesus came to be our Saviour. In fact you were right when you sang "No-hell, no-hell".....Jesus has come so that we might spend eternity with Him in heaven if we choose to accept Him and love him while we live on earth.

James: Wow that is a good present Grandad!

Grandad: It certainly is James.....now young man....I'm off to my bed or I won't be able to enjoy celebrating later on today. Goodnight or should I say Good morning James.

James: Goodnight Grandad.

*Exit Grandad. James starts to sing*

"No-hell, no-hell, no-hell, no-hell, I can go to heaven as well!"

*Exit James*