

## Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

### Jesus We Are Here Patrick Matsikenyiri

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Jesus, we are here, Jesus we are here,  
Jesus, we are here, we are here for you.

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Luke 2:6-20 *“While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guest room. Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord’s angel stood before them, the Lord’s glory shone around them and they were terrified. The angel said, ‘Don’t be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you – wonderful joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David’s city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger.’ Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, ‘Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those he favors.’ When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, ‘Let’s go right now to Bethlehem and see what’s happened. Let’s confirm what the Lord has revealed to us.’ They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything had happened just as they had been told.”*

Common English Bible<sup>1</sup>

Matthew 2:1-2, 10-11 *“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. They asked, ‘Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We’ve seen his star in the east, and we’ve come to honor him.’ When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”*

Common English Bible<sup>1</sup>

Both the shepherds and the magi heard about the birth of Jesus and went out to meet Him for themselves.

Have you made that journey to meet Jesus, “Christ the Lord”? If you have, describe what prompted that journey, and what it was like for you.

If you haven’t yet made that journey, why is that? The shepherds were afraid when they heard about the arrival of the baby Jesus. Is that part of your story? Do the angel’s words “I bring good news to you – wonderful joyous news for all people.” (emphasis added) make you feel more welcome at the manger? Why?

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We hear about the gifts the magi gave to the baby Jesus, items rare and expensive. Have you considered that the shepherds also gave gifts? Not tangible gifts like “*gold, frankincense, and myrrh*”, but rather the gift of themselves – their time, their willingness to listen to God’s call through the angels, their openness to seeing things in new ways.

Have you given the gift of yourself to Christ Jesus? If not, spend some time this Advent considering why you haven’t, and how you could give this gift.

If you have given the gift of yourself, have you given it only once? As you have grown and matured in your faith, have you offered your new self to God? This is the gift we are called to give again and again, and Advent is the time we are offered each year to accept anew the eternal gift of Christ Jesus, and to offer ourselves again. Spend some time with this idea, and consider giving the gift of yourself to God again.

Patrick Matsikenyiri said “Jesus we are here, we are here for you.” Have you looked at your relationship with Christ Jesus from that perspective? Spend some time this Advent season considering how you can be there for Christ Jesus and what that means for your life.

*“Thank God for his gift that words cannot describe”*

2 Corinthians 9:15 Common English Bible<sup>1</sup>

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