

WHAT CAN I GIVE?

Scripture:

“...And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” - **Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11**

Reflection:

There is a Christmas song or carol that asks the question: “What can I give poor as I am?” That is a question that we all ask in these economic hard times. When we see others going in and out of stores, purchasing and giving expensive gifts, we often feel embarrassed because we cannot do the same.

I am pleased to say that I have good news. As this nation struggles to reform health care, there is a gift that we can all give this year and that is the gift of time. We can give a few minutes to advocate on behalf of the 8.1 million uninsured children in America, many of whom are sick and some will die because they cannot receive the healthcare that they need and deserve. Take the time to call your Senators and ask them to support the vitally important Casey Children’s CHIP Amendment (#2790) which he will offer in a few days. This amendment will fully fund and improve the successful and cost-effective Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). It will prevent millions of children from being worse off after health reform.

There are gifts that we can give that do not cost money and gifts that are more needed than the many expensive gifts purchased and given. We can give the gift of kindness to others; we can give the gift of listening to children and adults, just listening with an understanding and compassionate heart. We can give the gift of love and affection. Many people feel unloved and unlovable. No one has said to them, “I love you!” No one has hugged or kissed them or given them a word of encouragement. We can also give the gift of a compliment. Sincerely saying, “You look great today” or “You are special” can bring a smile. Let us show children that we care by supporting Senator Casey’s (PA) amendment which will: keep and strengthen CHIP through 2019, and make children’s healthcare comprehensive (including mental health), affordable and accessible to every child no matter where they live. In this season when Love and Peace was born, we can be living examples as we advocate on behalf of children.

As we begin this special season of anticipation and celebration, we can also give the most indescribable gift ever. We can share the fact that “the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:23). We can remind others that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16). WHAT CAN I GIVE? The best gift of all is Jesus Christ. “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” (2 Cor. 9:15)

Prayer:

I thank You O God, that even though I may be poor, I can still give the most important gifts of all. I pray for those who suffer today for lack of healthcare. Quicken the hearts of those who will be voting on this health care legislation that they too will realize that as you are a precious gift to the world, so are your children today. Empower me to share the good news of Your most indescribable gift, the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God. Amen

Rev. Dr. Vernon A. Shannon, Pastor
John Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
The National Church of Zion Methodism