

# Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

*The Night Before June 28, 2020*

By Ken Woodley

'Twas the eve before St. Anne's regathering,  
when all through the night  
our dreams were filled with flickering light.

The stockings of hope were hung in a world full of fear,  
praying that peace, love and wellness could one day be here.

Like children we were nestled all snug in our beds,  
isolation from church no longer haunting our heads.

When up on the hillside there arose such a noise,  
of angels and shepherds all singing of joys.

Toward a manger we walked beneath the twinkling of stars,  
under the planets, like Venus and Mars.

The moon hung like a stocking high up in the sky  
but one light shone brightest and seemed so nearby.

Swords of anxiety were turning into plowshares of calm  
and we began to hear the singing of psalms.

The music, we discovered, was deep in our heart,  
a carol of love that silence never could part.

For as long as we wished, we knew it would ring  
if we made it a place deep inside us to sing.

Closer we came to the manger scene now,  
immune to the COVID darkness in some way and somehow.

There wasn't a wise man, no, nowhere in sight,  
just our congregation feeling love's holy might.

There was no barn and no stable, there was only Rose Hall,  
but the child still within us did answer the call.

No room at the inn but room inside us

who give birth to the message amid tumult and fuss  
about the love Jesus promised God has for us all,  
whether we stand or whether we fall.

Angels we have heard on high and angels we have felt so nigh.

Since the middle of March they've answered our cry.

There is a gentleness awaiting at this ending of June  
as a present to open that can't come too soon.

Away in that manger that is our true heart,  
whether sitting together or sitting apart.

A mask cannot hide who'll be sitting beside us,  
the one who was born on a day we call Christmas,

Not sitting by aisles, not sitting in a pew,  
regathered, instead, beside me and by you.

Coronavirus can't take him, the virus can't steal  
the holy spirit we'll feel because that spirit is real.