

It's the most wonderful time of the year?

The other night I was blessed to do one of my favorite things I get to do each year: drive Santa around town as a part of the Tolland Fire Department's Christmas Tour. It is such a joy to be able to flash the lights of the jeep I'm driving, wail the sirens, and yell out the window that "Santa is coming" to children, and adults, who are often visibly bouncing with anticipation of the man in red's arrival. And to be able to do it with my wife beside me and Jacob hanging his head out the window, in hopes of getting a glimpse of Santa, in the back, just makes it all the more special.

But while driving around town, for as many people as we see jumping around and sharing an adult beverage, or two, in anticipation of the sleigh's arrival, there are just as many dark houses and driveways that have no one standing there to greet St. Nick. And that may well be because they're not home; but it also may be that for them, Christmas just isn't the most wonderful time of the year.

Maybe you've been there? Or maybe you're there now? Maybe you've lost a loved one or a job. Maybe family dynamics are becoming more impossible to navigate or separation from those you love is weighing heavy on your heart. Maybe you're overwhelmed by all that's happening in the Middle East or with the political tension right here on our shores. Or maybe this is just a season that feels like too much to handle each year.

Whatever it may be, for many Christmas just isn't the most wonderful time of year.

Recognizing the complexity of this season, the Indigo Girls wrote a beautiful song entitled "There's Still My Joy," acknowledging that even though this time of year can be hard, the message of our faith is that there is still joy to be found.

I encourage you to grab some tissues and watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGLA3QNEyVA>. Or read the lyrics below. Either way, I pray it may affirm what you're feeling, and perhaps even help create a little space in your life for the joy of God's gift to enter in, even when it seems so far away . . .

I brought my tree down to the shore
The garland, and the silver star
To find my peace, and grieve no more
To heal this place inside my heart

On every branch I laid some bread
And hungry birds filled up the sky
They rang like bells around my head
They sang my spirit back to life

One tiny child can change the world
One shining light can show the way
Through all my tears, for what I've lost
There's still my joy

There's still my joy
For Christmas day

The snow comes down on empty sand
There's tinsel moonlight on the waves
My soul was lost, but here I am
So this must be amazing grace

One tiny child can change the world
One shining light can show the way
Beyond these tears for what I've lost
There's still my joy
There's still my joy
For Christmas day
There's still my joy for Christmas day

*(Source: [LyricFind](#); Songwriters: Beth Nielsen Chapman / Matthew Charles Rollings / Melissa Toni Manchester;
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