



# CHURCH MESSENGER

MONTHLY CHURCH NEWSLETTER

● Sunday School: 9:30am ● Worship Service: 10:30am ● Wednesday Bible Study: 5:00pm



## IN THIS ISSUE

- Seeking Wisdom & Understanding
- Giving Generously
- Star of Wonder: God Still Guides Us Today
- The True Meaning of Christmas: Celebrating Christ's Birth
- Mary's Faith and Obedience: A Model for Us Today
- The Shepherds' Joy: Experiencing God in Ordinary Life
- Christmas Scripture
- A Message from Our Minister

As we enter the month of December, our hearts turn toward the miracle of Christmas—the celebration of Christ's birth and the hope He brought into the world. This holy season invites us to pause and reflect on God's greatest gift: His Son, Jesus Christ. As we prepare for the joyous celebration of our Savior's birth, may our hearts overflow with praise, thanksgiving, and a renewed sense of wonder at God's love. Let us share this gratitude with those around us—through our words, our kindness, and our worship. May this Christmas season remind us that every day is a gift, and the greatest gift of all is Jesus.

## Seeking Wisdom & Understanding-

In this holy season, we are reminded that Christ came not only to save us but to guide us in truth. Proverbs 2:6 (NIV) tells us, "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding." As we celebrate Jesus' birth, may we seek His wisdom above all else, allowing His Word to lead our decisions, strengthen our faith, and deepen our understanding of God's purpose for our lives.

## Giving Generously-

Christmas beautifully reflects God's generosity—He gave His Son for us. In response, we are called to give with joyful hearts. Scripture reminds us in 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV), "God loves a cheerful giver." This season, may we share our blessings freely with our church family, our neighbors, and those in need. Every act of kindness becomes a way to shine the love of Christ during this blessed Christmas season.

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## The True Meaning of Christmas: Celebrating Christ's Birth



### Star of Wonder: God Still Guides Today

When we read the story of the Wise Men in Matthew 2, we see a beautiful reminder that God's guidance is both intentional and personal. The Magi were seekers—looking for truth, purpose, and hope. God met them right where they were, using a star—something familiar to them—to lead them to Christ. Scripture says, “After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.” (Matthew 2:9, NIV) The star did not reveal the whole journey at once, but it gave enough light for their next faithful step.

Today, we may not follow a physical star across the sky, but God still guides His people with the same care and faithfulness. He gives us His Word, and through it, He shines direction into our daily lives. “Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path” (Psalm 119:105, NIV). He gives us the Holy Spirit, who teaches, comforts, convicts, and leads us into truth. He guides us through prayer, through the wisdom of other believers, and through circumstances that gently shape our steps.

Like the Wise Men, we rarely see the entire path ahead. Instead, God invites us to trust Him with each small step. His guidance is steady, sure, and filled with love. This Christmas season, as we reflect on the “star of wonder,” may we also reflect on the One who still leads us—faithfully, patiently, and purposefully. When we lift our eyes and seek Him, we will discover that God still shines His light on our path today.

As the Christmas season approaches, we are surrounded by lights, music, gatherings, and traditions that bring warmth and joy to our hearts. Yet, in the midst of the busyness, it is important to pause and remember why we celebrate Christmas in the first place. Christmas is not simply a holiday—it is the celebration of the moment when God stepped into our world in the form of a tiny baby, bringing hope to all humanity. At its core, Christmas is the story of God's incredible love made visible through Jesus Christ.

Over two thousand years ago, in a humble stable in Bethlehem, God fulfilled His promise to send a Savior. Luke 2:11 (NIV) declares, “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.” This miraculous moment changed the course of history and offered salvation to every person who would believe. Jesus’ birth reminds us that God’s love reaches us right where we are—whether in our joy or our struggles—and invites us into a relationship with Him.

The true meaning of Christmas calls us to reflect on the humility of Christ’s arrival. He did not enter the world as a king surrounded by wealth and power, but as a child wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. This simple beginning shows us that God values the humble, the lowly, and the overlooked. It invites us to approach the season with the same humility—honoring Christ not with extravagance, but with hearts willing to worship and serve.

As believers, we are called to keep Christ at the center of our celebrations. While we enjoy the

traditions of the season—decorating, cooking, gift-giving, and gathering with loved ones—we must remember that these things are expressions of joy, not the source of it. True joy comes from recognizing that Jesus came to bring salvation, peace, and eternal life. Christmas becomes more meaningful when our celebrations reflect the love and mission of Christ.

The birth of Jesus also inspires us to share God’s love with others. Just as the angels proclaimed the good news to the shepherds, we are called to proclaim it today. Christmas is a wonderful opportunity to reach out to those who are hurting, lonely, or in need. Through acts of kindness, generosity, and compassion, we demonstrate the heart of Christ and point others to the One who is the Light of the World.

As we celebrate this blessed season, may we fix our hearts on the true meaning of Christmas: the incredible love of God revealed in the birth of Jesus Christ. Let us worship with gratitude, celebrate with purpose, and share the hope that only Christ can bring. May the message of Emmanuel—God with us—fill our homes and hearts with peace, joy, and everlasting hope this Christmas and always.





## Mary's Faith and Obedience: A Model for Us Today

When we read the Christmas story, we are immediately drawn to Mary—a young woman whose simple, unwavering faith changed the course of human history. She was not a queen, a priest, or a person of status. She was an ordinary girl living in an ordinary town. And yet, God chose her for an extraordinary purpose: to bring His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. Mary's life stands as a powerful reminder that God often works through those who seem unlikely, using humble hearts to accomplish His greatest plans.

Mary's encounter with the angel Gabriel was a moment that required profound courage. In Luke 1:30–31 (NIV), the angel said, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus." This message, though filled with promise, also came with uncertainty. Mary faced the reality of explaining a miraculous pregnancy to her family, her community, and even to Joseph. Yet even in the face of questions she could not answer, Mary chose faith over fear.

Her response in Luke 1:38 (NIV) is one of the most beautiful expressions of surrender in Scripture: "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." These words show not a reluctant heart, but one genuinely willing to trust God's wisdom. Mary did not ask for a different path or decline her calling. She simply opened her life to God's purposes. This moment teaches us that true obedience begins

with a willing heart—a heart that trusts that God's plans are always good.

Mary's faith was active. She did not quietly keep the news to herself or shrink back from her calling. Instead, she traveled to visit Elizabeth, who confirmed God's promise and encouraged her in her faith. This visit shows us that God often surrounds us with people who strengthen us when we are stepping into new areas of obedience. Just as Mary found comfort in Elizabeth's words, we too grow stronger when we seek Christian fellowship and support.

Her humility shines through the song of praise known as the Magnificat. In Luke 1:46–47 (NIV), Mary proclaimed, "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Mary understood that the honor she received was not about her greatness, but about God's greatness working through her. She celebrated not her role, but God's mercy, power, and faithfulness. In this, she models a posture of worship for every believer: to redirect every blessing, every gift, and every opportunity back to the glory of God.

Mary's journey was not without difficulty. Traveling to Bethlehem while pregnant, giving birth in a stable, fleeing to Egypt, and later watching Jesus grow into His ministry all required deep trust. She witnessed both the joys and sorrows of God's plan, including the painful prophecy that a sword would pierce her own soul (Luke 2:35). Yet through every season—joyful, confusing, or heartbreak—Mary

remained faithful. Her steadfastness encourages us to remain committed to God through all of life's changing circumstances.

In Mary's life, we also see a profound lesson about waiting. She carried the promise of God for nine months, but ultimately waited years to see Jesus reveal Himself as Messiah. Her quiet patience reminds us that God's timing is perfect. When we do not see immediate results or understand the fullness of His plan, we can trust that God is still at work. Faith is not simply believing in a moment—it is choosing to believe every day, even while we wait.

Mary's example impacts our daily lives today. God may not call us to carry the Messiah, but He does call us to carry His message, to follow His leading, and to live out our faith with courage. Like Mary, we are invited to respond with willingness, saying, "Lord, I am Yours. Lead me, use me, and fulfill Your will in me." Whether God is calling us to serve, forgive, give, teach, or simply walk faithfully in our homes and workplaces, Mary's life shows us what it means to say yes to God.

As we celebrate Christ's birth, may Mary's faith inspire us to walk closely with God. Her trust, humility, and obedience remind us to seek His will and follow wherever He leads. Just as God worked through Mary, He desires to work through us to share His love and hope with others. May we respond to Him with willing and joyful hearts.

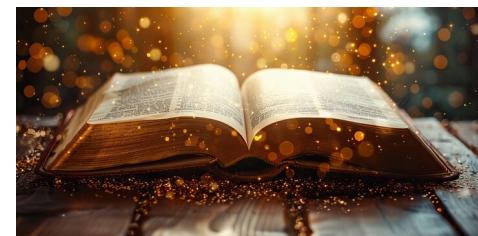


## The Shepherds' Joy: Experiencing God in Ordinary Life

When we think of the Christmas story, the shepherds remind us that God loves to meet people right where they are. They were not priests or scholars—just ordinary workers in a field. Yet on that holy night, God chose them to receive the first announcement of Christ's birth. Luke 2:10–11 (NIV) tells us, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today... a Savior has been born to you.” Their simple, everyday lives became the setting for a miraculous encounter with God's glory.

The shepherds' response also inspires us. They didn't hesitate or question—they hurried to Bethlehem, eager to see what God had revealed. Their willingness to seek Jesus with open hearts models how we, too, should respond to God's invitations in our daily lives. Even in the routines of work, family, and responsibility, God is near and actively speaking to His people.

After meeting Jesus, the shepherds joyfully spread the news of the Savior. They returned to their fields “glorifying and praising God”—their ordinary tasks forever changed by the presence of Christ. This Christmas, their story reminds us that God delights in meeting us in our ordinary moments, filling them with joy, purpose, and the wonder of His presence. May we, like the shepherds, seek Him wholeheartedly and share His good news with our world.



## CHRISTMAS SCRIPTURE

### Prophecies of the Coming Messiah

- December 1: Isaiah 7:14
- December 2: Isaiah 9:6–7
- December 3: Micah 5:2
- December 4: Isaiah 11:1–5
- December 5: Jeremiah 23:5–6
- December 6: Numbers 24:17

### The Announcements of Christ's Birth

- December 7: Luke 1:5–17
- December 8: Luke 1:26–38
- December 9: Luke 1:39–45
- December 10: Luke 1:46–56 (Mary's Song)
- December 11: Matthew 1:18–21
- December 12: Matthew 1:22–25

### The Birth of Jesus

- December 13: Luke 2:1–7
- December 14: Luke 2:8–14
- December 15: Luke 2:15–20
- December 16: Luke 2:21–24
- December 17: Luke 2:25–32 (Simeon's Praise)
- December 18: Luke 2:33–38 (Anna's Testimony)

### The Visit of the Magi

- December 19: Matthew 2:1–6
- December 20: Matthew 2:7–12
- December 21: Matthew 2:13–15
- December 22: Matthew 2:19–23

### The Purpose of Christ's Coming

- December 23: John 1:1–5
- December 24: John 1:9–14
- December 25: Galatians 4:4–5 & Titus 3:4–7

## A Message from Our Minister

Dear Beloved Church Family and Friends,  
As we enter this beautiful Christmas season, my heart is filled with deep gratitude for each of you. This is a sacred time when we pause to reflect on the greatest gift ever given—Jesus Christ, our Savior. In a world filled with busyness and noise, Christmas invites us to remember the extraordinary love of God who came near to us in the form of a Child. Scripture reminds us in Luke 2:10–11 (NIV): “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord.” The birth of Christ is more than a holiday tradition—it is the foundation of our hope, peace, and salvation.

I am especially thankful for our church family during this season. Your love, your service, and your commitment to Christ shine brightly, much like the star that guided the shepherds and wise men. Truly, your faithfulness reflects the joy and generosity at the heart of Christmas. As the Apostle Paul shared, “I always thank my God for you because of His grace given you in Christ Jesus” (1 Corinthians 1:4, NIV).

This Christmas, may we express our gratitude not only through celebration but also through compassionate action—encouraging one another, giving generously, and sharing the message of Christ's love with those who need it most. Let us remember that every blessing we have flows from God's grace, and every new day offers an opportunity to reflect His light. From my heart to yours, may your homes be filled with peace, your gatherings with joy, and your spirits with the wonder of Christ's birth. May the love of Jesus surround you and your families throughout this blessed season.

With Christmas Joy and Love in Christ,  
Keith