

Immanuel: God Is With Us

AN ADVENT DEVOTION

Winter Grace Senior Ministries, INC

Winter Grace
SENIOR MINISTRIES

December 1



John 1:1-5

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

December 1



John 1:1-5

It is December 1st, and the days are growing shorter and shorter, less sunshine, more darkness. We are eagerly awaiting December 22nd when the days begin to grow longer again. Aren't we always pursuing something that will brighten our days, something that will light up our lives? Often those relentless pursuits to light up our lives are worldly adventures. It may be fame or fortune. It may be the trappings of wealth. We may be in pursuit of the perfect beach body for when winter is over and we can show off our six-pack abs. Whatever it may be, we may find that if we actually achieve one of these goals, it just doesn't fill that place within us that we were certain would finally be satisfied.

This passage of Scripture reminds us that there is One True Light, and He was the light of all mankind. Let us receive this light that shines in the darkness. The Light of Jesus and a relationship with Him is the one that will satisfy us in the ways that those worldly adventures never will. He truly "Lights up our Lives."

Prayer

Gracious God, we yearn for your light to fill us with Your love. Be our shining light of hope and truth. Father, we trust that your light will forevermore overcome the darkness we sometimes feel, and your love will shine through us so that others might see You! -Amen

December 2



Isaiah 9:2-7

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

³ You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

⁴ For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

⁵ Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

December 2



Isaiah 9:2-7

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light!” Those words make me want to shout, “Hallelujah! Praise God!” I know sunrise comes early. Most people are not up to see it, or if they are, they are busy getting ready to start the day. One of the most spectacular sunrises I have ever seen was about 30 years ago. I had just dropped my husband off at Norfolk Naval Base. He was leaving on the USS Jacksonville for a deployment. I was quite sad. It was still dark when we arrived. The sky had brightened quite a bit by the time I drove away. Then I turned onto the approach to the highway. In front of me was the most amazing sunrise I have ever seen. The sun was massive! It was as if God had made that sunrise just for me. It was a gift. It was a promise. It filled my sad heart with hope. God’s promises are for all of us at all times. We just need to look for them and open our hearts.

Do you find yourself in a time of darkness? The true Light of the World is shining brightly. It is time to turn the corner and approach the Son. Jesus’ light has come into the world. The Wonderful Counselor, the Prince of Peace is with you.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your Son, the light of the world. We trust in You. Please light our paths with Your righteousness. Help us to focus on you, Lord. Wonderful Counselor, Prince of Peace dwell in our hearts forever. Amen

December 3



Isaiah 11: 1-10

- 11** A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
- 2** The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—
- 3** and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
- 4** but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
- 5** Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.
- 6** The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
- 7** The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
- 8** The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.
- 9** They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.
- 10** In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the
peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be
glorious.

December 3



Isaiah 11: 1-10

My friends we live in a world of so much potential. There is so much potential for good and so much potential for evil. Which are we going to choose? Where do we focus our attention? Which do we bring about through our own thoughts, words, and deeds? Jesus brings the good for all of us.

This passage in Isaiah foretells of the time when all of God's creatures will live in peace with one another and with God. The Babylonian exile had brought an end to the kingdom of Judah. But God, through Isaiah, provided this amazing picture of hope to come. Righteousness, justice, peace, and security were on the lips of Isaiah to the devastated people of Judah. Faithfulness would be the standard of the One to come.

In the days when you feel darkness surrounding and further encroaching on you, remember that God brought Israel out of captivity. Right now, are you captive to your physical, financial, or spiritual circumstances? Are you weary from the isolation of 2020? Fear not, Jesus Christ was born in that stable, in humble beginnings, and He is the hope and light, not just for the whole world, but for you personally as well.

Prayer

Dear God. When we are feeling the darkness of the December night in our very being, please remind us of the hope and promise of the babe born in Bethlehem. He is the light and hope of the world. No darkness of any kind can squelch His light. We give you thanks and praise for Your gift of faithfulness, justice, peace, and security You have given each of us. Amen.

December 4



Jeremiah 33:14-16

¹⁴ “‘The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah.

¹⁵ “‘In those days and at that time
I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line;
he will do what is just and right in the land.

¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved
and Jerusalem will live in safety.
This is the name by which it will be called:
The LORD Our Righteous Savior.’

December 4



Jeremiah 33:14-16

God's Word is filled with promises. Some say hundreds, others thousands. This passage begins with the promise of the coming of one who will do what is just and right. Saving and safety are promised. As Christians, we know Jeremiah is speaking of Jesus.

This passage is right in the middle of a series of promises to a people who are under siege by the Babylonians. The Babylonians are set on destroying the way of life of the Jews. But God has other plans. And we know God's plans cannot be thwarted.

At times we may feel under siege of forces we feel are beyond our control and working against us. It may be in any area of our lives. It may be in relationships. It may be physical. It may be spiritual. But God's promises for His people are just as true today as they were for the people of Jerusalem.

God's Word is filled with promises for those of all ages and all times. He promises to sustain us and rescue us. We are now a few days into the Advent season, anticipating the birth of Jesus. God has fulfilled His promise at the birth of His Son, the Branch, the sprout from David's line. We know this promise is true. All of God's other promises are true as well.

Prayer

Gracious God, we thank you that we can trust all of Your promises. Help us to keep them all in our hearts so that we may not despair. We praise and thank you for sending us a Savior, a Branch, a sprout of David's line. Let us always turn to the Lord of Righteousness and not despair. Amen.

December 5th



Luke 1:5-10

⁵ In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.

⁶ Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly.

⁷ But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

⁸ Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,

⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

¹⁰ And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

December 5



Luke 1: 5-10

In this passage we meet Zechariah on the biggest day of his priestly career. Of the 20,000 priests, just one was allowed to burn the incense at a time, just twice daily. Once chosen, they could not be chosen again. Thousands never had the opportunity. But this was Zechariah's day. This was the best day of his entire life as a priest.

We also see that both Elizabeth and Zechariah are of priestly descent and blameless, meaning faithful and sincere in keeping the Commandments. Though childless even to their old age, a sign at that time that God was displeased with them, they remained faithful to God. They continued to have faith that God had the best plan for them. They were not deterred. We know that rest of their story, but they did not. What they did know and believe was that God was in control and that God had a purpose and plan for their lives and that plan was good.

What if we had that confidence each and every day, even when days are long. We know the rest of the story, not only for Elizabeth and Zechariah, but we know God's ultimate plan for each of us. He sent a Savior. He sent His son so that we might have eternal life in heaven with Him. That is God's plan. Trust God's plan. It is good.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, help us to trust that your plan for us is good. You are a good, good Father, and we thank you for the gift of your Son Jesus. You made a way for us to spend eternity with you. We praise you and we thank you! Amen

December 6



Luke 1:11-17

¹¹ Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

¹³ But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.

¹⁴ He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,

¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.

¹⁶ He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

¹⁷ And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

December 6



Luke 1:11-17

Can you imagine? Zechariah is in the temple performing his once in a lifetime opportunity of tending the incense. He must have been humbled, excited, or maybe nervous? Then he is visited by an angel of the Lord. I can understand why he was afraid. Can't you? But we are told hundreds of times in the Bible to not be afraid or do not fear. Do we take these promises to heart? I wonder if Zechariah had the presence of mind to remember those promises. I bet they were so ingrained in him that if this was not his first thought, it was likely his second thought.

Zechariah is told the most amazing news. He and Elizabeth will be having a son! What would be more surprising to Zechariah, the visit of the angel or the news of a coming son? Hard to say. Not only does the angel promise fulfillment of a dream for them to become parents, but he also shares the promise of how John will serve God.

What plan might God have for each of us? What might God's plan be for you? You may not have an angel visit you. You may have to spend time being still and quiet to hear the small, soft whisper of God speaking to your heart to hear the plan. Likely, you might just see the next right step. The whole path needs to be entrusted to God. Be faithful and do not fear.

Prayer

Gracious God. You are for us. You have plans for us. Your plans are far above and more wonderful any we can imagine for ourselves. Please Lord, open our hearts to You. Help us to fully trust all the good, good plans you have for us. Amen.

December 7



Luke 1:18-25

¹⁸ Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”

¹⁹ The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. ²⁰ And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.”

²¹ Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.

²² When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

²³ When his time of service was completed, he returned home.

²⁴ After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. ²⁵ “The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.”

December 7



Luke 1:18-25

Zechariah doubted. He then was silenced until the birth of John. How often do we doubt the promises of God? I am going to go with daily. We may not intend to or even realize that we do. What may doubt look like? Despair, fear, mistrust. Eve doubted God by believing the lies of the serpent. And so it began. When we doubt God, we are making ourselves the god of our lives. We are elevating ourselves to a position above God, thinking we know better.

The silencing of Zechariah may seem extreme to us. He was in the temple performing the most sacred of activities. An angel came to him. Yet, he still doubted. True, it is rare we may find ourselves in such a position, right? So close to God? I recently read a book where the author spoke about what it means for the Kingdom of Heaven to be near. When we look to heaven we look up. Why? We think of God being far from us. But God is not. The Kingdom of Heaven is around us and we are in a sacred space. The Holy Spirit dwells within us. We do not need to be the god in our lives. God, the one true God, the maker of heaven and earth is very much real, very much alive, and very much present for us. Jesus is Immanuel, God with us. Let us anticipate His birth at this Advent season and doubt not. God is with us!

Prayer

Father God, we sometimes doubt. We ask your forgiveness. We ask you for a heart that trusts you completely. May we believe each moment of our lives that Jesus is Immanuel, God with us. Amen.

December 8th



Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

³⁴ "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called^[a] the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail."

³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

December 8



Luke 1:26-38

Zechariah responded to his heavenly visitor, Gabriel, with doubt. Mary responded to Gabriel with faith. While the message the angel had for Zechariah had to be stunning, can you imagine the range of thoughts that could have gone through Mary's mind? She went from being greatly troubled by his word to accepting in just a matter of moments. We see her responding with acceptance to be the Lord's servant! What an amazing response.

This event came to be known as the Annunciation. It is one of the most frequently represented Biblical scenes in art. Mary was a young girl, not yet married. The impact on her and her family, for her to be pregnant at this time, would have been devastating. Yet, she accepted the words from Gabriel.

We do not know what Mary was doing prior to Gabriel's visit. Perhaps she was praying to know God's will for her life and her prayers were heard and answered. Perhaps she was merely living a regular day in Nazareth. We will never know. What we do know is that her profound purpose for her life was revealed to her and she humbly accepted what she was told.

Have you ever received a word from God? Perhaps you have called out asking what you are to do in a specific situation. Perhaps you have asked God to reveal His purpose for your life. Whether you are bold to ask or your purpose is revealed to you, will you answer as Mary did? "May it be to me as you have said."

Prayer

Gracious God, please open our hearts to Your will for our lives. May we not only accept it but use the gifts and talents you have given us to fulfill it. Amen.

December 9



Matthew 1:18-21

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

December 9



Matthew 1:18-21

Have you ever had a visit from an angel in a dream? Have you ever heard the voice of God? Have you asked to hear the voice of God? Joseph received this first visit from an angel to tell him the right path to take in what must have seemed an impossible situation. His betrothed, Mary, was with child and Joseph knew the child was not his. What a tale Mary must have shared with Joseph about her encounter with the angel! What must his thoughts have been?

But then an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. Did Joseph listen and believe, or did he believe first then listen. Did he just like what he heard so he chose to believe it. Or did he believe this messenger of God, trust it, then obey what he heard?

When we turn to God, do we sit quietly and patiently so we might hear a small, still voice? Or do we clutter up our minds with only our desires and then, not hearing anything else say, "Oh! God must want me to have what I want. I am moving forward!"

Personally, I believe I have only audibly heard a word from God once. But, in times of prayer, times throughout the day just communing with God, I believe I have also heard God, through the Holy Spirit, give me direction. Sitting quietly before the Lord may not be our normal, but it may be the best choice we can ever make.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, help us to focus our thoughts on you, so that Your voice, Your guidance for us is what we hear, what we listen to, and what we believe, trust, and act upon. Thank you, Father for always teaching us what is best. Amen.

December 10



Matthew 1:22-26

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

December 10



Matthew 1:22-26

All of this took place to fulfill what was in the Scriptures.... There are 12 times Mathew speaks of the Scriptures of the Old Testament being fulfilled. Down to the tiniest of details, the prophets of old had foretold what was to come. They had spoken the promises of God. The promises of a Savior were fulfilled in Jesus. The Scriptures are accurate and true!

Just ponder this for a moment. The Scriptures are true in small details, in large proclamations, in teachings, and in promises! God Word is True! How might our perspective change when we bring that truth into our hearts and minds? When our perspective changes with a view toward God and trusting in the promises of God, then we see everything differently. That may seem a bit scary. I believe as you grow in your trust of God, scared will be the farthest emotion from your mind.

Trusting the Word of God will allow you to see just how precious you are in the sight of God. You will believe you are the handiwork of God. You will believe you are fearfully and wonderfully made. You may not be where you want to be, but you can, with that new perspective, trust what has been true all along: You are created in the image of God!

While this passage talks about Joseph's devotion to God, his trust in God, let this passage speak to your heart that God's promises are true and be devoted to God. His Word is true, all of the time.

Prayer

Gracious God, help us to trust Your Word is true and to live our lives grounded in that knowledge and perspective. Amen.

December 11



Luke 1:39-45

³⁹ At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth.

⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!

⁴³ But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.

⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

December 11



Luke 1:39-45

This passage ends as Elizabeth declares that Mary is blessed because Mary believed what the Lord told her. Mary was given an amazing blessing. Along with this blessing, she was given a life that none of us can begin to imagine. She lived her life in faith, trusting God and His promises. Do we do the same?

Time and time again we are returned to the basics. Do we believe the promises of God that are laid out to us in the Word of God? As we read through the Scriptures, we find promises, both big and small, that we are able to rely on. Would your outlook on day-to-day life, in both the big and small aspects of life be brighter with a greater sense of security and expectancy if you trusted the promises?

In order to trust these promises, we need to know what they are. In order to know what they are, we need to study the Word of God on a regular, preferably daily, basis. Whether you choose to begin in Genesis and read straight through Revelation, read a translation set up to walk you through the Bible chronologically, skip around from book to book, and back and forth between the Old and New Testament, take the time.

We, too, will be blessed by God when we believe that what He tells us is true.

Prayer

Father God, we thank you for the promises You have made to us. Please open our eyes and our hearts to each and every one of them. Help us to live our lives trusting You and Your promises. Amen.

December 12



Luke 1:46-56

⁴⁶ And Mary said:

“My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has been mindful

of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost
thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors.”

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months
and then returned home.

December 12



Luke 1:46-56

In these few verses of praise, Mary speaks of the mercy, grace, power, and goodness of God. This passage, known as the Magnificat or Mary's Song, invites us to join in with Mary to remember the great things that God has done. She speaks of how God lifted her up. She was a humble servant, not great in the view of the world, but one for whom God had done great things. The rich and the proud are brought down, while the humble and hungry are lifted-up.

In this season of preparation for the birth of Jesus, we are called to humble ourselves and fill our thoughts with the great things that God has done throughout all time.

In fact, God continues to do these great works today. His mercy still extends to those who fear the Lord. Fear of the Lord does not mean panic or anxiousness, but rather reverence, respect, and awe. Mary had humbled herself before God in this attitude of reverential fear, and He had blessed her.

We, too, are invited to fear the Lord, praise His great works, humble ourselves before the Lord. We, too, have and will continue to receive His great blessings.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before you in humility and awe. We praise Your Name for the great things you have done. We thank you for the mercy we do not deserve and the grace we could not earn. We thank you for your never-ending love. Amen.

December 13



Luke 2:1-5

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

December 13



Luke 2:1-5

The travel of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem may have been mandated by Emperor Caesar Augustus, but the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem was foretold in the Old Testament in Micah 5:2. This is just one of the many verses in the Old Testament that foretells of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

There are claims that there are between 200 and 400 prophecies in the Old Testament that are fulfilled in Jesus. I have read that there are as many as 574 verses in the OT fulfilled by Jesus. The point is that there are so many ways that Jesus fulfills the Hebrew Scriptures. If you did not believe the Jesus is indeed the Son of God, the Savior, the Redeemer, and more, then perhaps you can see this as evidence. It begins to make even the most skeptical among us begin to open ourselves to the reality that Jesus is Immanuel, God among us.

Joseph and Mary were devout Jews. They loved and feared God. They had been visited by angels to learn about the forthcoming birth of Jesus. This passage is one we have all heard of since we heard our first Bible stories as children at Christmas time. When we learn that this was not only the lead up to the birth story, but rather a fulfillment of Old Testament, the impact of what we read is heightened.

God's Word is true! This passage is further evidence.

Prayer

Heavenly Father! We praise you God for Truth! Your Word is true. Your Scriptures are fulfilled in Jesus. Since we know the promises foretelling Jesus are true, we know even more that all of Your Word is true. Amen.

December 14th



Luke 2:6-7

⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born,

⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

December 14



Luke 2:6-7

The birth of Jesus! Yes, it is in a stable where Mary and Joseph are staying with the animals who brought them. To say it is minimalist for birthing may be an understatement. But at the heart of the scene, we see a mother and father have brought their first born child into the world. This first born son is the Son of Man!

Imagine the scene: natural childbirth at its best. No doctors, nurses, medications, or standby assistance. We may imagine the birth of Jesus being smooth and easy, but there is no indication that this birth, was an easy or painless one. But then we read there was no room for Him. That is really the heart of the matter, isn't it?

Do we have room for Him today in our lives? Is there room for Jesus in your life each and every day? What does room for Jesus look like? Is Jesus in our lives a first thought or an after-thought? His earthly beginnings were humble, as was the rest of his earthly life. It was not a life envisioned by many of His day for the Savior who was to come. However, Jesus is the Messiah.

Are we so wrapped up in what the world expects that humbleness is not an option for us? Or are we filled with gratitude and joy to live the life that God has purposed for us, whether it be in humble or exalted conditions? Do we have room for Jesus to show us each day the right and best way to live our lives?

Prayer

Gracious God, we thank you for the birth of Jesus. May our eyes be open each day to live the life you have purposed for us and our hearts filled with Jesus and only allow other cares into our hearts that are acceptable to You. Amen.

December 15



Luke 2:8-12

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

December 15



Luke 2:8-12

The angel first appears to the shepherds and tells them not to be afraid and the good news of the birth of the Messiah. It is said that “Do not fear” appears in some form 365 times in the Bible, one for each day of the year. This is not the reverential fear of the Lord, but rather the fear associated with danger, threatening circumstances, anxiety. Understandably the shepherds were shocked at what was happening.

But not only were they told not to fear, but they were hearing news that would cause great joy! This announcement may have been 2,000 years ago. The joy of any other news may have faded after 2,000 years, but God! The joy promised to the shepherds is for us as well. The Messiah came for the Jews, but He is for all of us.

Good News abounds in the announcement of the angels to the shepherds! Good News abounds still. We have the benefit of 2,000 years of hindsight to know the truth of the angelic announcement. We know that not only was Jesus born, but also that He rose from the dead on the third day.

Promises of God’s Word are true. We need not fear! Rejoice in the Good News of Jesus Christ!

Prayer

Gracious God, time and time again Your Word tells us to fear not. Many of us feel we are living in a time of fear and mistrust. Lord, help us to ground our hearts and minds in you. Help us to live in faith, not fear. Help us to daily rejoice in the Good News of Jesus Christ. Amen.

December 16



Luke 2:13-14

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

December 16



Luke 2:13-14

What a vision of praise and worship! The angels had just delivered news that the Jewish people had been waiting to hear for hundreds of years: the coming of a Messiah! Now “a great company of heavenly hosts” had joined in! They trumpeted a time of peace.

The gift of peace is assured for those on whom favor rests. More than the Pax Romana, a time of political peace then, this peace spoken of by the angels was a much greater one, a gift from God. It is a peace that resonates deep within one’s being. God’s gifts are never ending and beyond anything we can imagine.

The birth of Jesus brought God to Earth, to live among us. He came to reconcile us to God so that we can live for all eternity in heaven with God in eternal worship! What a sight this must have been in the fields where the shepherds watched over their sheep. What a promise of hope and joy to each of us who believes!

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we praise You with great thanksgiving. The gifts of Your peace and joy are greater than any earthly peace and joy. Thank you, Lord for sending Jesus so that we might open our hearts to you and receive the gift of eternity in heaven with you. Help us to live our lives with that joy firmly in our hearts and share that joy with others so that they might come to know you. Amen.

December 17



Luke 2:15-17

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,

December 17



Luke 2:15-17

Following the praise and worship of the heavenly hosts, the shepherds hurried to find Jesus. They knew what was true! Jesus was God come to Earth. They sought out Jesus and then they spread the news about Jesus.

Doesn't this sum up exactly what we are called to do, even 2,000 years later? Seek Jesus and share Jesus. The shepherds had a life changing experience. They were right there, in the midst of the greatest event that had happened to that point in time. They had to have been in awe!

For us, our perspective may be different, but the reality and the impact are no less stunning. Jesus came to Earth to teach us and lead us. He died a horrible death on the cross. But then, He rose from the dead, conquering sin and death! The first disciples who witnessed His ascension were told to go and make disciples. The shepherds were the first called to spread the news of the birth of Jesus. We know some of the stories that the 12 shared. Have you ever wondered about the stories the shepherd shared?

Go and share with others what you know about Jesus. Your transformational moment may not have taken place following the visiting of an angel or a company of heavenly hosts, but if Jesus has transformed your life, go and share. Rejoice, for Jesus is Immanuel, God with us!

Prayer

Heavenly Father, please give us the boldness and the words we need to go and share Jesus. Help us to live a transformed life that brings Jesus to all we meet. Amen.

December 18



Luke 2:19-20

¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

December 18



Luke 2:19-20

“But Mary” It’s worth stopping to reflect on the reactions, the “downstream effect,” if you like, on the part of those who witnessed the coming of Jesus, the Word-made-flesh. Mary “treasures” and “ponders.” Like us, coming face to face with that which is inexplicable, a mystery too deep for words, she turns inward to the silence of her own thoughts to seek out what the extraordinary events and strange signs might mean.

There is a depth about Mary which speaks to us across two millennia of time and the distance between continents and cultures. No giddy girl she, though doubtless quite young, yet transformed early into the matron of a family, a child of the old covenant turned matriarch of God’s new covenant people. We do well to follow her lead, turning aside from the bustle of the season – which includes our own worries and anxieties over it – to treasure and to ponder what God might be doing in our midst.

“And the shepherds returned.” We usually pass quickly by this verse, treating it as if in keeping with its literary function: to hustle these poor herdsmen off the story’s stage in order to make way for the next act. But perhaps here is the first place where we should exercise our option to “ponder” like Mary.

A few years ago, while visiting “Shepherd’s Field” near Bethlehem, I saw a beautiful painting depicting this scene – the *only* painting, as it turns out, that I’ve ever noticed devoted strictly to the joyous return of the shepherds. All wear happy expressions, and the youngest leaps about as if dancing. It is a glad and festive scene. And it serves to remind the viewer of something we too often miss: for we are so focused on the Nativity being the *beginning* of something, to remember that it also represents the *completion* of God’s long-awaited promise, to send Messiah, who is Immanuel, God-with-us.

That scene – and the Scripture depicting it – challenge me. Each of us, every year, “returns.” We return from our celebrations, and our services. We return to the humdrum and everyday. We return to familiar scenes, well-worn with their familiarity; to jobs and chores, taxes and bills, and to a world which regards Christmas with, “Well, that’s over.” But do we return *rejoicing*? Do we understand with the mind of faith that the world’s redemption is complete, even in such a tiny beginning?

Prayer

Lord of revelation and Author of hope, help me to treasure, and to ponder, your great work in salvation which is unfolding still, even now. When my time comes to return to the daily routine from the special glow of the Christmas season, let me do so rejoicing, and inviting others into that same joy. Amen.

December 19



Micah 5:2-5

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans^[b] of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”

³ Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

⁴ He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

⁵ And he will be our peace
when the Assyrians invade our land
and march through our fortresses.
We will raise against them seven shepherds,
even eight commanders

December 19



Micah 5:2-5

Hometown pride is a wonderful thing. It can also be a little ironic. During my student years, some friends hailed from truly out-of-the-way places in the rural countryside of the state where our college was located. One classmate was excited about her hometown getting its first traffic light; another enthused when a fast-food outlet, the only one for many miles, had its grand opening in her tiny crossroads community. More than one friend measured the remoteness of their origins by being the first member of their families, going back to Adam and Eve, to go beyond high school. The roots were humble, but the dreams and hopes were not, and there was pride in the undertaking of them.

Bethlehem was such a place. Despite its historic connection to King David, it was hardly a metropolis, and its modesty was underlined by the hulking presence nearby of a massive fortress-palace belonging to Herod. It was not even the only Bethlehem, as another town by the same name lay in the ancestral lands to the north. But it was this particular place – Bethlehem Ephrath, in Judah’s tribal land – which was chosen by God to be the birthplace of Messiah Jesus. So small. So modest. Yet possessing a dignity we still celebrate today because of its connection with Christ, when many of the “great” places of that day lie forgotten, some as piles of stone in the dust.

Each of us, too, is like Bethlehem in some way. Each of us has our smallnesses, that we feel in our bones. For some it may be the humbleness of our own roots, our ancestry. Perhaps our education and accomplishments, or what we feel is the lack of the same. Maybe we are haunted by a mistake in our past, or a dream we never attained. Or it could be that the passage of time, and the effects of aging that make us feel diminished as compared to the persons we have once been.

This word is for us. In this holy season, we are forcefully reminded of what is always true: that God is able to make great what is humble when we yield to God’s purposes; that there is no limit to God’s ability to work through us. As once He was born in a small town in Judah, so Christ is born anew in us when we trust that He is greater than our fears, and trust that the Babe from Bethlehem can fulfill His great purposes, even through us.

Prayer

Ancient of Days, be born anew in our hearts during this holy season. Feed us with your flock once more, and let us trust that you are greater than our fears, our shortcomings, and our self-doubts. Lord of peace, be our peace. Amen.

December 20



Matthew 2:1-2

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem

2 and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

December 20



Matthew 2:1-2

The wise men were right on time. They had followed the right star. It had brought them to the right country. And then, they had found the right place. Well, almost.

Where does one seek a king, if not in a palace? Where, God's anointed world-ruler, if not in the corridors of power? But what these earnest philosophers, these seekers after truth, actually found was not – at first – God's Messiah, but an evil and blood-drenched autocrat, bent on holding power at any cost. One who would destroy anything and anyone who might even vaguely be perceived as a threat, including members of his own family. It is perhaps to be wondered at that, after their interview with the tyrant and hearing (as they surely must have) of his cruelty and excesses, that the wise men did not give up the search in fear and despair, and head for home.

Or perhaps they did think of it. But from the courts of Herod himself they gained new clues about where to look. And more than that, the Star beckoned them on.

The Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, famous for his interpretation of dreams, was once asked why people no longer saw God directly. He answer was that modern people don't look low enough. It is a wise answer, echoing the wisdom of the Jewish Talmud. It is in humility and service that we find God, not in power and affluence and status, not in clever schemes of personal manipulation or quests for self-actualized fulfillment.

The courts of royalty are always busy, crowded places, full of people seeking something, or looking for some kind of advantage. I suspect Herod's court was no different. The streets of little Bethlehem, though, would have offered plenty of room for these wayfarers from a faraway land. And in a humble abode, in the eyes of a tiny Child, they looked upon the face of God.

This Christmastide promises to be a strange one, with special longings and stresses unlike the typical year. We could find ourselves, like the wise men of old, in the right time with the right quest – but not quite in the right "place" to experience the Presence. Should that happen, may we also be wise enough to ask God for that Star which will guide us to the humble places where we will again, and anew, find the face of Jesus.

Prayer

God of the wayfarer and Lord of the sincere searcher, help me to put aside the easy assumptions of my journey into Christmastide, and to be open to your leading into the humble places, to see your Presence among the poor, the aged, the despised, the immigrant, those of no status. Help me to remember that it is still in the "dark streets" of this world that, by your will, there still "shineth the everlasting light." In the Name of Him to took His throne among the "least of these": Amen.

December 21



Matthew 2:3-6

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

December 21



Matthew 2:3-6

There is something quite striking in this short passage; but it is so familiar to us, that we may have trouble noticing it. All of Jerusalem is troubled, including King Herod: every inhabitant is in a stir. They have questions about the wise men and their purpose. They wonder about the meaning of what they are seeing and hearing. They are anxious about what will take place next, and especially those around the king must have been nervous about what it could mean for their lives and well-being.

Yet, in the midst of all this turmoil, there is one thing which is not questioned: the truth of the word of God, the prophecy in Scripture. Once consulted, its answer to the question of the day is taken as definitive and certain.

It is easy for us to look down our long noses at Herod and his court for their scheming and duplicity in dealing with the wise men, and their bloodstained cruelty which will shortly follow the birth of Jesus. We'd not be wrong in either case. But here is one place where perhaps we might actually learn something from the wily old king and his hangers-on: they were utterly sure that God is as true as His word. Are we?

Months earlier, when the angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife, the heavenly messenger had instructed him, "... and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Joseph also trusted that God is as good as His word and made the journey to Bethlehem with Mary.

What about you? When God declares that Christ will save you from your sins, even yours, do you believe what He says? When He tells you that you have an Advocate before the throne of God, even the same Jesus, do you fully entrust your case and your care in His keeping? And when He promises to shepherd you as part of His people, the Israel of God, are you ready to believe – and trusting, live as though you do?

John Henry Newman, himself a man whose life and journey of discipleship knew plenty of twists and turns, once said:

I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. My sickness, or perplexity, or sorrow may be necessary causes of some great end, which is quite beyond us. He does nothing in vain.

Prayer

Lord, I desire to trust you in all things. I find myself full of doubt and questions; but the hardest of all is my own resistance to fully casting myself upon the truth and reliability of your word. Help me to have the same solid certainty of Herod's scribes, the same quiet daring as Joseph, and the same surrender as a Newman, and take that next step with you that you call me to take, this day, this hour, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

December 22



Matthew 2:7-8

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.

⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

December 22



Matthew 2:7-8

"That I may worship him." As it so often does, evil appeals to the highest principle, invokes our noblest ideals, co-opts our dearest loves, as it seeks to anesthetize its victims with complacency the better to work its deadly agenda. *"Bring me word, too."*

But it is not to be. Though evil is fleet of feet and Herod's spies must surely have been everywhere, including in little Bethlehem, just a short journey distant, God's protection was swifter still, borne on the wings of angels and the light of a Star. The same Power which set an empire in motion to bring one couple to just the right place on just the right day so that a Boy-child would be born in conformity to the ancient prophecy – so what if everyone from Caesar on down thought it was to fulfill an "executive order" about paying taxes! – would now again be the sovereign Lord who would protect this family through birth, and spirit them away one step ahead of the king's murderous rampage to asylum in Egypt.

Even when the darkness surrounds, God is still Lord of all.

If there have been times this year when you have felt yourself subject to powers which were beyond your control and casually deaf to your appeal, let these verses speak to you. If you are one of the millions in this pandemic year whose world has been silently invaded by a threat you cannot see but whose impact you cannot miss, may this part of the story give you courage. And if you have dwelt in the wake of loss, journeyed like the Psalmist of old through the valley of shadows, then may this be a word of encouragement to you.

During the Civil War, an elderly widow suddenly found her house and farm in the middle of a battlefield one day when two armies faced each other. As enemy troops drew ever closer to her home, she decided she must do something and, not having a rifle, grabbed a broomstick and made for the front lines. A friendly soldier grabbed her arm to stop her, shouting, "Granny! You can't fight the rebels with that!" "Maybe not, sonny," she shot back. "But I can sure show 'em whose side I'm on!"

The wise men were clear about their purpose, about whose "side" they were on. God protected them and gave them the fulfillment of their quest, part of His greater work of salvation. When we are confronted with evil, or the temptation to try to make a separate peace with wrong, can we rely upon the One who has brought us, too, to this place?

Prayer

Lord, sometimes the darkness feels very thick, the uncertainties unnerving, the temptation to just try to get along feels so strong. Help me at those times to remember the way you led the wise men, and have promised to lead each of us by your Holy Spirit through whatever life may throw our way, bringing us safely home at last. Amen

December 23



Matthew 2:9-12

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

December 23



Matthew 2:9-12

Conditioned as we are, perhaps, by centuries of post-Enlightenment rationalism and science, we tend not to look for guidance in dreams and visions. Yet I know people personally whose lives have been profoundly changed by them. One learned of a sibling he had not previously known about, whose existence was revealed in a dream and later confirmed in conversation with an elderly relative. Another's vision of the closed gates of Heaven moved that person to profound repentance. A woman whose mother, who faithfully shared the gospel with generations of children and led many to trust Jesus but who had passed away suddenly, saw her late mom in a dream and heard her declare reassuringly that all she had believed and taught about the Lord are true. A man who was on pilgrimage with friends, following a different religion, who the night before the great final day had a dream in which a Man whom he instinctively knew was from God told him to leave right away. He did leave, as his friends slept, and came later to understand that he had seen a vision of Jesus. He is now a Christian leader in a sensitive country.

God is still speaking, it is clear. But are we open? Are we listening?

The wise men had just fulfilled a great quest, against tremendous challenges – not the least of which was simply finding the Christ Child. Their gifts reflected the potency of taking the best God gives us, and offering it back shaped by the best craftsmanship we can apply to it. Gold, that precious metal which can be shaped with rare artisanship into objects of great beauty and worth. Incense, a rare and costly resin blended by the perfumer so as to evoke the presence of the Divine and offer as holy sacrifice. Myrrh, in the ancient world both medicine and embalming spice, bridging life and healing, death and reverence.

How set alight with wonder the wise men must have been! How filled with enthusiasm and a sense of satisfaction, of fulfillment! Yet they were still open to being guided on the next step, humble enough to hear and obey a message from the courts of Heaven.

Now it is our turn, during these days of Advent and Christmas, to approach the manger and offer our worship to the One who has come among us as our Savior, and rules as our Lord. Soon we, too, will depart rejoicing, hopefully different for having made the journey, and with our lives altered in the “another way” of renewed discipleship and service. May we, too, have the same openness and teachability as the wise men of old.

Prayer

Lord, no matter what this holy season brings, whether of joy and exultation, or of challenge, let me stay open to your guidance and direction for that part of my life's journey which follows. And let me ever take the gifts you have given to me – career, family, relationships, time, memories, skills, caring, and yes, a heart to worship -- and offer them back to you with the best care and artisanship I can apply to them. Amen.

December 24



John 1:14

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Years ago when I was still pretty early in my ministry, I was serving a wonderful country church whose parsonage, where I lived with my family, stood next door. It had been a fabulous Christmas, with meaningful services and warm exchanges between Christian friends and families. The music, the lights, the decorations, all contributed to the holy and festive atmosphere, as they are supposed to do. After multiple services for Christmas Eve, I took the next few days off to spend with family at home.

It was about the second or third day after the last service that I went out late one afternoon, about dusk, to take my black Lab, Kady, for walk around the churchyard. Turning a corner of the building, something about the light and the stained glass windows in the sanctuary didn't look right. On closer examination, there was a glow coming from inside. The sun was too far down for it to be a reflection, and fire is always a worry in an older building – so I decided to investigate.

Kady and I had barely stepped into the sanctuary when the reason for the strange glow became evident. In the upper tier of one of the windows, a small electric candle was burning in the gathering gloom. There was no hazard: it ran on a couple of small batteries. I didn't know (and never learned) whether it had been overlooked in shutting off the lights after the last service, or if something was askew in the switch mechanism. But for whatever reason, it had been right there, for all these hours and days, a solitary light shining in the darkness.

I wonder even now how many people riding down the road from the chancel end of the church would have noticed the tiny glow in the night, and whether it would have appeared as an oddity to them or inspired them. It certainly touched me, that brave little candle standing alone, illuminating God's house as best it could, a faithful sentinel of joy, stubbornly insisting on light and never giving up even in the darkest night.

December 24



John 1:14

Fast forward decades, to the present. Despite its challenges, this has been a year of great joys, too, as I have become both a great-uncle and a grandfather, in that order, for the first time. What a wonder it has been to visit with these children, to watch them grow (usually via FaceTime and videos) and the emergence of their features and personalities, starting now to morph out of infancy. In their faces, their movements, their reactions and traits, even at this tender age, I can see signs and traces not only of their parents but their grandparents – and, I suspect, if I had but the wisdom afforded by a longer perspective, I’d see shades of even remoter ancestors, too. They don’t know it yet, of course, but they are a vote of confidence in humanity’s future, an expression of the possibilities engendered by love, and loves that stretch back generations into the remote past. Against the dimness of an unknown future, they – along with others who may yet appear – are sentinels, too, little beacons of possibility and confidence that God’s not done with our family just yet.

The Prologue of John’s gospel (1:1-18) ranks as one of the loftiest expressions in all of Scripture, describing as it does an arc which reaches back into the remotest past at Creation (“In the beginning”), stretching also into an eternity with God, a glory “full of grace and truth” that knows no end. The wonder of Christmas is exactly that “we have seen his glory”: for in Jesus, the full “family resemblance” of God is evident in every movement, every word, every pulse of his life that we feel in the Bible – and, when we know him by faith, that we feel in the course of our own lives also.

He is the great Light who has come into the darkness of our world and which would not be extinguished, can never be extinguished, and which beckons us come near to him in trust, and in love. And when we do, when he is born within our hearts and lives as he was born in flesh that first Christmas long ago, we find that more and more we bear the likeness of all of our forefathers and foremothers in the faith and, still more, become most truly ourselves as we become most completely like Him. And we, too, can become his lights of hope, of faith, of love, warmly and resiliently bringing light into our corners of the world.

May his presence be born again in you this Christmas, and his light find its reflection in the glow of your heart and your service. May you more and more be messengers of his grace, his truth, in the world he came to save.

Prayer

Lord, as we bring this Advent journey to its consummation, let our light bear witness to your greater Light, offering redemption to all. May we more and more resemble you in your great love, that your grace and truth may abound also through our lives. Merry Christmas, gracious Lord – for you are indeed the reason we celebrate today! Amen.

December 25



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December 25



*Merry
Christmas!*

*From,
Winter Grace Senior Ministries, Inc.*

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