



THE FAMILY of GOD


FAMILY
OF FAITH

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL
2021



FIRST
PRES





Jesus, fully God and fully man, was born into a bloodline, but He breaks down the barrier of genetics by declaring that the true and forever Family of God is the Family of Faith. You and I belong to God by faith! Just like Jesus' bloodline, the Family of Faith is comprised of the full range of human personality and circumstance. Our family tie is not through ethnicity or nationality, but through our common thread of true faith.

You belong in God's family. Do you believe that? The Apostle John writes, "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." To believe is to have faith. Through faith in Jesus, you and I become children of God, co-heirs with Christ.

Across the following pages, you are invited to interact with 27 people from the Bible who put their faith in God. These with whom you are about to share Advent with were real people with real highs and lows.

May your faith increase all the more by joining your church family in this year's Advent devotional. God, thank you that by placing our faith in Jesus we become your children, belonging forever to your beautiful and eternal family.

CHRIST IS BORN!

MICHAEL THORNTON
PASTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP

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TEAR OUT THE BOOKMARK OF DAILY SCRIPTURE ON PAGE 27.



EVENTS TO CELEBRATE ADVENT



Friday, December 3, 6–8 p.m.
Saturday, December 4, 9:30–11:30 a.m.



my.firstprescos.org/womensdinner
my.firstprescos.org/womensbrunch



Worship Center



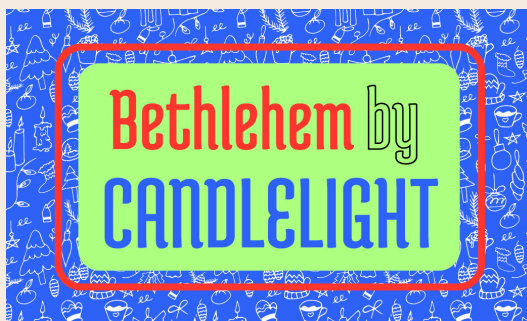
Saturday, December 18, 9:30–11 a.m.



my.firstprescos.org/mensbrunch



Weber Street Center



Sunday, December 5, 4–6:30 p.m.



Weber Street Center



Sunday, December 12 at 2 & 4:30 p.m.



Pikes Peak Center



FIND EVENT DETAILS
AND REGISTER ONLINE AT
FIRSTPRESCOS.ORG/CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS EVE



FAMILY SERVICE

10 a.m.

This 55-minute Sanctuary service is ideal for families with elementary-aged kids. Children are invited to help make the Christmas story come alive by singing in the choir loft and dressing up in provided angel and shepherd costumes. Plan on arriving 30 minutes early to choose a costume before the service begins.



SANCTUARY CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

***2, 4, 6 and 7:30**

Each Sanctuary service is filled with special music from our Big Blue choir and music ensembles and ends with a special Silent Night candlelight moment together. Nursery childcare available for infants through 6 years old.

*The 2 p.m. service will be livestreamed at firstprescos.org/watch.



MIDNIGHT COMMUNION SERVICE

11 p.m.

This warm 55-minute communion service in the Sanctuary features acoustic Christmas carols and ends at midnight as we say, "Merry Christmas!" to one another. No Nursery childcare available.



WONDER VILLAGE

5-9 p.m.

Wonder Village lights up the heart of downtown on Christmas Eve with family-friendly activities, a live Nativity, cookies and cocoa, and singing carols together on Bijou Street between Weber Street and Nevada Avenue.

BE A PART OF MAKING CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES HAPPEN!

Learn more about serving opportunities on page 31.



1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DAY I



ABRAHAM



THE FAMILY TREE BEGINS

..... GENESIS 12:1-9, MATTHEW 1:1-6

This Advent season we start our daily devotionals with Abraham. Abraham is the first person listed in the family tree of Jesus (Matthew 1:2), and the first human being called by God to follow Him into the unknown (Genesis 12:1).

After hearing God's call to "go," we read this simple sentence: "So Abram went as the Lord had told him" (Genesis 12:4a). And in that incredible encounter, Abram becomes the Father of our faith, and the first seed of Jesus' family tree.

A humble "yes." An early trust. A step with God. Who could possibly imagine what could grow

from an unpretentious affirmative response to God's voice. Through Abram's story we begin to get a picture of God's faithfulness, love and plan of salvation. This is a God worthy of response.

What is your simple "yes" to the Lord this Christmas season? Maybe it's stillness, or an act of love in a difficult situation. Maybe it's presence with someone who is hurting, or a sacrificial gift in a time of need. Abram wasn't looking for the Lord, but the Lord drew near to him. His act of obedience led to blessing and to the start of a new beginning. Jesus was on His way...

written by

JENNIFER HOLZ
EXECUTIVE PASTOR

ADVENT CANDLE

FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8–9

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”

These words, written by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the church in Ephesus, enthusiastically declare that we belong to the family of God. How? By faith.

God’s presence among us is pure gift ... undeserved, free and extravagant. Yet we ask, “How can I believe this good news?” Surely, we’ve got to do something to gain access to the Creator of the universe.

We work endlessly to serve the demands of our modern gods—success, pleasure, technology, politics. The list is endless. We live in a world that makes us work for reward, but God gives us, His children, salvation as pure gift, “not by works, so that no one can boast.”

World religions mock the Gospel, declaring that it is not moral to grant salvation to those underserving of such reward. The Gospel says no one is worthy, no one except Christ Jesus, born again into our hearts this Advent through faith.

Jesus is that marvelous. Jesus is that worthy. Jesus’ righteousness is that great. Jesus’ sacrifice is that justice-bringing. Jesus’ love is that pure. “Behold! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

God’s family is a family of faith. You belong to God’s family by faith, pure and simple.

DAY 2

SARAH

TEARS OF LAUGHTER

GENESIS 18:1-15

When God carries out His promises for us with great patience, we can often let doubt challenge our faith. God had promised a child to Sarah for years (Genesis 12), but eventually, when Sarah was past her own childbearing years but wanted her husband to have a child, she tried to make God's promise come true in her own strength by offering her servant, Hagar, to Abraham.

But Sarah is not remembered most for this act of mistrust, but rather for her faithful

perseverance. "And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered Him faithful who had made the promise" (Hebrews 11:11).

Sarah overheard God's promise to Abraham that she, at 90 years old, would give birth to a son. What would your faith-filled response be? Sarah fell down in tears of laughter! To keep the humor going, Sarah and Abraham named their child Isaac, which means "laughter."

What do you do with the promises of God for you? A messenger asked Sarah, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14). It's a rhetorical question. At the end of the day, may your response to God's love for you be "yes and amen," even if it involves some laughter.

written by

JAMAL SARIKOKI

SANCTUARY WORSHIP LEAD

DAY 3

ISAAC

REMINDERS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

GENESIS 21:1-7

Isaac was the son God promised to Abraham decades before he was finally born. After waiting all those years for this promised child, imagine Abraham's joy each time he looked upon his son. God did what He said he would! Isaac became a visible reminder to Abraham of God's faithful provision.

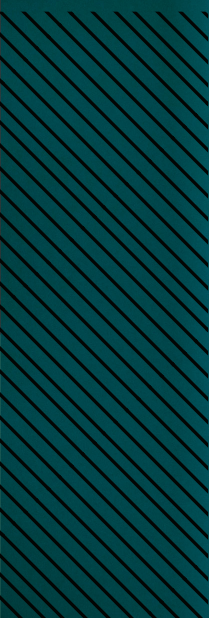
We can so easily focus upon lingering needs or unmet prayer requests that we lose sight of all the ways we have experienced our Lord's loving provision. Yet our lives are filled with examples of God meeting us in moments and ways that we've needed Him to. The season of Advent reminds us of God's promise to save us, and the fulfillment of this long-awaited promise when Jesus entered our world.

Isaac became a vivid reminder to Abraham of God's great faithfulness. Would you pause today to look for similar markers of your Lord's loving provision in your life? Allow these reminders to reassure you of God's active and loving presence. Find ways during Advent to respond to and rejoice in the faithfulness of a God who loves you and will keep His promises.

written by

MATT HOLTZMAN

PASTOR FOR ENGAGEMENT AND CARE



DAY 4

REBEKAH

AN IMPERFECT STRENGTH

..... GENESIS 24–27

She had everything. Rebekah's story starts in Genesis 24 as one of the great love stories in the history of love stories. Abraham's son, Isaac, needs a wife. After all, there is that promise of a great nation to come from him and that's not going to happen while he is single. The search for his bride lands on Rebekah as an answer to prayer. She is beautiful, of the right family and a wealthy one at that. She is courageous and she seeks the Lord's guidance. When Isaac sees her, it's love at first sight. What could go wrong?

At some point, Rebekah decides to make things happen for Jacob.

Because she has listened to the Lord, she knows that Jacob is to be the one who fulfills the promise of a great nation. Like Sarah, she takes matters into her own hands, trying to do the right thing. But the right thing is a disaster. It shatters her family and love turns to bitterness. Nevertheless, God works in this mess—the brothers reconcile, and we see the beginnings of the family that God promised. Rebekah teaches us that even in our failures, God makes things right and that being in the Family of God doesn't require perfection.

written by

EUNICE MCGARRAHAN

PASTOR FOR ADULT EDUCATION

DAY 5

RAHAB

YOUR PAST DOES NOT DEFINE YOU

..... JOSHUA 2

What's the first word that comes to mind when you hear her name—Rahab? In Joshua 2, Rahab is first introduced as a prostitute. But is that the best word association for our sister Rahab? Why is it that we often remember one another for the “shock and awe” moments of our lives rather than the everyday acts of obedience, of faithfulness?

After Rahab is introduced as a prostitute, she's then introduced as a liar (Joshua 2:5). Quite the introduction! How will you be remembered? I love the story of Rahab. For any and all reasons to be labeled a moral failure, we later find these eternal words rising from

Rahab's lips, “for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below” (Joshua 2:11b).

Rahab's story is one of being grafted into God's family by faith. Through trusting in the God of Israel, the Living God, she leaves her former life and marries Salmon, an Israelite of the tribe of Judah. Later, Rahab gives birth to Boaz, King David's great-grandfather.

Rahab's story teaches us this: your past does not define you. Your response to the faithfulness of God changes everything. No matter where you are, you can belong to the Family of God.

written by

MICHAEL THORNTON

PASTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP



DAY 6

RUTH

FAITHFUL AND REDEEMED

RUTH 1:16–17

Despite being an outsider and not having a future in a foreign land, Ruth the Moabitess is determined to care for her aging mother-in-law. The young widow ends the debate of whether she should follow Naomi, proclaiming, “Your people shall be my people, and your God my God!” And so, they relocate to Naomi’s hometown of Bethlehem together.

In Bethlehem, word spreads of Ruth’s radical dedication to Naomi, and Boaz takes notice. Boaz was Naomi’s kinsman-redeemer. He

had a legal responsibility to care for Naomi’s household if hard times fell upon them, and that’s exactly what Boaz does. He marries Ruth, and they begin a family together. With that, Ruth finds her place in the family of God.

A thousand years later, another couple would start their family in Bethlehem. Actually, it was the same family. Joseph, the great-great-etc. grandson of Ruth and Boaz, finds himself at Mary’s side as she gives birth to Jesus.

The Family of God keeps expanding, so far even to include us! Through faith in Jesus, we are “children of God.” In Christ, we are grafted into God’s family, just as Ruth was brought in. May you pause today to acknowledge the work of the one who has invited you to join God’s family, your redeemer, Jesus Christ.

written by

GREG HARTNETT

PASTOR OF EVANGELISM AND YOUNG ADULTS

DAY 7

DAVID

BUILD THE HOUSE AND HANG THE LIGHTS

2 SAMUEL 7: 11B–13

David is a person of legacy. But whether in a season of confession and tears, or of laughter and great joy, the Spirit is the foundation of David’s inheritance.

In 2 Samuel 7, David wants to make space for celebration—wants to build a house and hang the lights. Except humans are the Clark Griswolds of making space

for celebrating God. Instead, God makes David and the Family of Faith a promise.

God builds the anticipation of past promises and tells David someone else will build a house for God’s name—a promise that points us to King Jesus. God builds His house while we still wait for our ultimate celebration that ends in a feast.

But at Christmas we celebrate the image of the invisible God moving into the neighborhood. God builds the house and hangs the lights. God puts on flesh and comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found. His blessings flow there because the King is there. And as we sing and we laugh and we live and we work, by His grace the Spirit grows us, the Family of Faith.

written by

CLAIRE BERGER

DIRECTOR OF WOMEN’S MINISTRY

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Finding the perfect Christmas gift for someone who has it all can be a challenge, but the Something Significant gift catalog is here to help. 100 percent of money spent directly blesses and furthers the ministries of our mission partners who are sharing the love of Jesus in Colorado Springs and across the globe.

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1. Submit your purchase online and request gift cards.
1. Pick up gift cards at the Welcome Center to give to your friend, co-worker or family member. Each gift card has an area where you can write the recipient's name and add a personalized message about the local or global partner the gift supports.



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Colorado Springs, CO 80903



Drop off the completed order form and your check or cash at the Welcome Center Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. or place it in the offering plate at Sunday Worship.

VIEW ALL GIFTS ONLINE AT
MY.FIRSTPRESCOS.ORG/SOMETHINGSIGNIFICANT





2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DAY 8

JOHN THE BAPTIST

THE WILD COUSIN

..... LUKE 3:1-18

John the Baptist was a miraculous birth. His parents Elizabeth and Zechariah were, we are told, “very old” (Luke 1:7) and past the age of childbearing. But Zechariah received a vision from the Lord through the Angel Gabriel that John was coming. He didn’t believe it and was struck silent until the day John was born. Out of that silence came a great voice.

The prophets had fallen silent for 400 years. Zechariah was silent for nine months. John lifted a voice in the wilderness saying, “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

In some ways he was a prophet. It is possible that John was part of

the Qumran community, a group who had separated themselves from the world for the sake of purity before God. But John was too concerned for the lost to remain separate and out of sight. He offered a baptism for repentance.

Where does John sit in the Family of God? I call him Jesus’ wild cousin. Dancing to the beat of his own drum, rarely a thought unexpressed, unable to sit quietly through normal gatherings, John was a little out there! But he found his way to the Lord. Jesus was his Savior more than his cousin. Even the wild one comes home in Christ.

written by

TIM McCONNELL

LEAD PASTOR

ADVENT CANDLE

HOPE

I PETER 1:3-4

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you.”

Christian hope is grounded in the historical life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. When we say we “have hope” in the Gospel we are not saying we have wishful thinking that maybe it’s true. Christian hope is an entirely different kind of hope from that of the world. Christian hope is closer to the idea of exuberant anticipation for what is just around the corner.

We as the Family of Faith are invited into a posture of Hope this week in a special way. The apostle Peter writes of hope, telling us that we have a living hope because of the resurrection of Jesus. If Jesus conquered death, then we can always place our hope in Him and not the daily circumstances of our lives.

Peter does not speak of hope flippantly. He saw what happened to John the Baptist, Jesus and Stephen. He knows of the sorrow and disappointment of this world. But he knows we can hope for eternal life because it is all in the hands of Jesus, eternal God, who was born, was killed, and was raised to life, forever Lord of All.

DAY 9

SAMUEL

FIRST KINGS FIRST

I SAMUEL 2:1-10

Last of the judges, first of the prophets, consistent in his faith with the Lord. These are only a few of the characterizations of Samuel in the Bible (Psalm 99:6, Jeremiah 15:1, Acts 13:20). Yet, Samuel is not one of the first people I think of when we consider Heroes of our Faith. What was it that made his life so unique?

Samuel's name in Hebrew means "requested from God" (1 Samuel 1:20). Samuel's story begins from a result of a faithful God blessing

a barren woman named Hannah (1 Samuel 1:19-18). From then on, he was quite literally called by the Lord to take on many responsibilities such as priest, prophet, military leader and eventually establishes the new king over Israel. Throughout these roles however, Samuel's faith in the true King remained the same and he constantly tried to call the Israelites back to the Lord.

"There is no one holy like the LORD; there is none beside you" (1 Samuel 2:2). Samuel's life reminds us that God is always sovereign over all, and the best way we love Him is through trusting Him instead of worldly pressures. Samuel's life encourages us amid a chaotic world to constantly remind and point one another back to our faithful and sovereign King Jesus.

written by

ABI TOVAR

ASSOCIATE OF VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT



DAY 10

LYDIA

FAITH-FILLED HOSTESS

ACTS 16:11-15, 40

What would cause you to say to someone, "Come and stay at my home?"

For a select few who have an unfiltered desire to extend hospitality, this phrase might be directed toward strangers. Nevertheless, the more common reason would be to provide a place to land for someone we would consider family. In the New Testament, we find Lydia. And while we don't know a whole lot about her, what we

discover is profound. Described as a successful businesswoman who sold luxurious purple cloth, Lydia is additionally identified as a Jewish "worshiper of God" (Acts 16:14). On Paul's second missionary journey, she is impacted by the gospel of Jesus. The Lord opens up her heart to faith and she comes to be baptized. Lydia is adopted into the family of faith as a newfound daughter of God. From this point forward, Lydia can't help but think of Paul and his co-workers as nothing less than family members.

How does a successful businesswoman from Thyatira and a bunch of rerouted traveling evangelists come to find one another as newfound family members? It seems far-fetched. And yet, the story of Lydia reminds us that the life-giving message of Jesus creates a bond—one that opens the heart toward showing hospitality to newfound family members.

written by

MATT HOLTZMAN

PASTOR FOR ENGAGEMENT AND CARE



DAY 11

JEREMIAH

FIRE IN MY BONES

..... JEREMIAH 20:7-18

Whereas Jesus will be born in the small town of Bethlehem, just south of Jerusalem, Jeremiah is born some 600 years before Christ just northeast of Jerusalem in the small town of Anathoth. God calls Jeremiah to a dual prophetic call to proclaim both the judgment and grace of God to God's people and to the nations.

Jeremiah struggled hard. "So the word of the Lord has brought me insult and reproach all day long" (Jeremiah 20:8). Have you ever felt like running away from the Lord because what He calls you to is too burdensome? You and Jeremiah would be in good company together.

Yet Jeremiah knew the hand of the Lord was upon him to proclaim the full message of the Most High God. Jeremiah described the presence and message of God in his life like "a fire shut up in my bones" (Jeremiah 20:9) that Jeremiah could no easier extinguish than a raging wildfire.

Where has God called you to speak His truth and grace? May you, by faith, cling to God's call on your life like Jeremiah. May you respond to God's call with a soft heart and a resolve to remain faithful to your God who has been so kind to you in drawing you to Himself.

written by

JAMAL SARIKOKI
SANCTUARY WORSHIP LEAD

DAY 12

TIMOTHY

A ZEAL FOR CHRIST

..... 1 TIMOTHY 1:2

Timothy was a college-aged disciple of Paul, who traveled with and learned from Paul as he established church communities throughout the ancient Near East (Acts 16:1–4). But Timothy’s journey of discipleship began many years before meeting Paul.

Through his family upbringing, and specifically the investment that his mom and grandma made in his life (2 Timothy 1:5), a foundation of expectant faith and joy was laid in Timothy that Paul was able to direct into a personal life of discipleship and faith in Jesus.

Full of fearless youth and zeal for Christ, Timothy became like a son to Paul (1 Timothy 1:2). They shared a deep friendship and trust

that saw Paul sending Timothy to challenge and correct the wayward leadership and teachings of the church in Ephesus (the topic of Paul’s letters, 1 & 2 Timothy).

Proverbs 22:6 says to “start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” The life of Timothy is a testament to this—that family can lay an incredible foundation on which trusted leaders or the church community (like Paul, or Children’s Ministry, or Youth, or Young Life College ... or you!) can build on, cultivate, personalize, and have a ripple-effect of impact on other communities around the world.

written by

ANDY MORRISON

DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE MINISTRIES

DAY 13

ONESIMUS

RUNAWAY SLAVE TO BROTHER IN CHRIST

..... PHILEMON 15-16

Onesimus was a runaway slave who robbed from his master and fled to Rome, where he hoped to hide in the mass of humanity that lived in that enormous city. Onesimus' name means "useful" but he probably felt useless on every front. He was compromised, his sins were forcing him to hide, and he was ashamed to hold his head up for fear of being recognized.

Then something remarkable happened! He encountered the imprisoned Apostle Paul, who led him to Christ. Suddenly, the slave Onesimus became the spiritual brother of Paul, a member of the family of faith. Our Lord had

planned all along for Onesimus to be a son in the Family of God!

We have all sinned, and fall short of the glory of God. Martin Luther said, "All of us are Onesimuses!" We all make mistakes and fear that we are useless ... beyond the reach of love and redemption. But we are never beyond the reach of our Savior.

Onesimus was hiding, but Jesus came to find him ... as He does with all of us! When Onesimus was found in Christ, he gained a family he had never known, a Savior that paid his debt on the cross, and the joy of being received by God the Father through the righteousness of our Lord Jesus!

written by

JIM DEJARNETTE

MINISTER OF WORSHIP AND MUSIC

DAY 14

JONAH

THE GENTLE WORK OF THE LORD

..... JONAH 1-4

In the story of Jonah, we see the Lord's faithful work with one of His children who is hardly a model servant of God. In many ways Jonah is a rebellious child, blatantly disobedient, selfishly angry, prejudiced and racist, defined more by his flaws and failures than his success. Yet, the Lord is faithful to Jonah even when Jonah is not faithful to the Lord.

In Chapter 1, the Lord graciously gives Jonah a worthy work to do, and Jonah flees from the Lord. In Chapter 2, Jonah repents his disobedience, and the Lord faithfully delivers him from His judgment. Chapter 3 begins with, "Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, ..." demonstrating the grace of the Lord toward Jonah. Finally, Chapter 4 speaks

of the displeasure of Jonah as the Ninevites repent and are spared God's judgment. Obviously, Jonah had done his service of the Lord with an entirely wrong attitude. Yet, in Chapter 4 it is written, "But the Lord said, 'Do you have good reason to be angry?'" Such a gentle confrontation for Jonah's good. And as the story continues and Jonah continues in his waywardness, the Lord in His kindness again asks Jonah this same question (Jonah 4:9).

What question might the Lord be asking of you and me to correct us in His kindness? Our Savior came to us as a babe in the greatest display of humble concern for us. May we have hearts of flesh and respond in loving compliance to His gentle work in our lives.

written by

FLOYD SEBALD

DIRECTOR OF FIRST PRES FELLOWS
COLORADO SPRINGS



LET'S HOLD FAST TO SCRIPTURE TOGETHER

These Scripture bookmarks guide you through the daily reading in the Advent devotional.

Punch out the bookmark and keep it with you, place it in your Bible, or where you'll see it often.

And as a bonus, we've included four cards for inviting friends and family to join you at Christmas Eve services.

Hi

JOIN ME FOR CHRISTMAS EVE AT FIRST PRES!
SIT WITH ME AT THE

■ 10 a.m. Family Service

■ 2 p.m. Sanctuary Candlelight Service

■ 4 p.m. Sanctuary Candlelight Service

■ 6 p.m. Sanctuary Candlelight Service

■ 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary Candlelight Service

■ 11 p.m. Midnight Communion Service

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE
AND MERRY CHRISTMAS!

YOU'RE INVITED TO

CHRISTMAS EVE
at First Pres

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

Family Service:

10 a.m.

Sanctuary Candlelight Services:

2, 4, 6, 7:30 p.m.

Midnight Communion Service:

11 p.m.

FIRSTPRESCOS.ORG/CHRISTMAS



FIRST PRES

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL SCRIPTURES

WEEK 1

1: Nov. 28 Genesis 12:1-9

2: Nov. 29 Genesis 18:1-15

3: Nov. 30 Genesis 21:1-7

4: Dec. 1 Genesis 24-27

5: Dec. 2 Joshua 2

6: Dec. 3 Ruth 1:16-17

7: Dec. 4 2 Samuel 7:11b-13

WEEK 2

8: Dec. 5 Luke 3:1-18

9: Dec. 6 1 Samuel 2:1-10

10: Dec. 7 Acts 16:11-15, 40

11: Dec. 8 Jeremiah 20:7-18

12: Dec. 9 1 Timothy 1:2

13: Dec. 10 Philimon 15-16

14: Dec. 11 Jonah 1-4

Wonder Village

Wonder Village lights up the heart of downtown on Christmas Eve with family-friendly activities, a live Nativity, cookies and cocoa, and singing carols together on Bijou Street between Weber Street and Nevada Avenue. Everyone is welcome to take a stroll between 5 – 9 p.m. No cost or registration required!

Wonder Village

Celebrate the birth of Jesus with music, a message from Lead Pastor Tim McConnell, and downtown Wonder Village fun on Christmas Eve.

Wonder Village lights up the heart of downtown with family-friendly activities, a live Nativity, cookies and cocoa, and singing carols together on Bijou Street between Weber Street and Nevada Avenue. Everyone is welcome to take a stroll between 5 – 9 p.m. No cost or registration required!



WEEK 3

- 15: Dec. 12 Matthew 2:13-23
- 16: Dec. 13 Acts 1:20-26
- 17: Dec. 14 Luke 23:1-3, Matt. 28:5-8
- 18: Dec. 15 Eph. 2:17-22, John 19:25-27
- 19: Dec. 16 Luke 10:38-41
- 20: Dec. 17 Mark 5:24b-34
- 21: Dec. 18 Matthew 8:5-13

WEEK 4

- 22: Dec. 19 Luke 1:26-38
- 23: Dec. 20 42:1-6
- 24: Dec. 21 Romans 16:3-16
- 25: Dec. 22 Acts 9:1-19
- 26: Dec. 23 Matthew 4:18-20
- 27: Dec. 24 Luke 2:1-21

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Sanctuary Candlelight Services:

2, 4, 6, 7:30 p.m.

Midnight Communion Service:

11 p.m.

FIRSTPRESCOS.ORG/CHRISTMAS



FIRST PRES

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL SCRIPTURES

WEEK 1

1: Nov. 28 Genesis 12:1-9

2: Nov. 29 Genesis 18:1-15

3: Nov. 30 Genesis 21:1-7

4: Dec. 1 Genesis 24-27

5: Dec. 2 Joshua 2

6: Dec. 3 Ruth 1:16-17

7: Dec. 4 2 Samuel 7:11b-13

WEEK 2

8: Dec. 5 Luke 3:1-18

9: Dec. 6 1 Samuel 2:1-10

10: Dec. 7 Acts 16:11-15, 40

11: Dec. 8 Jeremiah 20:7-18

12: Dec. 9 1 Timothy 1:2

13: Dec. 10 Philimon 15-16

14: Dec. 11 Jonah 1-4

Wonder Village

Wonder Village lights up the heart of downtown on Christmas Eve with family-friendly activities, a live Nativity, cookies and cocoa, and singing carols together on Bijou Street between Weber Street and Nevada Avenue. Everyone is welcome to take a stroll between 5 – 9 p.m. No cost or registration required!

Wonder Village

Celebrate the birth of Jesus with music, a message from Lead Pastor Tim McConnell, and downtown Wonder Village fun on Christmas Eve.

Wonder Village lights up the heart of downtown with family-friendly activities, a live Nativity, cookies and cocoa, and singing carols together on Bijou Street between Weber Street and Nevada Avenue. Everyone is welcome to take a stroll between 5 – 9 p.m. No cost or registration required!



WEEK 3

- 15: Dec. 12 Matthew 2:13-23
- 16: Dec. 13 Acts 1:20-26
- 17: Dec. 14 Luke 23:1-3, Matt. 28:5-8
- 18: Dec. 15 Eph. 2:17-22, John 19:25-27
- 19: Dec. 16 Luke 10:38-41
- 20: Dec. 17 Mark 5:24b-34
- 21: Dec. 18 Matthew 8:5-13

WEEK 4

- 22: Dec. 19 Luke 1:26-38
- 23: Dec. 20 42:1-6
- 24: Dec. 21 Romans 16:3-16
- 25: Dec. 22 Acts 9:1-19
- 26: Dec. 23 Matthew 4:18-20
- 27: Dec. 24 Luke 2:1-21

CALLING ALL WHO CAN WELCOME PEOPLE INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

This Christmas, we have six worship services plus Wonder Village opportunities where you can serve as an individual or family. If you are interested in helping make Christmas Eve at First Pres an incredible experience for all our new guests and church family, consider serving at one or more of the Christmas Eve services.

WELCOME TEAM Hosting | Usher | Parking

We try to create a warm environment that helps people have an encounter with God. The Welcome Team is the first impression that people get of our church family. This team helps with greeting, parking, ushering and all the crucial roles that make people feel welcome.

FOOD SERVICE TEAM Prep | Setup | Cleanup

Whether preparing delicious cookies or mixing hot cocoa, the Food Service Team creates elements of joy for people to experience as they walk through Wonder Village or queue up for a Christmas Eve service.

WONDER VILLAGE TEAM Set Up | Hosting | Tear Down

Hundreds of people will visit Wonder Village and it takes tons of volunteers to bless our city with this free event on Bijou Street. This team will help set up the magic of Wonder Village, host attendees, and help tear down at the end of the night.



**SIGN UP TO SERVE
TODAY ONLINE AT
[FIRSTPRESCOS.ORG/CHRISTMAS](https://firstprescos.org/christmas)**

QUESTIONS?

Contact Abi Tovar, Associate of Volunteer Engagement at atovar@firstprescos.org or 719-884-6189.

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DAY 15



JOSEPH



QUIET OBEDIENCE

..... MATTHEW 2:13-23

The strong, silent type. Do you have a friend like Joseph? Here is the man chosen by God to father His Son on earth. He never says a word recorded in Scripture. But every time Joseph is told by God to do something, he does it. He was told not to divorce Mary, but to wait and trust. He did. He was told to faithfully register his family in Bethlehem. He did. He was told to name the child Jesus. He did. He was told to carry his family off to Egypt as refugees. He did.

What was it like to be the father of the Son of God? We only gain a few insights. When Mary and Joseph lost track of Jesus as a boy after a trip to Jerusalem for Passover, they found

Him in the Temple teaching the teachers. “‘Why were you searching for me?’ he asked. ‘Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?’” (Luke 2:49). Joseph was always aware that his own fatherhood was only a part of the story in the life of Jesus.

Joseph didn’t adopt Jesus. Jesus adopted Joseph. Jesus was not an adopted son. Joseph was an adopted father. I think many adoption parents feel the same way.

Is there room in the Family of God for a man like Joseph? His words are few but his obedience and faithfulness speak louder than words.

written by

TIM McCONNELL
LEAD PASTOR

ADVENT CANDLE

LOVE

I JOHN 4:7-11

“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

This week we celebrate that God does more than give us a passing glance. He declares His love for us, but how do we know it's true? Does God really love you? The Apostle John tells us that we know God loves us because God sent His one and only Son into the world to fix what was broken in our lives. Jesus did what we could never do and because of Jesus' sacrificial love we belong to God's family by faith.

What do we do with so great a love? “We also ought to love one another.” This Advent, may you be encouraged to not only receive God's love for you, but share it with those close to you, close in every sense of the word: physically close, our neighbors, co-workers—spiritually close, our brothers and sisters in Christ—psychologically close, our extended family, loved ones we have not connected with in a while—emotionally close, those we cherish in our hearts.

Belonging to the Family of God means we are the-have-received-mercy-people-of-God. We are the Loved Ones of the universe. Let us internalize so great a truth. Let us pass this Good News on to a world that is so desperate to hear that there is a God and He is Love.

DAY 16

MATTHIAS

✧ CHOSEN BY GOD ✧

..... ACTS 1:20-26

Were you ever the last one chosen for a baseball or basketball team? Were you ever called off the bench into a basketball or football game? Matthias was, as he was chosen by the 11 apostles to replace Judas, who had betrayed Jesus. Matthias is named as the 12th apostle (Acts 1:25). Jesus says of you and me, “I chose you.” You are “chosen” by God. When the 11 chose Matthias, God was not done “choosing.” You have been chosen by God to get up off the bench and get into the game.

God is afoot in this world, and He has given us the privilege of being chosen by Him to enter the fray. Peter, writing to the churches, said,

“You are the ones chosen by God, chosen to be a holy people, God’s instruments to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others the difference he made for you.”

What word is repeated seven times above? “Chosen.” So, as you are chosen by God to enter the fray, God says to you, “You are my servant, I have chosen you. Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not be afraid, for I am your God. Surely I will strengthen you, surely I will also help you, surely I will also uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

written by

PAT HARTSOCK

ASSISTING MINISTER OF CARE

DAY 17

MARY OF MAGDALENE

THE SCENT OF HOPE

..... LUKE 23:1–3, MATT 28:5–8

What smells signal Christmas?
Perhaps the smell of peppermint
or gingerbread goes hand-in-hand
with the songs and the lights and the
warm beverages of the season. If
hope had a smell, what would it be?

You must wonder what hope
smelled like for Mary of Magdalene.
Present for the death of Jesus,
she went three days later with
burial spices, spices tasked with
covering the stench of decompo-
sition, to anoint her dead King.
But as she entered the garden,
it was still dark. She could smell
the stone out of place before she
could see it—smell the damp
earth and cold stone from inside.

Coming into the garden with a
smell meant for death she met
instead with eternal life.

She became the “apostle to the
apostles” as she ran to announce
the good news to the Family
of Faith that Jesus was alive.

In a season of longing, longing for
Christ to come again, longing for
the messy places in our lives to be
a little less so, the longing can be
made even more acute with the
songs and the lights. But if you can
smell cold stone and burial spices,
you are in good company. To the
Family of Faith, these signal hope.

written by

CLAIRE BERGER

DIRECTOR OF WOMEN'S MINISTRY



DAY 18

MARY THE WIFE OF CLOPAS GRAFTED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD

**EPHESIANS 2:17–22,
JOHN 19:25–27**

Mary, the wife of Clopas, is a character that you might have missed when reading the Scriptures. She is mentioned in the Gospel of John (John 19:25). It is believed by many faith traditions that Mary, the wife of Clopas, could be related to Mary, the mother of Jesus, or Mary, the mother of James and Joseph.

However, her name is mentioned once, so, why is her name in the story of Jesus' crucifixion?

I believe John mentions her name to demonstrate her faith in the last moments of Jesus. This means she is integral to the story of Jesus. Even though her name is toward the end of Jesus' ministry, she stood with the other women in pain for Jesus.

What does this mean for us? There are many people in the Family of God who might be mentioned more than others or might never be mentioned. However, despite Mary, wife of Clopas, not being mentioned throughout the gospel, she is mentioned once. I believe she gives us hope that it doesn't matter at what point your name is in the book of life to the story of Jesus. When we have faith in Christ, you are a son, a daughter, a brother, a sister, a mother, or a father, in the family of God.

written by

MARCOS HENRY
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT MINISTRIES



DAY 19

MARY OF BETHANY RADICAL DEVOTION

LUKE 10:38–41

We have this blissful image of the contemplative Mary sitting calmly at Jesus' feet. However, Mary is not so docile but is a radical, boundary-breaking Jesus follower. She has stepped from her place in the kitchen into the man's space.

The first hearers of this story would have been shocked. This is not about the work that needs

to be done but about breaking cultural norms. And Jesus says, "Mary has chosen what is better" (Luke 10:42b). Wait a minute—rule-breaking, role challenging—how can that be better?

Mary acts decisively and chooses devotion to Jesus. Can I break out of patterns that distract me from God and follow Mary into a single-minded focus on Jesus? Is Jesus enough?

Mary, I need a sister like you—a sister who models loving "God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind" (Luke 10:27a).

How will you choose Jesus today? How will you love God with all of who you are?

written by

LINDA BOYLES
ASSISTING MINISTER OF CARE

DAY 20

THE UNKNOWN WOMAN

KNOWN, EVEN WHEN
ALONE IN THE CROWD

..... MARK 5:24B-34

Though we don't know her name, Mark tells us three things about this woman. She'd been suffering from an illness for 12 years (think what you were doing in 2009 to appreciate how long that was). This woman had spent everything she had seeking a cure. Unfortunately, she'd become worse, with nothing to show for losing all her monetary resources.

This woman was also alone that day, in a crowd unaware of her struggle. According to Levitical law, her condition made her unclean before God and prevented her from being near others who could become unclean by inadvertently touching her. That's undoubtedly why she was "trembling with fear" when she revealed her need to

Jesus. She was hurting in a way people around her were oblivious to because she knew they wouldn't respond sympathetically.

Amid all the joy of Christmas, are you carrying hurts, challenges or disappointments that the crowd around you may be oblivious to? If so, Jesus invites you, as He did this woman, to share them with Him. Tell Him what's weighing heavy upon your heart today—and trust that as you do, our Lord will meet you in ways you need Him to, as He did this unnamed woman.

written by

JOHN GOODALE

PASTOR OF CARING MINISTRIES

DAY 21

THE UNKNOWN MAN

UNPARALLELED FAITH

..... MATTHEW 8:5-13

"... a centurion came forward to him."
– Matthew 8:5

In old-timey movies when a villain enters the scene, the music suddenly turns suspenseful; typically pivoting to a minor key. If Matthew 8:5 had a music track, I'd imagine it to sound this way!

Here we find a character that many would have had problems with: A Roman centurion. Cue the minor music! What we have here is someone who could easily inflict fear on the world around him simply by walking up. We don't know his name. After all, who would care to know it anyway?

While Jewish leaders were typically not in the practice of enjoying the company of Roman soldiers, here

we find Jesus surprisingly ready and willing to interact and engage. Rather than shrinking back at the sight of such a man, Jesus draws near with ready healing for his servant. What's more, the text reads that Jesus responds with amazement at this man! And for what? Not because of his position of power, but because of his great, unparalleled faith.

Not a rabbi nor a disciple, but an unnamed "outsider" approaches the Messiah with nothing but raw faith to give. And Jesus, once again, shows the wideness of His mercy as He responds in healing love. Cue the major-key music!

written by

MATT HOLTZMAN

PASTOR FOR ENGAGEMENT AND CARE

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DAY 22



MARY



TRUSTING FAITH

..... LUKE 1:26–38

When visiting Nazareth, you find a fountain spring around which a beautiful church has been built. Tradition recounts that this is the spring where Mary was visited by the angel Gabriel while gathering water. “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God” (Luke 1:30). Mary. Faithful. Brave. Open. “‘I am the Lord’s servant,’ Mary answered. ‘May your word to me be fulfilled’” (Luke 1:38).

Here is the model for faith for every follower of Christ. I am the Lord’s servant. Let it be unto me as my Master demands. “I belong not to myself, but to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ,” as we learn in the Heidelberg Catechism. Let it be unto me. I belong to Jesus.

In this faith there is new birth. “No ear may hear his coming, but in this world

of sin, where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.”

Mary is rightfully called Mother of God. In her faith, the birth of Jesus was made manifest. Jesus Christ, Son of Man, Son of God, Savior, born of the Virgin Mary. It was not her faithfulness that brought Jesus into the world. Oh, no! The Spirit of God did that. But in her humble submission to the Lord, the mighty work of God was born.

It can be so for you. It can be so for me. When Christ is born again in us and we are born again in Him, the Family of God is born anew, one more member, one more child, one more soul. You are part of the Family of God.

written by

TIM McCONNELL

LEAD PASTOR

ADVENT CANDLE

JOY

I PETER 1:3–4

“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.’”

Right in the middle of fear and terror, the angel pronounces “good news that will cause great joy for all the people.” Someone needs to hear this! Have you ever been locked down by fear? Has the enemy named “Terror” chased you up and down the city streets of your life?

Belonging to the Family of God means being caught off guard by the joy of heaven. Happiness is predictable; joy catches us by surprise. Happiness results from something “good.” Joy, Kingdom joy, results from the movement of the King. By faith in the One who comes wrapped in clothes and lying in a manger, who is Lord of all, by faith in this One you have been opened up to joy unending. Lying in a manger in Bethlehem, there is a King on the move for you—and it will cause joy to thunder throughout your core.

“Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

May your Advent be filled with the knowledge of the joy of the Lord. And may the Holy Spirit swell up within you in the healing power of joy. May the Joyful One (“for the joy set before Him He endured the cross”) be seen and felt in your heart again this Advent.



DAY 23

JOB

STOCK MARKET CRASH

JOB 1, 42:1–6

When we first meet Job, he's faithfully loving the Lord and is extremely wealthy. We often don't think of a faithful pursuit of God and being rich as going hand-in-hand, but here it does, no conflict. Job has it made—family, wealth, health. Job's story starts out as a real-life testimony to how great life can feel for people at times.

But then ... Satan. Satan comes before God and mocks God, saying that the only reason Job fears the Lord is because the Lord has made

Job's life comfortable. Satan dares God to withhold protection from Job. God, in His infinite wisdom, knowing the true faithful heart of Job, allows Satan to rule over Job's world momentarily. God chooses to demonstrate His glory before Satan through Job's life.

Job is hit hard with total loss. The pain is unbearable. Complete stock market crash is only the beginning. People around Job start dying. Pain, prolonged deep anguish, becomes Job's closest companion.

And yet Job remains faithful. Even in the midst of such unspeakable pain, Job cannot deny what he knows in his heart, that there is a God and that God is worthy. How might Job's faithful response to hold onto God even in the midst of severe suffering encourage your own faith journey this Advent?

written by

MICHAEL THORNTON

PASTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP

DAY 24

JUNIA

A PROMINENT LEADER IN MINISTRY

ROMANS 16:3–16

Have you ever heard of sister Junia? She's mentioned once in Paul's greetings to his beloved ministry partners at the end of Romans: "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was" (Romans 16:7, NRSV).

John Stott asserts that Andronicus and Junia are likely a married couple and highly esteemed as

apostles, or sent ones, for Christ (Stott, Romans). Paul writes that they were in prison with him and "relatives," or Jewish kinfolk, of his. Junia is one of nine women greeted by Paul in Romans 16 showing that the dividing wall between men and women has been torn down in Christ. The Family of God is expansive. Jesus breaks through false barriers and includes you and me in His family tree. "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:28–29).

Paul's affection for his ministry partners is always so clear. May the work of Christ flowing through each of us bind us together as true brothers and sisters.

written by

MATT HOLTZMAN

PASTOR FOR ENGAGEMENT AND CARE





DAY 25

PAUL

A NEW VISION OF THE LAW

ACTS 9:1–19

Paul was shaped by the Law of God and that gave him his identity. Paul was proud of his learning and of his efforts to promote adherence to the Law. God was real to Paul through the Law.

Then Paul met the risen Jesus, and everything changed. He didn't discard the Law. He had a new understanding of it. Instead of thinking that keeping the Law would win favor with God, Paul learned that the Law pointed him to all that Jesus did for him in making him a new creation and a member of

the Family of God. And the first thing that happened to him after meeting Jesus was that a follower of Jesus was sent to him. In this first Christian relationship, Paul began to learn what living in the Family of God was like.

Paul loved that family so much, he made lists of what that life should look like: kind, patient, bearing others' burdens, and so on. These lists were not a replacement for the Law but what the Law would look like when the Holy Spirit enables us to live this way. Paul's life and teaching shows us that the Family of God bears a real resemblance to the Father.

written by

EUNICE MCGARRAHAN

PASTOR FOR ADULT EDUCATION



DAY 26

SIMON PETER

FOLLOWING JESUS

MATTHEW 4:18–20

He'd been working hard throughout the day as he had a hundred times before, when a man called out from the shore. "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people!" Now, Peter knows fishing isn't the most glamorous job, but it is honest, stable work and he makes a decent living. It is no small thing to abandon his boat and nets. And yet, there's something about this offer. Become my apprentice and I'll teach you to fish for people? Peter makes a split-second decision and follows the man on the shore.

In the following years, Peter witnesses incredible things: people with lifelong illnesses healed, bread and fish inexplicably multiplied to feed crowds of people, a life-threatening storm calmed. Peter responds to the call of Jesus in his life, and everything changes. His story is knit together with the story of God's reconciling work in Creation. Rather than being "Simon, the fisherman of Galilee who lived a quiet life by the sea," he becomes "Peter, follower of Jesus, leader of the early Church."

Jesus' call to "follow me" is the same call that is extended to you today. Have you responded? Is your story intertwined with Jesus? Or is the invitation to join the Family of God going unanswered in your life?

written by

GREG HARTNETT

PASTOR OF EVANGELISM AND YOUNG ADULTS

CHRISTMAS EVE

JESUS

SON OF MAN, SON OF GOD

..... LUKE 2:1-21

Then there is Jesus. Jesus makes the Family of God. Jesus is the center of the Family of God. When Jesus is born, we can all be a part of the Family of God.

In Isaiah, we read a prophecy of the coming Lord: "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" (Isaiah 9:6). How can an infant be Everlasting Father?

Jesus is the father of our faith. By Him we are born again. Because of His work we are adopted into the household of God. He makes us children of God when we believe in His name. Jesus is the father of a New Covenant. He is the progenitor of a new age. Through Him a new

kingdom is inaugurated and established—the Kingdom of God. Jesus fathered all this.

How can the baby in the manger be our Father? Jesus is God incarnate. Jesus the Son is one with God the Father. But also, by His birth, we are born anew. By His becoming the infant Son, we become children of God. The infant is the Father. Because Jesus was born, you can be born into the Family of God. The infant is the Father of your new and eternal life in the Family of God, and when you receive Him by faith... "Where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in." Be born in us this day, Jesus, our Everlasting Father.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

written by

TIM McCONNELL

LEAD PASTOR

THE CHRIST CANDLE

All during this Advent season, we have been lighting candles that shine in the darkness, reminding us that Jesus, the Light of the World, is coming. And now He's here! Those candles have been pointing us to Jesus, but they also are symbols of all the things we want to be a part of our lives: faith, hope, love and joy. We are tempted to try to make those things happen by managing our lives in just the right way. And those efforts might work for a while. More often than not, we experience frustration. We can't create faith, hope, love and joy to any lasting degree on our own.

Christ is central to all those things we seek at Christmas. On this Holy Night, wonder at the gifts of faith, hope, love and joy that Jesus gives you.

LUKE 2: 1-15

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

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. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 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.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, '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. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'

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

*'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.'*

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.'"

CHRISTMAS DAY SNAPSHOT



WHERE DID I SPEND CHRISTMAS DAY?



WHAT WAS THE WEATHER LIKE?



WHO DID I CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH?



WHAT TRADITION MEANT THE MOST TO ME THIS YEAR?



MY FAVORITE ADVENT SCRIPTURE:



MY FAVORITE CHRISTMAS SONG THIS YEAR:



A YEAR IN REVIEW



HOW DID I SEE GOD AT WORK IN 2021?

UNEXPECTED JOY:

UNEXPECTED SORROW:

GRATEFUL FOR:

I'M MOST PROUD OF:

PRAYER FOR 2022:



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**FIRST
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