

As the Angel Said . . . Fear Not!

Joseph and Mary, about to deliver baby Jesus, lived in Nazareth. According to prophecy 700 years earlier, Jesus would be born in Bethlehem, about 80 miles away (Micah 5:2). So God orchestrated: He used a Roman emperor, Caesar Augustus, to order that everyone go to the city of their ancestors to register and be taxed. You may recognize the names of others formerly from Bethlehem: Elimelech, Boaz, Jesse and David. Also, it was in Bethlehem that Samuel anointed David to be King (1 Samuel 16). So Mary and Joseph, both in King David's family line, traveled to Bethlehem, a four- to seven-day walk.

When the young couple arrived in Bethlehem, no room was available. This trip, in the late stage of Mary's pregnancy, would not be advised by doctors today. It shows that God's plans sometimes require inconvenience and discomfort; but what a glorious outcome awaits!

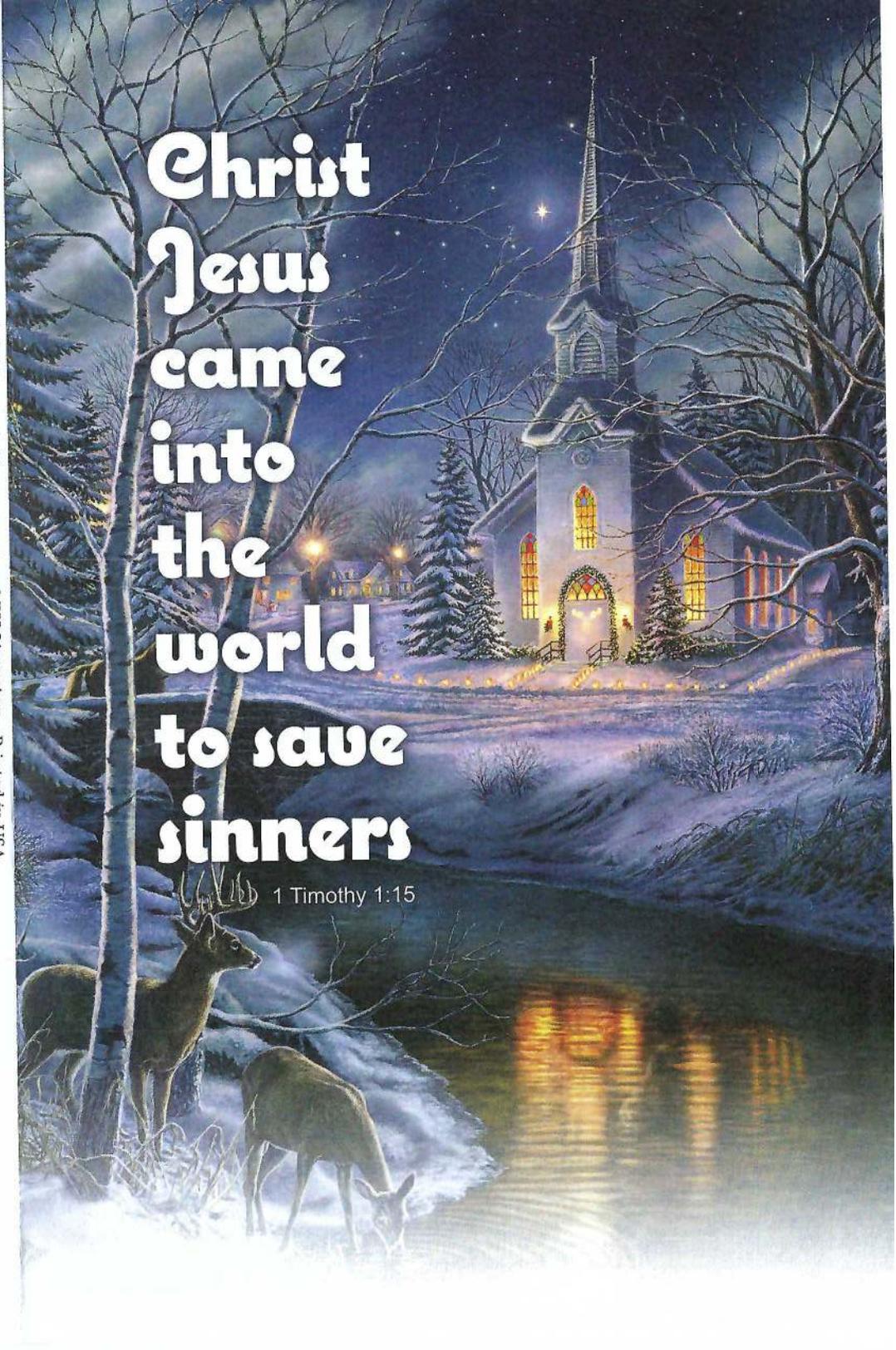
Elsewhere in God's kingdom, shepherds were frightened by a dazzling sky display. But after they heard the birth announcement proclaimed by angels, they hurried to Bethlehem and found the Savior! Then went away praising and glorifying God (Luke 2:1–20).

Disruptions to plans, troubles, fear, things whirling out of control—sound familiar? God was with Mary and Joseph and was directing each aspect of Jesus' birth. God is the same today (Malachi 3:6). He is with us (Isaiah 41:10). He is still orchestrating His plan. "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand" (Isaiah 14:24).

As the shepherds went away praising God after listening to His message and seeking the Savior, we too can cast aside our fear, "hear" His message by reading the Bible, seek the Savior in prayer and come away praising, "Glory to God in the highest!"

Lucinda J. Rollings

"Holy Night" ©James A. Meger, courtesy MHS Licensing · Printed in USA



Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners

1 Timothy 1:15

Covenant Church

3115 N.W. 16th Avenue Gainesville FL 32605

December 19, 2021

Call to Worship

Sounds of Hope

Invocation

Pastor Don Mauldin

Sing Unto the Lord

Hymn #249 O Come All Ye Faithful

Welcome and Announcements

Recognition of Guests

Mission Moment

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Worship in Song

Hymn #250 O Little Town of Bethlehem

Offertory Prayer

Joe Morgan

Offertory

Rose Morgan

Special Music

Sermon: "God is Good..."

Pastor Don Mauldin

Scripture: Luke 2:1-20

Hymn of Benediction

Hymn #279 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Merry Christmas!

Covenant News

Our ministry for December is Helping Hands. Helping Hands is a group of volunteer health professionals who have provided free healthcare to the poor and/or homeless for over 30 years. The clinic is staffed by social workers, registered nurses, advanced registered nurse practitioners, physicians, and community service volunteers. 140 people in all! Over the years, there have been over 50,000 visits with over 12,000 individuals seeking care. Half of those served are homeless, ranging from months to decades on the streets.

Covenant Christmas Social tonight at 5 PM. The get together will be a time for fellowship and food for Covenant members and friends and their families. Covenant Church will provide plenty of boiled shrimp with cocktail sauce and drinks. Bring a favorite finger food to share with others. It will not be a complete meal like the Thanksgiving dinner but there should be plenty of food and time to visit with each other.

***Christmas Eve service on
Friday, December 24 at 5 PM***

The YAH group is planning to meet on Tuesday, Jan. 11 at Covenant Church at 10:00 am. We need to get together to discuss the future of our YAH group since we have lost our Beloved leader, Madge Bush. Those of you who belong and those of you who would like to join--PLEASE COME