

Shepherds Praised God at the Good Shepherd's Birth

While shepherds watched their flocks by night, All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down, And glory shone around.
"Fear not!" said he; for mighty dread Had seized their troubled mind,
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring, To you and all mankind."

Nahum Tate

Suppose the shepherds who spread the word of Jesus' birth, as recorded in Luke 2, were in the crowd listening to Him in John 10:11. They would have heard him say, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," and they would have marveled at that news, also.

In Luke 19:10 we read the reason Jesus was born—"to seek and to save that which was lost." This truth is illustrated in Matthew 18 and Luke 15, where Jesus told the story of a shepherd tending one-hundred sheep. He left ninety-nine of them to fend for themselves while he searched for one that was lost, and expressed great joy when he found his one lost sheep. Was it merely a coincidence that the good news of our Savior's birth was first told to shepherds tending a flock of sheep?

New Testament writers refer to the church—those who have trusted in Jesus alone for salvation—as a flock. Paul, in Acts 20:28, urges church leaders to "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood," just as a shepherd of sheep would care for and feed his sheep. Peter makes a similar appeal in 1 Peter 5:2a.

Jesus continued in John 10, verses 27–28, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." As we remember the birth of our Good Shepherd this Christmas, let us listen for His voice and follow Him.

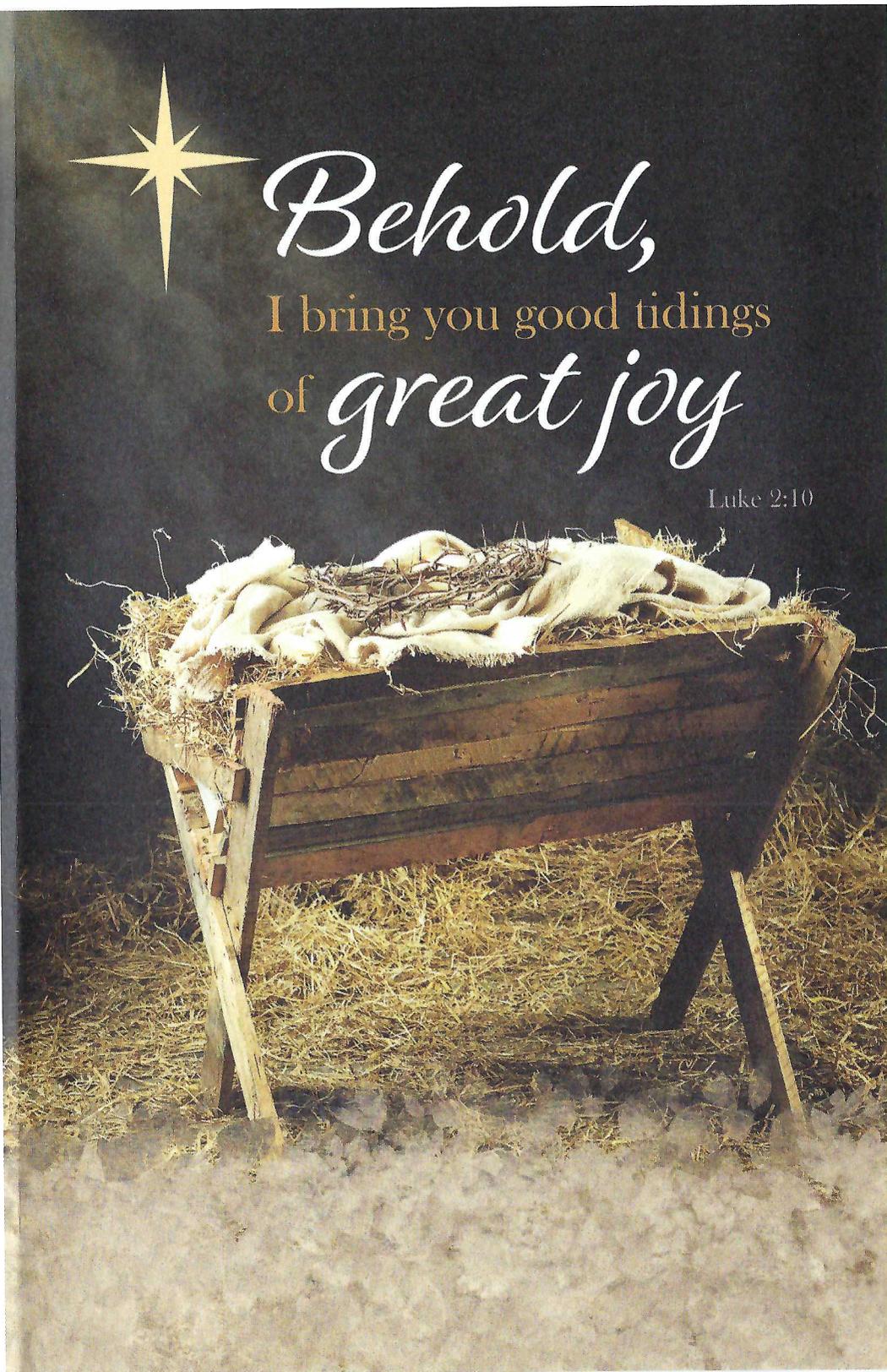
K.E. Horsley

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Behold,
I bring you good tidings
of great joy

Luke 2:10



Covenant Church

3115 N.W. 16th Avenue Gainesville FL 32605

December 17, 2023

Advent Reading

Call to Worship

Sounds of Hope

Invocation

Pastor Don Mauldin

Sing Unto the Lord

Hymn # 249 O Come All Ye Faithful

Welcome and Announcements

Ron Marks

Recognition of Guests

Mission Moment

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Worship in Song

Hymn # 270 Joy to the World

Offertory Prayer

Craig Alexander

Offertory

Rose Morgan

Color it Christmas!

Sounds of Hope

Benediction

Peace, Joy, and Love

Pastor Don Mauldin

352-262-5349

Covenant News

Our ministry for December is Helping Hands Clinic. 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.

Christmas Eve Service will be at our regular time next Sunday.

Color it Christmas!



Merry Christmas! from Brenda, Cindy, Michelle,
Rose and Tina

Please take an ornament from the garlands
around the columns before you leave this
morning to remind you to “Color it Christmas!”