



# new life news

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF NEW LIFE CHURCH OF CHRIST DECEMBER 2019

## HOPE

Luke 2:25-35

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. <sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. <sup>27</sup> Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

<sup>29</sup> "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace.

<sup>30</sup> For my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the sight of all people,

<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

<sup>33</sup> The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, <sup>35</sup> so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

**Simeon was an old man who was waiting for God to do something.** He along with the entire Jewish nation was calling on God to keep His promise and to send the "consolation of Israel." **That consolation was the Messiah, whom the Jews thought would free them from Roman rule.** Simeon got what he was waiting for. God acted. God sent His Son. **But God's plans were not the plans of the Jews. God's plans were to bring the hope of salvation to all.** God's plan was bigger than freeing the Jews from the Romans: He was planning to free sinners from their sin. Simeon probably didn't understand all that, but he did understand that God was on the move. **And that, in the person of this baby, salvation was coming.**

**This year as we walk through the Christmas season, I want to encourage you to look at that baby and see HOPE, just like Simeon did.** Realize that Jesus changed everything. He was the sign that God was moving. That God keeps his promises. That God loves his people. That God was bringing salvation. **That there is hope.** And Jesus remains for us the symbol of HOPE. When we see Jesus we know that the manger leads to the cross which leads to the empty tomb which means we have the hope of forgiveness and eternal life. **I have heard people say that they are worried about the world their kids will have to live in. But I say, in Jesus there is HOPE. For Today. For Tomorrow. For Eternity.**

~Steve Kistler

## Church Events

- Dec 14  
Christmas Concert by  
Chris Mulpas 4:00pm
- Dec 18  
Comfort & Joy Sewing  
5:30pm
- Dec 24  
Christmas Eve Service  
6:00pm
- Dec 25  
Merry Christmas
- Dec 25 – Jan 1  
Office Closed

I was given the task of **looking at Christmas** through the **perspective of Joseph**. First, I wanted to think of the ways I relate to Joseph. First, we are both guys. We have both experienced engagement to women we loved so very much. We both had dreams of what our lives were going to look like with our wonderful wives to be. We both would find out God had very different plans in store for us.

**Luke 2:10-12**

**I can only imagine the pain, the sadness, and the anger Joseph must of felt when he found out Mary was pregnant knowing he wasn't the father.** I imagine it was like being punched in the gut. The time between finding out, and the visit from the Angel must have been terrible. The constant thoughts running through his head, not being able to sleep, trying to figure out what he was going to do. **But God stepped into the momentary chaos Joseph was experiencing, and calmed the storm** (as this baby would do several years down the road).

But the angel said to them. "Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you; you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and laying in a manger."

I'm sure as shocking and unbelievable as the news was to Joseph, **it had to provide so much relief to him**, but I'm sure there were new fears that were introduced to him. What are people going to think of him if Mary's already pregnant and they are not married? **This amongst other fears did not keep him from playing the part God had intended for him.**

I get amazed at Joseph's perseverance through the entire Christmas story. **In Romans it says, "Perseverance produces character", and I believe we can tell all these years later, the awesome character of Joseph.** It goes on to say character produces hope. Well, the Christmas story definitely gives us hope. **I'm just so glad, that our brother Joseph took on the challenge God gave him.** I hope we can all use his story of an awesome example of perseverance in our lives when things don't go according to plan.

~Jason Sharp



Can you *imagine* what it would be like to be in Mary's shoes? Being just a *young girl*, engaged to be married to her fiancé and then to be *told by an angel* that she was going to carry the *Savior of the world*. I don't know about you, but I would be *totally freaked out!!*

I think I would ask some of the same questions though. Just like Mary, I would ask "*Why me?*" She felt she was just an ordinary girl, just like all of us would have thought. What a true honor that would have been when the angel replied, "*You have found favor with God!*" Wow!! How amazing would that have been to hear?

Then the question, *how?* I am a virgin. Then the angel replied, "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.*" Wow again!!

And then how would she tell Joseph and her family? Would they *believe* her? And you know from the story, that *Joseph did not* until an angel came to him in a dream and said "do not be afraid, *take Mary as your wife*" and explained that the child *conceived in her* was from the *Holy Spirit* and that she will give birth to the *Son of God*. Wow again and again! What a truly amazing *honor* that would have been to have been *chosen by God* to carry *His Son*.

I am amazed at the *attitude of Mary*. She said to the angel, "*I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said.*" I wonder if *any of us* would have had the *same response*. Would the *fear* have overwhelmed us? Would the *thought* of being the mother of the Savior totally *freak us out?* I don't know the answers to these questions. I only know that *Mary* is an example of a *true servant of God*.

~Sherri Benick

# December Birthdays



2 – Amy Beveridge

3 – David Shaffer

6 – Darryl Jones, Dianne Kehl,  
Bruce Snyder

10 – Eli Sharp

11 – Bryan Dawson, Jeff Shaffer

12 – Bill Bushong

23 – Hope Thompson

25 – Julie Clark

26 – Jacob Kindt

28 – Carolyn Awwiller, Michael  
Tokar

29 – Jackson Noe

30 – Jim Rockwell

31 – Jeff Dixon, Lorri Richards

When the shepherds were watching their flocks at night, everything seemed normal for them. Tending sheep would likely be a predictable living, as long as the sheep did not wander and vicious predators stayed away. But all of that was about to change...

***"I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger. Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors!" (Luke 2:10-12, 14 CSB)***

With the coming of the angels to proclaim the birth of the Savior, anything predictable was gone and now the shepherds were on their way to a stable in Bethlehem.

This is what we think about when we gaze upon the nativities set up in our homes: the lowly shepherds, forgotten by the world but not forgotten by God who sent a heavenly choir to tell them that the Messiah was for everyone. But we must not forget one of the best parts! The shepherds did not just go back to their sheep.

***"After seeing them, they reported the message they were told about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them." (Luke 2:17-18 CSB)***

The forgotten shepherds started telling all of Bethlehem what they saw. This should not be a surprise to us because normally when there is good news in our lives, we want to tell everyone who will listen. The shepherds had just seen the heavenly host singing praise to God, as well as the baby they had been announcing lying in a manger. They had seen the Lord's promise with their own eyes. That is not something that you keep quiet, so they told everyone in sight!

In Matthew's gospel we read that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus did not return home to Nazareth right away. Before the wise men came, they had been staying in a house in Bethlehem for as much as two years. I have always wondered why. I believe the shepherds were the reason! It only makes sense that if you have a town full of people who had just been told that the promised Christ of God had come to the world, that at least some in their town would want that blessing to stay with them. There may have been no lodging available when they came into town, but the message of the shepherds changed all that. **They would MAKE ROOM for this blessed gift from God.**

I wish Christians would be more like the shepherds who shared the Good News of Jesus with everyone. The shepherds almost certainly went door to door with what they knew. Why is it so hard to tell anyone today about Jesus? It doesn't have to be. **All we need to do is tell what we know... THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD HAS COME FOR US!!!**

~Chris Mulpas

**The Staff and Elders at New Life Church of Christ  
wish your family a very Blessed and Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year!**

**May you always remember and be thankful for why  
we celebrate Christmas!!**

**Steve, Jason, Chris, Sherri, Eric, Jon, Scott & Lyle**