

## Morning Worship

December 6, 2015

Pastor — Allan Lane	Organ --- Alva Lou Schottel
Worship Leader — Tim Waters	Piano — Sharon Waters
<b>As you enter for worship, please silence your cell phones.</b>	
(CCLI permit # 424692 covers all copyright song lyrics)	
Hymn # 94 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"	Tim/People
Worship Prayer	Allan Lane
Welcome and Fellowship	Allan/People
Chorus #82 "Emmanuel"	Tim/People
Advent Candle Recognition	Jack and Flo Conard
Hymn # 88 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"	Tim/People
Missions Moment	"Dave and Ivette: The Philippines"
Hymn # 101 "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"	Tim/People
Offering Prayer	Bill Schottel
Tithes and Offerings	People
Offering Music	Sharon Waters
Hymn # 76 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"	Tim/People
Anthem "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"	Worship Choir
Children's Worship	
Scripture Reading	Allan/People
Message	Allan Lane
Hymn # 281 "Speak to My Heart"	Tim/People
Prayer Concerns	Allan/People
Chorus # 95 "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"	Tim/People

## Angelic Encounters

Luke 2:9-14

*While we do not know very much about angels, we do know they were very involved during the first advent of Christ. Let's look at four different reactions to these early angelic encounters in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.*

In one of the earliest recorded Christmas carols found in 1 Timothy 3:16, we read these words: "Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory." We know that angels were present at His Temptation (Matthew 4:11), in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43), at His Resurrection (Mark 16:5), at His Ascension (Acts 1:10-11), and they will accompany Him at His Second Advent (Matthew 25:31). And angels were very involved during His first advent. Let's look at four different reactions to these early angelic encounters in Matthew and Luke.

### 1) Denial and Doubt . (Luke 1:5-25)

The first appearance of an angel in the gospel accounts takes place in the opening verses of Luke when Gabriel, one of only two named angels in the Bible (the other being Michael) appears to Zechariah to tell him that he and his wife Elizabeth were going to have a son named John. Luke 1:7 indicates that "they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years." Zechariah was a priest and when it was his turn to serve in the Temple to burn incense, the angel of the Lord appeared and verse 12 tells us that he was "gripped with fear." The angel comforted him and said in verse 13, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer

has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John." The angel then proceeded to describe what kind of person he would be as well as his purpose: "...to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Even though Zechariah had been praying for a child and even though he was a religious guy he denied and he doubted in verse 18: "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years." Because of his doubts, he is made dumb (literally) and is not able to speak until the baby is born. Luke 1:64 tells us that when he is finally able to speak eight days after John's birth, the first thing he did was to praise God. He then breaks into a song with these opening lyrics in verse 68: "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because He has come and redeemed his people." The song ends with an allusion to Isaiah 9:2 in verse 79: "To shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace."

## **2) Unsure with Surrender . (Luke 1:26-38)**

In the next angelic encounter, Gabriel appears to a virgin named Mary six months later. After giving a greeting, Mary is greatly troubled and so we hear these words of comfort once again: "Do not be afraid..." Mary is then told that she will be pregnant and give birth to a son and she is to give him the name Jesus. In verse 32 Gabriel tells her a little about the baby she will give birth to: "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High..." While Zechariah denied and doubted when he heard the amazing news, Mary was simply not sure how all this would happen when she asks in verse 34: "How will this be...since I am a virgin?" After Gabriel gives her a few more details that must have been very difficult for a teenager to comprehend, Mary responds with the heart of a servant in verse 38: "I am the Lord's servant...May it be to me as you have said." Mary wasn't sure how it was all going to work out but she surrendered anyway.

## **3) Acceptance and Action . (Matthew 1:18-25)**

Joseph needed some divine intervention after he found out Mary was pregnant because he knew he wasn't the father. His reputation was on the line. What was he going to do? Because he was a righteous man, he determined to end the engagement as quietly as he could.

In the middle of his misery, Joseph gets a visit. Let's look at Matthew 1:20-21: "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. 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.'" This unnamed angel fills in some of the blanks for Joseph but first he settles Joseph's anxious heart by saying, "Do not be afraid." Amazingly, he is being asked to raise a child that is not his. And, he's given a glimpse of the glory of this child as the angel tells him that this boy will be the Savior, fulfilling the prophecy of a "sure sign" from Isaiah 7:14. Joseph immediately accepts his assignment and acts on it when we read, "he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife."

## **4) Believed and Broadcasted . (Luke 2:8-20)**

The final exhibit of angelic intervention takes place when God rocks the routine of some guys who are just out doing their job. Luke 2:8-20: "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." In the midst of the mundane, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared. Into the darkness of a silent night came the brightness of the glory of the Lord. I'm

sure they were rubbing their eyes and shaking in their sandals. In fact, the word "terrified" means that they were alarmed and agitated.

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid.' Once again, an angel has to tell humans to chill out. The reason they did not need to be afraid is because the messenger was bringing "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 lying in a manger.'"

As the shepherds are trying to handle the message from this one messenger, they are taken aback again in verse 13: "Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God..." The word "suddenly" means that the heavenly host came unexpectedly and without warning. The phrase "great company" means there were so many that it was impossible to count; a vast array of angels. The sky was filled with a multitude of mighty messengers. The phrase "heavenly host" refers to the Lord's army in other passages of Scripture like 2 Kings 6:17: "Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." The shepherds watched as heaven opened up and literally saw an entire militia of messengers, hundreds and thousands of angelic warriors worshipping God.

By the way, while angels do sing in other instances, this time they say in verse 14: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." Notice that peace comes only after praising. We must put God and His glory first and then peace will come. While this is a neat time of the year, there is nothing magical about this season if one does not know the Christ of Christmas. The phrase "Happy Holidays" is meaningless without an acknowledgement of the holiness of God.

After witnessing this incredible display of unbridled adoration and praise, the shepherds knew that they had to move in verse 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.'" They discussed what they should do and were unanimous in their decision to head to Bethlehem. I love verse 16 because it shows that their fear had been replaced with faith and then their faith went to their feet: "So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger." There was no delay. The word "hurried" carries with it the idea of speed. It was no small matter for them to leave their sheep behind because they could have lost their jobs by leaving them unattended.

The shepherds then became messengers of the message they had received from the angel in verse 17: "When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them." With hearts filled with gratitude, these men broke out into praise in verse 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."

## **Conclusion**

There are angels everywhere and I believe they are still doing God's work today. But whether we see or hear an angel doesn't really matter. What matters most is that we get God's message and that we respond to it. Which Christmas character most represents where you're at today?

## **Respond to the Message of Christmas**

- Are you denying and doubting? Don't be like Zechariah and allow your doubts to delay a decision. Did you know that angels are very curious about Christmas? In fact, they have studied salvation and are amazed by it. 1 Peter 1:12 says that "Even angels long to look into these things." Angels don't understand everything about

redemption because they can't experience it but my guess is that they're dumbfounded when people deny and doubt. Ask God to dispel your doubts; study the Scriptures and be open to the supernatural. Wise men still follow Him; dumb people don't.

- Are you a bit uncertain but ready to surrender? Mary wasn't sure about everything but she surrendered anyway. Luke 2:11 says that a Savior is born to you. Christmas must become personal. Have you personally received Him even if you're a bit uncertain? When you repent and receive all that Jesus has for you, Luke 15:10 tells us that "there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels over one sinner who repents." The angels are ready to throw a party on your behalf but you must first receive Jesus as your personal Savior. Will you do that right now?

Friends, heaven is now open but it won't stay that way forever. John 1:51: "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." At the heart of Christmas is a gift heralded by the angels. It's a present that must be received: a gift that must be opened.

- Are you ready to accept and act? Joseph is a good model of someone who put feet to his faith. What is God asking you to do right now? No matter how difficult it is, if God is telling you to do it, that's what you need to do.
- Do you believe and will you broadcast the good news? Have you ever noticed the middle letters in the word "evangelism?" Do you see the word "angel" there? We are called to believe and broadcast the good news now, just like the angels did back then. The shepherds communicated the Christmas story. We are now the messengers of the manger story. Who can you point to the Savior this season? Invite a friend to church next Sunday.

### ***Be a Manger Messenger!***

### ***Peace to Men***

Are you familiar with singer Travis Tritt? He's a famous Country singer, but before he made it big, Tritt spent years playing in small out-of-the-way bars and taverns. He says that, as you might expect, some of these were dangerous places. His fans were mostly drunks who had a hard time controlling their tempers. Thus, bar fights would break out, and even the entertainers were in danger. He learned to handle those risky crowds. He said: "Just when a bar fight started getting out of hand, when bikers were reaching for their pool cues and rednecks were heading for the gun rack, I'd start playing 'Silent Night.' It could be the middle of July -- I didn't care. Sometimes they'd even start crying, standing there watching me sweat and play Christmas carols."

Don't be surprised that the singing of a few Christmas carols can bring peace to a bunch of drunken men in a tavern. Christmas Carols can do that because that's what an original Carol promised. Luke 2:14 tells us the angels sang a carol that declared: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." Peace to Men was the promise of that first carol. Without God's peace, the world can be a very violent place.

About 27 years before Jesus was born Rome experienced something unique that history refers to as the *Pax Romana*, or the peace of Rome. It began with the reign of Augustine, Emperor of Rome and lasted until about 180 A.D., a period of 200 years. There were a few internal conflicts, but their nation rarely went to war during this time period. Their *Pax Romana* offered something the world hadn't known for centuries: a nation at peace from war. Peace was only yours if you were Roman. If you weren't Roman, you could have peace with Rome, but it was enforced at the point of a sword. You did things their way, or there was no peace. While this was a time of great national security, it was also a time when people were filled with uncertainty and violence. There was peace from war in Rome, but no real peace within the hearts of men.

So, when the angels sang that the Messiah had come, they were declaring that God was

offering something Rome could not give. They said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests." At the height *Pax Romana*, the angels of God declared that a newborn baby was going to offer a new and different kind of peace, better than the world could offer. During His time on earth, Jesus told His followers He had come to offer us this different peace. Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27). That, my friends, is what Christmas is all about!

God Bless You!  
Bro. Allan

## Opportunities For Service

### **Living out Your Spiritual Commitment . . . and Fulfilling Christ's Divine Plan**

#### **Sunday, December 6, 2015**

Choir Rehearsal..... 9:00 am

Sunday School ..... 9:15 am

Morning Worship.....10:30 am

Nursery: Volunteers as needed

Ushers: Larry McKahan, Isaac Waters, Ken Kirkpatrick, Bill Schottel

Alternate: Steven Buckley

Christmas Tea at the Lane's 2-4 pm

No Evening Worship

#### **Monday, December 7**

Food Kitchen

#### **Wednesday, December 9**

Prayer Warriors.....10:00 am

Youth Study.....6:30 pm

Bible Study.....6:30 pm

Adult Choir .....7:30 pm

#### **Thursday, December 10**

R Team.....6:30 pm

#### **Sunday, December 13, 2015**

Choir Rehearsal..... 9:00 am

Sunday School ..... 9:15 am

Morning Worship.....10:30 am

Nursery: Volunteers as needed

Ushers: Steven Buckley, Ken Nice, Don Sharp, Fred Kerns

Alternate: Isaac Waters

Evening Worship..... 6:30 pm

#### **Wednesday, December 16**

Youth Study..... 6:30 pm

Prayer / Bible Study .....6:30 pm

Adult Choir ..... 7:30 pm

#### **Thursday, December 17**

O Team.....6:30 pm

#### **Up-Coming Events.....**

**December 6 — Christmas Tea at the Lane's 2-4 pm**

**December 7 — Food Kitchen**

**December 9 — Prayer Warriors 10 am— Ladies: Don't forget  
the Gift Exchange**

**December 20 — Food Pantry Collection Day**  
— Choir Presentation

**December 21 — Food Pantry Day at Patee Park Baptist**

**December 23 — Christmas Eve “Eve” Service**

**December 24 — Christmas Eve—Office Closed**

**December 25 — Christmas—Office Closed**

## **GROW Team**

Commit to **GROW!** **Everyone make a contact!** Invite someone to Bible Study and Worship this week. ☺

### **Sunday Nights**

We will not have Sunday Evening Service here tonight. Watch the weekly schedule to know when we will meet during the month of December.

### **Wednesday Night Prayer and Bible Study**

We will be meeting this Wednesday at 6:30 pm for Prayer and Bible Study. Plan to attend!

### **Christmas Card Exchange**

As in the past, the Christmas card boxes are in the hallway. Share a card with other church members and donate the postage you save to Lottie Moon!

CHRISTMAS CHOIR  
PRESENTATION  
DECEMBER 20 AT  
10:30 AM WORSHIP

**Patee Park Food Pantry**  
Collection Day  
December 20

Donated items may be placed in the basket in the hallway. You may donate monetarily as well. Thank you for supporting this ministry of our church.

**Christmas Eve “Eve” Service**  
**Wednesday, December 23, at 6:30 pm**

### ***For the Record***

Sunday School.....	28
Visitors.....	1
Total.....	29
Contacts Made.....	7

Morning Worship.....	46
Children's Worship .....	11
Sunday Night .....	N/A
Wednesday Night .....	19

### **Financial Record:**

Weekly Budget..... \$ 2,040.52  
 Offering Received... \$ 1,978.51

### **Offering Received by Mail:**

### **December Counting Team:**

Don Beavers and Jordan Lane

### **December Van Driver:**

Mike Green

Remember to call 232-3747  
**before 8 am** if you need a ride.

### **December Member Birthdays:**

03 ... Brent Fortune  
 08 ... Madeline Swink  
 09 ... Allison Adkinson  
 11 ... George Ferbert  
 15 ... George Burgess  
 16 .. Addison Leichti  
 16 ... Doris Richardson  
 19 ... Jessica Kirkpatrick  
 20 ... Leona Reynolds  
 20 ... Brenda Burgess  
 23 ... Joseph Coats

### **December Anniversaries**

Bill and Alva Lou Schottel  
 December 22, 1962

George and Maxine Ferbert  
 December 31, 1955

### ***Prayer Requests ...***

Maxine Stark—friend of Conard's  
 Kenneth Hoenshell—friend of Conard's  
 Linda Dotson and Family  
 Family of Eleanor Becerra  
     -Brigida's mother  
 Maxine and George Ferbert  
 Bill Haskins—recovery  
 Joyce Izer—Praise the Lord for healing!  
 Stacy Gray—cancer treatment  
 Muriel Elder and Family  
 Linda Rails—Doris' Richardson's sister

Grant Schottel—advanced training  
Henrietta Caballero—Brigida's Sister  
Austin Chalfant—Abby's nephew  
Gary and Marilyn Singleton—health  
Bob Barquist—cancer  
Louanne Laurence—Joyce's Mother  
Lester Buck Kathryn Beavers  
LoLeta Middleton Dorothy Post  
Allen Jennings Ann Riddle  
Jim Winans Jozy Winans  
Nellie Reynolds Leona Reynolds  
Kevin Duty Kenny Duty  
Madeline Swink Bobby Griswold  
Lois Pace Susan Patten  
Debbie Sands Sue Higgins  
Brenda Burgess Judy Anderson  
Carolyn Houts Roscoe Lane  
Keon McKahan Dorothy Post  
Missionaries Don and Diane Combs  
Nickolay Nazaruk, Peski 2 Church  
David and Deborah Grace  
Jeanette Swackhamer—Beja People  
Our Nation and Leaders  
Our Military Service Women and Men  
Terrorism in our world

## Today's Prayer Requests ...

## **Our Nation and our Leaders ...**

## Five More New Families...