

## **Signs of the Season: Signs and Glory**

Rev. Cameron D St.Michael –December 24 2025

Christmas Eve 2025

### **Greeting (Luke 2)**

Leader: Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you!

People: It is wonderful, joyous news for all people.

Leader: Your savior is born today in David's city, Christ the Lord!

People: A newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger!

**Opening Prayer:** O God our Father, you have brought us again to the glad season when we celebrate and give thanks for the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that his Spirit may be born anew in our hearts this day. Open our ears that we may hear again the angelic chorus of old. Open our lips that we, too, may sing with uplifted hearts. Open our eyes that we may see your true light. May we celebrate our Emmanuel, our God with us, as we celebrate the miracle of Christ's birth. Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace. Let there be goodwill to all as we celebrate Christmas. Help us as we reflect on the signs of the season. Help us to understand your timing and truth as we hear stories of faithfulness. Let us celebrate your glory and power as we share in this Christmas journey. May you help us to greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ, our Emmanuel, so that we may know peace and light. Amen.

### **Christmas Eve Sermon:**

Tonight, I want to tell you the story of an empty stocking. Once upon a midnight clear there was a child's cry. A blazing star hung over a stable and wise men came with birthday gifts. We haven't forgotten that night down the centuries. We celebrate it with stars on Christmas trees, with the sound of bells and with gifts - but especially with gifts. You give me a book. I give you a tie. Aunt Martha has always wanted an orange squeezer and Uncle Henry could do with a new pipe. Oh, we forget nobody - adult or child. All the stockings are filled. All, that is, except one. And we have even forgotten to

hang it up. The stocking for the child born in the manger. It's his birthday we're celebrating. Don't let us ever forget that. Let us ask ourselves what he would wish for most and then let each put in his share. Loving kindness, warm hearts... and a stretched-out hand of tolerance. All the shining gifts that make peace on earth.

These are not my words, but the words of one of my favorite Christmas movies, the Bishop's Wife. They are given in a sermon in that movie, and every year I hear those words and every year I find joy in them. Honestly, I like starting my own message out with that quotation because I have yet to find a Christmas message where it doesn't apply. We have been on a journey to the manger, watching the signs of the season. And now that we are here, we are called to remember why we are here. When we speak of the glory of God, we often think about a storm cloud or a burning bush. We think of signs and wonders that boom and crackle. We think of signs so big they are hard to miss. But we are reminded that the glory of God is shone to us on Christmas in a very different way. It is the glory of God shown in the birth of a child. It is an announcement that is not brought to the mighty and powerful, but to lowly shepherds as they watch their flocks by night. And I have to be honest, I when I hear these words in my head, they are words spoken by Linus from A Charlie Brown Christmas. "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And we hear the angels sing "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

God's glory is shown to us through the baby that is born and laid in a manger. Those shepherds go to see the child and tell the story. A story that we are still telling 2,000 years later. Because it is a story of the glory of God being revealed in a way that shapes and forms our very lives. We heard it sprinkled throughout the readings for this evening. That the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. That the light will not be overtaken by darkness. The grace of God has appeared and brought to us salvation. That the one to bring peace has been born in Bethlehem. That the heavens

are glad and the earth rejoices. Like Mary, let us ponder these words and let us hold them dear in our hearts. Because they tell us of the glory of God revealed to us in Jesus Christ, our redeemer. That we should not be afraid, but we should rejoice because on this night we bear witness to the birth of our Emmanuel, our God that is always with us. Not matter what.

This is the message that I remember when I try to remember what Christmas is all about. Because it is sign that our Emmanuel has come: God is with us. God is with the humble and the lowly. God is with the kind and the compassionate. God is with you and God is with me. Because Jesus Christ came to be a sign that we are worthy of love. These are the signs of the season: that we see people believe in peace on earth and goodwill towards men. That we see people seek out the good in others. That we look around and we find the light of our Lord shining brightly. Let us be inspired to fill that empty stocking with loving kindness. Let us put in our share of grace and mercy. Let us fill it with light so that it illumines our lives all the year round. Let us be like those shepherds as they returned to their fields, that we may glorify and praise God for all we have heard and seen. And let us celebrate the signs of the season, for Jesus Christ is born. Jesus Christ is born. Amen.

**Dismissal with Blessing:** Heavenly Father, salvation has been given to us, a child has been born to us. Your love is born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior. Your Spirit is upon us this very night. Help us to celebrate your son by loving and caring for each other, rejoicing in the grace that has been shown to us all. Bless us with your hope, your peace, your joy, and your love this night. May the love of Christ our Lord rest in our hearts this evening as we go forth celebrating Christmas in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen and Merry Christmas!

I hope you enjoy this special printing of our Christmas Eve message!

Rev Camron D St.Michael