



Careline newsletter

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Christmas Will Always Be HIS STORY

As the year draws to a close and many wait expectantly for some miraculous change of circumstance from the last 11 months, Pastor Dennis asks, "What if things don't get better? What if they get worse?" Even in the most trying of times, all through history, we see that God accomplishes His will NO MATTER WHAT. It is after all, HIS STORY.

Should we go, not go, meet not meet? To mask, or not to mask — these are the questions we're all asking. There's much information one week and the next it is contradicted or reversed or morphs into something else. What do we believe and who can we trust? The situation of our post-COVID world leaves many in a bewildered and confused state. But during the season of the holidays, as thoughts turn to Christmas and as we retell the story once again, my thoughts inevitably turn to the times in which the story is told. If we think back 2000 years, the people of Nazareth and Judea were facing their own kind of difficulty. They had questions too. A young builder named Joseph was betrothed to an eligible, young village girl named Mary. Mary was expecting a baby, but it wasn't Joseph's. The scandal and confusion was great for him. To marry or not to marry? To annul the betrothal or not? In the middle of wedding preparations and the chaos of the news of a baby, a decree went out that ALL should report to their birth towns for the Roman census. With so many questions and Mary expecting, should they go, or not? Good question. I believe Joseph asked God. How do I know?

Well, I don't know that exactly, and the scripture does not say this explicitly. But Joseph was described as a righteous and good man and if you consider the fact that he received a divine dream to help him make the decision to marry his already pregnant fiancée instead of putting her away, then it's easy to believe Joseph would seek God's further counsel. He knew God had a plan and it was not going to be changed. So Joseph packed it up and took Mary with him to Bethlehem. God knew the needs of Mary and the precious cargo that she was carrying and He also knew where Jesus would be born. This birthplace was prophesied by Micah an 8th Century BC prophet in Micah 5:2. Every detail was planned and fulfilled. We see that even when life throws us wicked curve balls, God is sovereign and still on His throne. Nothing that has happened is a curve ball to God. He used Caesar's decree to bring the Jesus to Bethlehem for the appointed time of His birth and we can be sure that God will use all of the circumstances of our time to bring us all to where He desires us to be. I hope the truth of that fact is encouraging to you today and that you can see how God is

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Mark Your Calendars

**12.13—Angel Tree Gifts
Due Back to CBC**

**12.14—Angel Tree Family
Drive-Thru Event**

**12.20—Church-Wide Caroling
Teams Disperse for
"Socially Distanced
Musical Greeting Cards"**

**12.24—Church Office
Closes @ Noon
thru 1/4/21**

**12.24—Christmas Eve
Carols, Communion,
and Candlelight
Service**

12.25—Merry Christmas!

**12.27—Regular Sunday
AM Schedule**

leading us through all of this. I want us to be in the middle of His will and plan and not just hanging on to the shirt tale of His will. He has plans for some that have had to stay home. He knows where you are, so ask Him why He has you where you are. For those that are out, what is His plan for us? I don't think His plan is for us to just exist. God has a desire for us and whatever circumstance we find ourselves in, God wants to use us. Can you imagine what the early disciples thought when they were all being arrested and put in jail, probably thinking, "How is *this* in God's plan?" Paul was thrown between two guards in a dungeon, but God had a plan and used Paul's letters from prison of the edification of the Church. Even Christ's death on the cross was a plan that no one would have conceived of except for God. And who among us isn't a sinner and need of a savior? Aren't we glad God thinks ahead of us?

You see all that we go through in life, God desires to use to show His Glory, through His mercy and grace. Christmas time is the time when the greatest plan that this world has ever seen or ever will see began. It was a plan designed before the world was ever formed and it is a plan that will be working through eternity.

Which brings me to my last point, and whether some reading this thinks it's political or not, I'm going to say it because it's BIBILICAL. Pray for our country's upholding of the sanctity of life. I am afraid that the direction of the incoming leadership has demonstrated a lack of belief that the lives of the unborn are important. We've been here before in our country, but we were making some strides toward standing up for the rights of the most innocent among us. Abortion is a tragedy for all involved, but legalized abortion as the regular practice of a society is abhorrent to the Lord and it is our country's greatest failure in my opinion. We have plumbed the depths of depravity as a nation when we can say that a full-term baby's life can be extinguished because of inconvenience, paternal questions, deformity, or whatever other reasons a person might try to use to justify it.

No matter how you see it, the life of the child is precious and should be considered first. They are innocents. We must answer for how we treat them. Pray for this incoming administration and other state and national leaders to have an understanding about life and when life really begins. Pray for those that are being and have been duped by the ideology that abortion is perfectly fine. Many are told that it is the best thing and now they live with burden and heartache they never knew would come with their decision. Pray they will find peace in Christ Jesus. Pray for our nation to understand that "ALL LIVES MATTER!" Even and most especially the unborn. God has a purpose for every life.

So, as we look ahead with the questions, "What do we do?" Let us remember God desires to use us where He has us! Whether in quarantine or in the public, whether at work, or at home, whether sick or in health, whether this or that political party is in control, God has a plan and He is sticking to it and nothing will stop Him.

No matter what our circumstance may be, and it may get worse before it gets better, just remember, nothing could stop Christ from being born in Bethlehem, and nothing is going to stop God's plan for the Gospel being shared today. Let us in be in prayer about how we as a church can become more influential in our community with the greatest news that has ever been heard—peace on earth! Jesus came, He lived, He died, He was buried, He rose again from the grave, and remember – He is coming BACK! God and sinners reconciled!

Have a great Christmas and share Jesus with everyone He puts in your path! He is the reason for all seasons.

Bro. D

Luke 2:30-32

"I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!"

"For it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child Himself."

—CHARLES DICKENS



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Thanks to Dad Hengeveld (See Luke 2:1-16)

12-20-2001

SORRY FOLKS, WE'RE BOOKED SOLID ... GOD HIMSELF COULDN'T GET A ROOM HERE TONIGHT



TRU CHOICE
PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTER

TruChoice Pregnancy Resource Center offers
free & confidential counseling options in San Marcos, TX.
For more information call or text 512-396-3020.

We will also provide you with important information about all of your pregnancy options — *abortion, parenting, adoption* — and will let you explore them while providing a nonjudgmental and safe setting.

TruChoice Pregnancy Resource Center is here to provide you with information about all of your pregnancy options so that you can make the best decision for you and your partner.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Della Uhr <u>Celebrate Recovery</u> 6:30— Meeting	2 Zula Swan Melanie Gold Regular Schedule	3 Josh Kidd 6:30 PM Praise Team & Band Rehearsal	4 Cathy Chidester Brooklyn Doring	5
6 Gary Hamilton Regular AM Schedule	7	8 Gayle Champion Gaye Smith Bob Ingle <u>Celebrate Recovery</u> 6:30— Meeting	9 Danny Rodriguez Shane Scott Regular Schedule	10 Evangelina Leos 6:30 PM Praise Team & Band Rehearsal	11	12 Daniel Walker Doug Martin-Whitaker
13 Regular AM Schedule	14 Jack Caraway 7:00 PM ANGEL TREE GIFT PICK-UP DRIVE-THRU EVENT @ CBC	15 Sharon Critz <u>Celebrate Recovery</u> 6:30— Meeting	16 Regular Schedule	17 Nancy Anderson 6:30 PM Praise Team & Band Rehearsal	18	19
20 Christian Jeanes Regular AM Schedule	21 Nancy Scroggins Ruben Constante	22 Alex Sandoval <u>Celebrate Recovery</u> 6:30— Meeting	23 No Activities	24 Church Office Closes Noon Today Thru Jan 4 6:30PM Carols, Communion & Candlelight Service	25 Christmas Day	26
27 Baptism Sunday Regular AM Schedule	28 Church Office Closed	29 Church Office Closed <u>Celebrate Recovery</u> 6:30— Meeting	30 Ben Cortez Church Office Closed	31 Luanne Caraway Edward Oliphant Daniel Day Les & Kathy Turner Church Office Closed	January 1 Happy New Year Church Office Closed	2

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, December 20
 Church-Wide Caroling Teams Head Out Into
 the Highways and By-Ways

Come out and join us for
 a night of the ultimate
 socially distanced
 Christmas greeting.
 We'll stand on the stoop,
 curb, drive-way, (or
 wherever we can) of
 homes and sing carols and send Christmas
 greetings and love out to some of our senior
 saints. We'll meet at 5:00 PM at CBC Campus
 and depart in a caravan from there. Please
 feel free to wear masks or bring your own
 vehicle.



Thursday, December 24

Carols, Communion & Candlelight — Join us
 for our Christmas Eve Service and Lord's
 Supper as we tell the Christmas story with
 Scripture and song.



SILENT NIGHT

Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
'Round yon virgin Mother and Child
Holy infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-ia!
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night
Son of God, oh, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth

-Joseph Mohr & Franz Gruber
December 24, 1818



Historic photo of St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf



St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf today

Carol Story: Silent Night

The scene: Christmas Eve, 1818 in the Austrian Alps. Inside the newly constructed Church of St. Nicholas in Oberndorf, a Tyrol village near Salzburg, Father Joseph Mohr prepares for the midnight service. He is distraught because the church organ is broken due to recent flooding of the nearby Salzach river, ruining prospects for that evening's carefully planned music. But Father Joseph was about to learn again that our problems are often God's opportunities and that the Lord can cause all things to work together for good to those who love Him. The father is inspired to write a new hymn, one that could be sung without instruments, at least organless. Hastily, he writes the words, "Silent Night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright..." Taking the text to his organist, Franz Gruber, he explains the situation and asks Franz to compose a simple tune.

That Christmas Eve, 1818, "Silent Night" was sung for the first time as a duet accompanied not by an organ, but instead by a guitar.

Shortly after, Karl Mauracher, an organ repairman heard about the near-disastrous, organless Christmas Eve, acquired a copy of the text and tune that was quickly being spread abroad the region as "Tiroler Volkslied." The song came to attention of the Strasser family, famous folksingers in the area who gladly took the tune with them to folk festivals and special events up and down the Austrian alps. Eventually, the Strasser children performed the tune for the royal family, assuring the carol's fame.

"Stille Nacht" or Silent Night" was first published for congregational singing in 1838 in a widely used German hymnal. It was spread to America by German-speaking immigrants and taken to their new churches across American towns and cities and eventually appeared in its current form in a book of Sunday school songs in 1863.

Were it not for a broken organ, there would never have been a "Silent Night."

This story was abstracted and embellished from Robert J. Morgan's book, Then Sings My Soul.



The guitar believed to have been played Christmas Eve 1818.