



**A Sermon for Christmas Eve
December 24, 2024**

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Luke 2:1-20

The Shepherds knew first

We were on the hillside as usual, snuggled in with our sheep, minding our own business, perhaps dreaming a bit, looking at the stars in the night sky. It was a bit chilly, as late December usually is. Just pull that sheep a little closer, ah, warm and quiet and.....

Ka-zang!

What...who...this is scary! Now I'd never seen an angel before, but I swear that is what we saw – a being, filled with light, floating in the air right in front of us. And it spoke! To us! To shepherds! It knew we were scared, so it said first of all, "Do not be afraid; for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people." Wow. What could this angel have to tell us, the lowest of the low, outcasts from towns and other people.

The angel went on, "To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." Wha..a..a..t? The hoped for, the longed for, the Savior of our people. Wow. So where is he, we wondered. In a palace maybe?

The angel went on, "This will be a sign for you: you will find the child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." What? Lying in a feed trough? This can't be right!

Suddenly the angel was surrounded with a whole choir of angels, who sang "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth, peace among those whom he favors!"

Those whom God favors? Even us? The lowest of the low?

We started talking among ourselves, and we figured we had better check it out. The angel said in the city of David, so we ran to Bethlehem. And guess where we found him? In a stable! The baby really was lying in a

feed trough! The baby's parents, Mary and Joseph, looked as surprised to see us, as we them. We told them what the angels had said and somehow Mary seemed to know what we were talking about, as if she were pondering the message.

So we went back to our sheep and we couldn't help but glorify and praise God on our way. We were pretty noisy. But I mean really, wouldn't you be?

But here's the thing. We still couldn't get over being told about this wonderous event. God sent God's angels with the message to us, no one else. We never thought we were important enough for God to pay attention to us. But we got personal messengers! With the greatest announcement in the world! God was born into our midst, among the rich ones, the important ones, but first of all, to the poor ones like us. God wants us to know that God is with all of us, that God favors everyone, no matter what.

This is Good News. Glory to God!