

## “TAKE 10”- Worship While Away! (Sunday, December 24, 2017)

### Share:

With the prophet Isaiah, we proclaim the promise of God:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Hear the good news of great joy: A Savior is born, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace.

### Advent Candle Reading:

Tonight, is the night we have been waiting for, when waiting is transformed into awestruck wonder. We celebrate Jesus coming into this world and light all five candles. The **first candle** reminds us of the ultimate hope that comes through our Savior’s birth. The **second candle** beckons us to the peace of Christ that surpasses all understanding. The **third candle** invites us to share the joy of the shepherds and angels announcing the Savior’s birth. The **fourth candle** reminds us of the Good News of great joy that tells us God’s love is stronger than human sin. The **Christ candle** reminds us that from the moment he took his first breath until the day of his glorious return, Jesus says to each of us, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

### Read these words from a hymn today: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

*Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king.*

*Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”*

*Joyful, all ye nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies; with angelic host proclaim,*

*“Christ is born in Bethlehem!” Hark! The herald angels sing,*

*“Glory to the newborn king!”*

*Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,*

*Late in time, behold him come, offspring of the virgin’s womb.*

*Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity,*

*Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.*

*Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”*

### Read this scripture from worship: Luke 2:1-20 (*The Message*)

<sup>1-5</sup> About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire. This was the first census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to travel to his own ancestral hometown to be accounted for. So, Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David’s town, for the census. As a

descendant of David, he had to go there. He went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant. <sup>6-7</sup> While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger, because there was no room in the hostel. <sup>8-12</sup> There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

<sup>13-14</sup> At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises: Glory to God in the heavenly heights, Peace to all men and women on earth who please him.

<sup>15-18</sup> As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. All who heard the shepherders were impressed. <sup>19-20</sup> Mary kept all these things to herself, holding them dear, deep within herself. The shepherders returned and let loose, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen. It turned out exactly the way they'd been told!

### Talk together, responding to these questions:

- How does the Christmas story emphasize God's love?
- How will I respond to what God has done for me and the world?
- How will I receive and welcome God's Gift of Jesus this year?

### Pray together:

God of hope, peace, joy, and love, this day is so full! For children, this day is one of excitement and anticipation; for others, this day is filled with responsibilities and activity. Some are traveling this day to be with family or friends, while others spend the day quietly and alone. Be with us in all our varied circumstances and moods. I pray that I, and all those within my circles of care, will be especially attentive to the angels' good news: that you have come to dwell among us in Jesus Christ, full of grace and truth. In him is our great joy. Amen.

### Bless one another:

Take each person's hand and say. "God's grace is for you, God's love is upon you, God's call is within you. Be kind to yourself and others this week as a child of God."

Resources Used: *Glory to God*, The Presbyterian Hymnal  
*Feasting on the Word*, Year A, A Worship Companion