

THE ANNOUNCEMENT
Matthew 1:18-25

I. THE MAN

- A. *Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit ...” (Matthew 1:18)*
- B. What Do We Know About Joseph?
 - 1. How many pictures have you seen of Joseph holding Jesus?
 - 2. Joseph provides the crucial connection to the “House of David.”
 - 3. Joseph was probably between 18 and 20 years of age.
- C. Where Are the Shepherds?
 - 1. I’ve always preferred Luke’s Christmas!
 - 2. I like Mary singing, angels singing, and manger scenes.
- D. Misconceptions About Christmas.
 - 1. “We Three Kings.” They were not kings, they were not at the stable, and we don’t know how many made the trip.
 - 2. There was no innkeeper and Mary didn’t ride a donkey.

II. THE MESSAGE

- A. *“Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife...” (1:20)*
- B. Marry Mary.
 - 1. This was probably the most difficult decision of his young life.
 - 2. We can relate to Joseph because we have faced difficult decisions.
 - 3. We also know what it’s like when life doesn’t turn out the way we thought it would.
- C. The Baby Is God.
 - 1. Believing that he should marry Mary is one thing, but believing the baby is God is something else entirely.
 - 2. Joseph is told that the Holy Spirit is responsible for this.
- D. Call His Name Jesus.

III. THE MESSIAH

- A. *“Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel” (which means, God with us). (1:23)*
- B. The Sacrifice.
 - 1. *“The Word (meaning Christ) became flesh and dwelt among us.”*
 - 2. He understands how hard it is down here.
 - 3. Dr. Dennis Kinlaw compares the story of Abraham and Isaac to Jesus.
- C. Making the Impossible Possible.
 - 1. The incarnation is impossible. The resurrection is impossible.
 - 2. God specializes in the unexpected and unexplainable and making the impossible possible.
 - 3. It’s amazing what love can do!

Prayer Concerns: Members – Burney Biesel, David Etheridge, Edie Ford, Beverly Green, Dorothy Miles ... Friends – Willis Chapman, Emily Davis, Reggie Deloach, Bernice Hill, Teresia Hilliard, Blake Holden, Matt Jennings, Jeff Joyner, Sheena Moore, Jimmy Patterson, Allen Voss, Todd Warren ...

Christian Sympathy is extended to the family of **Geraldine Shauf** who died on Friday, December 14, and to the family of **Gwen Steward** in the death of her daughter, **Kay Irvin**.

PASTORAL PRAYER

(written by Frederick Buechner)

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Most High, Prince of Peace, be born again into our world. Wherever there is war in this world, wherever there is pain, wherever there is loneliness, wherever there is no hope, come, thou long-expected one, with healing in your wings.

Holy Child, whom the shepherds and the kings and the dumb beasts adored, be born again. Wherever there is boredom, wherever there is fear of failure, wherever there is temptation too strong to resist, wherever there is bitterness of heart, come, thou Blessed One, with healing in your wings.

Savior, be born in each of us as we raise our faces to your face, not knowing fully who we are or who you are, knowing only that your love is beyond our knowing and that no other has the power to make us whole. Come, Lord Jesus, to each who longs for you even though we have forgotten your name. Come quickly.

Hear us now as we pray the prayer you taught us to pray ...

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

MATTHEW 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and his name shall be called Emmanuel"
(which means, God with us).

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

SERMON SCHEDULE

December 24	<i>Christmas Eve Communion</i>	6:00 & 9:00 p.m.
December 30	<i>Post-Christmas Blues</i>	Matthew 2:13-23
January 6	<i>It's Only a Star</i>	Matthew 2:1-12
January 13	<i>A Miraculous Moment</i>	Matthew 3:13-17
January 20	<i>The Lamb of God</i>	John 1:29-42
January 27	<i>Changing Jobs</i>	Matthew 4:12-23