



December 22, 2019

Volume 16, Number 51

Good morning, Northside Family. Welcome to worship on this final Sunday before Christmas. Don't you love Christmas? The anticipation, the joy, the special opportunities to reflect with family and friends? From my heart to yours, I hope this is indeed a wonderful Christmas for you and your family.

Today, we're going to change up our routine. Rather than worship God in song, then hear from God in a sermon, we're going to weave songs and devotional vignettes together that focus and speak to the coming of Christ to earth. I expect that today's reflections from the lyrics of time-tested "Christmas" hymns and the testimony of Scripture to Christ's arrival on earth will bring a blessing to your faith.

The "Christmas Story" in Scripture is filled with appearances by angels. The birth of Jesus's cousin, John, was announced to a stunned, couldn't-believe-it, soon-to-be-dad, Zechariah (Luke 1.11-20). Six months later, an angel was dispatched by God to tell Mary that she would be the mother of the Christ child (Luke 1.26-38). Upon the birth of Jesus, an angel announced to shepherds that a Savior had been born in the city of David (Luke 2.8-15). The coming of Jesus to earth as the Word made flesh was filled with angel appearances and announcements.

What do you know about angels and their role in the spiritual realm? Have you ever done a personal study or been in a Bible class study on what Scripture says about angels?

Each January, between sessions of GriefShare, I lead a four-week Wednesday Bible class on a topic we may not be as familiar with. Two years ago, we had a great study on the Afterlife that was very well received. Last year, we took the story of Job and noticed how the wind that brought tragedy in the opening chapters also brings a fresh revelation of God at the end. We learned how the problem of pain and suffering can actually be avenues for God to bring the best blessings out of the worst events in our lives.

This year, I have been asked/challenged to lead a four-week study on Angels. The prep study in advance of this class has been fascinating! I'll confess, I've never studied up much on what the Bible says about angels. Since Jesus has promised to never forsake us and the Holy Spirit lives in us, why do we need angels? I've always pushed angels to the backburner in favor of emphasizing the Son and the Spirit. But the Bible has much, a whole lot more than I realized, to say about these "*ministering spirits*." I hope you will make plans to join us on Wednesdays, beginning January 8, in either the morning class in Room 19-A (10:30 a.m.) or the evening class in the Worship Center (6:30 p.m.).

Tonight and next week, our LIFE Groups will not meet and we're all invited to gather in the Worship Center at 5:00 p.m. This evening, we'll be treated to a message from **Houston Colson** entitled *Indescribable* based on Job 38.31-35.

Finally, our new Youth Minister, **Evan Rippee** began his ministry work this week. Evan's new phone number is 501-722-2752 and his email address is [erippee@northsidecofc.info](mailto:erippee@northsidecofc.info). Welcome and pray for Evan, Kim and their children as they settle in and serve among us.

Merry Christmas!  
Jim

### Shepherd's Note

We are truly blessed by God to live in this country. We enjoy prosperity and comforts that are not common to the majority of dwellers on this earth. And yet, we may feel insecure about our future here on earth, because we can see changes sweeping our country that cause concern and anxiety. However, our fundamental identity should not come from our earthly citizenship but from our citizenship in the Kingdom of God. Of course, as children of God, we have obligations and responsibilities to the country where we hold our earthly citizenship but our true identity should be as citizens of God's kingdom.

The apostle Peter, giving instruction on living Godly lives in a pagan society, writes in I Peter 2:11-12: *"Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us."* Peter addresses the Christians as foreigners and exiles. Foreigners, generally, are easy to identify. They stand out as different from those they live among. As citizens of God's kingdom, and foreigners here on earth, we should also stand out by the lives we live. The apostle Paul writes *"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ"* (Philippians 3:20) and *"For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins"* (Colossians 1:13-14).

Our earthly citizenship is not our hope for the future. The world's governments can grant or revoke freedoms and privileges as they will, but our citizenship in God's kingdom is a citizenship that joins us with other Christians the world over. We all live under different earthly governments, but are united in identity as citizens of God's kingdom and, as such, our citizenship is in a kingdom that is unshakable. May we all live lives as foreigners and strangers on this earth so that God may be glorified by our lives.

### Billy's Thoughts

My wish is for each of you a pleasant Christmas holiday. For those of us privileged to be with family in the next two weeks, no doubt this will add to our joy. For those who may not be with family, my prayer is that you will find comfort in the times you can be with other Christians worshiping the Lord.

With that last thought in mind, please remember our altered holiday schedule. Tonight, everyone is invited at 5:00 p.m. to a time of praise and a message from God's Word to be shared by **Houston Colson**. Also, next Sunday evening (December 29), also at 5:00, is another opportunity to gather with our church family for worship and praise. *This week, we will have no mid-week services* (morning or evening) and the week of the New Year's holiday there will be only one mid-week meeting on Thursday morning, January 2 at 10:30 AM (and everyone is welcome). In lieu of our evening service falling on the New Year's Day holiday, Jim and I will have a brief devotional guide to give you next Sunday that you can share with your family, friends or even alone to reflect on the blessings of 2019 and ahead to 2020.

For sure there has been a lot of debate over the last twenty centuries about the date of Jesus' birth, or whether it should be commemorated at all, or absolutely not. Some have guessed it was on December 25, others January 7, and others have argued for something completely different. I don't want to enter that battle, but point out a couple of things that I think are important and helpful. In Scripture, Jesus' birth is given importance, not because of the date, or even because of his humble birthplace. Yet, most of 4-5 chapters of Matthew and Luke are dedicated to his birth and related events and John begins his Gospel speaking of the importance of the Word (God) Jesus becoming flesh and entering our world. Curiously, at the same time, the New Testament makes no command to remember his birth, and does not allude to early Christians memorializing his birth, or relate any instructions about commemorating it.

Perhaps the guiding principle to be followed is found in Romans 14:4-7 which recognizes some of us will want to remember special calendar days, and others will not. In any case, our love for one another is more important: *"For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone."*

### Hispanic Happenings with Fernando

This month of December, we invited several church preachers and leaders to meet here at Northside to plan activities for next year. Six congregations in the area were represented at this meeting: Benton, Hope, Geyer Springs, Conway, Russellville and Batesville. Some events are planned: Fellowship meetings in Conway, Benton and Batesville; singing workshops in Hope and Russellville; a retreat in Benton and a Men's retreat also in Benton. Our plan is to grow in fellowship as we work together to reach souls in Central Arkansas.

### Events This Week

**TONIGHT: No LIFE groups.** We will all meet together at 5:00 in the worship center. **Houston Colson** will be our speaker. Please come and show your support for Houston.

**MONDAY: Pickleball** 6:30 p.m. in the Outreach Building for anyone 18 years of age and older.

**WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY: Office Closed** If you have an emergency, you can either contact an elder or call the office and leave a message. The phone will be monitored.

### Upcoming Events

**December 29: No LIFE groups.** We will all meet together at 5:00 in the worship center.

**December 30: Pickleball** 6:30 p.m. in the Outreach Building for anyone 18 years of age and older.

**January 2: Early morning Bible class** 10:30-11:30 in classroom 19a. Due to the holiday Wednesday, this class is going to be on Thursday.

**January 19: Johnson Street Church of Christ** will join us in worship for Martin Luther King weekend.

**The meal prepared** by **Janie Elliott** for the Hospice House in Bryant last Tuesday was chicken and dumplings, green beans/potatoes and corn. Janie also prepared banana nut bread for dessert.

**We have received** an invitation to the annual women's conference that is held on the Harding University campus February 21-22, 2020. This was formerly known as W.I.N.G.S. (women in God's service) Conference. It has been renamed "Bloom" to represent the spiritual growth they hope to see among the women who attend. The theme this year is "Eyes Fixed on Jesus" from Hebrews 12: 1-2. For more information please see the flyer posted on the bulletin board next to the office.

**Congratulations** to **Hermanie Pierre Guerrero** on her graduation of earning her a Doctorate in theology and chaplaincy.

### Love Notes and Heartstrings

*"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven"* (Matthew 5.16).

I love this time of year when people seem to be more kind! My prayer is that I show kindness and glorify my Father all year long.

We, 32 of us, had a great time at the ladies brunch and Dirty Santa game at **Jill Sloan's** house! One of the most stolen gifts was a trio of snowmen made by **Kim Graham!** Since everyone didn't get to take them home, Kim shared how she made them. December 30th, at 1:00, come to my house and we will make our very own!!! Get with me or **Beth Connors** with any questions! Merry Christmas to you all! *Trish*

Jim  
Fernando  
Evan  
Linda

We wish you a  
Merry Christmas  
May Christmas bring  
joy to your heart and  
happiness to your home.  
(From the staff at Northside)

Billy  
Stephanie  
Dawn

**We have had several in our Northside family who has lost loved ones recently. Sympathy is extended to:**

**Stacy Barnes** and her family in the death of her dad, **Bud Cearley**. His funeral was last Thursday in Pine Bluff.

**Rachel Lambert** and her family in the death of her grandfather, **Jim Montgomery**.

**Barbara Salley** and her family in the death of her sister-in-law, **Marie Crisp**.

**Valerie Rout** and her family in the death of her husband, **Tom**, recently.

**Prayer List: Patrick Bowers'** ablation procedure had to be rescheduled because he became ill. He underwent tests last week and is awaiting biopsy results. **Ruthie Burgess** will have hip replacement surgery on January 3 at the Maumelle Surgery Center. **Jan Hastings** will undergo outpatient shoulder surgery tomorrow at Saline Memorial. **Michelle Hastings** is now at home after having successful foot surgery last week. **Seth Henry**, Martha Davis' dad, has returned to The Manor after being in rehab for several weeks being treated with IV antibiotics. **Lillian Hogue**, Debbie Turbyfill's mother, is undergoing chemo treatments. **Laura Hutchison** is awaiting a date for a lithotripsy procedure due to a large kidney stone. **Suzanne Reed** is waiting for results of a recent MRI. **Micah Sexson**, Grisham & Teresa Phillips' son-in-law, is improving some. A g-tube was inserted last week that will hopefully make him a little more comfortable. **Harold Stuart** will see a hip surgeon on January 17 to set up a date for surgery. **Melba VanZandt's** pathology results came back cancer-free. **Doug Walker**, Margaret Organ's brother, got cancer-free results on his biopsy and his condition can be treated with medication.

**Continue to remember:** Lois Baxter, Sherry Benton, Blythe Bowers, Frank Bray, Tyler Buck, Gail Bueker, Joe Campbell, Charles Caradine, Cash Clancy, Briaunah Diamond, Todd Donahue, Susan Dorsey, Don & Patricia Flowers, Kelley Geurin, Tammy Givens, Mark Gober, Ella Graves, Steve Graves, Mark Greeno, Helen Hairston, Kenneth Haltom, W.K. Hannah, Logan Harris, Misty Harrison, Terry Hastings, Ronnie Hastings, Donna Haughee, Orville Haxton, Jan Hicks, Chris Humes, Betty Humphries, Lynne Hutto, Buddy Jones, Glenn Kays, Rod Kirk, Reba Leonard, Yvonne Lewis, Bill Loe, Cathy Loe, Wilma Lunsford, Charlotte Mabery, Robert Matheny, James Mayberry, Pat Maxwell, Dudley McClerkin, Karla McCoy, Manher & Louise Mehta, Jim Miller, Jimmy Mitchell, Mark Otwell, Wanda Otwell, Sharon Pearson, Joe Peevy, Grisham Phillips, Francille Pryor, Brenda Rhodes, Chuck Rice, Diana Richard, Shirley Ridge, Doug Robinson, Earlene Russell, Bess Sanders, Milton & Margaret Scott, Carol Shepard, Roy Slaughter, Brenda Smith, Patsy Steele, Harold Stuart, Letha Styles, Fred & Edith Swaim, Randy Townsend, Roy Treadway, Sissy Treat, Ruth VanZandt, Ron Wallace, Kathy White, Autumn Wilder, Angela Wilson, Billie Wilson, Bartha Wise, Syble Womack, and Mark Woodville.

**Names will stay on the "continue to remember" list for a month unless the office is given an update.**

**Shepherds**

Jim Acree Terry Hastings  
Carroll Davis Randy Mitchell  
Tom Davis Rob Nossaman  
Todd Ferguson Rick Treadway  
Richard Wallace

Email address: elders@northsidecofc.info  
Chairman thru December: Carroll Davis

**Deacons**

Wes Ader Michael Haltom  
Carlos Bautista Alex Hamilton  
Gary Black Josh Hastings  
Jarred Crow Todd Hastings  
Rodney Crownover Phillip Howell  
Justin Dorsey Charlie Manning  
Curtis Evans Billy McLain  
Julio Flores Steve Smith  
Kelley Geurin Alejo Solis  
Chris Givens Freddy Swaim  
Javier Guzman

**Staff**

Jim Gardner  
Stephanie Howell  
Billy McLain  
Dawn Mitchell  
Jimmy Mitchell  
Linda Pike  
Evan Rippee  
Fernando Toledo

**Records: December 15, 2019**

Bible Classes	315
AM Worship	487
PM Worship	150
Wednesday	180
Weekly budget	\$13,732.00
Contribution	\$23,373.96

**Service Schedule**

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Bible Study-Hispanic	10:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship-Hispanic	11:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Morning Bible Study	10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	6:30 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study-Hispanic	7:00 p.m.

**Office Information**

Telephone 501-315-1128  
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E-mail office@northsidecofc.info  
Web www.northsidecofc.info  
Address 917 North East Street  
Benton, AR 72015

**Office Hours**

Monday—Thursday 8:30 a.m.--4:00 p.m.  
Friday 8:30 a.m.--Noon

**10:00 A.M. Worship**

Jimmy Mitchell.....Worship Leader  
Jesus is Lord.....180  
Todd Hastings.....Welcome & Family News  
Behold Our God.....PH  
Ron Jones.....Prayer  
Josh Hastings.....Isaiah 9.6-7  
Vignette/O Come All Ye Faithful.....997  
Billy McLain.....Communion Devo & Offering  
Magnificat.....(offering song).....PH  
Jesus Loves Me.....(children’s song).....1014  
Vignette/Away In A Manger.....1017  
Vignette/Silent Night.....1003  
Vignette/Joy To The World.....1018  
Jim Gardner.....Invitation  
My Only Hope Is You.....PH  
Angels We Have Heard On High.....1002  
Tom Davis.....Shepherds Prayer

**Infant Nursery**

Pat Traylor & Charlene Beck

**Toddler Nursery**

Rachel Garner & Kristen Hamilton

**5:00 P.M. Worship**

**Communion**

Kelley Geurin

**Infant & Toddler Nursery**

Sarah Gober

**Pantry Items:**

Ramen Noodles, Canned Soup,  
Canned Chili, Saltine Crackers,  
Dish Washing Liquid, Laundry Detergent

**The backpack program for Caldwell & Howard Perrin schools** is in need of individual Mac n Cheese, individual applesauce cups, pudding cups, fruit cups, pop tarts, peanut butter or cheese crackers, individual chip bags, juice boxes and Capri Sun. Please put your items in the tubs just outside the children’s worship room in the multipurpose area.



**NEED PRAYER**

An Elder and his wife will be in the Elders’ office after services to pray with anyone that needs prayer. Elder and his wife this week:

**Carroll & Betty Davis**