

December 3, 2017



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Matthew 1:20-21; Luke 1:5-25, 26-38,
Luke 2:8-20

Psalm 47:6-7; Luke 2:20; James 5:13,
Matthew 1:1-17, Isaiah 7:14,

DAY 1

Read [Mathew 1:20-21](#), [Luke 1:5-25, 26-38](#)

- **What do you observe is happening in each of these Scripture passages?**
- **The term angel translates from Greek and Hebrew into the word "messenger." How do the angels in these scriptures fill this role?**
- **Each of the angels of the Christmas story use similar terminology when they deliver their messages. What words are most common?**
- **How did Mary react to the presence of the angel?**
- **What was Joseph's response to the angel appearing in his dream?**

DAY 2

Read [Luke 2:8-20](#)

The angel did not visit the most prestigious people in society; at God's bidding, the angel made this important announcement to humble shepherds.

- **Why do you think that is?**
- **What did the shepherds do once they heard the announcement made by the angel?**

Since the shepherds raised the lambs that were sacrificed to atone for people's sins each spring during Passover, they would have understood the importance of the Messiah's arrival to save the world from sin.

- **How ready are modern day Christians for this kind of arrival?**
- **In what ways are you preparing yourself for the coming of the Christ?**

DAY 3

Read [Psalm 47:6-7](#); [Luke 2:20](#); [James 5:13](#)

The Greek word translated as "praising" means "to speak of the excellence of a person, object or event." More specifically, in the New Testament it is used to denote "the joyful praise of God expressed in doxology, hymn or prayer, whether by individuals, the group of disciples, the community or the angels.

- **Think about this and write your own definition of praising. What does it mean to you?**

Many people have been led to believe that "praising" always involves singing, but, while the two are closely linked, praise is not limited to singing. A person can also praise God in many ways.

- **How do you offer your praise to God?**
- **What ways have you observed how others offer Godly praise?**
- **How is their version of praise similar or different from yours?**

The idea of angels singing on the night of Christ's birth has become so common that many are surprised to learn that the Bible does not unequivocally state this.

- **How do you visualize the night that Christ was born? How much of your image is based on family or church traditions and how much is based on scripture?**

DAY 4

Read [Matthew 1:1-17](#)

The genealogy of Jesus sheds light on some pretty interesting things about Jesus' relatives. Take a moment and use your concordance (or [this one](#) found online) and look up the persons named in the verses above.

- **What kind of people were they?**
- **Are you surprised by what you've learned about Jesus' ancestors?**

Jesus' ancestors were swindlers and usurpers, harlots, daughters of incest, and adulterers, exiles and prisoners; casualties of sin and death, one and all. This is the point of the angel's birth announcement. It is to sinners such as these that the angels bring good news of great joy.

- **Who do you know that needs good news?**

DAY 5

Read [Isaiah 7:14](#)

The prophet Isaiah foretold that one day the Messiah would come. This proclamation made it clear the name the Messiah would be called.

- **What is the name? What does it mean?**

For many, the name of Jesus brings about restoration of mind, body, soul...The name of Jesus is used to bring about healing, power and renewal of life.

- **What does the name of Jesus mean to you?**

As you think this through, look through the Scriptures (old and new testaments) and record the many names of Jesus. Define them in your own words.

- **How have you witnessed the names of Jesus defined through Scripture in your life?**

DAY 6

Today is a day of reflection and prayer. Give your praises to God for sending his angels to share the good news. Take time to listen for the messages that God has for you.

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St. Paul United Methodist Church
1199 Highland Ave. | Largo, FL 33770
727-584-8165 | church@stpaulumc.org

www.stpaulumc.org



St. Paul United Methodist Church, 1199 Highland Avenue, Largo, FL 33770

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