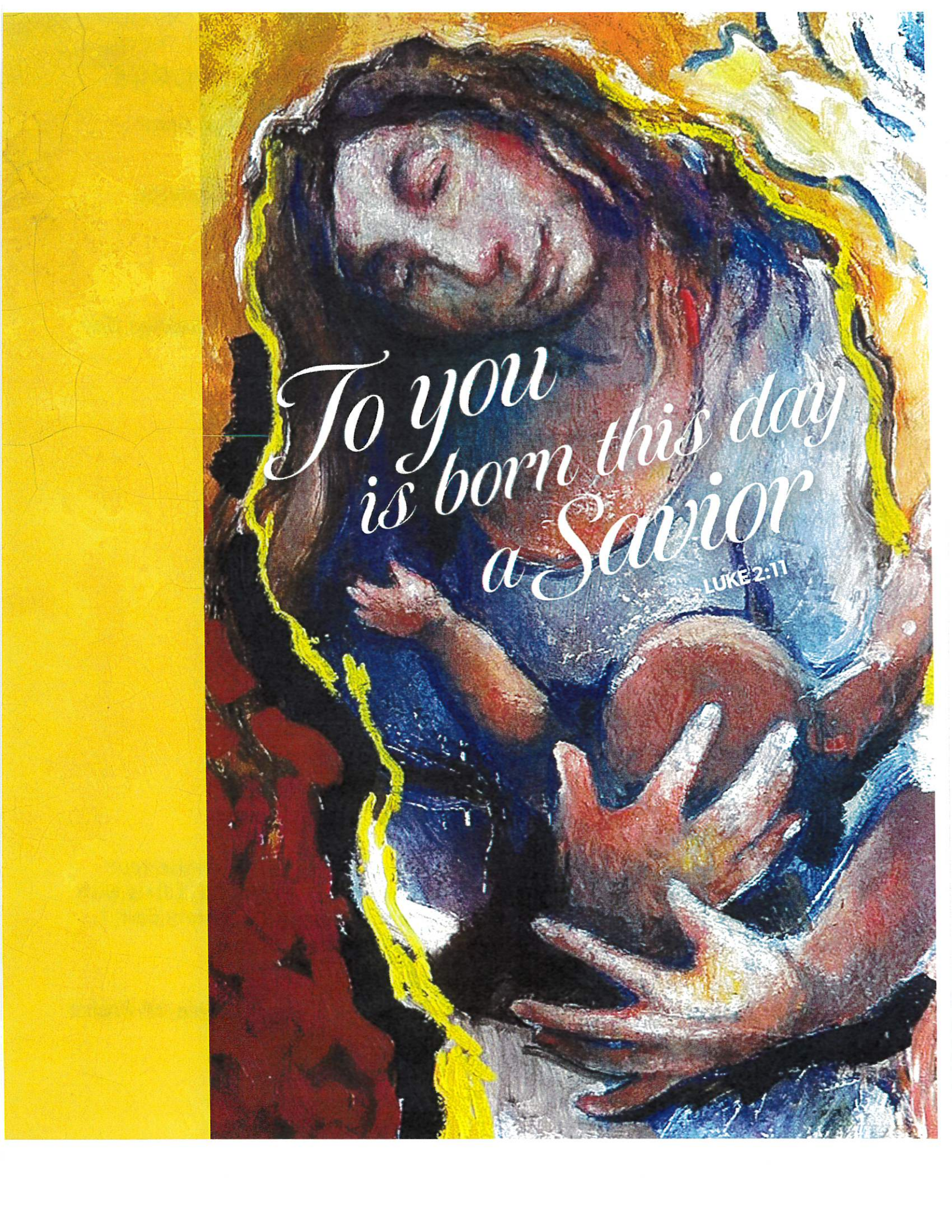




*To you
is born this day
a Savior*

LUKE 2:11



FAITH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

500 West Le Claire Road Eldridge, Iowa
Pastor Carrie Lewis La Plante Pastor Heather Geest

Family Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24, 2023

2:00 & 4:00 p.m.

Prelude (2:00 pm)

*"Carol of the Bells"
"The Herald Angels Sing"*

Resounding Joy

Greeting

Hymn

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain*

Prayer

P Lord God, we thank you for making this holy night shine with the true light of your Son. As we celebrate his birth as a human child, fill us with the joy of heaven. For he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Anthem (2:00 pm)

"Sing the Glory"

People of Praise

Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

Welcoming the Gospel "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song? *Refrain*

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain*

The Christmas Story: Part 1 Luke 2:1-7

Hymn "Away in a Manger"

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

The Christmas Story: Part 2 Luke 2:8-20

Hymn

"Go Tell It On The Mountain"

(The children come forward as the hymn is sung.)

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled
when, lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Christmas Eve Message

(Following the message, the children return to their seats as we sing.)

Hymn

"I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve"

I am so glad each Christmas Eve,
the night of Jesus' birth!
Then like the sun the star shone forth,
and angels sang on earth.

The little child in Bethlehem,
he was a king indeed!
For he came down from heav'n above
to help a world in need.

He dwells again in heaven's realm,
the Son of God today;
and still he loves his little ones
and hears them when they pray.

I am so glad each Christmas Eve!
His praises then I sing;
he opens now for ev'ry child
the palace of the king.

And so I love each Christmas Eve,
and I love Jesus too;
and that he loves me ev'ry day
I know so well is true.

Prayers of the Church

Sharing of the Peace

Offering

Offering Prayer

The Great Thanksgiving

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Thanksgiving at the Table

The Lord's Prayer

C Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily
bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the
kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.
Amen.

Distribution of Communion

Believing in the real presence of Christ, we invite all present to participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. All who are baptized and believe that Jesus Christ is present in the gifts of bread and wine are welcome at the Lord's table. Those who do not wish to receive communion and children who are not yet receiving communion may come forward for a blessing.

Communion is distributed by continuous distribution. Today we will be using two stations. Please come forward by the center aisle to receive the wafer from the pastor, and then, receive a cup of wine (light colored drink in the outer rings of the tray) or grape juice (darker colored drink in the center of the trays) from the communion assistant. Gluten-free wafers are available in the small gold dish on the paten. You may place your empty cups in the baskets at the ends of the front pews as you return to your seats by the side aisles.

Songs During Distribution

"Your Little Ones, Dear Lord"

Your little ones, dear Lord, are we,
and come your lowly bed to see;
enlighten ev'ry soul and mind,
that we the way to you may find.

With songs we hasten you to greet,
and kiss the ground before your feet.
Oh, blessed hour, oh, sweetest night
that gave you birth, our soul's delight.

Oh, draw us wholly to you, Lord,
and to us all your grace accord;
true faith and love to us impart,
that we may hold you in our heart.

Until at last we too proclaim,
with all your saints, your glorious name;
in paradise our songs renew,
and praise you as the angels do.

"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 you nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuell! *Refrain*

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!
Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

Post-Communion Blessing and Prayer

Candle Lighting

Please stand. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when giving light to another. Parents, please assist the children if they are holding a candle.

Hymn of Light "Silent Night, Holy Night!"

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Christmas Eve Prayer

P Loving God, Help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds,
and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate
and open the door of love all over the world.
Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.
Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings,
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be your children,
and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts,
forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake.

C Amen.

Blessing

P May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph,
the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the
determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty
God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

The candles are extinguished.

Recessional Hymn

"Joy to the World"

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king; let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground; he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Dismissal

P Glory to God in the highest!

C Peace to God's people on earth!

P Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

C Thanks be to God.

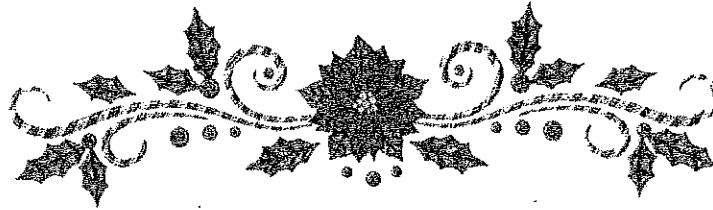


~Thank you to those who share in our worship this evening~

	2:00 pm Worship Service
Ushers	Diane Krebs & Kenny Oetzmann
Reader	Joan Hennigan
Communion Assistants	Joan Hennigan, Mary Moore & Theresa White
Counters	Kenny & Sue Oetzmann

	4:00 am Worship Service
Ushers	Kenny & Sue Oetzmann
Reader	Mary Moore
Communion Assistants	Tom & Pam Carlson
Counters	Mary Moore, Kenny & Sue Oetzmann

Choir Director	Susan Becker
Organist	Teri Wittkowski & Susan Becker



Christmas Flowers

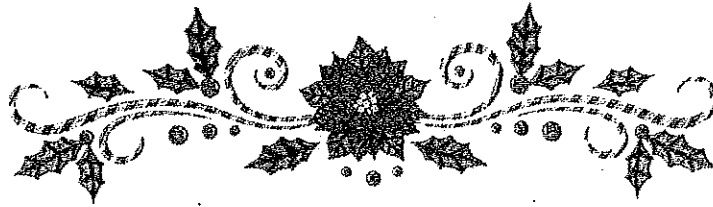
Thank you to everyone who provided the beautiful poinsettias for this Christmas season.

From:

Nina & Brian Looney
Jeanne Willems
Jeanne Willems
Mary Moore
Joan & Denny Hennigan
Stephanie McNamara
Kevin & Kara Zidarich
The Baustian Family
Liz Hoffman & Family
Liz Hoffman & Family
Amanda Strom
Colton & Becky Johnson
Cathy Diaz
Dorothy Watson & Nancy & Eugene Kreiter
Justin, Amber, Calin, & Emily
Mark & Chris Copley
Kristy Looney
Jan Hartwig
Scott, Carrie, Abby & Maddy La Plante
Scott, Carrie, Abby & Maddy La Plante
Chad & Carrie Keppy
Rex & Mary Jo McVey
Dan & Mary Ann Anderson
Kent & Michelle Wiebel
John Hintze
Dave & Shirley Rose
Sue Casel
Rhonda Webber
John & Keri Suiter

In Honor or Memory Of:

In celebration of our 50th anniversary
Leroy Willems & Loved Ones
Betty Spies
Dale Moore
Loved Ones
Jana Donaubauer
Loved Ones
Sheila Baustian & Shirley Baustian
Mark Hoffmann
Pat Hoffmann
Loved Ones
Cathy Potter
Husband, Enrique
Donald Watson
Grandpa Donald Watson
Nels & Clara, Bob & Lottie
Bob & Marlene Lage
Mark & Don
Our grandparents
Dan La Plante & Joanne Tamblingson
Carrie's brother, Matt, & Sister-in-law, Jena
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Our dads
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Jim & Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Bud & Janet Nagle



Christmas Flowers

From:

Mike & Rita Smith
Bob & Theresa White
Kelly Goldsmith
Tonya, Maisie & Melena Knutsen
Myra Kreiter & Family

Kim Wilkins
Carol Roe
Jim & Ida Weibel
Ann Kuehl
Carol Marten
Sue Sissel
Jared & Kelly Penning
Pam & Dean Engelbrecht
Tom & Pam Carlson
Curt & Carolyn Hulsen
Jason & Chelsey Dingbaum
Matthew Whisler
Beverly Schmidt
Kourtney & Winston Johnson
Darin & Beth Ann Anderson & Family
Ed & Kathy Stoltz

In Honor or Memory Of:

Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Larry Goldsmith
Leroy & Marilyn Knutsen
Jack, Henry & Roma Kreiter &
Victor & Agnes Randolph
Mom, Geraldine Wilkins
Loved One
Loved Ones
Wes Kuehl & Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Arliss & Florence Whisler
Dennis Schmidt & Sally Schmidt
Lucas Johnson
Loved Ones
Loved Ones

You Belong

Who belongs? That is an enduring question for people of faith, and the beloved story of Jesus' birth in Luke's gospel helps to give us an answer.

Of course, Mary and Joseph have a place at the Savior's side on the night of his birth. Yet despite her call to bear none other than the Son of God (Luke 1:35), Mary is subject to the whims of earthly power. In compliance with the emperor's order, the couple make the trek to Bethlehem to be counted. But the baby will not wait to be born, and the guesthouse is so crowded that they have to lay him in a manger. Not the ideal conditions for labor and delivery! Nonetheless, for these new parents, home is where they make it. Wherever Jesus lies, that is where Mary and Joseph belong.

And perhaps to the dismay of exhausted parents, the shepherds also belong in the presence of the Savior, the Messiah, the Lord, that first night. Noteworthy infants usually attract noteworthy visitors, but the messenger of God sends the birth announcement to lowly field hands instead. Jesus is born in the city of David not just to anyone, but *to them*; he is a sign of God's salvation not in the abstract, but *for them*. No wonder these marginal, mostly neglected members of the community glorify and praise God for all they hear and see (Luke 2:20).

The wonder of Christmas is that you belong in Jesus' company too. The baby in the feeding trough foreshadows the Lord at his table. And if the child in the manger is *for you*, then so is his life, given and poured out. Come, taste and see for yourself. Receive this good news of great joy, peace, and God's favor, then sing your praise to God in reply.