

Christmas Day
Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-4[5-12]
John 1:1-14

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Holy Spirit Lutheran Church

This morning we get to hear the Christmas story told one more time.

But before we read it together, I wanted to ask you who is your favorite person or being from the Christmas story? If you need a little reminder think back to the short clip, we watched at the start of service.

For me it was always the shepherds or the kings - they were the coolest by far. The kings got to bring flashy gifts, wear super cool crowns and robes, and the shepherds got to relax with a soft flock of sheep to keep them warm.

As you hear the Christmas story again this morning, listen for when your favorite moments and people appear! When they do raise your hand okay?

Who wants to read the first scroll?

Before the world began, the Word was there. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was there with God in the beginning. Everything was made through him, and nothing was made without him. In him there was life, and that life was a light for the people of the world. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not taken it away.

Huh? That's doesn't sound like the Christmas story I was expecting. Does it sound like the story you thought you would hear?

Hmm?

Let's see...

Here at Holy Spirit we have a nativity set to help us tell the story each year, but I'm not sure that any of these pieces are in the story that we just read.

I didn't hear about wise men or shepherds.

There wasn't an angel, either.

Mary and Joseph weren't there.

I didn't even hear about a baby!

I think I may have put out the wrong nativity scene . . .

But, wait – the passage we just heard did talk about a light that came! A light that was so bright that no amount of darkness could ever take it away.

There was a bright light, a **great star** God created that shone on the night Jesus was born telling the world where to find the baby! So I guess we can keep the star within our nativity scene this morning after all!

Maybe we just need to keep reading to help the rest of the nativity to find its place. What do you think? Who wants to read the second scroll?

There was a man named John, who was sent by God. He came to tell people about the light. Through him all people could hear about the light and believe. John was not the light. But he came to tell people about the light. The true light was coming into the world. This is the true light that gives light to all people. The Word was already in the world. The world was made through him, but the world did not know him. He came to the world that was his own. And his own people did not accept him.

Well that part finally sounds a little bit more like the Christmas story I know!

Who in the Christmas story told the world about the light of the star?

Angels - Yes, they sure did! They told the story of Jesus coming through prophecy and by singing songs to God on high.

And who else?

The three kings! That's it! Three people from a far away land who came to see baby Jesus after they had watched the star way up in the sky. Because the three kings were wise people they knew that this particular star was special and that it meant a king would be born beneath it one day soon.

So they followed the star to greet Jesus, keeping him safe from King Herod who wanted to hurt baby Jesus because he felt threatened. Its kind of sad to think that not everyone wanted to welcome Jesus – but there were many who did want to and both the kings and the angels helped them to find baby Jesus that evening.

Great so now we have the Star, Angels, and the three Kings. Let's keep reading to see who else we can bring back to the scene.

Who would like to read the third scroll?

But some people did accept him. They believed in him, and he gave them the gift to become children of God. They became God's children, but not in the way babies are usually born. It was not because of any human plan – but by the very love of God.

The Word became a flesh and lived among us. We saw his divine greatness—the greatness that belongs to the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Did you hear that?

The Word of God became flesh and lived among us!

That sounds like a baby to me! Let's put **baby Jesus** back in the manger.

And the scroll also said there were people who welcomed and accepted the Word within the world. The word is another name for Jesus that Saint John came up with to describe Jesus within God – as his son – from the very beginning of time. So there were people who welcomed and accepted Jesus from the start!

As the angels and kings came to welcome and follow baby Jesus who else was willing to follow, help, and take care of the new born king? Who might some of those people have been?

Mary – Jesus' mother

Joseph – Jesus' father

The shepherds and all the **animals** too!

Look! Our nativity set is complete again! And you thought that this wasn't a Christmas story!

When we talk about the Word of God we often think of stories - and before we had so many books, or even scrolls, people had to remember important stories by telling them so that they wouldn't get lost.

Because what good is a story if it doesn't get told?

That's the best way to learn a story, right? To hear someone tell it and then tell it back – again, and again, and again. Just like the angels told the story with their songs, the kings told the story through the star, and Mary told the story through caring for the tiny baby in the manger.

We need every single person in this nativity to help tell this great story don't we?

It just wouldn't be the same if any of the people were missing.

But we don't just need them – we also need each one of us here.

Each one of us has an important part of this story to tell too – How Jesus came down to earth as Emmanuel – God with us – to share his everlasting love and grace with us all. And that is the story we get to help tell. That God loves not only us – but everyone on this earth.

Do you think you can help share that story?

What about you bigger kids out there?

You don't have to have it written down in a book or on a scroll – but as a child of God you carry it with you in your heart where ever you go. And every time you share love with someone else – you are sharing about God.

As a reminder of this important story you can take a white heart this morning to help you remember that God's love is always with you no matter where you go.

Lets pray - Word of God,

Teach us the stories of our faith/ be always on lips/and burning in our hearts.

Be with us as we hear again the story of Christs birth, give us the courage to tell of his great love /again and again and again. Amen

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