

HERITAGE NEWS

Monthly Newsletter



Reaching People in the Name of Christ - Discipling People in the Way of Christ - Empowering People in the Service of Christ

Merry Christmas AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Road to Bethlehem

By: Michael Tutterow

The road called hope winds through the hills of Judea and leads to a place of wonder in the tiny town of Bethlehem

The Church of the Nativity sprawls across a couple of blocks in Bethlehem. It's ancient stone walls tower above you as you walk toward the entrance. But to enter the doorway, you have to stoop. The actual opening is only about three-and-a-half feet high, so every pilgrim who arrives must go through the "Entry of Humility."

Two sets of massive columns line each side of the sanctuary. They support the arched center nave which soars above. The original mosaic floors are covered by a wooden floor that creaks with age. At the far end of the sanctuary

is an ornate altar. To the side is a narrow stone stairway that leads to a small grotto or cave under the floor. No more than 15 or 20 people can fit into the cramped, lantern-lit space at any one time, so you patiently wait until you come to a place marked by a silver star in the marble floor.

There, like millions before me, I knelt and ran my fingers across the Latin inscription etched in a silver star on the floor: *Hic De Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus Est (Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary).*

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HERITAGE
BAPTIST CHURCH

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The Road to Bethlehem

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Or as John's Gospel describes it, "The word became flesh and lived among us." Wow.

Somewhere amid all the eating and celebrating, the decorating and gift giving, stop long enough and simply ponder that wonder. You might just find yourself on your knees giving thanks for what Christmas meant – and still means.

Grace and peace – and merry Christmas!



A Christmas Day Home Worship Guide

Invite your family (friends too if you wish) to share in a few minutes of worship together.

Light a candle *(if you have an Advent wreath, light the Christ candle).*

If you have a nativity, place Jesus in the manger.

Sing (or read aloud) a favorite Christmas carol together, such as:

Joy to the World

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Angels We Have Heard on High

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Silent Night

What makes this carol special to you?

Read the devotional for Christmas Day from the Advent guide.

What favorite Christmas memories do you have?

Read Luke 2:8-20. Discuss how the shepherds must have felt seeing the angels and hearing their message.

They ran to town and were among the first people to see Jesus.

Close with a simple prayer: *Jesus, You brought hope and joy to the shepherds and all those who met You. May Christmas joy fill our hearts today. And may we share that joy with others all year round. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.*

Go to celebrate this day with your family and friends. And may gratitude and joy fill your heart and home today!

January 1 Worship / 2nd Sunday of Christmas

Message: "Guiding Light"

(Ephesians 1:3-6,15-19a; Matthew 2:1-18)

Matthew tells how the Magi found their way to Jesus by following a star. On this first day of a new year, we choose our own "star words" to bring light into our lives and guide us in new paths throughout the year ahead.



Celebrations of the Season

Photos By: Robyn Rhodes, Clara King & Charles Smith





Let's Get Together

December 24 - January 11

December

24 - Christmas Eve Communion & Candlelight Services at 5:30 & 9:00 pm

25 - CHRISTMAS DAY

No in-person worship.

26-31 - Church office is Closed*

January

1- No SS, In-person Worship 10:00 am

10 - Reading Buddies Resumes

11 - Wednesday Night Activities Resume

*During the week the church office is closed, if you have an emergency or a question, please call Michael (404.403.9176), Rusty (770.377.8716) or Robyn (770.547.9677) and we will be happy to assist you.

Please remember that all contributions for 2022 must be given and/or postmarked on or before Dec. 31 in order for you to receive credit for your 2022 contributions.

Thank you for your generosity!



A Beautiful Youth Bake Sale



Dec. 4

The Bake Sale & Youth Elf Day combined raised OVER \$2,000 for our Youth Program. Thank you to everyone for making this weekend such a success!

Doggone Good Deeds



Dec.10

HBC Members (two & four-legged) were spotted ringing the bell at Hobby Lobby to help the efforts of The Salvation Army. Photo by Barbara Bentley.

Advent Acolytes



Dec. 11

Thank you to all of the children and youth who have been so helpful during worship this Advent Season.