

## Special Christmas Edition

This month we bring you words of encouragement for the Christmas season from some of our members of Church of the Harvest in Olathe, Kansas. A church that I am proud to call home. Sprinkled throughout this edition are bites of inspiration from special guest writers. I hope something posted here will bring some joy, love, peace and hope into your life.

*Lonnie*

We start with our Lead Pastor who was incarcerated in India for preaching the Gospel of Christ.

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While you are in this season, I want to attempt to encourage you with a couple of thoughts that helped me during my time of incarceration.

First, you are not alone. Jesus promised to never leave you or forsake you, while disconnected from those you love and that love you. Know that Jesus is there waiting to talk with you and to be a constant friend.

Second, Praise produces peace. A heart conditioned with gratitude transforms how you see and understand your environment and situation. It worked to set Paul and Silas free, and it works to set our hearts free as well.

Finally, Serving saves. Find ways to think, serve and give outside of yourself and your needs. I know this is difficult to do, but if we can, it saves our sanity, preserves our purpose, and becomes a platform of influence.



These simple thoughts helped me through my difficult time in prison and I hope it will help you. Remember Jesus loves you and can be trusted to walk with you through this time in your life.

*David Frech, Sr. Pastor, Church of the Harvest*





This is my prayer of encouragement for you this Christmas season. Although you are in prison, I pray you have - or will find - the freedom Jesus Christ offers. If you spend time in the Bible, you'll see that when Jesus walked this earth, He showed us the loving, holy, and tender nature of God. God the Father long had a plan to make a way for each of us to find our way to Him. His son Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life! He willingly gave his life as a ransom for each of us. And He rose from the dead after 3 days! Through Him, we are offered the free gift of forgiveness – all we have to do is confess Him as our Lord and Savior. It's really that simple. We're all sinners and have fallen short of the glory of God. After I became His child, the cares of this world and my regrets over past sins no longer had power over me. Because of Jesus I enjoy an abundant life in this troubled world, plus my eternity is assured! I pray for that same hope for you. May you be blessed and receive this gift – Jesus is the best gift of all!

*Pam*

Dear reader,

Life is full of surrender. Taking yourself off the throne in your heart. In Romans 6:6 NIV "For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin."

When surrendering to Him, deciding to live for Him instead of the world, accepting Him in our lives...He says, we should no longer be slaves to sin. He frees us. He delivers us from that sin and we become alive in Him. Joy begins to be rooted in His love for you. He loves us so much. He wants a relationship with you. He wants you to be close to Him. To fall in love with His beauty. He adores you. His love is limitless. Fall in love with that vastness. He has given us the gift, that is surrendering to Him. Stepping off your throne and letting Him reign. He calls you to walk in a new life with Him.

Romans 8:18 NLT, "Yet what we suffer now, is nothing compared to the glory He will reveal to us later." Trust in Him, good things are coming.

*Ayrabella*





Have you heard the good news of salvation thru Jesus Christ?

The Good News is, because of His death on the Cross and His Resurrection from the dead, we no longer have to fear judgment, punishment, or hell!

All we need to do is faithfully come to God in prayer, and in Jesus's name confess our sins to Him and trust Him as our Lord, savior and sin-bearer. That's it!

The Bible says:

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is LORD and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9

"If we confess our sins, He will be faithful and just, and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." 1-John 1:9

Dear Friend, I am not headed for Heaven because of anything I did, but rather for what the Lord Jesus Christ did for me on the Cross! And I am eternally grateful that He has welcomed me, a wretched sinner, into His sheep-fold...forever!

There is hope for every sinner at the foot of the cross because no one is beyond God's reach.

In Christ we are forgiven!

*Greg Paulsen*

"The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Psalms 34:18. All those times you were broken-hearted, you might have thought Christ was far-away, but He was right there with you. You probably didn't see Him at the time, but quiet your spirit and let Him show you that He was beside you in all the painful times. Once you discover that aspect of Christ's love and how much you matter to Him, you'll be able to see how the crushed pieces of your life can be transformed into something beautiful.

*Kathy Meylan*



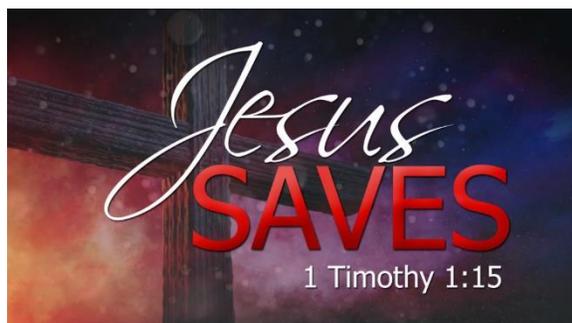
Several years ago, a close friend of our family went into the hospital for heart issues –he had an enlarged heart. While he was in the hospital, I felt the Lord lead me to go visit him and talk to him about the birth, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins and how His finished work at the cross gives us righteous standing with God the Father. I felt a little awkward, and argued with the Lord that I wouldn't know what to say to him, but I cared about this man, and I wanted to obey the Lord, so I did. During that visit, I invited him to receive Christ as his Savior and he did so.

Several months later, he informed me that from that day he was delivered and free from drinking, drugs, cigarette smoking, and physically abusing his girlfriend. I knew the girlfriend and I knew this to be true. My family and I could visibly see the difference in this young man. He even had experienced healing in his physical heart. Five years later he was still free from all of those things.

A few years later I shared the same information with a young girl on our block. She had changed since I had seen her in grade school.... She wore black clothing and dark heavy makeup and would scream profanities up and down the street. When we visited she shared that she had lost her two best friends who had moved from the area, and that the only people who would befriend her in her new school were those who behaved and dressed like her. After sharing with her about Jesus and his love for her and his sacrifice at the cross for her, she accepted him as Savior and then she left. One week later she showed up at my door. She was so beautiful... her entire demeanor had changed. All of the dark make up was removed, she was dressed attractively, her hair was clean and combed, and I never saw her scream and curse in the neighborhood again after that.

Both of these friends were dramatically changed with the simple good news of the gospel of Grace and the love of God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ.

*Sharol Gutierrez*

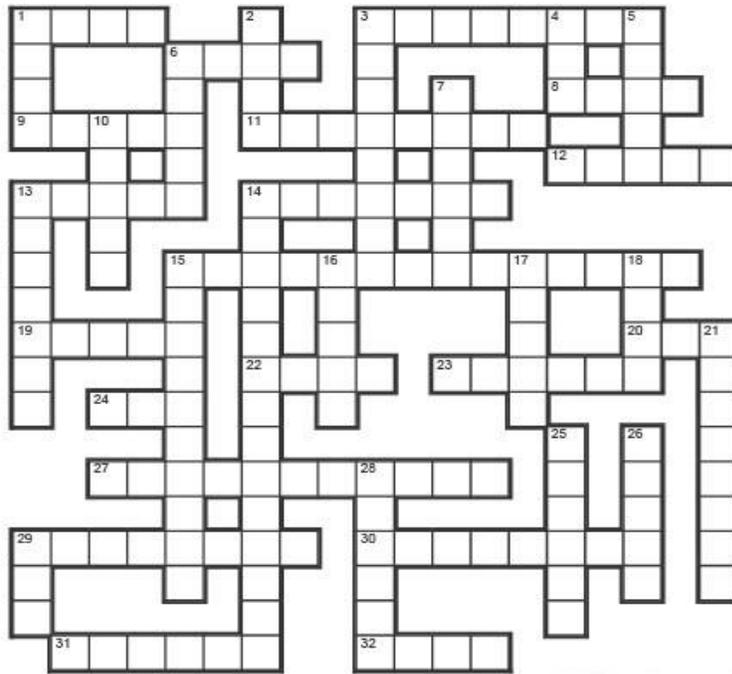




## CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

### Across

- 1 Transportation for going over snow (4)
- 3 Mixture of seasoned ingredients (8)
- 6 Baby's bed (4)
- 8 Period from December 24th to January 6th (4)
- 9 Red-breasted bird (5)
- 11 Twelve days after Christmas (8)
- 12 Alcoholic drink normally served in a bowl (5)
- 13 Jolly (5)
- 14 News (7)
- 15 Goes with the turkey (9,5)
- 19 A type of tree used at Christmas (5)
- 20 The colour of Santa's hat (3)
- 22 \_\_\_ log; traditonally burned at Christmas (4)
- 23 Sanctified (6)
- 24 Cured leg of pork (3)
- 27 Christmas song (6,5)
- 29 Found under the Christmas tree? (8)
- 30 Grace (8)
- 31 Snow falls in this season (6)
- 32 Given at Christmas (4)

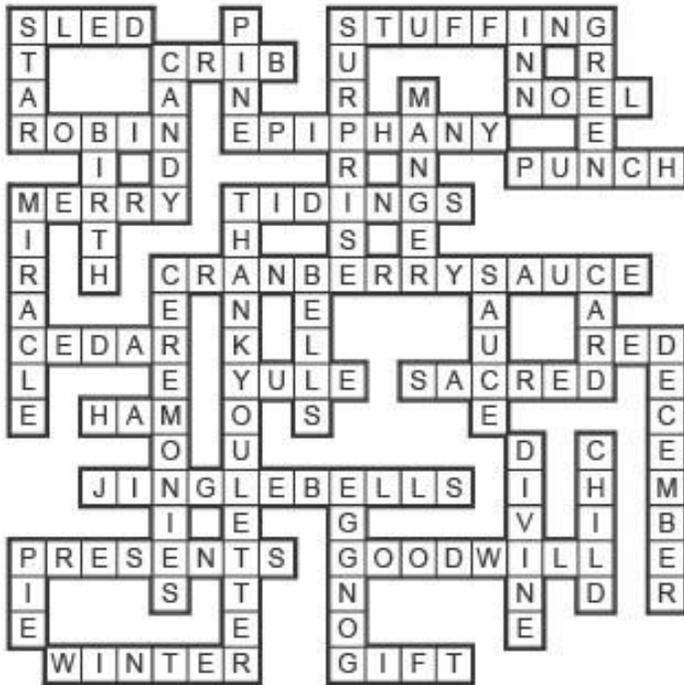


### Down

- 1 Bright celestial body (4)
- 2 Christmas tree type (4)
- 3 Take aback (8)
- 4 No room here! (3)
- 5 Elvish colour (5)
- 6 Sweets; flavoured sugar (5)
- 7 Container usually found in a stable (6)
- 10 Beginning of life (5)
- 13 Amazing event (7)
- 14 Written after Christmas? (5,3,6)
- 15 Formal events (10)
- 16 Ring out from churches (5)
- 17 Accompaniment for food (5)
- 18 Printed or written greeting (4)
- 21 Month in which Christmas falls (8)
- 25 Nature of God (6)
- 26 One was born in Bethlehem (5)
- 28 Sweetened milk drink, with eggs and alcohol (6)
- 29 Pastry dish (3)



## CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD - SOLUTION



Across: 1 Sled, 3 Stuffing, 6 Crib, 8 Noel, 9 Robin, 11 Epiphany, 12 Punch, 13 Merry, 14 Tidings, 15 Cranberry sauce, 19 Cedar, 20 Red, 22 Yule, 23 Sacred, 24 Ham, 27 Jingle Bells, 29 Presents, 30 Goodwill, 31 Winter, 32 Gift.

Down: 1 Star, 2 Pine, 3 Surprise, 4 Inn, 5 Green, 6 Candy, 7 Manger, 10 Birth, 13 Miracle, 14 Thank you letter, 15 Ceremonies, 16 Bells, 17 Sauce, 18 Card, 21 December, 25 Divine, 26 Child, 28 Eggnog, 29 Pie.

Precious Creation of God,

I was encouraged to write a letter to someone confined in prison. I was reminded that prison can be in the form of a physical building, or it can be an emotional/spiritual confinement. A person might be held captive by fear, anxiety, addictions, shame, debt... The list goes on. I think it's safe to say that every person is held in bondage in one form or another.

I personally have recognized that I have been in a self-imposed prison of deceit for years. For me that comes in the form of self-doubt and negative self-talk. One day I was telling myself "I don't have a voice, I have no influence, nobody would want to follow me, I have nothing to offer..." It dawned on me THAT is not the truth my Father who created me speaks of me. I asked myself, "Who IS saying this about me? Who have I been believing?" Immediately, I realized it was not the Father of Truth, but the father of lies. Not only have I been believing his lies, I have agreed with the lies, reinforcing them by speaking them to myself. These lies have kept my voice, my faith, and my identity in bondage, limiting God's fullness in me.

I wouldn't blame you for feeling my "prison" is small and insignificant compared to what you have been through. To be honest, I'm kind of embarrassed to bring it up, but just felt like I should for some reason. I hope it serves some purpose in your life.

I pray that this Christmas season be a time of freedom for you, a time that you courageously break out of any emotional or spiritual "prison cells" you have been locked up in. And that you can see yourself through the eyes of your creator. You are precious in his sight.



Bless you,  
*Jan*

PS. Here are a few scriptures I have found helpful as I break free from my prison.

John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Galatians 5:1 It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore, keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

Song of Solomon 7:5 Your head crowns you like Carmel, And the flowing hair of your head is like purple threads; *The* king is captivated by *your* tresses (locks of hair).

We hope that this Christmas season brings you joy and encouragement. We are a family of three, living in Olathe, Kansas. Charles and Kathy (parents) are 64 years old and retired. Our daughter, living with us, is 22. We have 3 grown children as well, another daughter and her husband, and their two children, and two sons, who are single.

The daughter still at home is working as a para for special needs children at an elementary school close to our house. She is going to our local community college (JCCC) studying interior design.

What we would love for you to know this Christmas season is that we are praying for peace for you and for you to know that GOD loves you. We love you. And we are praying for you to feel this to your bones.

The bible says that you were planned and designed by GOD, with a purpose for your life before you were even born, when your mom was pregnant with you! Isn't that amazing!!! That all means that GOD made you his own original masterpiece! He gave you your talents, your personality, your looks. You are uniquely made and loved by your creator, GOD!

The bible also says that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of GOD. What does that even mean? That means that we all need a Savior, JESUS! GOD gave his only son that we can be free from our bondage of sin. Short explanation is GOD sent his gift to us at Christmas, which is the reason for the season! It is truly the best GIFT ever.



But here is the thing: It is a choice whether you want to open the present sent by GOD to you this Christmas season. We would love for you to consider opening it. This is what you Pray: Dear GOD, I know that I am a sinner and need a savior. Please forgive me of my sins (whatever they are) ... doesn't matter to GOD in the least. I want to open my heart (today) to your precious son JESUS. I want to open this sweet gift that you gave me.

If you spoke that prayer, GOD has forgiven anything you have ever done. You will feel so much lighter, and freer. Now, get a bible and try to read something in it every day. You will not understand everything you read. That is ok. Read and understand what you get and ask GOD to explain the other.

The bible says that once you accept Jesus, you are going to heaven! We will be there too. Praying that you have found this letter comforting and we wish you peace and contentment this Christmas Season!

The Fords,

*Charles, Kathy, & Ally*

It's easy this time of year to feel down, depressed, alone. I want to encourage you with something that was preached to me last week. 1st Corinthians 4-8.

**4** Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5** It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **6** Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7** It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. **8** Love never fails.

Usually, we read this from a spouse or a child's perspective...try reading it from God's. Love is patient, kind, does not envy, but the one we should cling to, God keeps no record of wrongs! He casts your sin as far as the East is from the West. He loves you and he is always there!

Praying blessings over you this Christmas Season and Always.

*Katie Willis*

Proverbs 24:14 NIV- "Know also that wisdom is like honey for you: If you find it, there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off."

Being wise through Christ will help get you through any obstacle. Things may not go as you planned, but trust God's process. You will never be alone. You are strong. You are important.

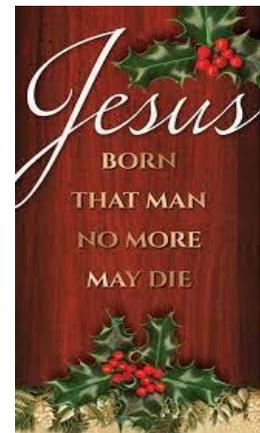
You are loved,

*Riley Perks*

Our hope is in the Lord. Our healing comes from the Lord. God comes to those who call out to Him. He provides hope and healing above and beyond our expectations. May God bless you richly!

Thank you, God, for these gifts you give us!

*Christine Brewood*



## Immanuel, God with Us

As December 25<sup>th</sup> approaches and we prepare to celebrate another Christmas holiday, it is appropriate to pause to consider just what it is we celebrate.

This is the day that has been historically assigned as the birthday of Jesus Christ. Probably Jesus was actually born on a totally different day, in a different season of the year. The important thing isn't that we got his actual date of birth correct, it is that we actually celebrate the fact that He was born at all.

Why is the birth of Jesus any different than your birth? Or mine? Or the birth of any other historical figure making a significant contribution to the world?

No other birth, no other baby ever in history was like Jesus. His is the only birth in all of time where there was an intersection of eternity IN time. Only Jesus was the portal through which the creator God Himself became a man and entered into our world. Before Jesus, God was God and man was man. As soon as Jesus took his first breath, God was WITH us.

*"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel – which means, God with us." Matthew 1:23 NIV*

*"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned...*

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. " Isaiah 9:2, 6-7a NIV*

What does it MEAN to you and to me that Jesus was born over 2000 years ago?

It means, God is STILL with us. It means all of these verses are still relevant and true in 2022.



*Kendana Heston*

**Words to Grow By**

**Peace, Hope, Love & Joy**

May the Spirit of Christmas  
Bring you **Peace**,  
The gladness of Christmas  
Give you **Hope**,  
And the warmth of Christmas  
Grant you **Love**.

Wishing you & your family  
A **Joyous** and Very  
Merry Christmas!

*For unto us a Child is born,  
Unto us a Son is given,  
And the government will be upon His shoulder  
And His name will be called  
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6-7*

**Women Empowering Women**

**Our Christmas Prayer for You**

May knowing **JESUS** bring you  
**PEACE** to bless each day,  
**HOPE** for each tomorrow,  
And **JOY** in every season.  
And never forget that Jesus is  
The Reason for the Season.

Amen

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men! Luke 2:14*

*Linda Lewis*

My earnest desire for you is that you would believe that the Lord Jesus died on the cross, bearing all your sins (wrongdoings), which he did! If you've already done this, Praise God! If not, I encourage you to keep reading my letter to you!

Sincerely ask God to forgive you your sins and he will! Also don't think that anything you've done is unforgivable, God promised to forgive no matter what you've said and/or done, because of the Lord Jesus bearing your sins on the Cross. The Lord won't reject you. He loves you! He created you for Himself! You will have PEACE with and from God. You will have eternal life and after you die, you will be with the Lord Jesus forever! You also need to be willing to turn away from practicing sin, which is repentance. The Bible, which is God's Word, will tell you what sin is. If you plan on doing what I'm asking, I encourage you to ask for the Chaplain, so he can explain to you more about what I'm talking about. You could also go to one of the Christians' meetings and ask them to explain it more to you, and I encourage you to keep going to their meetings.

Don't delay making this decision, you never know when you might breathe your last breath. God created you because he wants you to be with him for eternity! But God has to judge sin, and if you don't believe the Lord Jesus died on the cross for your sins and repent, God will have to send you to the Lake of Fire for eternity! I WILL be praying for you!

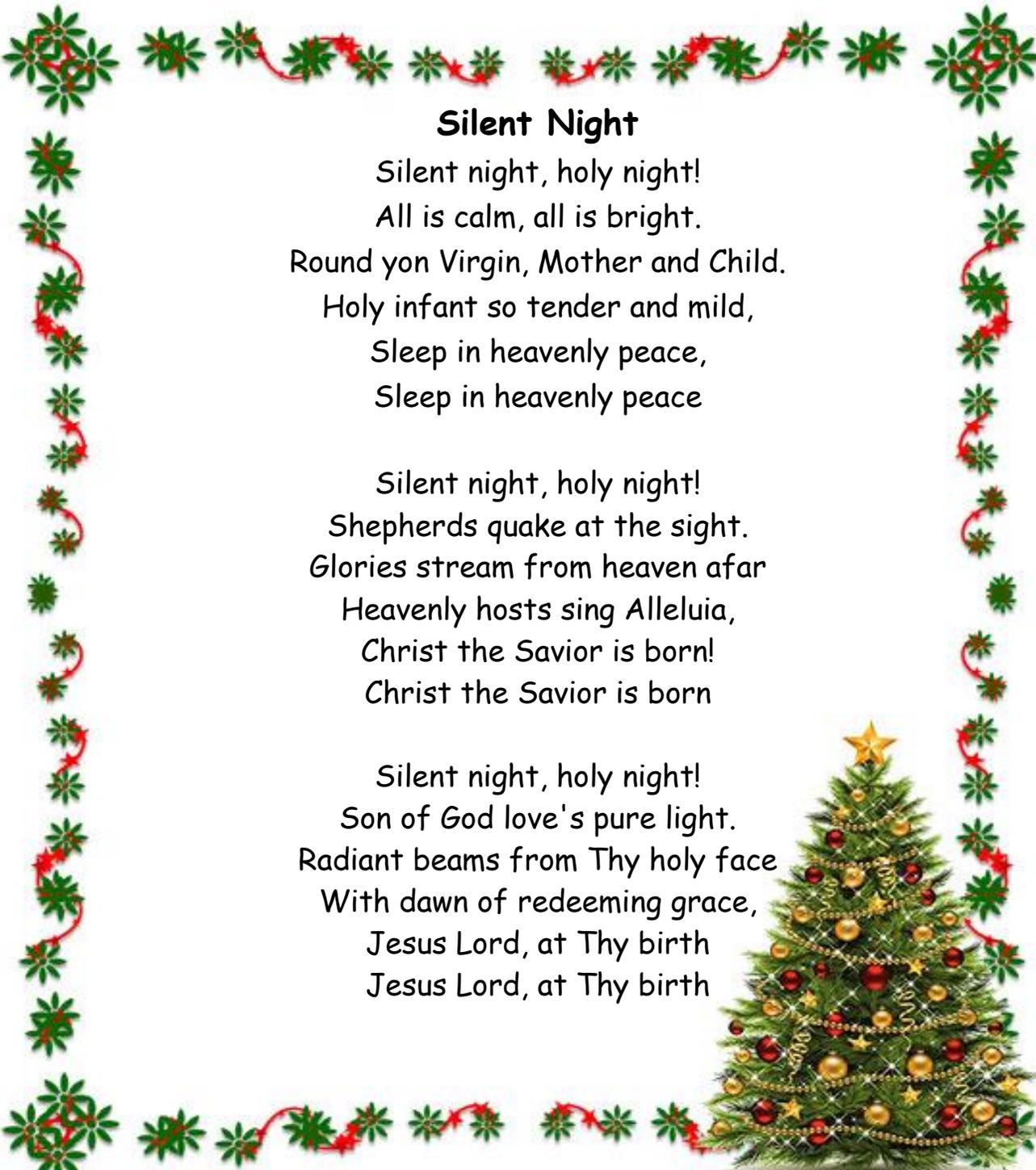
*Bro. Justin Dirks*

Wanted to send a note of encouragement to you in prison. I know this is an unfortunate thing that has happen and I pray that God would turn it into good. One of the best things about our God is that he is the God of second chances. The bible says as we repent and turn to Him, he will forgive our sins as far as the east is from the west. Sometimes when we are in difficult seasons of life it seems that it will last forever. But as with all seasons they will pass and a new season in life will come. Get ready because God has great things planned for you. The apostle Paul who was arguably the greatest writer of the new testament wrote some of his best books/letters while in prison. I pray you would encounter God during this very difficult season of your life and experience the transforming love and healing of Jesus. The bible says Jesus has come to set the captive free and when the Son sets you free you will be free indeed.

God Bless,

*Tim McKay*

Grab some friends and sing this timeless Christmas carol.



### Silent 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  
Heavenly 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 Thy holy face  
With dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth



Several years ago, when I was young and deep in my mess, I was arrested for possession of a large amount of narcotics. I was able to get diversion when I went to court by saying that I had a drug problem and volunteer to admit myself to a residential drug and alcohol treatment center.

This was not my first time getting in trouble with the law, just not for drugs, and I actually did have a substance abuse problem. So, my family was pretty tired of me and sort of watched from afar.

Well, this happened to be around the holiday season. I was admitted somewhere around the beginning of fall. I made it through Thanksgiving without breaking down, but when Christmas started getting close, I started to feel “some kind of way” about being in this place and not being able to be with family. I would talk to my family and girlfriend (who is now my wife) on the phone and see them every now and then, but I still felt lonely. I remember the facility I was in had a Christmas dinner and we could invite family. I told my people about it, but no one showed up. I felt like they were done with me. I was not mad at them; I was mad at myself for being in this situation. So, I decided to accept that everybody was through fooling with me. Later that evening the doorbell rang. It was a group of people from a local church. They wanted to come in and spend Christmas evening with “the poor sinners”. We all gathered in our big meeting room. They shared the gospel with us, sang some Christmas songs, then handed us some wrapped gifts.

After they left, I went to my room and opened my gift. It was a three pack of socks. Not a lot to jump up and down about, right? Wrong! I cried. I instantly realized that even though I may not be at home with my family or celebrating with my girlfriend, God was there with me. I didn’t see that at first. But I did after he made it even more obvious by sending his Angels to comfort me. To guard my emotions and mental wellbeing. I cherished those socks more than any clothing I had.

No matter how far you are from loved ones, no matter how long it has been since you have felt their touch, God is holding you in His arms. God has sent Angels to comfort you. You may not have recognized them. Maybe it is someone in this magazine. Maybe after reading this you have realized you have Angels around you.

God is always with you. He is there now holding your hand. That’s his promise. ***Psalm 73:23 Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.***

*Lonnie Johnson*  
Executive Director, Growth Ministries

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:8-11). When the shepherds were in the darkness of night, angels came and proclaimed the good news that Christ the Lord had been born. Maybe right now you feel like you are in the dark and have no hope, but the news that those angels shared over 2000 years ago is still true today. This is the season we celebrate one of the greatest miracles ever, Jesus’ birth. Because of this birth, we have hope. My prayer for you is that you will experience this good news by asking Jesus to come into your life and forgive you of your sins. Then it would be a very Merry Christmas indeed!

*Mike Hernandez*

Many times, in our way of human thinking we tend to feel like we have messed up so badly that God couldn’t possibly forgive us. But Scripture is full of stories of God doing just that – He can and does forgive.

There are many examples of this, . Moses who led God’s people out of slavery, was a murderer. David, who became the king of Israel, and who was called a “man after God’s own heart,” committed adultery and then plotted against, and was responsible for, murdering the woman’s husband and then covering it up.

Why would God put stories of imperfect people like these men in His word, the Bible? Even more, why would He use them to lead His people? His whole plan to spread the news about His love to the world involves using imperfect people who mess things up all the time.

He loves you and has a plan for you too, no matter what you have done, or how long you are in prison. God promises that whoever seeks Him will find Him. So get up and go looking for God. He is just waiting for you to take the first step!

Wise Men still seek Him!

*Karolyn Cook*

Dear Child of God,

We want you to know today and every day that you are dearly loved and cherished by God. No matter what you have done, no matter what you have been through, He loves you! 1 John 4:9-10 says, “God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

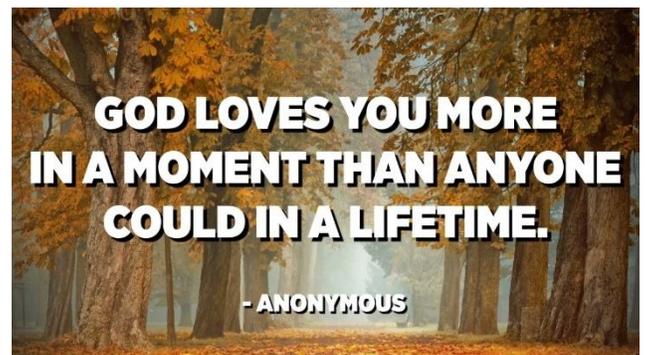
During this Christmas season, may you be overpowered by the love of God. We pray that this love transforms your heart and your mind. Not only are you loved, but you are forgiven and you are free. John 8:36 says, “So if the Son (Jesus) sets you free, you are truly free.” This means you are free from the bondage of what you have done and the guilt and shame of what you have done. When Jesus died on the cross, he took on every sin we would ever commit, and it was nailed to that cross with Him. When you call on Jesus and ask him to forgive you, it will bring you freedom to live to your highest potential and freedom to serve God and others!

You are not a mistake or accident; you were created by God on purpose because He loves you! Jeremiah 1:5 says, Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations. It’s not too late, God can use you for good, if you let Him.

Today is the day!

Merry Christmas friend! May you feel the Love of Christ today and everyday moving forward because you are chosen and made on purpose!

*Jason and Quion*



Let me remind you...You matter. You are enough. Jesus loves you AS you are, where you are, who you are.

I'm sure you probably feel like you must be vigilant to be safe, protect yourself, your reputation, watch your back, listen for every noise-step-voice around you. Guess what, Jesus wants that for you even more than you do, and He never sleeps. He is always with you and keeps a watchful guard over you. You can trust Him.

I am also praying for you this Christmas season. Praying for your safety, praying against sadness and loneliness. Asking God to bless you with His peace and cover you with blessing and favor. Praying you find Him and Know Him in a closer, committed relationship.

Be encouraged, you soldier of this internal war — where you battle thoughts, feelings, fears, and doubts. God is FOR YOU!! He loves you so much. He will help you overcome each day and every night. You can rest in Him. His grace awaits your reach toward Him.

PRAY: I want you, Jesus — You're sufficient for all my needs, all my concerns. You're enough for me now and always. Thank you for Your grace and compassion. Thanks for standing by me through all my muck and loving me anyway. Be Lord in my life. Live IN me Jesus. I believe in You and trust you now. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Psalm 91:1-7 says, "I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." Surely, he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart."

May God bless you,

*Debra Nixon*





# BIBLICAL CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH

R I J W W S Q X L A N G E L K O Z N  
S D M T K C E N S U S B C M A G I K  
E H S A J O S E P H B J E S U S R M  
O S E T N G A B R I E L M N M I F Y  
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A A I C H A E R G R C U S B O M O R  
H D Z S V E I R B R T T S E U A C H  
F D V N E U R N A T I V I T Y N K M  
H L G E X M O D P S M I A H G U S B  
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D E K R C F R A N K I N C E N S E L  
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C H R I S T M A S H C E N O E L V M

- Advent
- Angel
- Bethlehem
- Census
- Christmas
- Flocks
- Frankincense
- Gabriel
- Gold
- Herod
- Immanuel
- Jesus
- Joseph
- Magi
- Manger
- Mary
- Messiah
- Myrrh
- Nativity
- Noel
- Shepherds
- Star
- Swaddling
- Wisemen

## Just for Laughs

### Ugly Christmas Tree

The cat had an obsession with the Christmas tree. The entire holiday season, it was a miserable job to keep the cat out of the tree. Thankfully, it was Christmas Eve, and the tree would be coming down soon. However, it was then that the oversized barn cat decided it was time to wage war. Unfortunately, the tree stand wasn't up to the added weight of the voluptuous tomcat. It came crashing to the ground with a thunderous boom.

Upon hearing the resounding crash, the entire family woke. The living room looked like a Christmas wasteland, with ornaments rolling under the couch and the tree crushing presents. The cat slinked away under the radar to pick needles out of his fur. Bobby, the youngest, looked up at his mother in wonder. "Dad was right, Mom. Santa thought your Christmas tree was ugly too."

### Christmas Spirit

It was just before Christmas and the magistrate was in a happy mood. He asked the prisoner who was in the dock, 'What are you charged with?'

The prisoner replied, 'Doing my Christmas shopping too early.'

'That's no crime', said the magistrate. 'Just how early were you doing this shopping?'

'Before the shop opened', answered the prisoner.

### One Liners

Which of Santa's reindeer has bad manners? Rude-olph!

What is a skunk's favorite Christmas song? Jingle smells!

Where do snowmen keep money? In a snow bank.

How much did Santa pay for his sleigh? Nothing. It was on the house.

Why is Santa so good at karate? Cause he's got a black belt.



### The True Story of Christmas - The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-20)

<sup>1</sup>In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup>(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup>And everyone went to their own town to register.

<sup>4</sup>So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. <sup>5</sup>He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup>and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

<sup>8</sup>And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup>An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. <sup>11</sup>Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

<sup>13</sup>Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

<sup>16</sup>So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

**The Growth Ministries Family wants you to know that we consider you as part of our family. We wish you a very Merry Christmas, and a prosperous New Year.**