

Christmas Eve 2020

Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and our incarnate Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Merry Christmas!

So, this is a weird Christmas, right? I think we can all agree on that.

Most of us are probably not where we usually are on this night. Instead of being in a church building, we are in our homes, but that's not a bad thing. It's actually kind of nice.

The whole idea of lighting Advent candles at home is welcoming the light of Christ into our houses, and we are literally doing that this evening as we worship in our own homes.

Tonight we celebrate the light of Christ coming to us right where we are. We don't have to go anywhere. God comes to us. As we contemplate that tonight, we get to ponder with Mary as to what that means for us. How does this Christmas impact our future?

Just over 2,000 years ago, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He wasn't born in his own home. He wasn't even born in a home, because there was no room for him in any home due to all of the people registering with the Roman guard.

From his birth, we can already see how he is cast aside and homeless, but being homeless isn't necessarily a bad thing. God never wanted a temple. God always wants to be with the people right where they are, and so today we are not at the church, what some may call God's house, but we are in our own homes welcoming the light. Just as it should be.

So, how will this worshipping the birth of Christ in our own homes make the coming year different from all of the previous years? How does Christ entering our dwelling places and filling our homes with light change how we will live from this day forward?

God is not someone we go visit, but someone who comes to us, right where we are.

God comes to us. That is the beauty of the incarnation. No one can climb to God, so God comes to us, as a baby and then grows up with us, lives with us, teaches us, heals us, and then saves us in his death and resurrection.

From birth through death, Jesus knows everything that we experience. God knows what it is to be born, to have family and friends, to suffer, and to die. God knows it all.

God the infinite becomes the finite for us so that nothing can ever separate us from God. We can never say, “Well, God wouldn’t understand,” because God does understand. God understands. God understands it all – everything we humans go through.

Someone on the outside cannot be our Savior, because they wouldn’t know what they are saving us from. It takes someone on the inside to make a difference, and so God joins us right where we are.

God comes to us in our homes, because God isn’t actually homeless, God’s home is everywhere someone makes him room, and tonight, wherever you might be, is where God is residing right now. So, if you are wearing shoes, take them off, because you are on holy ground. Your home is a holy place.

And so, what difference will that make in your life?

Jesus has come as your savior, to your own home. The question tonight is, “What exactly is Jesus saving you from?” Only you can answer that question.

God is born to us as a baby, because babies don’t judge. Babies don’t care who you are. God comes to us as a baby so that we will know love instead of hate. In love, God comes to save us.

So, from what do you need saving? Tonight Jesus is coming to you right where you are. What do you have to tell him?

One of the other great thing about babies is that they listen, because they are non-verbal, so you can just talk and talk and talk, and you will be loved no matter what you say. Jesus listens, so that you can work out whatever it is that is holding you captive, so that he can set you free.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world. He enters our darkness to give us hope. He is the light that shines on our path, bringing us comfort, saving us from whatever holds us down.

Tonight we will hold candles and sing “Silent Night” to remember that Jesus is the light of the world shining in our own darkness.

Tonight we are reminded that Jesus is like a candle, not a flashlight. He lights our steps right in front of us as our companion, helping us to see more clearly where we are and to let us know that we are not alone.

Outside of the resurrection, he doesn't show us what the future holds, only that God holds us right where we are.

God comes to us. His presence in our present is our Christmas present.

God comes to us right where we are. He is our savior. The savior of the whole world and our individual savior too. So, what do you need saving from right here and now. Tell Jesus. He's listening and ready to take on all your fears right now.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world. The light no darkness can overcome.

Thanks be to God. Amen.