

HOPE OF THE WORLD

The Jews had been waiting for a warrior king to rescue them. God sent them a babe. A babe that was the son of a young girl and a carpenter. A son of God the Father. A babe that would grow into a man who could perform miracles. He taught in the temple as a child. Then grew to turn water into the finest wine, to feed 5000 from a fish and five loaves of bread and had leftovers, he changed lives from sinners into forgiven people, to raise dead people, to heal lepers and cure illnesses and drive out demons. He taught not violence and release from oppression but love and caring for each other and faithfulness to God by how we treat those around us and that that is how we honor God. And it all began with a baby. Every year we celebrate the birth of that child. Once again, we sing the familiar hymns, Silent Night, O Little Town of Bethlehem, I heard the Bells on Christmas Day, and more. We give gifts to friends and family. We light Advent candles. We celebrate and sometimes we realize it's not about us but a love that lasts from before our birth and beyond to eternity. We give from our abundance to the poor. And sometimes we forget the Christ in Christmas. What is that saying? The reason for the season!

Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine. Love was born at Christmas; star and angels gave the sign.

Luke 2:4-7 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. He went there to register with Mary who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her first born, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

Dear Lord, we thank you for the gift of a savior, for the Christmas season. May we remember those who are poor, and may we give them from our bounty, may we remember those who are ill, and may we aid them, may we remember those who are suffering and may we comfort them. Be with us Lord in all we do. Be with our church Lord, may it be your church. Be with our Pastor and bless his ministry, give him strength for the tasks before him and may he feel the love and support from those he serves. Be with our staff and leaders, bless what they do for your church. Be with those who suffer from war in the Ukraine and those suffering in Haiti. We pray in the name of Jesus the Christ who came as a child. In Jesus name, amen.

Grace Epperson