



The
Coming

ADVENT 2018

The Coming

Thousands of years ago, during the time the Old Testament was written, God spoke to His people through prophets. Prophets were people chosen by God to communicate truth about God, revealing His character and His love to His people. When Jesus was born, these prophets had been silent for more than 400 years.

God's people had no autonomy and were being ruled by Rome. The people were lost, oppressed, and lacked hope; but God's plan was to send His Son to redeem the world. His plan was to bring hope, joy, peace and love to the world. His plan was to demonstrate His love by sending His Son to the world as a baby.

This study was written to help you experience the Christmas season in a deeper way. It is designed to help you connect with the coming of Jesus. We will center our study on four aspects that Jesus' coming brought to the world: hope, joy, peace and love.

We believe that Advent is the antidote to a hurried holiday. As a church family, let's take a slow
"walk to the manger together."

WEEK ONE

Hope

Monday

The Greek word that appears in the New Testament that we translate as hope is defined as confident expectation. Hope is a general term that is more a sense that you have than it is a tangible feeling.

We use the word hope in a totally different context. We say things like, “I hope my team wins this game” or “I hope I pass my math test.” There is uncertainty involved in that sort of hope. The hope that Jesus has brought to the world is confident expectation.

Tim Keller wrote,

“When September 11 happened and New Yorkers started to suffer, you heard two voices. You heard the conventional moralistic voices saying, “When I see you suffer, it tells me about a judging God. You must not be living right, and so God is judging you.” When they see suffering, they see a judgmental God.

The secular voice said, “When I see people suffering, I see God missing.” When they see suffering, they see an absent, indifferent God.

But when we see Jesus Christ dying and suffering on the cross through an act of violence and injustice, what kind of God do we see then? A condemning God? No, we see a God of love paying for sin. Do we see a missing God? Absolutely not! We see a God who is not remote but involved.”

You and I live in a world where there is darkness, suffering, pain, and confusion. Much of the time God gets the blame for these things. But God sent Jesus into the world to bring hope in the middle of a dark world filled with suffering, pain, and confusion. This week we will look at hope and how God sent the gift of hope into the world with this one life.

Tuesday

“In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. 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 2:1–21, ESV)**

This is the traditional Christmas story. It may be very familiar to you. If it is, read it several times today. Pay special attention to verse 11. The titles for Jesus are profound. Do not miss them. In this verse, Jesus is called Savior and Christ the Lord. Today we will look at the word Savior. This word means “the one who rescues from danger.” There are difficulties in this world. We live in a world of broken relationships and physical and spiritual pain. We live in a world where evil is present and prominent. But God has an ultimate plan for these things.

Ultimately, God created us to live in deeply intimate relationships with Him. But there was a fracture that broke the rhythm of that relationship. That fracture is sin. That fracture leaves us in this world of brokenness. But it does not leave us without hope because Jesus has come as the Savior of this world. This season, we celebrate the coming of that hope.

Wednesday

“For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.” **(Romans 4:13–21, ESV)**

Think about the hope that was in the heart of Abraham. God made a promise to Abraham that he would have many children and that they would be the foundation of God’s people. Pray that God would allow you to bring this same kind of trust in God that Abraham had to the front of your mind this week.

Pay special attention to the last verse in this reading. Abraham was fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Let those words ring in your heart and mind this week. God is able to do what He has promised.

Thursday

The Gospel of Matthew begins with a genealogy and then quickly moves from history to tension. Herod, the King assigned by Rome to be King over Israel and Judah. He was a ruthless and evil King. In fact, history tells us that Herod even murdered his own family members.

Herod's devious plan was to use the wise men in order to get information so that he could act against the child (Jesus). The wise men spoke with Herod and then went on their way. What we know from scripture is that the wise men were warned in a dream, not to return to Herod (**Matthew 2:12**).

Once Herod found out these wise men were not coming back to provide information, the circumstances did not improve and Herod's murderous heart was exposed to the people he ruled. Herod's plan was to murder all of the children under the age of two in Bethlehem and the region.

However, God had been in control over the entire situation, in midst of Herod's plans. In His goodness and in order to demonstrate His power over people and history, He warns Joseph to flee into Egypt (which was part of prophecy that was to be fulfilled). Joseph grabbed Mary and Jesus and set out to Egypt. Herod's plan to murder Jesus was circumvented because of God.

The hope we find in Matthew's Gospel is that when God desires to accomplish His purposes and plans—no King, or plot, or circumstance will stop God to fulfill what He has planned. Jesus was born to be the hope of our salvation, and nothing or no one would stop Him. Our hope is found in knowing that God's Word never fails, and He will accomplish what He sets forth to do. Today, we take courage and find hope in the truth that just as God was in control when Jesus was a baby, He remains in control of all His purposes and plans for us and for His Church!"

Friday

Reread Luke 2:1-21. Again, pay special attention to verse 11. Today we will look closely at the title Christ the Lord.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” **(Luke 2:11, ESV)**

When you see the word Christ in the New Testament, it is the same word as the Old Testament word Messiah. It means anointed one. All of the Old Testament points ahead to this anointed Messiah who will bring eternal hope to the world. Here in Luke, with this proclamation of Christ the Lord, the angels are saying that this long-awaited anointed one is here.

God’s plan to redeem the world to Himself has always been through this Savior, this Messiah, this Christ. He is here, and we are celebrating the hope that has come in Jesus.

WEEK TWO

Joy

Monday

Joy is an elusive concept. Because of that, we will spend our first day just thinking about the word and what it intends to communicate.

The concept of Joy is especially hard for us to grasp in the western world today. The inclination of the mind is to bind happiness and joy together. This is a legitimate binding; there is happiness that comes from joy. However, happiness for today's world is wrapped up in our health, our bank accounts, and having enough time to enjoy our hobbies. It is tied to our pursuit of the American dream. Our happiness is directly affected how we are doing in that pursuit. The joy that Jesus brought to the earth with his birth is so much more than the American dream.

The dictionary defines joy as the emotion of great delight or happiness caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying. The definition of joy from Scripture adds the word gladness. To be filled with joy is to be glad, to have pleasure, to be delighted, to be exceptionally happy.

Think of it like this: happiness is something you feel on the surface while joy is something you feel in your soul. It is not easily wiped away. The opposite of happy is sad. The opposite of joy is sorrow. There is a depth to joy. Joy is what Jesus brought into the world.

Tuesday

In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. **(Luke 2:8-10)**

God is all about replacing fear with joy. That is what happened that night on the hillside with shepherds. Luke 2 says the “glory of the Lord shone around them.” This glory is the presence of God, and it caused them to be afraid. The angel’s first words were “fear not.” The angel then said, “I bring you good news of great joy.” The angel is speaking the words of God, and essentially they are: “I want to replace your fear with joy.”

Their fear came from a knowledge of themselves. When faced with the presence of God, the immediate response in Scripture is fear. From Abraham to Moses to Isaiah to these shepherds, they were all afraid when they encountered God. They were afraid because of their sin. But the message of Christmas is: “Fear not, the long expected Savior is here!”

That is joy! Moving from “I am dead” to “I have been completely accepted” is God replacing fear with joy. It is the message of Christmas.

Sin is born in our mistaken thought that we can provide pleasure for ourselves. All sin is a conscious or an unconscious statement to God that we know how to give ourselves pleasure better than He does. The result is a disconnect from God, from the source of true joy. God has not come to ruin you; He has come to get you back. Our King is here.

Wednesday

In Genesis 22, you find the story of Abraham and Isaac. You might know this story. Abraham is over 100 years old when the story takes place, and his son Isaac is just a boy. God has promised Abraham that he will be the father of God's people. Isaac is the beginning of the fulfillment of that promise.

Then God asks Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. Sin is a big deal to God, and in the Old Testament times, God's people offered sacrifices to appease the wrath of God toward sin. So Abraham trusted God and resolved to surrender his promise-fulfilling son.

The Bible says that Abraham traveled to a mountain and bound his son on an altar and took a knife to sacrifice him. As the knife in Abraham's hand reached its apex, an angel of the Lord commanded him to stop.

In the moments between the command to sacrifice Isaac and the command to stop, interestingly, Abraham was confident. Not exactly what you would think Abraham would be filled with at that moment. As a father, this story always challenges my heart.

Yet, Abraham remained steadfast and confident. How? You might ask. Scripture gives us an insight into what Abraham was thinking during those moments with his son Isaac. Hebrews 11:17-19 states, "By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, of whom it was said, 'Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.' He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead..." These were amazing words, and give us an insight into Abraham's thoughts and faith in God. In fact, Abraham even answered his son in this way after he asked where the lamb was for the sacrifice . . . Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son" (Genesis 22:8).

Rather than disobeying God and withholding his son, Abraham trusted in what God had said—that's faith—and offered his son. Later, God did exactly what Abraham said and provided a ram for the offering.

Thursday

Joy is not found in the circumstances of your life. Circumstances can change, health can fade, the economy can fall apart, and jobs can be lost. If your joy is found in these things, it can fade or fall apart. The joy that the coming of Jesus brought to this world is deeper than that.

Scripture says in 1 Peter that the follower of Christ has an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. That same passage says that we are strangers in this world and that we were not meant to live in a broken and fallen world. It is a world with death and disease and heartache. But God has given us a hope and a peace that is the epicenter of our joy.

I have an old friend back home named Denny. Denny had a son named Jon who died in a tragic accident just after his junior year of high school. The days and weeks following his death were very difficult for Denny and the rest of his family. I do not remember a father and son closer than Denny and Jon. They were best friends.

As time went by, Denny began to talk about how grateful he was that God gave him the 17 years with Jon and the great memories that would never be lost. He was grateful for the fact they were best friends. There is a lot that Denny likes to talk about in regards to Jon, but this is the most profound for me. Denny doesn't simply mourn the loss of his son. Denny celebrates his son. Denny celebrates the God who allowed him to spend 17 great years with Jon. Denny's joy was not and is not bound by his circumstances. In John 14:6, Jesus calls himself "the truth." The definition of the type of truth Jesus uses here is a truth that is unaffected by circumstances. Think of a concrete pillar holding up a great bridge. The waves and boats that pass by do not affect the pillar. This is Jesus. This is the kind of joy the coming brought.

If the joy in your life is bound to the circumstances in your life, I invite you to investigate this Jesus that came to bring you real joy that is unaffected by circumstances. Think about that joy—the joy brought by the coming of Jesus.

Friday

Philippians is a book that deals greatly with joy and greatly with Jesus. It is a short book so take a chance this weekend to read the entire book (more than once, if you can). The Apostle Paul wrote the book and uses a form of the word joy 12 times in this book. Many scholars consider joy to be this book's theme.

Here's some background for you on the book. Paul's major job was to start churches. He would go into a town and draw people with his teaching about Jesus, and then he would appoint pastors and invest in them and help them start a church. He'd then go into the next town. Paul did this thing in the city of Philippi. Years later, he wrote this letter to the people of Philippi.

Paul is in prison and in very poor health as he writes the letter. Paul hopes to see the Philippians again, but he expects to be killed by his captors for his belief in Jesus and the things he's spoken about Him.

There is a man named Epaphroditus, who was one of the pastors of the church in Philippi. The Philippians sent Epaphroditus to Paul during his time in prison. While Epaphroditus was with Paul, he developed a nearly fatal illness.

This is a book about two things that are really woven into one. First, it is a book about the prize, a prize that is a relationship with Jesus. Second, it is about rejoicing even when times are very hard. Set aside some time this weekend to think on these things and pray, praising God for your relationship with Him!

WEEK THREE

Peace

Monday

The Greek word that is translated in the New Testament as peace is eirene. Strong's New Testament Lexicon defines the word as "the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is."

As we embark on this week centered around reading about peace, it is important to drill down deep into the understanding of this word that Christ came to bring to the world. There is confidence, there is secured position, there is a settled spirit, and there is assured relationship with God. This is the state of soul that Jesus brought on that first Advent.

In one of the last teaching moments Jesus had with his disciples, he said to them, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you." (John 14:27). Peace is a possession. Live today in confidence that you hold the tranquil state of a soul assured of your salvation as a possession.

Tuesday

In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah where she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped inside her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she exclaimed with a loud cry: "You are the most blessed of women, and your child will be blessed! How could this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For you see, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped for joy inside me! She who has believed is blessed because what was spoken to her by the Lord will be fulfilled!" **(Luke 1:39-45)**

In this passage we see interaction between Mary and Elizabeth. Elizabeth and Mary are related in some way. We are never told how exactly; they are probably close cousins of some sort. In these verses, Mary is pregnant with Jesus, and Elizabeth is pregnant with John the Baptist.

Tim Keller writes, "Blessed (in Luke 1:39-45) is to be brought back to full shalom, full human functioning. It makes you everything that God meant for you to be. What Elizabeth is saying is that if Mary believes and owns this incarnation that the angel is speaking to her, she will be totally changed, transformed... blessed."

This is the peace that is offered. We were made to enjoy eternal peace with God. We were made to enjoy Him and His creation and be enjoyed by Him. But the fracture of self-dependence and self-provision has come. That fracture has taken away our peace, leaving us longing for something more and different. Even nonbelievers would admit that there is something within each of us that longs for something more. We are longing to get back this "full shalom," this full peace that came in the form of a baby. Celebrate this baby today and the peace that He brings. My prayer for you this week is that you will have a deeper knowledge and experience of the peace that Jesus came to bring to you and to the world.

Wednesday

“For in him (Christ) all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.” **(Colossians 1:19-20)**

One of Jesus’ titles is “the Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). God is in the business of reconciling men and women to Himself and restoring the Earth as He once created it. You might ask, “How is he doing this?” As Colossians 1:20 states, “by the blood of His cross.”

As believers in Christ, the cross provides for us both reconciliation and peace with God. Without the cross we are enemies of God—the very opposite of peace. As we celebrate this Christmas season, remember that peace came at a cost and that cost was the cross.

The greatest gift came with the greatest sacrifice, but done so for our good and ultimately for His glory.

As you dwell on peace today, thank God for Jesus. Thank God for how He provided peace for us through His Son’s death on the cross

Thursday

Here are a few quotes about peace for you today.

Jack Handy said, *"I think a pillow should be the peace symbol, not the dove. The pillow has more feathers than the dove, and it doesn't have a beak to peck you with."*

John Lennon said, *"If you wish for peace, understand war."*

Martin Luther King Jr. said, *"Many men cry Peace! Peace! But they refuse to do the things that make for peace."*

Not only do we refuse to do the things that make for peace, as MLK said, but we are incapable of doing the things that make for peace with God. From yesterday's reading, we found that Scripture tells us that no one does good, not even one. In ourselves, we do not have the ability to make peace with God.

This is why this season is so beautiful. Jesus came into the world to bring us peace with God, something we could not do ourselves. It is why this week of looking at peace is so vital to bringing our spirits to a place of adoration for Jesus and the peace he brought.

The God of the universe intends for you to live in peace with Him. Apart from Jesus, we are not capable of living in that peace. Before the sin of Adam and Eve, Scripture says they stood before God and before each other, naked and unashamed. They were filled with peace and were living in the rhythm they were created to live in. They were so distracted by the glory of that peace that they had no time nor inclination to be ashamed of themselves.

I pray for a day of peace for you. I pray for a life of peace for you. I pray for an eternity of peace for you. I pray for a peace that you have never known nor will ever know until you reach the peace of heaven.

Friday

Therefore, since we have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have also obtained access through Him by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also rejoice in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For while we were still helpless, at the appointed moment, Christ died for the ungodly. For rarely will someone die for a just person—though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die. But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us! (Romans 5:1-8).

We will spend the end of this week on these verses.

Verse 1 says that we have peace with God. That peace has come from Jesus and the life he lived.

German Theologian and father of the reformation Martin Luther said this about the peace spoken about in Romans 5:1:

The Apostle (Paul) here means that peace of which all the prophets speak, namely, spiritual peace. This peace consists properly in an appeased conscience and in confidence with God, just as conversely the lack of peace means spiritual anxiety, a disturbed conscience and mistrust against God.

This is the peace that the coming of Jesus brought to this world. With trust and surrender to Jesus, you have peace with God. Live in that peace today. Celebrate it.

WEEK FOUR

Love

Monday

But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us! (**Romans 5:8**)

The greatest act of love this world has ever seen is God giving His Son Jesus. John 3:16 says that God sent His Son because He loves us so much, and that if we would believe in Jesus, we would have eternal life.

There is more to this love than just that familiar verse. In Romans 5:8, there are two striking phrases to consider. The first phrase is “God shows his love.”

The word that is translated as shows is profound. The word picture that Apostle Paul desired to show is likened to placing something within your reach. This book that you are holding is within your reach. When my children were very small, we had to make sure things that would hurt them were outside of their reach. There was nothing sharp left too low.

The second phrase is “still sinners.” As sinners, we are repulsive to God. God cannot be in the presence of sin; it would contradict His holiness. Romans 3 says that as sinners, our mouths are as open graves and filled with disease. In our most wretched and repulsive state, love came to our world.

This is what is happening here. As sinners, we are dead and unable to move toward God. But God’s plan to redeem us was to place His life-giving love within the reach of a dead man. Jesus is that love personified, and, with the birth of Jesus, that love is within our reach. That is what we celebrate this season and in the coming of love.

Tuesday

Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not conceited, does not act improperly, is not selfish, is not provoked, and does not keep a record of wrongs. Love finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for languages, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. **(1 Corinthians 13:4-8)**

Think of the person that you love the most. For me, it is my wife. I want to believe that I am a pretty decent husband. My wife tells me I am. She tells me that I love her well and that she feels loved by me.

When I read the verses in 1 Corinthians that you just read, I am embarrassed of my love. I am not always kind or patient. I am often proud and rude and easily angered. I hold wrongs against my wife. I am not always protective, trusting, or hopeful. According to the biblical definition of love, I fail often.

It's unfortunate that I fail in that way with the person I love the most. The bad news is that you're the same way. The good news is that Jesus demonstrated how we should love. He came as love to show us how to love. Knowing we would not ever do it fully, He came in order that we may see His love shown.

That is the beauty of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our failure does not diminish our acceptance. I want to say that again in a more personal way. Your failure does not diminish your acceptance. The love of God overcomes your failure, and it is not dependent upon you in any way. Jesus is the perfect love—love that has no condition.

Wednesday

Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **(1 John 4:10)**

God is love; not us. Jesus is love; not us. When Jesus was born to Mary in that stable, true love that gives of itself for the betterment of another was born.

Propitiation is one of those loaded theological words; however, it simply means “paid for.” Jesus is love defined. He came to bring to us what we could not bring to ourselves, which is the payment for sin and reconciliation with God.

Pastor and author John Piper says, “Love is bringing the object of your love to a place where they are enthralled with that which will eternally satisfy the soul, namely Jesus.”

Jesus is love. Christmas truly is the coming of love.

Thursday

In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah where she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped inside her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she exclaimed with a loud cry: "You are the most blessed of women, and your child will be blessed! How could this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For you see, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped for joy inside me! She who has believed is blessed because what was spoken to her by the Lord will be fulfilled!" And Mary said: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior, because He has looked with favor on the humble condition of His slave. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed, because the Mighty One has done great things for me, and His name is holy. His mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear Him. He has done a mighty deed with His arm; He has scattered the proud because of the thoughts of their hearts; He has toppled the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly. He has satisfied the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, mindful of His mercy, just as He spoke to our ancestors, to Abraham and his descendants forever. And Mary stayed with her about three months; then she returned to her home. **Luke 1:39-56.**

Starting with verse 46, this is Mary's song of praise, also called The Magnificat. The title is derived from the first line of the song, "My soul magnifies." Mary's song is intended to make larger the love that has come to her and is coming to the world.

As you meditate on this passage, know that Mary was a teenager and of no worldly significance. Also know that Jesus comes to those who seek Him and who are humble and hungry.

Friday

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered. This first registration took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So everyone went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. Then she gave birth to her firstborn Son, and she wrapped Him snugly in cloth and laid Him in a feeding trough —because there was no room for them at the lodging place. **(Luke 2:1-7)**

Love is here. The reading today is intentionally short. All of these readings are intended to connect your heart with the coming hope, peace, joy, and love that is found in Jesus. Reflect on the simplicity of the story you have just read in Luke 2:1-7.

Excerpt from “The Gift of Christmas” by Timothy Keller; Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus: Experiencing the Peace and Promise of Christmas. Edited by Nancy Guthrie, Crossway Books © 2008

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holman Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2009 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Holman Christian Standard Bible®, Holman CSB®, and HCSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

F  **RKS**
of
Dix River Baptist Church