

# The Parish VISITOR



*"Be Transformed...By the renewing of your minds." - Romans 12:2 - NIV*

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood  
4011 Clinton St., Los Angeles, CA 90004-2298  
The REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY, Pastor

cpchollywood.org

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**2022**  
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## Christmas REFLECTION 2021



*your pastor writes*

By REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to all the readers of the *Parish Visitor*!

I pray you all will have a blessed 2022. Following is the Christmas Reflection I gave at this year's Christmas Service. I pray it will shine the light of Jesus Christ into your heart.

Christmas Reflection 2021, originally given at CPC on December 19, 2021

*Continued next page*

**Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood  
is an intentional, healing community;  
proclaiming and demonstrating the wholeness  
of life offered in JESUS CHRIST.**



**WELCOME  
BACK**

**in our Sanctuary!**

In addition to the in-person worship, we continue to stream the service on Zoom for those unable to attend in-person.

The invitation for joining the service can be found at the events page on our website at [cpchollywood.org](http://cpchollywood.org).

You can send in your prayer requests PRIOR to the service via email to [sbaroldy@gmail.com](mailto:sbaroldy@gmail.com) or text at 323-202-5078.

*“And the angel answered him [Zechariah],  
“I AM GABRIEL.  
I stand in the presence of God,  
and I was sent to speak to you  
and to bring you this good news.”  
(Luke 1:19, ESV)*

**Introduction: God’s personal messengers:** Angels, angels everywhere! We have seen angels throughout our study of the Revelation this past year.

The Revelation tells us there are myriads of angels around God’s throne. They worship God day and night.

The Revelation also tells us there are angels of destruction who carry out God’s judgements against God’s enemies. And, there are angels who bring messages to the Apostle John throughout the book of the Revelation.

Now, this morning, we see angels throughout the narrative surrounding the birth of Jesus. There is literally a supernatural invasion of angels to announce Jesus’ birth. Have you ever thought about that? Have you ever wondered why angelic visitations surround Jesus’ birth? Here is how I understand it.

In the birth of Jesus Christ, our supernatural God invades our natural world. Jesus is Immanuel, God with us. Another way to say it is Jesus Christ is God in the flesh.

And as God in the flesh, Jesus intervenes in our personal histories. Jesus Christ enters the natural world and involves himself intimately with our lives. Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, comes to save us; Jesus comes to heal us; and Jesus comes to give us his eternal life. This is the miracle of Christmas.

And, so, it makes perfect sense that when our supernatural God invades our natural world, God brings his supernatural, heavenly host with him to bear witness to this creation changing event.

And understand, the angels aren’t there to provide glitz and glamor to Jesus’ birth. They are not part of a big Hollywood type production. The angels are there as God’s personal messengers.

The angel Gabriel identifies himself, in Luke 1:19, as God’s personal messenger. Luke 1:19 says, *“And the angel answered him [Zechariah], “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.”* (Luke 1:19, ESV)

The angel Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, was sent to deliver a personal message to Zechariah. Think about that! God sends Zechariah a personal message. What does this tell you about our God?

Our God is personal. God knows us. God cares about us. God intervenes in our personal lives, sometimes, maybe even oftentimes, in supernatural ways.

And, so, this morning, I want to briefly look at three angelic visitations, from the gospel of Luke, that surround Jesus’ birth.

**The angel's message to Zechariah:** In the first visitation, the angel Gabriel appears to the priest Zechariah. Zechariah had been chosen by lot to enter the temple to burn incense, something that happened maybe once in a priest's life. This timing is not a coincidence. It is God ordained. While burning the incense, an angel appears to Zechariah.

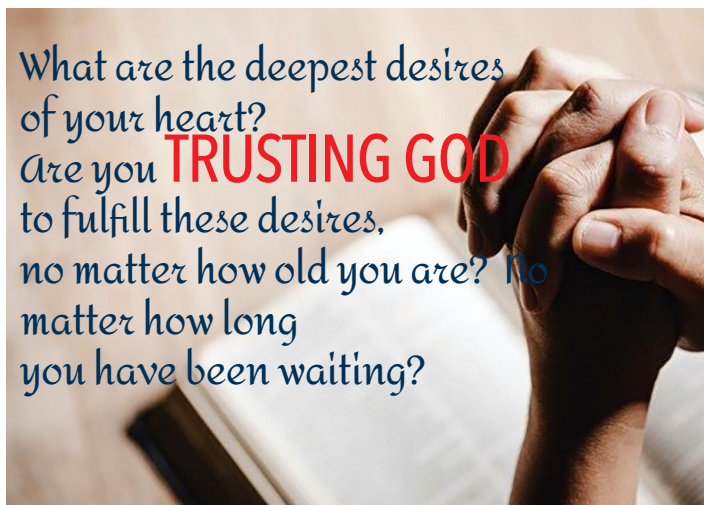
Luke 1:13-14 says, *"But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.'"* (Luke 1:13-14, ESV)

Through Gabriel, God promises Zechariah a son, even though his wife Elizabeth is barren and both Zechariah and Elizabeth are advanced in years.

Our supernatural God invades Zechariah and Elizabeth's natural world, and gives them the deepest desire of their hearts, a child. The child, of course, becomes John the Baptist, who is called to prepare the way for the arrival of the Messiah.

Through this supernatural act of grace, God reminds us that no matter how old we are, God can intervene in our lives to give us the deepest desires of our hearts, if we will continue to trust him and walk in faith. The angel reminds us that, with God, there is always hope. Amen!

So, let me ask. What are the deepest desires of your heart? Are you trusting God to fulfill these desires, no matter how old you are? No matter how long you have been waiting?



The eternal Christ left the glories of heaven and was born the baby Jesus. The arrival of Jesus always brings joy and gladness. The arrival of Jesus always brings hope.

The book of the Revelation tells us the Lord Jesus Christ is always coming. He is always arriving, even now. The Lord Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, loves to break into our lives to bring joy, peace and hope at unexpected moments, just as he did for Zechariah and Elizabeth.

So, I encourage us to always be vigilant, to pray, and watch for Jesus to come anew into our life and into the life of our families and friends. This is God's message to us through the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth.

The angel's message to Mary: Next, the angel Gabriel appears to Mary, a poor, teenage girl who is of the line of King David.

Luke 1:30-31 says, *"And the angel [Gabriel] said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.'"* (Luke 1:30-31, ESV)

Again, God, through Gabriel, invades Mary's personal history. The angel startles Mary with the staggering announcement that God has chosen her to be the mother of the Savior of the world.

Think about that for a moment. The salvation of all humankind hangs on the response of this teenage girl, who is from a small, backwater village called Nazareth. The angel tells Mary the Holy Spirit will overshadow her and she will become pregnant.

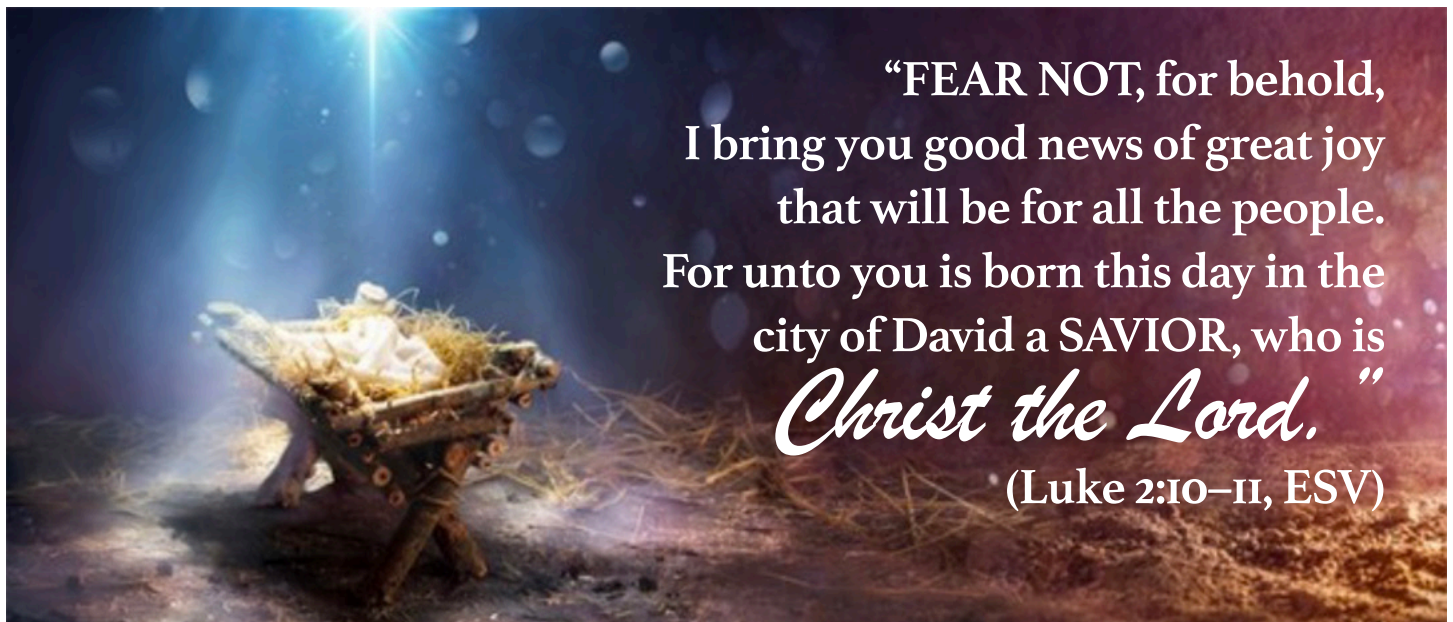
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Mary's response of faith continues to resound down through the centuries. Luke 1:38 tells us, "And Mary said, *'Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.'*" And the angel departed from her." (Luke 1:38, ESV)

Incredibly, Mary is willing to do as God asks, in spite of the scandal, the scorn, and the shame it will bring upon her and her betrothed husband, Joseph.

*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 2:10–11, ESV)

Then, a heavenly host, a myriad of angels, appears to these same shepherds. This heavenly host praises God, in Luke 2:14, saying, "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!*" (Luke 2:14, ESV)



**"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 2:10–11, ESV)**

And here, God reminds us that he can use, not just the oldest amongst us, as he used Zechariah and Elizabeth, God can use even the youngest of us, even the poorest of us, in a mighty way, **if** we will trust him and respond to God's word in faith.

Again, are you seeking God through his word? Are you trusting God and his promises? Do you believe that God can use you in a mighty way, no matter your current circumstances? Are you willing to say "yes" when God calls you? This is God's message to us through the story of Mary.

**The angel's message to the shepherds:** And, finally, after Jesus is born, angels appear to shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night. First, the angel of the Lord appears to these shepherds in Luke 2:10-11.

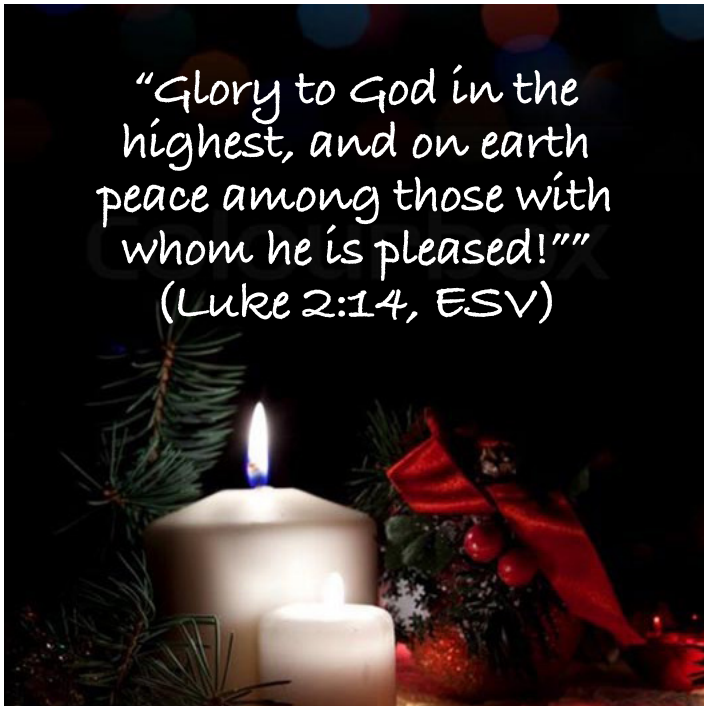
These verses read, "And the angel said to them, *'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of*

We remember shepherds were a despised class in the culture of that time. Isn't it amazing that God announces the birth of the Savior first to the lowest and most despised class in society?

In these angelic pronouncements, God gives hope to all humanity. God gives hope to the rich, to the poor, to the powerful, to the homeless, and to everyone in between. Through the heavenly host, God proclaims Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. And that through faith in Jesus, all have access to great joy and peace!

This doesn't mean we will never encounter hardships, or trials, or suffering or pain. This is our lot in this sin stained world. Yet, eternal God came in the flesh so we wouldn't walk through spiritual darkness alone.

When we repent of our sins, and place our trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. And through the Holy Spirit, we can have joy and peace in the midst of these hardships. This is



"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"  
(Luke 2:14, ESV)

God's message to us through the shepherds.

**Fear Not:** And, now, let me ask this question. What if we had an angelic appearance this morning? If we had an angelic visitation, what would the angel say to us?

One thing we can be certain the angel would say is "Fear not!" Have you noticed every time an angel appears, the first thing they say is "fear not!"

Now, one reason they say "fear not" is because it is startling to us when something or someone from the spiritual realm manifests in the material world. Right? We are told in the bible there is a spiritual realm. Yet, when we actually see it manifest in the natural world, it shakes us up.

There's another reason an angel says "fear not." The angel says "fear not" because God doesn't want us to live in fear. God's plan for us is to live a life free from fear. Freedom from fear. Wouldn't that be awesome?

We hear this message from God himself in Isa. 41:10. The context of Isaiah, chapter 41, is the restoration of God's kingdom and God's people. God's people need restoration because they had been sent into exile in Babylon because of their repeated sins against God.

God's people are in captivity. They now live in fear; fear of their captors; fear of the unknown; fear they would never get to go home. So, in Isaiah, chapter 41, God gives a word of encouragement to his afflicted, captive people.

Through Isaiah, God says, "*fear not, for I am with*

*you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*" (Isaiah 41:10, ESV)

God says "fear not" because he is with us. God says he will strengthen us; he will help us, and he will uphold us with his righteous right hand.

"*Fear not, for I am with you.*" Do you feel the power behind these words? God says he, himself, will be with us, to take us through all the problems and struggles of life.

And, later in Isaiah, chapter 41, the Lord says he, himself, will stoop to deliver his own people. That promise is fulfilled near term when Cyrus releases the captive Israelites so they can return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. And it is fulfilled far term in the birth of Jesus Christ. Jesus is God who stoops to be with us.

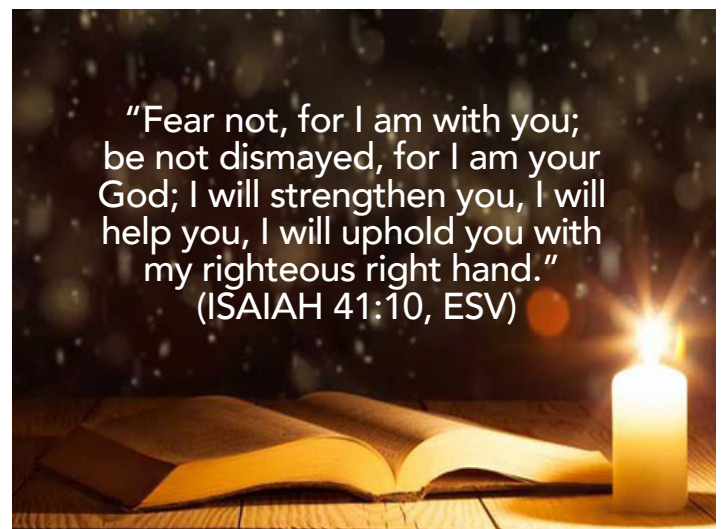
Through Jesus Christ, God is with us in our pain and in our afflictions. We often want God to take away the pain and the suffering. And sometimes God does.

Yet, God's promise is that, through Jesus, he will always be with us in our pain and in our afflictions. Therefore, we can live our lives free from fear! We are not alone.

Living a life free from fear. Living a life filled with great joy and peace. Living life knowing God is with us, every second, of every day, for all eternity. All of these promises contained in the birth of the baby Jesus. Yet, God's promises are only fully realized when they are received through faith. Amen!

See you next month,

Pastor Steve



"Fear not, for I am with you;  
be not dismayed, for I am your  
God; I will strengthen you, I will  
help you, I will uphold you with  
my righteous right hand."  
(ISAIAH 41:10, ESV)



## Evidence of God's graciousness to CPC

What a privilege and delight it is to report GOD's graciousness to us. In this report/story we can actually see GOD's breaking into our day-to-day life. The result a deeper sense of fellowship with Him.

In October, a location manager from "This is Us", (an ABC TV family series) contacted Pastor Steve to ask if CPC would consider renting the sanctuary to Disney Production in order to film a memorial service scene in a "This is Us" episode.

**1st evidence of GOD:** Pastor Steve took the call. He usually rejects such calls out of hand. But this time he took the call, listened and considered and prayed about this request. With Session's partnership in prayer and following approval, "This is Us" was green lighted for October 18-20; one day to set up, one day to film, and one day to tear down and return the campus to its original state.

**2nd evidence of GOD:** The original agreement was that CPC would receive a payment for \$4K. When the Project manager arrived, he said, "I think we can do better than that." The final payment was \$12K for CPC and \$30 and hour for a site representative. "Perhaps Pastor, you would like your wife, Simone, to be the site manager." Simone was delighted to be paid for what she would have done anyway as our church hostess. Clearly God had impacted this man's heart to not lowball but bless the church financially.

**3rd evidence of GOD:** There were over a hundred people on campus and walking through the Fellowship Hall. On the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall there are art pieces representing Jesus' birth, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and the gift of Jesus' Holy Spirit (GOD with us). From time to time someone would stop and just ponder the bulletin board. Sometimes groups would gather at the bulletin board to talk about the paintings displayed and the story they told. The paintings communicate the gospel. There were wonderful dialogues going on about the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**4th evidence of GOD:** The CPC community was encouraged to receive affirmation that we are "a hidden jewel"; that our gift of hospitality was received; and that there is a palpable presence of the Holy Spirit in this place.

## Pastor APPRECIATION DAY

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood celebrated Pastor Appreciation Sunday on October 17, 2021. Our congregation is so blessed to have such a God loving pastoral team.





Join us in  
**Worship**  
SUNDAYS at 11:00 A.M.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/384758031?pwd=ZnEySIBjL1VkuMhiTWRCREdmZVhJZz09>

Meeting ID: 384 758 031

Password: 351955

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,384758031# US (San Jose)

+13462487799,,384758031# US (Houston)

## FINANCIAL REPORT

DECEMBER  
2021



	DEC. 2021	YTD
Receipts	\$ 40,799	\$ 177,918
Disbursements	\$ 14,016	\$ 151,066
Increase (Deficit)	\$ 26,783	\$ 26,850

## WITH *Gratitude*

Dear Members and Friends of CPC,

Because of God's grace and your generosity, CPC had a tremendous year financially. This is the best year we have had since I became Pastor. The Session and I simply say, "thank you Lord and thank you church family." For more information on this year, please listen to the January 2, 2022 message "Test Me" on the church website.

Blessings,  
Pastor Steve



prayer  
REQUESTS

### *How can we pray for you?*

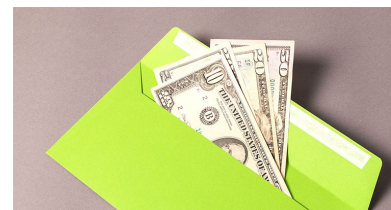
If you have prayer requests, you can send them via email or text PRIOR to our service each Sunday. My email is sbaroldy@gmail.com. You can text me at 323-202-5078.

## *Our Father,*

Who art in Heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name;  
Thy Kingdom come,  
Thy will be done  
on earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil

*Amen.*

## *Gifts & Offering*



**T**he Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact our lives. Amidst all the challenges, CPC is doing all we can to serve our church, to connect people to one another, and to connect all of us to God through our online worship.

We are grateful for your continued generosity in supporting our mission and NOW more than ever we need your help for us to continue to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and give hope to others.

Please consider sending a gift or donation to:

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood  
4011 Clinton Street, Los Angeles, CA 90004

# In Our Thoughts & Prayers



Let us remember to keep in our prayers the church family and friends who are in need of God's healing touch: overall healing for Kimi Fujitani, Charles Ingram, Janet Nozaki, Frank Morimoto, Stella Kenner, Karen Koranye, Lashman Johal, Pastor Steve, Martin; healing of knee and wrist of Maria Cardenas and prayers for Marley, Hunter, Cousin Dari, and Aunt Laley; overall healing for Ron Jung; healing and God's blessings for Harumi Mayeda; strength to care for her Mom for Irene Mayeda; overall healing for Joan Janecek; healing of legs of Sherri Esaki; healing of back and leg pain for Yuri Sangen; healing of left foot and diabetes for Denise Albriton; overall healing and healing of cancer in nostril of Brian Albriton; prayers for Pastor Steve, his wife Simone and their daughters Nicole and Noelle and David and Alice; revival for CPC and neighborhood, our elders, Faro de Luz Church, outreach to community, unsaved relatives and friends, and protection against major disaster.

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