

Theme: “Christmas Messengers”

May the “Good News” of Jesus birth and the salvation He came to bring fill you with the gifts joy, hope, peace, and love that come to us from the Christ-child, Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

- † Over the centuries God has used many messengers.
- † In the Old Testament He used *Prophets* as His “mouthpieces” to speak His important messages to His people and the world, including messages about the coming Savior.
- † He used men like the prophet Isaiah who would prophesy 700 years before Jesus was born: **“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel”** (literally: “God-With-Us”). – **Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV)**

“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 (NKJV)**
- † In the Bible we read accounts of God using all kinds of different messengers: young people, old people; men and women; poor, homeless nomads, as well as wealthy kings. Sometimes He even used the words of His enemies to speak a prophecy. There was even one very unusual account where He opened the mouth of a donkey to speak!

- † But when God really wanted an important message delivered, what did He use? (The internet?) No, He used His **angels!** This makes sense since the word **angel** means, “messenger.”
- † Of course He would use **angels**, right? He used **angels** to deliver the message to Mary that she would be the mother of the Savior, the Son of God. He used an **angel** in a vision to deliver the same message to Joseph.
- † Why wouldn't He use these powerful spirit-beings whose very presence lit up the sky with **“the glory of the Lord” (Luke 2:9)** on the night of Christ's birth; whose words powerfully proclaimed: **“Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11 NKJV)**?
- † It just makes sense, doesn't it? When you want to deliver the greatest **“good tidings”** (“Good News”) of all time, you use the best “messengers,” **angels.**
- † What we might not expect is that He has chosen to use us as His messengers! Yes, us! Undeserving and unqualified as we may be, God chooses to use us to share His “Good News.”
- † Just think of who He used on that first night to spread the message of the birth of the Savior:
- † He didn't use an army of theologically-trained prophets, pastors, and teachers. He used shepherds! Men whose training involved taking care of sheep!
- † And yet, they had “Good News” to tell, so they shared it: **“And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷ Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the**

saying which was told them concerning this Child. ¹⁸ And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.” (Luke 2:16-18 NKJV)

- † You and I have this same “Good News” to tell—the best news to tell!
- † That God Himself became one of us, to show that He had come to save each one of us!
- † He did that by living the perfect life that we couldn't live, by dying a death on the cross our sins to forgive, and by rising again the third day to give us everlasting life with Him in heaven!
- † We can share that wonderful news with others—like the angels and the shepherds, and all of God's messengers!
- † To remind us that we are God's messengers we are all going to share in speaking and singing of this “Good News” in our worship service today—from our young children, to the oldest among us.
- † We begin with the words of the familiar Christmas Account from **Luke** chapter **2...**