



Gideon's Trumpet

Church of Our Saviour
Lebanon Springs, NY

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Hush -- He's Coming!

"Hush -- He's Coming!" Mom would say and we would all quiet down. When Jesus came to the manger, we wanted to be the "best" we could be.

Aren't we all trying to be the "best" we can be while we await His coming? Let Him find us prepared -- PRAY!

Try praying while you go about your errands. Have a hectic commute? Say a prayer for the other commuters and yourself. Prepare yourself for Jesus -- say your prayers and let us pray for each other.



Special points of interest:

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Pastor's Points

In a world filled with uncertainty and fearful questions, it is great to enter into this season. A season of hope and expectation. That is what the Advent Season brings to us, a period of preparation and examination. Preparing for the coming of Our Lord and the examination of ourselves to be ready recipients of His coming.

Christmas Day is our reminder of the gentleness of His coming. Therefore, open your hearts to the joy of His love and to His coming. SEASON'S GREETINGS in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Fr. C.G. Dugger



THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS

What does the message of Christmas mean to you? Do thoughts of the baby Jesus asleep within His mother's arms come to mind? Or do you immediately rush to images of packages and presents being opened and family and friends joined together over Christmas dinner?

Christmas is a time for fellowship and demonstrating one's love for others. However, we must never forget God was the first to demonstrate His love to us. And this has not changed throughout the centuries since His Son's birth, He is still saying "I love you" to all who listen for His voice.

We long to know we are loved with an infinite love and that there is hope no matter what we face. This is the message of Christmas, and this is why Jesus came—to bring an eternal light to a darkened world and offer a message of hope and love that could not be silenced. The message of Christmas is one of God's personal love given through the life of Jesus Christ. It is a message of extreme favor and unconditional acceptance.

When applied to a life, it can bring freedom from the strongest bondage, offer the greatest sense of peace, and forgive the deepest sin. For those who accept the message of Christmas there is an opportunity for a new beginning. Yet sadly, this message is often overlooked or simply hurried past. And while some may reject the message of Christmas, they cannot cancel its existence.

This is because the message of Christmas is one of eternal love. It bears all, believes all, hopes all, and endures all. Most of all, the message of Christmas never fails. **(1 Corinthians 13:7-8)** It is written personally to you: God loves you, and no one can take His love away from you. Neither sin nor any other force can rob what He has established.

Many times we view the message of Christmas as being exclusively for the unsaved or spiritually deceived. Yet its message is just as relevant for the spiritual journey facing you. This is because the message of Christmas is one that speaks of salvation as a way of life lived out through the advent of Christ's birth and the Holy Spirit's presence.

When Jesus was born, Jerusalem and the surrounding territories were under a **Pax Romana**, or Roman peace. There was no war or threat of war. The people could live without fear of being attacked by enemies. However, there was a deep restlessness within their hearts. There was wealth and prosperity, but there also was a lack of hope and a sense of emptiness.

Jesus Christ was God's answer to the growing outcry of the lost, oppressed, and emotionally hurting. John, the apostle, writes, "[In Jesus] was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it . . . He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name . . ." **(John 1:4-5;11-12)**.

This is the same message of praise and adoration the angelic host spoke to the shepherds the night Jesus was born: "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" **(Luke 2:10-11)**.





We need the message of Christmas and the reassurance it brings. The teenager who has run away from home needs to know he can find forgiveness in the arms of God. The man or the woman who has lost a spouse needs to know life is still worth living.

The lawyer or the doctor who thinks she or he has it all but realizes there is an emptiness inside that money and prominence can't fill needs to know there is Someone who can satisfy his greatest longing. Only God can satisfy the cries of your heart.

Many believe they must do something to gain His approval. They tell them-selves they need to "clean up" their lives before coming to Jesus Christ. But we can never become clean enough to stand in the presence of God, apart from His saving grace. We need a Savior, and this is why God sent His Son. Only Jesus is capable of handling the disappointments, failures, and sin you face. He knows your weaknesses and through His forgiveness you can begin again.

How do you come to God? Just as you are. Jesus did not wait for the world to "get it right." If He had, He never would have come. He came to us because He saw the need, and He knew the only solution for the separation sin had caused was God's message of love and unconditional forgiveness.

If you have fallen to sin, go to Him. If you are discouraged and don't feel as though you can live another day, know that He is waiting for you with arms open. He has a solution to your problem. He cares what happens, and He wants you to bring your tears, frustrations, and struggles to Him.

One of the most wondrous things about God is the fact that He is our Teacher. He encourages us in love. He strengthens us for the battle, but He also teaches us how to pray in faith about the troubles we face and to expect an answer because we are His beloved.

The impact of Christ's birth was not diminished by the spiritual darkness of His society. Today the effectiveness of His life lived out by the power of the Holy Spirit is not lessened in any way by the wickedness of our world. Therefore, be encouraged. God is sovereign and His message of love, commitment, and purity remains steadfast.

While He hates sin, He loves His creation. This is why the message of Christmas is unlike any before it. It brings immeasurable hope, peace, security, and eternal joy to all who accept its message.

Mary was not rich or famous. There was nothing about her that attracted notoriety. Her only desire was to become a handmaid for the Lord. **(Luke 1:38)** And this was all it took for God to choose her to become the mother of the Son of God. Even the angel Gabriel acknowledged God's loving care for Mary: "Greetings, favored one. The Lord is with you! Do not be afraid . . . for you have found favor with God . . ." **(v. 28, 30)**.

The message God sends to you this Christmas is one of eternal favor. He has chosen to love you. Deuteronomy 7 tells us: "The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loved you . . ." **(v. 7-8)**

It is His love that draws you. You may seek to give elaborate gifts to those you love this Christmas, but the greatest gift has already been given. It came wrapped not in expensive garments but in swaddling clothes lying in a manger.

Would you like to give God a gift this Christmas? Give Him yourself. Let His message of love fill your heart as you surrender to His wondrous embrace.

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Snippets and Bits

Commercials for God

A fifth grade teacher in a Christian school asked her class to look at TV commercials and see if they could use them in some way to communicate ideas about God.

Here are some of the results:

God is like ... BAYER ASPIRIN -- He works miracles.

God is like ... a FORD -- He's got a better idea.

God is like ... COKE -- He's the real thing.

God is like ... HALLMARK CARDS -- He cares enough to send His very best.

God is like ... TIDE -- He gets the stains out that others leave behind.

God is like ... GENERAL ELECTRIC -- He brings good things to life.

God is like ... SEARS -- He has everything.

God is like ... ALKA-SELTZER -- Try him, you'll like Him.

God is like ... SCOTCH TAPE -- You can't see him, but you know He's there.

God is like ... DELTA -- He's ready when you are.

God is like ... ALLSTATE -- You're in good hands with Him.

God is like ... VO-5 Hair Spray -- He holds through all kinds of weather.

God is like ... DIAL SOAP -- Aren't you glad you have Him? Don't you wish everybody did?

God is like ... the U.S. POST OFFICE -- Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet nor ice will keep Him from His appointed destination.

Contributed by Sue Schauder.

Got something you would like to have in Gideon's Trumpet? Want to share with your Brothers and Sisters in Christ? We encourage *YOUR* participation in the Trumpet and solicit your contributions which can be left in the Church Office; or mailed to Susan Darcy, 7 Hutchinson Lane Lenox, MA 01240-2217 or sent by email to:

Susan@darcy-systems.com.

I'm looking forward to your suggestions and contributions!



Youth Corner



Are your children or grandchildren in Sunday School? Our wonderful teacher, Debi Galusha, has her students practicing for the Christmas Eve early service and could use some more voices. So bring your kids or grandkids next Sunday -- Allow them to make (as the Bible says) "a joyful noise unto the Lord".

Got a question about Sunday School? Please call Debi Galusha at 518-733-9356.



Birth of Our Saviour Quiz

Think you know the answers?

Take the quiz and find out

- Who was sent to prepare the world for Jesus?
 - Joseph
 - John the Baptist
 - Mary
- How did Mary come to name the Saviour Jesus?
 - She discussed it with Joseph and they agreed
 - John the Baptist named him so
 - An angel of the Lord
- In what special way was Mary with child?
 - She was not expected to have children ever
 - She was really past the childbearing years
 - She was a virgin and was carrying an immaculately conceived child
- Where was Jesus born?
 - Bethlehem
 - Tel Aviv
 - Jerusalem
- Where in the city (question no. 4) was Jesus born?
 - In the royal palace
 - In a stable (for cattle)
 - In Joseph's tent just outside of town
- Why was the holy delivery in this place?
 - The king wished it so
 - There was no room for Mary and Joseph at the inn
 - That was as far as Mary could travel
- In what was the baby Jesus immediately wrapped?
 - Joseph's cloak
 - Mary's robe
 - Swaddling clothes
- What event proclaimed the arrival of the Lord Jesus?
 - The Star of Bethlehem
 - God's voice speaking to the world
 - The death of the anti-Christ
- Who first heard of the coming of Christ on that blessed eve?
 - The king and queen of Rome
 - Shepherds in the fields
 - The innkeepers
- How did the (answers to question no. 9) hear the most holy news?
 - The devil spoke to them
 - Angels told them
 - The crying of the child indicated such



December and January Calendar At a Glance

December 2004			
Thursday	December 2	6:30 PM	Simple Meal - Bring a Sandwich - drinks provided
		7:00 PM	Bible Teaching, Prayers for Local Churches, Compline
Saturday	December 4	10:00 AM	Episcopal Church Women Meeting
Sunday	December 5	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
		10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School
Thursday	December 9	9:00 AM	Vestry Meeting
Sunday	December 12	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
		10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Last Sunday School Class until Fall
Sunday	December 19	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
		10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School
Friday	Christmas Eve Service	7:00 PM	Holy Eucharist with Special Music for the Children
	Christmas Eve Service	11:00 PM	Holy Eucharist
Saturday	Christmas Day	9:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
Sunday	December 26	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Laying on of Hands
		10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Laying on of Hands
January 2005			
Sunday	January 2	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
		10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School
Thursday	January 6	6:30 PM	Simple Meal - Bring a Sandwich - drinks provided
		7:00 PM	Bible Teaching, Prayers for Local Churches, Compline
Saturday	January 8	10:00 AM	Episcopal Church Women Meeting
Sunday	January 9	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
		10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
Thursday	January 13	7:00 PM	Vestry Meeting
Sunday	January 16	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
		10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School
Sunday	January 23	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
		10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School
Sunday	January 30	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Laying on of Hands
		10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist & Laying on of Hands & Sunday School
Mark Your Calendars to Plan for these Future Events			
Friday	Christmas Eve Service	7 PM	Holy Eucharist with Special Music for the Children
	Christmas Eve Service	11 PM	Holy Eucharist
Saturday	Christmas Day	9 AM	Holy Eucharist



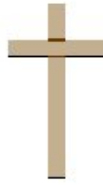
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Lebanon Springs, NY**

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We're on the Web!

<http://www.churchofoursaviour.us/>



The mission of the Church of Our Saviour is to spread the Gospel and inspire a renewal and commitment to living the Christian life through the love of Jesus Christ as expressed by His People.

During December Remember these Important Dates

Date	Subject
24 December	Christmas Eve Services at 7:00 PM and 11:00 PM
25 December	Christmas Day Service at 9 AM

These are the Every Month Important Dates

1st Saturday - Episcopal Church Women Meeting (Special Date - January 8th)
1st Thursday - Simple Meal (Bring a Sandwich) and Bible Study - Dec. 2 and Jan. 6
2nd Thursday - Vestry Meeting - Dec. 9 and Jan. 13