

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CHRISTMAS PILGRIMAGE December 21, 2020

Welcome to our Christmas Pilgrimage. This is a guided meditation that offers an opportunity to reflect on different parts of the Christmas story and how they might speak to our lives today. A video version of the pilgrimage was recorded for those who have internet access and will be available on December 21. You can view it at <https://youtu.be/J-eMbTmD4So>. This is our printed version of that pilgrimage. The pictures will help guide you through different stations that have been set up in the sanctuary at Zion.



Find a comfortable spot, perhaps by the glow of your Christmas tree or at your table with a candle flickering. As you journey through each station, imagine yourself in the sacred space of our sanctuary. You might want to take some time to journal as you ponder the questions below. You're invited to open the doors of your heart as you journey toward the manger and listen for the Good News of God's love.

STATION 1 – A YES WAITING TO BE BORN

Mary is visited by an angel that says she will bear a very special child who will be a light to the people. She says, "may it be so." Are there things in your life that are waiting to be born and all you need to do is say, "Yes?" Imagine yourself lighting a candle as that "yes" glows within you.



STATION 2 – OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

Joseph is worried about being a father to an illegitimate child. But an angel assures him that this will be the role of his lifetime. Where are you willing to go out of your comfort zone to do an extraordinary thing? Great possibility can emerge when we begin thinking and imagining outside of the box.



STATION 3 – BOLD PROCLAMATION

Mary visits her cousin, Elizabeth, while she is pregnant. It is there that she makes a bold statement that this child she is carrying will stand up for the outcasts and bring down the unjust mighty from their lofty positions. Who needs you to advocate bravely for them? What Good News needs to be proclaimed this Advent season? The pulpit is but one place where we hear Good News.



STATION 4 – Emmanuel, God with Us

Mary and Joseph make a journey to Bethlehem to be counted in a census. A very pregnant Mary rides on a donkey, and when they arrive, there is no place for them to stay. Have you ever felt panicked about your situation? God is with you. The cross reminds us how far God would go to be with us.



STATION 5 – GIVE THANKS

The child is born in a stable, certainly not usually meant for human births. At a time of year when what we “want” seems to get all the attention, what simple things and people do you already have that you are grateful for?



STATION 6 – WRAPPED IN LOVE AND PEACE

Jesus was “swaddled”—wrapped tightly—and laid in a manger on a bed of straw. Know that God wraps you tightly in love and peace. What can you offer as a way of “wrapping others with love and peace” in the coming year? Like the simple straw that lined the manger, what simple way can you prepare a place for Christ to be more present in your heart this year?



STATION 7 – THE NATIVITY

Luke 2:1-14

...the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!’

