



The Sound of Morning Star

Morning Star Lutheran Church ~ Missouri Synod
Lakeside, California
www.morningstarlcms.org



December

2024

Greetings family and friends of MSLC,

Happy Thanksgiving! I'm not sure if this will be coming out before or after, but either way, I hope it was a good one. A few weeks ago, our gospel message for Mark was about the widow's mite. This is the quintessential passage that is usually associated with giving. Since most pastors don't like to preach about money, I was curious as to which direction my two resources would go with this passage. The first resource, and different resources since that Sunday, have gone to the widow's heart as opposed to the Pharisees heart. She gave everything she had while he gave from his abundance. The application is where is your heart or who does it belong to.

My second source sort of went in the same direction, but also realized that what is at the center of this story is tithing. It is about money, and the fact that the widow gave all she had, while the Pharisee gave his proportional to his wealth, supposedly.

As I looked at this story, the first question that came to my mind is why do pastors have such a difficult time discussing money. As I went to the bible, tithing literally begins in Genesis 4 with the story of Cain and Abel. Though there seems to be no provoking for it, Abel gives one of his fattened calves to the Lord while Cain also gives a portion of his bounty to God but it is rejected. God's reasoning is that HE wanted the top portion from both and only received it from Abel.

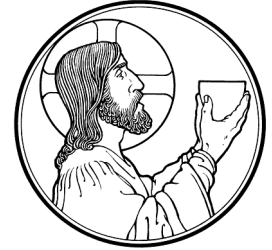
As I was thinking about this scenario, most of you can relate to the farming and vegetable side of this story. You plant a garden and wait for the vegetables to become ripe, hoping that it will be bountiful. You keep the puny ones, but it's the large ones you thank God for. On the ranch side, animals are the same way. The largest cow with the most potent bull, and the hope of a strong large calf which doesn't always happen.

Cain of course, was so upset about this whole scenario, that he ended up killing his brother because his offering was rejected. As I skimmed through the old testament, there were plenty of examples of offerings to God.

In the new testament, since Jesus was the once and final offering, the thinking has changed. Paul, in 2 Cor 9 talks about the Corinthians and their willingness to share, and praises them for their abundant giving.

Since giving is commanded by God, why do clergy have such a difficult time with it? I think part of the reason is the old adage about the man who was asked why he didn't attend church, and his response was that church only wants his money.

If you attend a church that is healthy, people give and you're in the black and sailing along, why offend people by asking them to give? If you belong to a church that struggles to get by, you have the same problem of not wanting to offend anyone by not mentioning the subject.



Sunday Services

8:45 a.m.

In person, via Zoom, or on
Morning Star's
Facebook page.

Bible Study

10:00 a.m.

For more information,
call the Church office.

619-443-6032





An interesting point that one of my resources made was how many times money was mentioned in the bible. I apologize for not remembering the exact number, but I was somewhat stunned by how large it was. As I was pondering how to approach this subject, the HOLY SPIRIT gave me a few reminders; from Ex 20. You shall have no other gods before me. Is money a god. it can be. The love of money is the root of all evil. Sometimes, it's not even the love of money, but it's the belief that it's mine and you can't have any. The rich young ruler from Matt: 19, who wanted to earn his way to heaven, couldn't, and walked away because he couldn't part with his money. I'm not sure it's the love of money, or the fact of how hard he had worked for his wealth and Jesus was saying it didn't matter.

A friend of mine put this whole subject into perspective, and Jesus did in Matt 22: 21. "give to Cesar what is Cesar's to God what is God's. What is God's? as a believing Christian, God has given me everything I have. Whatever the government requires, I pay my taxes. God has asked for ten percent of everything HE has given me. I am surrounded by HIS gifts of abundance, and HE wants the top portion.

I was struck by the giving part in the red letter book. The pastor started out small and worked his way up and eventually went past the ten percent. Excuses that I've heard about not preaching on this subject range from fear of offending someone to it's personal to its none of our business. Each Sunday the salvation story is preached by mandate from the synod so that we don't stray as the Israelites did. What doesn't go anywhere is whether we trust GOD to provide for all of our need. From Eph 2: 8-9 we have been saved by grace through faith, not by works, it is a gift from God. there's nothing we can do for salvation, and yet God provides for all our needs is a reciprocal one.

Sola Fide Sola Gratia Sola Scriptura

There was a BOD meeting as well as a voters meeting

The final benevolence went to disaster relief for all of the hurricane damage in the south east

The 2025 budget was accepted

We continue to wait for a volunteer to step in as new president



**Please join us in Classroom 4 at 10:00 a.m. on
SUNDAY MORNINGS, and be blessed by Studying God's
Word.**



The Strangeness of Christmas

By Pastor Richard Ross

From the beginning, humanity has prayed to God that He would stop the wars, end the violence, and bring peace on earth. We beg the Lord that somehow love would prevail, that good would triumph over evil.

Two-thousand years ago God answered our prayers with a baby.

We remember the stories: There was the celebration of Jesus' birth by angels and some scruffy shepherds in a field (Luke 2:8-10). There were the astrologers "bearing gifts they traverse afar," who followed a star 2,000 miles to worship Him (Matthew 2:1,9-11). And there was the king who tried to kill the baby (Matthew 2:16-18)

The image of a babe in a manger surrounded by barn animals, shepherds, astrologers, and His parents has been implanted so deeply in our hearts and minds we cannot assign a time to our inundation with the nativities, movies, paintings, and greetings cards. The picture of the Nativity is so much a part of what we are, its strangeness has been all but lost on us.

And not everyone buys it. Some people think the Christmas story is nothing more than a fairytale concocted by a poor 1st century Jewish family to coverup their daughter's promiscuity. Others find the whole idea so preposterous they cannot even allow themselves to entertain it.

The thing that often gets in the way of faith in the Lord who revealed Himself humble and meek as a baby, is our craving for a savior who is a warrior king, even Superman! We long for justice; our hearts rage against our enemies, wishing that the Lord would rain down His wrath on them.

But the Lord's wisdom is not our wisdom. Eight-hundred years before Mary was betrothed to Joseph, the prophet proclaimed, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel, which means, 'God With Us'" (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23).

God is love, and in His mercy He shared who and what He is through the beauty of a humble pregnancy and a vulnerable child. The baby grew to manhood, becoming a craftsman, skilled in carpentry. It's easy for me to imagine the care He showed His neighbors as He went about His daily work until God the Father mandated His call to public ministry at His baptism.

Our Lord lived His birth name, "Jesus," which means, "Yahweh saves." He shared God's love with others directly, healing the sick, casting out demons, raising the dead, and forgiving sins. Indeed, He was, and He is "Immanuel," "God With Us." Today, we receive Christ's ministry when we hear His voice, His Word. God IS with us. As we gaze upon the Cross, His love settles on our hearts. God IS with us. As we receive His body and blood in the bread and wine, we are filled with confidence. God IS with us.

But the wars, the violence, and the fear-mongering continue. Too often evil beats down the good. And loving our neighbors is often easier said than done. But God IS with us. We cannot fix a world that denies and resists God's love. But we can let God's love envelope us and change us, even transform us. For He is Immanuel, "God With Us." Amen.



“While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks “

Submitted by Chris Hill

We all have our own favorite Christmas Hymns and Carols. As I was thinking about some of mine, I noticed that most of them had their roots in old English or Irish with Medieval cord patterns.

“While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night” is one of my favorites. I decided to investigate who composed it and when. (I like knowing the history of music). Interestingly, “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks” was the only Christmas hymn that the Anglican Church authorized to be sung, and before it was published, only the Psalms of David were allowed to be sung. So, this makes “While Shepherds” of the ‘official’ Christmas Carols we have in English Literature.

It is not known exactly when the date of the composition was written but it appears in Nahum Tate’s and Nicholas Bradys’s 1700 supplement to their New Version of the Psalms of David that was approved by King William III for worship. “While Shepherds Watch” is a paraphrase of Luke 2:8-14 so it offers us a way to sing the Christmas story virtually directly from Scripture, which was very unusual for the time.

Not everyone liked this New Version of singing from scripture instead of the Psalms. The tune to the text (or lyrics) changed from time to time. The Old Winchester tune changed to simply Winchester and has been widely used mostly in Europe. However, in 1728 there was an adaptation taken from an Aria from the Opera, Siroe, composed by George Frideric Handel! The composition is named Christmas, by Handel. This is the melody that is most used in the United States.

Well, no wonder I like it! Words written by Luke and music by Handel. Hard to find a better Christmas song than that in my opinion!





CHRISTMAS. C. M. (107)

HANDEL. 153

1. While shepherds watch'd their flocks by night, All seated on the ground, The an-gel
of the Lord came down, And glo-ry shone a - round, And glo-ry shone a-round.

113 *Glad tidings of great joy.* 93-a.

WHILE shepherds watch'd their flocks by
All seated on the ground, [night,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

2 Fear not, said he, (for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind,)
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
To you and all mankind.

3 To you, in David's town, this day
Is born, of David's line,
The Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
And this shall be the sign:

4 The heavenly babe you there shall find
To human view display'd,
All meanly wrapp'd in swathing-bands,
And in a manger laid.

5 Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
Appear'd a shining throng
Of angels, praising God on high,
Who thus address'd their song:

6 All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace:
Good-will henceforth, from heaven to men,
Begin and never cease.

834 *The race for glory.* 83-a.

A WAKE, my soul! stretch every nerve,
And press with vigour on;
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,
And an immortal crown.

2 'Tis God's all-animating voice
That calls thee from on high;
'Tis he whose hand presents the prize
To thine aspiring eye.

3 A cloud of witnesses around
Hold thee in full survey;
Forget the steps already trod,
And onward urge thy way.

4 Blest Saviour! introduced by thee,
Our race have we begun:
And, crown'd with vict'ry, at thy feet
We'll lay our trophies down.

654 *The Minister's prayer: The scandal 88-b.
of the cross.*

JESUS, my strength and righteousness,
My Saviour and my King,
Triumphantly thy Name I bless,—
Thy conqu'ring Name I sing.

2 Thou, Lord, hast magnified thy Name;
Thou hast maintain'd thy cause;
And I enjoy the glorious shame,—
The scandal of thy cross.

3 Thou gavest me to speak thy word,
In the appointed hour;
I have proclaim'd my dying Lord,
And felt thy Spirit's power.

4 Superior to my foes I stood,
Above their smile or frown;
On all the strangers to thy blood
With pitying love look'd down.

5 O let me have thy presence still;
Set as a flint my face,
To show the counsel of thy will,
Which saves a world by grace.

6 O let me never blush to own
The glorious gospel word;
Which saves a world through faith alone,
Faith in a dying Lord.



Don't Forget:

"Handel's Messiah"



The Point Loma Choral Union, a 100-voice choir including community singers and PLNU music students, presents Handel's immortal oratorio *Messiah*, with student soloists and chamber orchestra, conducted by Dr. Keith Pedersen. A PLNU tradition for over 50 years.

Freewill offering



Date:
Sunday, December 8

Time:
3:00 p.m.

Location :
Point Loma Campus
Crill Performance Hall

BIBLE THEMES IN SPANISH (EDITED)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• El que oye y entiende la palabra da fruto
<i>The one who hears and understands the Word bears fruit</i>• El reino de los cielos es como una perla fina
<i>The Kingdom of Heaven is like a fine pearl</i>• Tome su cruz y sígame
<i>Take up your cross and follow Me</i>• Somos todos como hijos de Dios
<i>We are all like children of God</i>• Jesús tiene autoridad en mi vida
<i>Jesus has authority in my life</i>• El amor no guarda rencor
<i>Love doesn't hold grudge</i>• Dichosos los que trabajan por la paz
<i>Blessed are the peacemakers</i>• El Señor abre los ojos a los ciegos
<i>The Lord opens the eyes of the blind</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primero tendrá que predicarse el evangelio a todas las naciones
<i>The gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations</i>• ¡Manténganse despiertos!
<i>Stay awake!</i>• Soy bendecida para ser una bendición / Soy bendecido para ser una bendición
<i>I am blessed to be a blessing</i>• Dios me conoce muy bien
<i>God knows me very well</i>• Jesús me ama
<i>Jesus loves me</i>• Lleven una vida de amor, así como Cristo nos amó
<i>Walk in love, as Christ loved us</i>• El Espíritu es el que da vida
<i>It is the Spirit that gives life</i>• Cristo amó a la iglesia y se entregó por ella
<i>Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her</i> |
|---|---|



Morning Star Lutheran Church



619-443-6032

12821 Ha Hana Road
Lakeside, CA 92040

www.morningstarlcms.org

Pastor Richard Ross

The people of Morning Star believe in the One True God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe that everything God says in His Word, 'the Bible', is true. And we believe in God's promise that He will give us the free gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus, who died on the cross and rose again to save us.

Sunday Morning

Worship

8:45 a.m.

In person, on Zoom, or
Morning Star's
Facebook page.

Bible Study

10:00 a.m.

Youth Confirmation

10:00 a.m.

(Check the calendar for
the monthly
schedule.)

Ongoing Prayers:



Prayers of Thanksgiving for: *God's
saving grace, through
the gift of faith.*

May Our LORD send HEALING &
PEACE to our World, showing mercy
to all who are suffering.

Pray for those in the
Armed Forces,
especially:

Lucas Nelson Davis United States Navy
(Chris Hill's Grandson)



Prayers for our Pastor and Board of
Directors.

Prayers for His Church, the World and
Creation..

To add prayer concerns to this page, con-
tact the Church Office.

619-443-6032



Morning Star's 2024 Board of Directors:

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Director of Lay Ministry Dick Collingwood

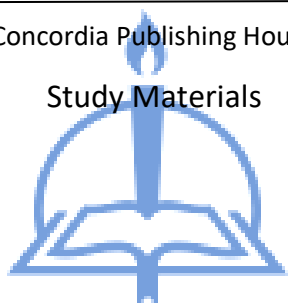
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Study Materials



Find daily devotions at

www.cph.org



FOR DEVOTIONS EVERYDAY TO YOUR IN-
BOX— SIGNUP AT : LWML.ORG

Mustard Seed Daily Devotions

**Wanted: INSPIRATIONAL BIBLE-
BASED ARTICLES.**



Editor, Chris Hill, chrisahill12@gmail.com

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE IS:
December 22,, 2024

For Birthdays,
Anniversaries,
and Other
Special Dates in Novem-
ber see the calendar.

Morning Star also has an On-Line
Prayer Chain at:

morningstarlcms.org

~ Jim Birren, Prayer Coordinator