

Christmas Day 2021 - Good News Of Great Joy For All People

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[0 : 00] hey everyone merry christmas to you however you're spending this special day whether you're with family or friends whether you're on your own whether you're at work i pray you'd know hope peace joy and love in your life as we give thanks and celebrate the coming of jesus to be god with us my name's matt the vicar of st john's and if it's okay with you i figured we'd just have a few mellow minutes together to reflect on the significance of this day and in particular the story which surrounded that first christmas you see the christmas story is about as rich a tale as it's possible to get a story infused with all sorts of characters all sorts of circumstances all sorts of encounters and it'd be good to think briefly today about three of these encounters in particular three angelic encounters that some of the supporting cast in the jesus story each have so for a start let's think about zechariah a member as we discover in luke's gospel of jesus's extended family a great uncle perhaps certainly a man in the autumn of his years luke tells us that zechariah was a priest a man who we're told stood tall in the sight of god having devoted his life to serving in the temple in jerusalem and it was while serving in the temple that zechariah had a most unexpected encounter with an angel named gabriel the message zechariah received was that he shouldn't be afraid because the good news was that he was to be a father as with his equally senior wife elizabeth they would conceive and give birth to a son a son they were to name john luke tells us that zechariah spent a long time in the temple that day no doubt processing and absorbing the news the wonder the joy of this angelic encounter now some six months later luke tells us of another visitation by gabriel not on this occasion in the city of jerusalem but in a town called nazareth and not to an old man like zechariah but instead to a young niece of his by the name of mary the message mary received was that she shouldn't be afraid because the good news was that she will conceive and give birth to a son a son she was to name jesus luke tells us that mary hurried to see and stay with her relative elizabeth zechariah's wife no doubt processing and absorbing the news the wonder the joy of this angelic encounter and then some nine months later luke tells us of yet another angelic encounter this time with a group of shepherds on the rolling hills outside of bethlehem luke doesn't give us the angel's name this time it'd be nice to think it was gabriel again but the message the shepherds received received was that they shouldn't be afraid because the good news was that they were being invited to pay a visit to a baby who had been born that day a baby named jesus a baby born to be their

savior luke tells us that the shepherds hurried into town to see the child no doubt processing and absorbing the news the wonder the joy of this angelic encounter zechariah mary the shepherds three angelic encounters three ways in which god gives a life-changing message of good news three ways which i would say we're called to draw encouragement from for ourselves you see in that first christmas story the good news of god's love is shared with those who are old those who are young those who are somewhere in the middle the good news of god's love is shared with those who are part of the establishment those who live an ordinary understated life those who live on the outskirts of respectable society the good news of god's love is shared with those who are in the city those who are in a small town those who are out in the countryside and we could go on because you see the breadth of these divinely inspired encounters underlines the truth of the angel's message on that the first christmas night that the coming of jesus is good news of great joy for all people a savior who has been born to mary yes but as the angels themselves declare a savior who has been born to us to you and to me and so no matter who we are no matter our background our age our status no matter our preferences our place our personality no matter the way we see ourselves or how other people see us the good news of great joy at this and every christmas is that

jesus has come to be the savior for all people all people including you and including me that i would say is the christmas story that jesus has come to be god with us god with us us always even to the end of the age and so however we process and absorb the news the wonder the joy of this encounter i pray that you and i would be inspired to make the christmas story our own story our own story story which tells of how god is with us in our lives both now and always and with that in mind here's a christmas cracker of a track from the saint john's band for today the family hiding from the storm found no place at the keeper's door for it was this a child was born the savior world so cold and hollow the sleeping town that did not know lying in a manger low the savior king who had no home

the hope has come to heal our sorrows is there room in your heart is there room in your heart heart is there room in your heart for god to write his story the shepherds counting sheep at night do not fear the glory light you are precious in wisdom you are approxxing shall alone possibly work in crescendo them recovery the beauty of we languid in the waffle ofnes is there ■■■■ my gosh this conversation may be nice but it is

You can come as you are, but it may set you apart When you make room in your heart and trade your dreams for His glory Make room in your heart, make room in your heart The mother holds the promise tight Every wrong will be made right The road is straight and the burdens lie For His hands He holds tomorrow Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?

Is there room in your heart for God to write His story? You can come as you are, but it may set you apart When you make room in your heart and trade your dreams for His glory Make room in your heart You can come as you are, but it may set you apart You can come as you are, but it may set you apart

[11 : 39] Lovely stuff And we'll be back with a New Year Sunday session here on YouTube on Sunday the 2nd of January So let's get together in that virtual way again then But until then, have yourself a merry little Christmas And may you live with the hope, the peace, the joy and the love Which comes from knowing God with us Through Jesus and by His Spirit Both this Christmas Day and forevermore For on Christmas

There are a few beautiful, many months Over there When, have you met God with our■ry For His heart For His heart Oh if I've got part of by His heart And very yearly If you are changing my mind And very rarely Or when I've got my spirit And once in a shoulder You have probably got a tendency