

Day 1
December 16



Pray | Give thanks to God for always keeping his promises

GOD ALWAYS keeps his promises. God promised a savior, Jesus Christ, for his people since the beginning of his creation.

There are several Old Testament prophecies about the identity and character of Jesus. God has complete control over his creation. God sometimes uses circumstances and people that we might consider less than ideal to bring about his will. God loves us so much he will stop at nothing to save us.



Read | Micah 5:2-4, Luke 2:1-3



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

God allowed Roman rule to bring the prophecy of the birthplace of Jesus to fruition. This seems unexpected because the Roman government was often at odds with God’s people. What are some ways in which God has used unexpected means to bring about his will for your life?

God could have brought Jesus into this world with or without prophecies. Why do you think there were prophecies made about Jesus throughout the Old Testament? What purpose might those prophecies serve in your faith journey?

If you do not yet have a relationship with Jesus Christ, will you spend time in prayer and ask him into your heart today? Maybe you don’t think you are good enough or loveable enough; however, the love and grace of Jesus Christ has power over any circumstance, feeling, and even death!

Day 2
December 17



Pray | Ask God to partner with you in unexpected ways

WITH UNEXPECTED circumstances come unexpected people. God’s will is infinitely more powerful than human expectations.

You don’t have to be an expert theologian, a pastor, or celebrity to be used by God to usher in his glory to others. The Bible is repeatedly full of examples of God using ordinary and unexpected people to fulfill his mission. King David was one of these ordinary and unexpected people—a youngest son and a simple shepherd—hardly someone we might expect to become King of Israel and an integral part in the ancestry of Jesus.



Read | 1 Samuel 16:1-13, Luke 2:4



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

At a quick glance, there was nothing special about David at the time of his anointing. He was the youngest child in a society where firstborns were most treasured. How does the anointing of David fulfill some of God’s promises of a savior for his people? How do some of the characteristics of David point to Jesus Christ as the Messiah?

Everyone’s faith journey is unique, full of surprises, and specifically mapped out by God. What unexpected people in your life has God lifted up to you to bring you closer to him?

God will often present opportunities for his people to play a role in the faith journey of others. Have you ever played the role of the unexpected person in someone else’s faith journey? How did this experience influence the faith journey of the other person? How did it influence your own faith journey?

Day 3
December 18



Pray | Thank God for loving all of his people

SOMETIMES WE might forget that historical figures like Mary and Joseph were people just like us, not just characters in an ancient story.

It is very true that God sent Jesus to save us from our sins, but he also sent Jesus to save people like Mary and Joseph. To the human eye, Mary and Joseph appear to be ordinary with no exceptional attributes or high status. However, they were very extraordinary and exceptional in God’s eyes. God chose them to be his instrument for bringing Jesus into this world.



Read | Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 2:5-7



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

God’s unique design for every human being gives everyone an opportunity to have a personal relationship with him. The same infinite God that created the entire universe also has specific plans and a specific relationship with you. How might this effect the way in which you communicate with God and what you communicate with him about?

It is said that human DNA make-up is approximately 99.9% the same for everyone (www.genomnewsnetwork.org). God is a relational creator so it should be no surprise that humans share so much in common with one another. Spend some time in reflection on your life. Do you focus more on the similarities between yourself and others or the differences? How will changing your mindset toward others change your relationships?

If you currently feel spiritually stuck or are wondering what your purpose in life might be, take comfort in God’s grace and love. God made you for his mission. Spend time in prayer today and ask God to renew your spirit and tell him you love and trust him.

Day 4
December 19



Pray | For your faith in Jesus to be a light to others

“TODAY IN the town of David a Savior has been born to *you*; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

After the birth of Jesus, an angel of the Lord appeared to a group of shepherds making them among the very first people to hear the news of Jesus’ birth. The angel did not appear before the emperor of Rome or a huge religious congregation, but a lowly group of shepherds.

The gift of God’s grace is available to the rich and the poor, the ordinary and the extraordinary.



Read | Luke 2:8-11



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

The shepherds are not merely characters in the story of Jesus’ birth; they were real people that existed at a specific time in history. The angel added God’s personal touch to the shepherds saying that the Savior was born to them. Why do you think the angel phrased this announcement to the shepherds with an emphasis on the name of David?

Sometimes Christians might experience chapters in their life where they feel their faith is not strong or they feel farther from God than usual. How might spending time in prayer and meditating on the fact that God sent Jesus for *you* help to lift you up during these chapters?

Consider sharing the ongoing story of your faith journey to others. Why might it be uplifting for others to hear about how God has personally showed up for you and how you personally show up for him?

Day 5
December 20



Pray | For the Holy Spirit to guide you through the holidays

WHEN GOD speaks, he means what he says. Every word God offers has an eternal purpose for everyone.

God’s words are consistent and reliable. About 1000 years before Jesus’ birth, God told David his bloodline would produce a great king. He sent his angel to confirm his words to the shepherds, mentioning David once again, just after Jesus was born. At an unknown time in the future, Jesus will make his triumphant return. He will remind us of all of his history and promises. His purposes and promises to his people will be fully felt and realized.



Read | Luke 2:11-14, Revelation 22:12-16



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Why do you think the angel emphasized that the newborn Messiah was located in the town of David, and why do you think David is still emphasized in the times of Revelation?

Sometimes God’s word and God’s promises might seem overwhelming or difficult to comprehend. If you are not part of a small group, youth group, men’s ministry, or women’s ministry here at Five Oaks, consider joining one that will best fit you! God reveals himself in amazing ways when his people share time together in his word.

The Christmas holiday can be very stressful, expensive, and hurried. While giving and receiving gifts or enjoying a big Christmas meal are wonderful traditions, take time to slow down and really focus on Jesus. Consider starting a new tradition and share the gift of the gospel with others.

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