



...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

- Matthew 5:16

On December mornings, gather with your family to countdown with God's word and acts of service. There is no better way to celebrate Christmas than to let your life overflow with compassion and gratitude for the best gift ever - Jesus Christ!

1

A YOUNG COUPLE, MARY AND JOSEPH, GET ENGAGED.

Give up your spot in line. (They'll be so thankful!)

2

ONE DAY, GOD SENDS THE ANGEL GABRIEL TO MARY. HE HAS SOME VERY SPECIAL NEWS!

Grab a garbage bag and clean up your neighborhood or local playground.

3

MARY IS GREATLY TROUBLED WHEN SHE HEARS THE ANGEL'S GREETING.

Park at Elizabeth Lane Elementary this morning and ride the shuttle. You will bless someone else with a parking spot in the church parking lot.

4

GABRIEL RESPONDS TO MARY: "DON'T BE AFRAID; GOD IS VERY HAPPY WITH YOU!"

Pay for someone else's coffee. (Christmas caffeine!)

5

GABRIEL TELLS MARY THE SPECIAL NEWS: SHE WILL HAVE A BABY BOY, AND HE WILL BE NAMED JESUS.

Compliment or encourage a stressed mom with kids. (Even a stranger!)

6

GABRIEL SHARES MORE DETAILS OF GOD'S PLAN WITH MARY: JESUS WILL BE GREAT AND BE CALLED GOD'S VERY OWN SON!

Cook a double portion and deliver to a young family, a caregiver or a widow/ widower.

7

MARY DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HOW SHE CAN HAVE A BABY WITHOUT BEING MARRIED, BUT THE ANGEL GABRIEL ASSURES HER OF A GREAT TRUTH: NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD.

Make thank you cards for your mailman, garbage truck drivers, & grocery store clerks.

8

"I SERVE GOD WITH MY LIFE AND WANT ALL THAT YOU HAVE SAID TO HAPPEN," MARY TELLS THE ANGEL, AND HE LEAVES.

Donate needed items to Beds for Kids. Needs include comforters, sheet sets, pillows, furniture, and *Jesus Storybook* Bibles. Items can be put in the collection bins at Carmel.

9

MARY VISITS HER COUSIN ELIZABETH AND IS SO OVERWHELMED WITH GOD'S GOODNESS THAT SHE SINGS A SONG OF PRAISE.

Practice and plan for caroling in your neighborhood. Invite friends to join you!

10

CAESAR AUGUSTUS WANTS TO KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE IN HIS EMPIRE, HE TELLS ALL THE PEOPLE TO GO BACK TO THEIR HOMETOWN TO BE REGISTERED AND COUNTED.

Leave a kind note under a family member's pillow.

11

JOSEPH TAKES MARY, WHO IS PREGNANT, TO HIS HOMETOWN OF BETHLEHEM TO BE COUNTED.

Choose a friend or family member with young kids and offer to babysit for free one night this week.

12

WHILE JOSEPH AND MARY ARE IN BETHLEHEM, THE TIME COMES FOR THE BABY TO BE BORN.

Purchase a gift that is more than a gift - like clean water, a goat, or clothes. Check out the options through IMB's onlifematters.org.

13

MARY GIVES BIRTH TO JESUS, WRAPS HIM IN SWADDLING CLOTHS AND LAYS HIM IN A MANGER BECAUSE THERE IS NO ROOM FOR THEM ANYWHERE ELSE.

Do another family member's chore in secret.

14

AT NIGHT IN A NEARBY FIELD, SHEPHERDS ARE WATCHING THEIR FLOCKS.

Make get-well cards for someone who needs them.

15

THE SKY LIGHTS UP -- GOD HAS SENT AN ANGEL TO THE SHEPHERDS TO TELL THEM THE GOOD NEWS.

Invite someone from a different country or culture to your house. Share a meal and your traditions with each other.

16

WHEN THE SHEPHERDS SEE THE ANGEL, THEY ARE AFRAID!

Email an encouraging note to a Carmel missionary at carmelbaptist.org/serve/nations.

17

THE ANGEL TRIES TO CALM THE SHEPHERDS: "DON'T BE AFRAID - I BRING WONDERFUL NEWS THAT WILL BRING JOY TO ALL OF THE WORLD!"

Tell each of your family members one thing you love about them.

18

"A SAVIOR--THE RESCUER YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR IS BORN TODAY!" THE ANGEL PROCLAIMS TO THE SHEPHERDS.

Take turns sharing your favorite family memory from the last year.

19

THE ANGEL EXPLAINS THAT THE SHEPHERDS WILL FIND THE BABY WRAPPED IN SWADDLING CLOTHS AND LYING IN A MANGER.

Offer to do the dishes or take out the trash without being asked.

20

MORE ANGELS COME TO CELEBRATE THE GOOD NEWS - THEY ARRIVE AT THE SHEPHERD'S FIELD AND BEGIN PRAISING GOD!

Do yard work for a neighbor.

21

THE SHEPHERDS LEAVE THEIR FLOCKS AND HURRY TO FIND MARY, JOSEPH AND THE BABY WHO IS LYING IN A MANGER.

Send a kind text or leave a voicemail for someone you haven't spoken to in awhile.

22

AFTER THEY SEE THE BABY, THE SHEPHERDS EXCITEDLY GO AND TELL EVERYONE THEY RUN INTO THE GOOD NEWS!

Invite your neighbors to sing Christmas carols, drink cocoa and roast marshmallows.

23

THE SHEPHERDS RETURN TO THEIR FLOCKS, PRAISING GOD FOR ALL THEY HAD SEEN AND HEARD.

Write encouraging phrases on index cards and leave them under the windshield wiper on random cars.

24

MARY NAMES THE BABY JESUS JUST AS THE ANGEL HAD TOLD HER TO DO.

Celebrate Christmas Eve with family traditions and worship at Carmel or another Christmas Eve service.

25

GOD HAS SENT HIS SON TO RESCUE US BECAUSE HE LOVES US! Luke 1:26-2:21

Go back to Day 1 and read God's story of compassion from beginning to end. Merry Christmas! God loves you!

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Matthew 1:21

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Mark 10:45

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Luke 19:10

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 20:31

ADVENT
2017

For additional opportunities and resources, visit carmelbaptist.org/christmas-2017.