

“Light and Life”

John 1:1-5

Pastor Charlie Berthoud | Sermon for Friday, December 24, 2021

The Bible gives us several perspectives on the birth of Jesus. In Luke, we hear about shepherds and angels,
about good news of great joy for all the people,
about peace and goodwill to all.

In John, we have a more poetic and theological perspective, which echoes the creation narrative in Genesis and celebrates the gift of light.

Listen for God's word from John chapter one:

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

The good news of Christmas is that Jesus is born.

Jesus is the one who proclaims God's new reality, the Kingdom.

He teaches about love and forgiveness, and he shows us love and forgiveness.

He reaches out to the last, the least, and the lost, showing that ALL of us are beloved children of God.

He reminds us of God's steadfast love, offering us second chances and fresh starts.

He is the one who calls people like us to turn around, get back on track, and live with purpose and meaning.

Or in other words, as the hymn says, “light and life to all he brings.”

We live in a time of too much sadness and darkness and death, with Covid and all the other challenges of our time. It’s hard right now.

We are understandably concerned about the spread of Covid, a contagious virus.

Tonight, as we celebrate Christmas, I want to encourage us to be contagious—contagious with God’s light and with life and with love.

Last year outside of Baltimore, one family learned that a neighbor was struggling with grief, stress, and work challenges.

So the family left some cookies on their neighbor’s porch.

And they ran a string of lights across the street, as a sign of connection, a reminder that they were in this together.



Other neighbors saw the lights and wanted to do the same. One woman shared: “I said to my neighbor: ‘Let’s do it, too.’ Before we knew it, we were cleaning out Home Depot of all the lights.”

So they started running lights across the streets and all around the neighborhood, using existing power and cable lines, and presumably being very safe.

Another family was thinking about moving to a bigger house in a

different neighborhood, but they were moved by the love in the neighborhood, so they stayed. And they stayed up late one night bending coat hangers with the message “Love lives here.”



This year the street is full of light and love and life. It’s almost contagious.

One simple act led to another. The light shines in the darkness.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2021/12/21/baltimore-rodgers-forge-christmas-lights/>

My hope for each of you on this Christmas Eve is that you will recognize and experience...

the light of God in Jesus Christ,

the love that God has for the whole world,

and the life that God offers us every day.

And I hope you’ll find ways to share the light, the love, and the life with the people around you. The good news of great joy is for ALL the people.

Merry Christmas. Amen.