



### Christmas Message 2018.

Christmas is an opportunity to rejoice in the gift of life! As we celebrate the arrival of Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger, we are reminded of God's gracious gift of physical and spiritual birth.

The book of Genesis explains how God created human life. "Then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). The Hebrew word "אָדָם Adam" is the name given to the first man. The name "Adam" is closely related to the Hebrew word "adamah" which means "earth." Adam's name was chosen because he was created from the dust of the ground. It is very interesting that Latin and English roots for the word "earth" are derivatives of the word "humus" which means "from the earth." From "humus"—the word **humility** is formed.

God graciously and lovingly created Adam just as God creates each one of us. When we have the opportunity to see new babies fresh from God, it inspires us to remember the sanctity of God-given life. When we hold these little ones tight, and watch them wrap their little hands around one of our fingers, we understand the love and blessing of God. Just like Adam, each one of us is created for a relationship with God. The relationship begins when we humble ourselves before the Lord. When we humble ourselves: We acknowledge and worship God as our Creator; we try to live and obey God's Word; we ask for forgiveness when we sin; we praise God for our lives and the gift of everlasting life through Jesus Christ.

In a few days, we will celebrate Jesus' arrival as the Savior of the world. Jesus, God's only-begotten Son, was born in a manger—a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes—in a state of humility to fulfill God's purposes.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. <sup>69</sup> He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, <sup>70</sup> as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, <sup>71</sup> that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. <sup>72</sup> Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, <sup>73</sup> the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us <sup>74</sup> that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, <sup>75</sup> in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. <sup>76</sup> And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, <sup>77</sup> to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. <sup>78</sup> By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, <sup>79</sup> to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:68-79).

Let us humble ourselves and THANK GOD this Christmas Season for the gift of life. May God continue to use our presbytery, our churches, and each one of us to share the light of Jesus.

Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

Jason Elliott, Moderator, for the Administrative Team:  
Alcinda, Colleen, Ruth, Rob, and Tim,  
and our Presbytery Staff: Frank, Connie, Kandy, & Patty