

Christmas at Flatirons – Week 1

Do you hear what I hear? – Jim Burgen

December 5, 2021

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation-encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Bible References

Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:20-25

// Message Summary

This week Pastor Jim Burgen launches our *Christmas at Flatirons* series. The retelling of the Christmas story is often filled with awe and wonder at the miraculous account of **“how”** baby Jesus entered the world. And there’s no shortage of *wow* in the “how” of this story: we’ve got a prophecy, choirs of angels, a star, virgin birth, shepherds and wise-men. But Pastor Jim wants to remind us of the bigger perspective – God’s redemption plan for humanity. God’s gift was made possible to us through the birth, life, and death of Jesus – God’s one and only Son. His resurrection from the dead completes the whole gospel package and gives us the gift of life. This is the **“why”** of the Christmas story. This gospel is the good news of Jesus come to earth as Immanuel (meaning God with us). For those of us who get to know Jesus, and join Him in what He is doing, the gospel story makes the Christmas story one reason to sing joy to the world.

One of our central beliefs at Flatirons is biblical authority. The bible is God’s word – His clear message to us. The opening words of Luke’s Gospel are written with the same conviction, “so that you may know with certainty the things that have been fulfilled among us” about Jesus Christ (Luke 1:1-3). Luke is the only gospel narrative that tells the story of Jesus birth which is why these verses are so often read as the Christmas story.

// Community Questions

1. Ready or not, the Christmas season is upon us. What is your favorite Christmas song; who sings it or what makes it great?
2. Think about someone you will spend time with during the holiday season and share with your group how or why being with that person brings you joy.

// Discussion Questions

1. Read Luke 1:28-29 and Matthew 1:20-21. Think for a moment about how this news might have landed on Mary and Joseph, as they each heard the message from the angel.
 - a. When unexpected news comes your way, what is your first reaction?
 - b. Do you call someone to share your story or are you more likely to keep it to yourself and think on it a while?
 - c. Most of us don't get an angel visit to preview what God has in store for our lives so how do you recognize a message from God?
 - d. How might you improve your chances of hearing and understanding God's message?
2. Pastor Jim emphasized Luke 1:37 where the angel said "For no word from God will ever fail." Some bible versions read, "For with God, nothing shall be impossible." Share what these words mean to you on your journey of faith and obedience with God today.

// Challenge

How might things be different for you and the people in your life if you decided to join God in what He is doing?

What is one clear command that you have received from God and you are in the process of deciding whether you are going to tell God yes or no?

As you read your bible and pray this week, think on these questions and any area of your life that requires obedience. Plan it: what steps can you take to begin responding to what God has already commanded? Look at your calendar and pin down a date to take action.