

The gospel of John gives us a glimpse into the background planning that went into bringing Jesus to us. His birth was more than a simple occasion of a young woman giving birth in a stable, to which shepherds and wise men came to visit. This was an occasion that God had choreographed to rescue people from all nations. Let's rejoice today, for God made his dwelling on earth for us.

**PRAYER:**

Dear God, We praise you for your great plans and works of salvation. Help us to see the amazing love you have shown in coming to be with us to save us. Amen.

**ACTION:**

Reflect on the birth of Jesus and be thankful that from humble beginnings, salvation came to us all.

**Saturday, December 26, 2020**

Hebrews 13:8

**PONDER:**

Maybe you're feeling a little let down after the excitement. After all the preparation, family, friends, gatherings and gifts — or maybe the COVID-19 isolation put a damper on the celebration. Suddenly, it seems Christmas is over. Here's the great news. The reason for the season is a reason for joy every day. Jesus is with you always. Praise be to God.

**PRAYER:**

Lord Jesus, help me to wake each morning with joyful expectation of my life with You. Amen.

**ACTION:**

Call a friend and remind them that even as the glitter fades and the decorations come down, God's Love remains with them.



**GOBIN CHURCH**  
A United Methodist Community for All

**DAILY PRAYER MEDITATIONS**

December 21-26, 2020

**Monday, December 21, 2020**

Hebrews 9:1-14

**PONDER:**

“Busy, busy, busy!” Those are the closing words of the evil magician in one of my favorite Christmas cartoon stories, “Frosty The Snowman.” He has to get busy writing “I am sorry for what I did to Frosty” a hundred, million, zillion times — or something like that. But it won't be in the laborious writing of those words that the magician will find redemption, but in the change in his heart that comes if he reflects on doing better and the forgiveness that comes from God. In today's Scripture to the Hebrews, the readers know what they need to do, and they've been “busy, busy, busy” doing what they think they are supposed to do. But they feel guilty for not doing enough. It can be frustrating to look at the need surrounding us. Sometimes we want to scream, “I'm trying, God, but I can only do so much!” In those times, refocus to be thankful for what God has done and is doing. Release the guilt, and walk with God as a helper to our brothers and sisters.

**PRAYER:**

Thank you, God, that I can have a clear conscience before you, not because of anything I have done, but because of what you have done for me through your Son Jesus. Amen.

**ACTION:**

Practice forgiveness today. First, forgive yourself for not doing as much as you can, with all you can, whenever you can. Second, thank God for forgiving you.

**Tuesday, December 22, 2020**

Hebrews 8:1-13

**PONDER:**

Sometimes an enemy uses trials to get our focus off of Christ. Rather than allowing the trial to drive us to Christ for sustenance and

comfort, we turn to worldly counsel that anyone could use — think Internet conspiracy theories or political slants to our personal preferences — rather than keeping our sustaining hope in Jesus. The counsel may even “work,” in the sense of providing relief from our pain. But if it is relief without Christ, it is deceptive relief. The first readers of the letter to the Hebrews were tempted to abandon Christ and return to Judaism under threat of persecution. Judaism had been the practice of their ancestors for centuries. God had revealed Himself through the Hebrew Scriptures and the religious practices spelled out there were comfortable and satisfying. Why endure persecution for their faith in Christ? Why not just go back to the old ways that had been followed for centuries? Because God loves us and wants us to grow better, grow kinder, grow gentler, grow more faithful to the teachings of Jesus. How can you grow closer today to being the person God wants you to be?

**PRAYER:**

Dear God, Help me stay focused on the message of Jesus. Thank you for your encouragements when I do and say the things I should do. Order my steps to move forward in your path. Amen.

**ACTION:**

What does it mean to have God’s laws written on our hearts? Make some hearts — drawings, paintings on stones, cookies with icing — and write words of love on those hearts. Share them with others.

**Wednesday, December 23, 2020**

Mark 11:1-11

**PONDER:**

Why did Jesus leave the temple and go to Bethany? He was just in a parade. He’s riding a borrowed colt. It’s a march, a movement. We call it the triumphal entry. Jesus rides into Jerusalem. He enters the temple. He looks around at everything. And he leaves. He does nothing. He says nothing. He just leaves. He goes to Bethany. It’s a strange and anticlimactic ending to the triumphal entry. What’s that all about? Maybe he left so he could keep his promise to return the colt he was riding, as he said he would do. What if returning the colt is a metaphor for us? Ask yourself, what do I need to return this week? We all have stuff that we’ve carried around with us for far too long. It’s no longer able to take us anywhere or give us life. It’s just baggage we carry that continues to weigh us down. It impoverishes life. It corrupts our heart. What do you need to let go of, release, and return this week? Is it a grudge or resentment? Anger? Fear? Disappointment and regret? Guilt? Envy? Maybe you need to return being in control, having to be right, a need for approval, perfectionism. Maybe it is time to return and release it all to God, trusting that God can do something with this stuff when we were never able to.

**PRAYER:**

Dear God, Help me to return many colts this week. Help me to empty the barn where I store all the unneeded things I’ve accumulated in my life, but am too tired, scared or lazy to let go. Thank you for your care and comfort. Amen.

**ACTION:**

Take that image of returning the colt with you this week. Take it wherever you go. Bring it to whatever you do. Hold it as you pray. Let it be present as you live your life and as you engage people in relationships whether in your family, at work, at school, at the grocery store.

**Thursday, December 24, 2020**

Luke 2:7

**PONDER:**

We can hardly go through a Christmas season without a reminder that Jesus was born in less than ideal circumstances. We see scenes of a stable filled with animals, while Mary and Joseph look lovingly into a manger, where the baby Jesus calmly rests. The animals welcome him. The lowly shepherds welcome him. Today, in Bethlehem, in the Church of the Nativity, a golden star on the floor marks the spot where Jesus was born, according to traditional accounts. The church today is a far different scene than a cold, dirty stable — or even a spare room as described in some other accounts. It seems to me Jesus came to a place that was somewhat hostile to the presence of God. But, thankfully, he changed the world through his ministry, calling to the lost, lonely and unwelcome. He wants all to experience the warmth of being at home in the presence of the Lord.

**PRAYER:**

Lord Jesus, thank you for coming to our unwelcoming world so that you could welcome us into your presence. Amen.

**ACTION:**

Find a way you can welcome someone who might feel unwanted, lost or alone. Tell them God loves them, and so do you.

**Friday, December 25, 2020**

John 1:14

**PONDER:**

When Jesus first appeared on earth, it looked like a random birth. Though a few people knew of Jesus’ coming, most were unaware of the plans that had been made in heaven in order to bring us a Savior.