



Finding Our Kneeling Places
Pastor Nancy M. Raabe
Grace Lutheran Church,
December 24, 2022
Luke 2:1-20

What really is the marvel of this night?

I am coming to think that it is not in the miraculous, but in the ordinary. God has come to us in flesh and bones and blood just like our own, ordinary. Shepherds, the first evangelists of the gospel, ordinary -- simple folk who took the news that was given to them without question or interpretation. The rich and powerful and politically well-connected would have doubted and questioned and second-guessed, but not these ordinary shepherds.

Instead, they took the angel's news just as it was told and hurried off to find the child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger. The manger gives them a clue -- look where animals reside -- and they locate him in a cattle shed -- ordinary. Kneeling down, for they all knew the rituals of worship, they discovered not just a baby, but a family -- ordinary. They tell the parents exactly what the angel had told them. Mary tries to pull strands of meaning together in her mind, but the shepherds accept in gratitude exactly what had been told to them.

And furthermore they recognized immediately it was a message from God, since they were living on the land and closely attuned to the abundance of God's provision for them. Praising God, they proceed to pass this same news along to others. No high tech. Just word of mouth. Simple. Unfiltered. Ordinary.

This Christmas, find your kneeling places in the ordinary where you encounter the living God. Seek those not at the foot of magnificence that is beyond human understanding, but wherever you see the Son of God enfleshed in God's own people, and whenever you witness the power of hope at work in them. Places where need is voiced and love is found. In stables aglow with signs of God's mercy and Christ's humility and the Spirit's hope. Aglow with the presence of the God who has truly come for us.

[Song: "Stables" by Peter Mayer]

Amen.