

Theologian and civil rights activist Howard Thurman once wrote,

“When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace to the people,
to make music in the heart.”

As people of faith know, God’s gift of the Child in the manger is not meant to be embraced only in December when our hearts and halos are in the right place or when our wings and our witness lift us to new levels of goodness and grace. On the contrary, God’s gift of Jesus Christ initiates the beginning of our work. Having been blessed by the One in the manger, we now depart as transformed people who live in the reality of our Lord. After the celebration of the birth of the Christ Child, we seek to reflect God’s love in our daily lives by committing ourselves to the true spirit of Christmas throughout the entire year . . .

by sharing our resources with the people who truly need our gifts . . .

by living faithfully in ways that will bring peace on earth . . .

by expressing our love in more direct ways than gifts . . .

and by examining our activities in the light of our deepest values.

Living this way as we begin a new year immerses us in the beauty and holiness that God revealed at Christmas, and it gives us something true, meaningful, and life-giving to which we can commit our lives. And if these things are happening among us, then truly the Christ Child has been born in our hearts.

Let us begin the new year by gathering together on Sunday morning at one of our worship services at 8:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.