

JESUS CHANGED MY LIFE
JOSEPH - He Directs My Actions
Advent Worship Series – Week 2
December 9, 2007

WORSHIP SERVICE OUTLINES

Each worship outline contains all elements needed for your worship service. The order of each service presented is only a *suggestion*. No doubt changes will be needed to accommodate the flow and worship style of your corps. The outlines are flexible and allow opportunities to “cut and paste” as needed. If you are blessed with instrumental or vocal music resources, you may find there is more structured material here than needed. It is recommended that the headings of each section of the service be included in the bulletin.

Announcements and Offering

Call to Worship:

The man of wood and stone had to become a man of dream and destiny. The man who had yearned for his own flesh and blood found his calling as an adoptive father.

Today, we know Joseph’s name because of his faithfulness and obedience in following every instruction that God gave him. In Joseph and in Mary, God selected the only man and the only woman in this world to whom he would entrust his own precious Son.

Joseph was a quiet man. When the wise men visited, for example, no word is recorded from Joseph. But he was a man of faith, dependability, and practicality who served as a model not only for the beloved Child but for all of us who would stand quietly in that Child’s presence.

(Why the Nativity?, page 28)

HC#151 – Fairest Lord Jesus	HC-151	HCD14-T11
Additional Optional Songs		
SB#100 – Angels, from the realms of glory	TB-398 – Come and Worship (Regent Sq.)	HTD4-T12 (4 vs.)
SB#113 – Joy to the world!	TB-87 – Joy to the World!	HTD4-T9 (3 vs.)
SB#114 – Light of the world	TB-653 – Here I am to Worship	
HC#146 – Here I am to Worship	HC-146	HCD13-T16
SB#116 – O come, all ye faithful	TB-496 – Adeste Fideles	HTD3 –T1 (3 vs.)
HC#140 – O Come, All Ye Faithful	HC-140	HCD12-T20

HC#141 – All Hail the Power	HC-141	HCD13 –T11
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Responsive Scripture/Candle Lighting:

Leader: Joseph was open to receiving God’s message and guidance for his life. But more than just receiving the message, Joseph was also willing to change his decisions and behavior as a result of his encounter with God.

Solo 1: Come, let us adore him.

Solo 2: Immanuel, God with us.

[Lighting of the second Advent candle.]

Solo 2: On this second Sunday of Advent as we light the second candle, we are called to open our hearts to the miracle of Christ's coming and to his plan for our lives.

Leader: As you and I are sensitively obedient to God’s leading in our lives, we too will be changed and receive comfort, direction, and a clear view of God’s perspective in our lives.

All: An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:20-21)

Leader: All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

All: Out of the stump of David’s family will grow a shoot—yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root. And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. (Isaiah 11:1-2)

Leader: In that day the heir to David’s throne will be a banner of salvation to all the world. The nations will rally to him, and the land where he lives will be a glorious place. (Isaiah 11:10)

All: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and they will call him Immanuel”, which means “God with us.” (Isaiah 7:14)

HC#61 – Crown Him King of Kings	HC-61	HCD5-T11
Additional Optional Songs		
HC#10 – The Light Has Come	HC-10	HCD1-T10
HC#72 – Emmanuel	HC-72	HCD6-T12

HC#82 – Jesus, Name Above All Names	HC-82	HCD7-T12
HC#123 – Shine on Us	HC-123	HCD11-T13
HC#146 – Here I am to Worship	HC-146	HCD13-T16
HC#169 – Hallelujah	HC-169	HCD15-T19
HC#187 – Jesus, Messiah	HC-187	HCD17-T17
HC#219 – King of Kings, Majesty	HC-219	HCD20-T19
HC#220 – Incarnate	HC-220	HCD20-T20

[NOTE: It is recommended that either the movie clip *OR* the drama be chosen for the service—*NOT BOTH*.]

Movie Clip



The Nativity Story – The Journey of a Lifetime, a Story for All Time
(Distributed by New Line Home Entertainment)

Scene 12

Start: 46:32 Mary at door
End: 49:35 “I am your husband...”

Optional Movie Clips

Close to Jesus – The Stories of Those He Touched

Disc 2 – Joseph of Nazareth

(Distributed by Artisan Home Entertainment)

Scene 6 – Conception

Start: 37:28 Joseph...”Mary, Mary...where’s Mary?”
End: 42:49 Joseph leaves

Start: 44:40 Joseph walking up hill, sits at table...”I’ll marry you...”

End: 48:28 “...If it’s true?”

Scene 7 – The Lord Saves

Start: 48:30 Joseph sleeping...“Mary, Mary...why?”
End: 51:18 Wedding.... “...around your table”

Jesus of Nazareth (Distributed by Artisan Home Entertainment)

Scene 9 – Joseph’s Dilemma

Start: 21:48 ... “That’s too much for any man to believe.”
End: 25:49 “...Thank you.”

Scene 10 – Nightmares

Start: 25:53 Joseph’s dream
End: 27:15 ...”the Savior...”

Start: 27:16 Wedding
End: 30:32 Wedding

Mary of Nazareth (Distributed by Questar, Inc.)

Scene 3

Start: 16:26 Joseph sleeping
End: 17:30 ...”from their sins”

Drama: A Well Ordered Life

Reading:

Why Joseph? To fulfill his plan, God needed a carpenter. He needed a man who was sturdy, stable, and practical, yet sensitive to the voice of God. He needed one who would stand quietly with a young virgin who might have seemed an object of ridicule, yet who carried in her womb the hope of the world. Joseph was strong but compassionate; he was able to lead the tiring expedition to Bethlehem and to the stable, to love and encourage the mother of Christ. Joseph, as the man of the house, was the teacher to give Jesus his first lessons in the law of God. And in Jerusalem, when the boy was twelve and it became evident that his first allegiance must be to another Father, Joseph was the man to humbly and silently step back and let God step forward.

(Why the Nativity?, page 29)

HC#82 – Jesus, Name Above All Names	HC-82	HCD7-T12
Additional Optional Songs		
HC#72 – Emmanuel	HC-72	HCD6-T12
HC#45 – While We are Waiting, Come	HC-45	HCD3-T15

Congregational Prayers: [Select 2 people from the congregation to read the following prayers from their seats.]

Prayer #1:

Who is this child? Who is this Wonderful Counselor? He is a man who has walked in our shoes, felt our pains and struggled with our temptations. Moreover, he walks with us now, every step of the way. How could we not love him? O Light of the World, prophesied deliverer of Israel, you have truly come. You are my deliverer and the light of my world as well. With joy I acknowledge your right to every righteous and holy title and to every place of authority. Come, Lord Jesus, Messiah, and rule over us with justice and peace. Do it even now in me. I welcome you gratefully to the throne of my life. Amen.

(The NIV Worship Bible, page 909)

Prayer #2

Eternal and most holy God, we praise and honor you as we gather in the name of your dear Son, Jesus. During this Advent season we sense your nearness in the songs we sing and in the words we hear from Holy Scripture.

May your light and peace radiate about us and within us as we worship you today. We praise and thank you for this house of worship and this body of your church. In expectation and joy, we worship you now and each day until Jesus returns to claim his own. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Message – Joseph—He Directs My Actions

HC#130 – Lead Me, Lord	HC-130	HCD11-T20
Additional Optional Songs		
HC#156 – Enter In	HC-156	HCD14-T15
HC#112 – The Potter’s Hand	HC-112	HCD10-T12
HC#219 – King of Kings, Majesty	HC-219	HCD20-T19
HC#220 – Incarnate	HC-220	HCD20-T20
HC#226 – I Worship You	HC-226	HCD21-T16

Benediction:

Lord Jesus, we come with praise and thanksgiving for the marvel and miracle of your birth we celebrate this season. Come once again to us this hour that we may rejoice because you have been born in our hearts. We pray that in all our labors, in all our relationships, in all of our life, you will live and love through us, in all our seasons of life, as our Savior and Lord. In your name, we pray.

(Colonel Henry Gariepy)

Vocal Benediction – HC#140 – O Come, All Ye Faithful	HC-140	HCD12-T20
SB#85 – O come, all ye faithful	TB-552 – Adeste Fideles	HTD3-T1 (3 vs.)
Additional Optional Songs		
HC#61 – Crown Him King of Kings	HC-61	HCD5-T11
HC#141 – All Hail the Power	HC-141	HCD13-T11
HC#149 – In Christ Alone	HC-149	HCD13-T19
HC#151 – Fairest Lord Jesus	HC-151	HCD14-T11
SB#112 – It was on a starry night	TB-535 – same	
HC#180	HC-280	HCD16-T20
HC#260 – Go, Tell it on the Mountain	HC-260	HCD24-T20

Week # 2	
DRAMA	
A Well Ordered Life	
By Martyn Scott Thomas	
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Topic:	God's plan
Scripture:	Matthew 1:18-25
Synopsis:	A disciplined and detailed man talks about doing things according to God's plan.
Characters:	Joseph – the father of Jesus.
Props/Costumes:	Biblical or modern dress.
Setting:	Bare stage.
Running Time:	3 minutes.

Joseph: Everything has its place. Leave nothing to chance. Life goes more smoothly when you have a plan. I'm a firm believer in that philosophy. But then I should be – I'm a carpenter.

My work, my livelihood, depends on a good plan. I must pay attention to every last detail or my work suffers. If I don't follow the plan, things don't fit together as they should. The table wobbles. The chair collapses. The yoke shatters. That sense of order carries over into every part of my life. Without a plan, it just doesn't fit together as it should.

So, as you can imagine, I planned very carefully for the months leading up to my wedding. This was to be, by far, the most important event in my life. I would leave nothing to chance. I paid extra attention to every detail. I wanted everything to be perfect.

I soon found out my wedding would be anything but perfect. I knew something was wrong when Mary met me at my shop. She never stopped by while I was working. The shop was no place for a woman. But she needed to talk and it couldn't wait. What she told me brought all of my careful plans to a crash. She was pregnant.

I knew the child wasn't mine and I couldn't believe that Mary would betray me like this. But I still loved her and couldn't bear to see her hurt further, so I came up with a plan. I intended to divorce her quietly to avoid any additional public disgrace.

But that wouldn't happen. Before I could carry out my plan, an angel of the Lord appeared to me in a dream. He told me, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

I was shocked. Everything Mary had said was true. It was time for a new plan. I would take her home to be my wife. We would set up our home. I would remodel the nursery. We would prepare for the birth of our son, God's son. It would be a glorious birth; our home surrounded with family and friends, full of celebration, laughter, and jubilation. We would then parade him to Jerusalem, to the Temple, where he would be heralded by the priests and the people. All of Israel would rejoice with the birth of this child.

Once again, the plan would change. On the road to Bethlehem, nine months pregnant, there was no room in the Inn. We were pushed into a stable, surrounded not by family, but by animals. Instead of our warm soft bed, my wife and child were resting in hay, covered with the blanket from our donkey. Instead of the priests in the Temple, shepherds from the fields came to marvel at our baby. This is not what I planned. But it is what God planned.

I have no idea what's next for us, but God does. I'm learning to put my plans aside and listen for God's direction. He's entrusted me with his son and I know his plan is best.

[Blackout]

JESUS CHANGED MY LIFE

Advent Sermon – Week 2

December 9, 2007

Joseph—He Directs My Actions

Text: Matthew 1:18-25

Premise: As we are sensitively obedient to God’s leading, we will receive comfort, direction and a larger perspective.

Have you ever played the children’s game, “Blind Man’s Bluff,” or been at a party with a piñata? Both games start out the same way. Someone, wearing a blindfold, is spun around and then released to find the goal – either another player or the piñata. The people call out directions for the blindfolded person to follow. How well the person does often depends upon how well they can hear the directions and follow them. Often there may be some mean people who make it harder by shouting out wrong directions.

There are times all of us need help to find the right path in life. Sometimes that help can come in the form of a parent, a mentor, a counselor, a teacher, or a friend. All those sources would be considered natural sources. However, we believe that supernatural—or beyond natural help—is also available, pointing the way we should go. Supernatural assistance can come through the counsel of a mature Christian friend, through reading God’s word, and through prayer. And then . . . there are times God decides to make His will and direction very clear through an overt communication of His will. Joseph was someone who certainly needed supernatural direction. His life was spinning out of control and he desperately needed help. God doesn’t leave Joseph to make his decision on his own. In the middle of his fitful sleep, God sent Joseph an angel to reveal the nature of the Child Mary was carrying.

As you and I are sensitively obedient to God’s leading in our lives, we too will be changed and receive comfort, direction, and a clear view of God’s perspective in our lives.

1. Following God’s plan will help us move past our fears

- A. It’s natural to be anxious and fearful when confronted by the unknown.
 - a. Psychologists speak of fear as emotional reactions to perceived danger or other threats to security.
 - i. There are many phobias including: arachnophobia (the fear of spiders); acrophobia (the fear of heights); and the most commonly reported phobia – glossophobia, or fear of public speaking. .
 - ii. A fear response can be very helpful when it is because we are confronting something dangerous. In that case, fear is a survival mechanism.
 - b. The Bible has quite a bit to say about fear as well. “Fear” is found 326 times and “afraid” another 206 times in the Bible.
 - i. Fear can mean having reverence, as when we say, “the fear of God” (Deut 10:20).

- ii. 1 John 4:18 speaks of fear in terms of punishment, such as being afraid of a parent, boss, or teacher because we have done something wrong.
 - iii. Anxiety is described by one source as: “an unpleasant emotion which includes fear, worry and apprehension.” Phil. 4:6 encourages us to “be anxious in nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”
 - c. Joseph’s reality went from a dream to a nightmare. He was afraid; unsure what to do
 - i. Joseph had just found out his fiancé Mary was pregnant – and he knew the baby wasn’t his. From his point of view, obviously Mary had been unfaithful and guilty of adultery.
 - ii. That sort of thing wasn’t acceptable in the community. The Law said Joseph should divorce Mary.
 - iii. The Bible describes Joseph as an honorable man, and rather than subjecting her to public humiliation, Joseph decides the best thing is to divorce Mary quietly.
- B. God then gives Joseph the tools to confront and move past his fears.
 - a. The angel, Gabriel appears to Joseph saying, “Don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife. She is pregnant by the Holy Spirit.” Isn’t it interesting that when angels show up the first thing they say is, “Don’t be afraid.”
 - i. John’s father Zacharias (Luke 1:13).
 - ii. As we saw last week, the angel said the same thing to Mary (Luke 1:30).
 - iii. The angel says the same to the shepherds at the announcement of Jesus’ birth (Luke 2:10).
 - iv. In imparting that information, God gave Joseph just what he needed at that moment; assurance of Mary’s faithfulness and purity.
 - b. Joseph’s willingness to adopt Jesus as his son placed him legally in the line of David. One commentator noted: “If Joseph had carried through his plans to “dismiss [Mary] quietly” (v. 19) when he discovered she was already pregnant, not only would Jesus have been illegitimate in the eyes of his culture, but, according to Matthew, he would have been without the validity of a Davidic heritage.”
 - c. The angel continues, asking Joseph to believe something even more miraculous — that this child is to be the long-awaited Messiah.
 - d. Our passage gives two names for Jesus. First, the angel commands Joseph to give a name to the baby: That name is “Jesus,” a Hellenized version of the Hebrew *Yeshua*, a shortened form of Joshua, which means “Yahweh saves.” Second, in the Scripture

citation from Isaiah, Matthew features the fact that God has come to earth — Immanuel. The name “Immanuel” doesn’t appear elsewhere in the gospel (v. 23).

- C. If we allow Him, God will provide us what we need to positively respond to our fears and move past them.
 - a. Perhaps God will give us an assurance of His love and presence (Matthew 28:20).
 - b. At times, God will remind us that even though it seems our life may be spinning out of control, He has a plan and is in control.

II. Following God’s plan will take us out of our comfort zones by leading us to a larger perspective.

- A. At times, being faithful to God’s leading will put God’s people at odds with public opinion
 - a. You can imagine that Joseph’s decision to take Mary as his wife was not readily understood around the town. Joseph was willing to put up with any discomfort his controversial decision would bring in order to follow God’s will.
 - b. William Booth faced a similar response at his decision to leave his ministry in the Methodist New Connection. Many thought he was crazy and throwing away a promising career in the ministry.
 - c. In Acts 4:19-20, Peter and John, while standing in front of the Sanhedrin (the ruling council) declared: “Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard (about Jesus).”
 - d. It takes courage for us to stay on a path to which we believe God has directed us. Many in society would prefer if we wouldn’t make people uncomfortable by talking about sin, holiness and social justice. However, God encourages us to be courageous because of His continued presence (Joshua 1:9).
- B. When God’s people are faithful in following God’s leading, they are led to decisions, circumstances, and destinations never imagined.
 - a. Joseph woke up from his dream and knew exactly what he should do.
 - i. Joseph married Mary, adopted Jesus as his own son, and protected him. Later, when Herod’s paranoia threatened Jesus’ life, Joseph again followed the angel’s leading and took Mary and Jesus to Egypt until Herod died.
 - ii. It was remarkable that Joseph treated Jesus as a son, although he wasn’t his biological father. Joseph showed true unselfishness, and a willingness to put his pride aside as he followed the will of God.

- iii. Although Joseph married Mary, he didn't have sexual relations with her until after Jesus was born. That fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" -- which means, "God with us."
- b. William and Catherine Booth, in choosing to follow God's leading, left the security of a safe and respectable ministry and ultimately founded The Salvation Army.
- c. As you and I are faithful in following God's leading, we can find ourselves being marvelously used by God as the channels of blessing, grace, mercy and love to people who are hurting and alienated. When we do that we play an important role in carrying forward God's plan of salvation.

Joseph was open to receiving God's message and guidance for his life. But more than just receiving the message, Joseph was also willing to change his decisions and behavior as a result of his encounter with God. On this second Sunday of Advent, let us follow Joseph's example through our willingness to:

Receive and follow God's message of love and reconciliation.

Move out of our comfort zones to serve people who are hurting.

Take our places in fulfilling God's plan of salvation.