

THE GOSPEL

# MESSENGER

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# Glory

*to God in the Highest*

**He Is Here** pg 2-3  
Bishop Scotty Poole

**Remembering**  
**Rev David Hodges**  
pg 6-7

**Well, Glory** pg 10  
Rev Anthony Baumann





# He Is Here

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For every born-again believer, three specific times in history are crucial to our belief. One is the death on the cross of our Savior, Jesus. Another is the resurrection of our Savior, Jesus. These are two of the most powerful times in the history of humanity and are lynchpin moments for the Christian faith. However, without this third event, neither the death nor resurrection of our Savior, Jesus, would have been possible, and that event is the miraculous birth of our Savior, Jesus. While all three events had to happen for Jesus to truly be the savior of the world, the first two I mention are filled with pain, anguish, and uncertainty of His followers. The last is filled with rejoicing and celebration of the moment that God intervened in the life of humanity to make for Himself an avenue by which humanity could have a relationship with Him that was not known to mankind since the time of Adam.

As we approach another Christmas season, it is hard to do so without thinking about the joyous moment that God made a magnificent entrance to this earth as a baby in a manger in that little town of Bethlehem. Luke 2:8-14 records the glorious announcement of that moment:

*8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the Glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.*

As the announcement of Jesus' birth is being made, a host of angels join in, proclaiming, "Glory to God in the highest." This statement is so powerful. It is the proclamation that God has overcome the sin of mankind. The sin of humanity had separated them from God; now, God is with us. Even though He, Jesus, has not taught one time, healed a blind man, cast out a demon, walked on water, forgiven one taken in adultery, or witnessed to a broken women at a well, He is here to accomplish all of this and



even more. His love for His people made Him willing to come to this earth to set right and restore what man corrupted and broke. This is why Christmas is filled with such hope. It's the beginning of restoration and gives hope that all things can be better in Jesus. The Glory of God (and Christmas) is that God has achieved (in Jesus) what is impossible for man to do. Humanity could only dream of a way back to God, while Jesus made the way and became the way. The Glory means there is hope, and no situation cannot be overcome through Jesus.

Christmas is about two things: hope and giving. Jesus gave us that we might have hope. So, every year when Christmas comes, my thoughts go to giving and hope. The kind of giving I'm talking about is giving of self, even as Jesus did. Giving and receiving presents is nice, but the joy Christmas brings reminds us that we can give freely just as we have been given to. Helping, serving, and even fellowshiping have a powerful effect on those receiving such. It brings the question. What can I do to share Jesus, as Jesus was shared with us? Giving always leads to hope. Nothing is impossible with God, and Christmas brings that reminder to us every year.

The Glory of Christmas is that we are reminded how good God is and how good we can be to each other. The final statement the host of angels made was, "...on earth peace, goodwill toward men." When I think of what God gave and the hope it brought, I find myself engulfed in His peace and a beneficiary of His goodwill. There is no feeling like Godly, peace, hope, and giving, and that comes from the Glory of Christmas: Jesus, the Savior, Christ the Lord.



***Bishop Scotty Poole***

*Bishop Poole serves the CHC as the General Superintendent*







## "Glory to God in the Highest": A Timeless Proclamation of Christian Faith and Inspiration

In the tapestry of human history, specific phrases resonate profoundly within the hearts of believers, transcending time and boundaries. "Glory to God in the Highest" is one such phrase, rooted deeply in Christian tradition, and it holds a sacred place in the hearts of faithful Christians. This article delves into the profound significance of this powerful Christian proclamation, exploring its biblical origins, its relevance to Christian beliefs, and its enduring inspiration.

### The Origin of "Glory to God in the Highest"

The phrase "Glory to God in the Highest" finds its origins in the Christian narrative, specifically in the account of the birth of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Gospel of Luke. In this sacred text, an angel appears to shepherds in the fields and heralds the arrival of the Messiah with these divine words: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Luke 2:14, New King James Version).

This proclamation, often referred to as the "Gloria in Excelsis Deo," marks a momentous event—the incarnation of God in human form. It signifies the fulfillment of a divine promise and serves as a jubilant celebration of God's love, grace, and hope. The angel's message is an invitation to all believers to join in the chorus of adoration

and to recognize the significance of this divine event in the Christian faith.

### Interpretations and Significance in Christian Belief

"Glory to God in the Highest" holds a special place in Christian belief and practice, with deep-rooted interpretations and spiritual significance:

**Liturgical Use:** Within Christian liturgy, the phrase plays a central role, often included in the Gloria, a hymn of praise and adoration sung during Mass and other worship services. The Gloria is a joyful affirmation of faith and an invitation for the congregation to participate in the worship of God.

**Theological Significance:** The phrase encapsulates key theological themes, such as the incarnation of Christ, which is central to Christian belief. It underscores the belief in God becoming human to bring salvation and peace to the world.

**Worship and Adoration:** Christians use this phrase as an act of worship and adoration, a way to give glory to the Creator. It is a reminder of the divine's majesty and a call for believers to express their reverence.

**Seasonal Celebration:** "Glory to God in the Highest" is often associated with the Christmas season, when Christians worldwide celebrate the birth of Jesus. It serves as a reminder of the miraculous event of the nativity.

## Enduring Relevance in Christian Faith

This Christian proclamation remains enduringly relevant for several reasons, touching the hearts of believers and inspiring their faith:

**Hope and Salvation:** The phrase represents the hope and salvation brought by Jesus, the Savior. It reminds Christians of the redemption and reconciliation offered through faith in Christ.

**Unity and Community:** "Glory to God in the Highest" fosters a sense of unity among believers, transcending denominational differences. It is a declaration that unites the Christian community in acknowledging God's sovereignty.

**Joy and Gratitude:** It expresses joy and gratitude, inviting Christians to reflect on the blessings received through faith. Gratitude is a fundamental Christian virtue that fosters a deep sense of appreciation.

**Reflection and Purpose:** The phrase encourages believers to reflect on the divine and the purpose of their lives. It prompts individuals to consider their role in manifesting God's love, peace, and goodwill on Earth.

**Transcendence:** "Glory to God in the Highest" points to the transcendence of God, emphasizing the belief in a higher power beyond human comprehension. It invites Christians to contemplate the mysteries of faith and existence.

In conclusion, "Glory to God in the Highest" is a timeless proclamation of Christian faith and an enduring source of inspiration for believers. It is more than words; it represents the heart of Christian belief, encapsulating the hope, unity, joy, and gratitude that define the Christian journey. Whether sung in a place of worship, whispered in a moment of personal devotion, or shared with the Christian community, this phrase serves as a heartfelt reminder of God's glory and an expression of faith in the highest.

With sincere appreciation for your support for World Missions, Kristie and I wish you and your family a very Merry CHRISTmas!



### ***Rev. Jonathan Fitzpatrick***

*Rev. Jonathan Fitzpatrick serves the CHC as World Missions Executive Director.*

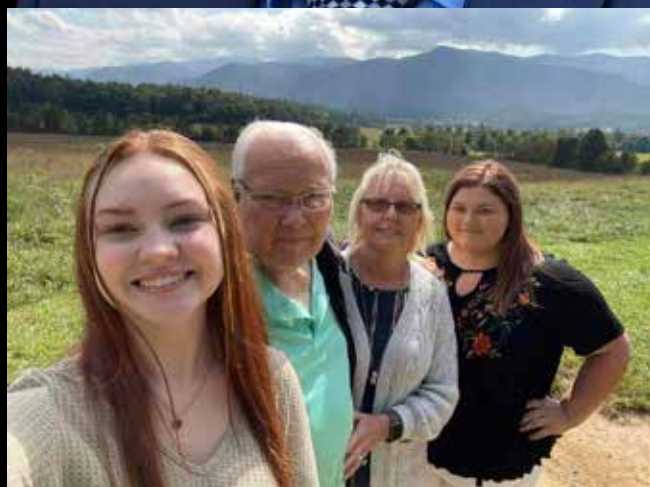
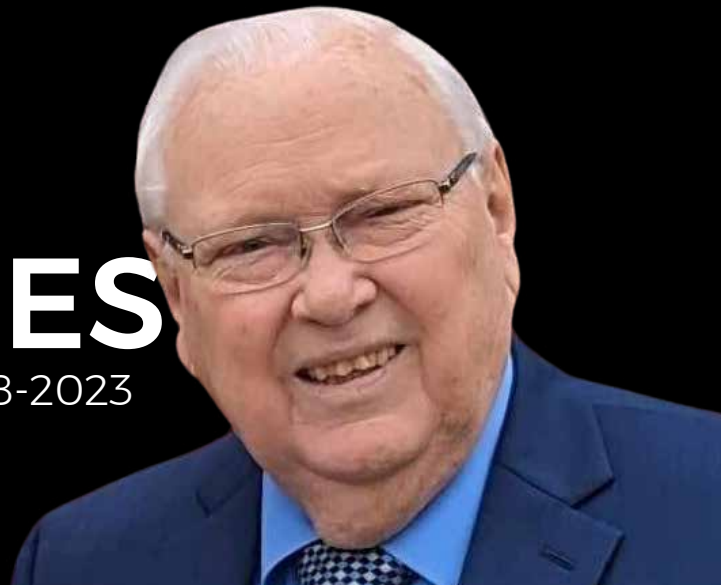




REMEMBERING REVEREND

# DAVID HODGES

1948-2023



# Legacy Lives On

*"The greatest legacy one can pass on to one's children and grandchildren is not money or material things accumulated in one's life, but rather a legacy of character and faith."*

Billy Graham

David Hodges was one of a kind.  
He left a legacy of character and faith.  
He left a legacy of unity.  
He left a legacy of love.

**R**ev. David Hodges spent most of his life in ministry alongside his wife, Retha Hodges. He was ordained with the Congregational Holiness Church in 1971 and, from there, set out to be all he could for the Kingdom of God. He pastored Raiford Road Church in Macclenny, FL, for three years. He also served the Congregational Holiness Church denomination, pastoring three churches in the Florida district. He pastored



Sanderson CHC for 3 years, Pine Valley (currently Safe Harbor) CHC for 20 years, and Manntown CHC for 23 years until our Lord called him Home. He served the Florida District CHC as Secretary for 18 years and District Superintendent for 24 years. He left this world holding positions as Pastor of Manntown and Superintendent of the Florida district.

He was a great mentor to many and loved to put into those who sought wisdom. We don't know how many souls were saved under his ministry, but what we do know is that the number of seeds he planted throughout his ministry is innumerable. Serving God was his number one priority, and serving the body of Christ was his second. Nothing ever made him question whether or not the journey would be worth it. There's not a doubt in anyone's mind when he sees the face of Jesus and he hears, "Well done thou good and faithful servant," that he would do it all again. He was the same man outside of the pulpit as he was

standing behind it. He was quick to give God the glory in every accomplishment in his life. He had a heart for the future generation and spent his last days at youth camps across our denomination's southern states. He was an encouragement to young ministers and everyone he came in contact with. The shoes he left behind will never be filled, but he had high hopes that our district would go on for generations. He left a legacy of looking forward, loving others, and serving well. He was one of the most faithful servants you could have known. He was known for opening every message he preached with these words: "If no one has told you today that they love you, let me be the first to tell you that I love you!"

That sums up the kind of man David Hodges was. If he were here, he would encourage and challenge us to let our lives speak of our salvation without words and honor God in all we do. He would encourage each one to leave a legacy of knowing Christ and making Him known. May our hearts learn to love souls and seek to win them to Christ the way David Hodges always did. He left the greatest legacy he possibly could have for his children, grandchildren, church, and district! Heaven is undoubtedly sweeter with him there.





# Life Changing

What must it have looked like when the sky filled with a "multitude of heavenly hosts"? What was a dark night sky was, in a moment, changed into wonder and beautiful light and color. It must have been a moment the men of the fields never forgot for the rest of their lives. How glorious and wonderful the presence of the Lord must have been. Have you ever had a life-changing moment with God? A moment where the presence of the Lord was so present that the weight of His presence pressed upon you?

I remember the very first time I had an encounter with Him that changed my life forever. During a night service at our annual camp meeting in North Alabama, I felt and heard the Spirit of God pull me down to the altar during the worship time of the service. I got up and walked down to the altar, and the closer I got, I began to cry as I felt the presence of the Lord. Have you ever had one of those ugly cries with the Lord? HA! I wept so hard that my face hurt the next day. That night, it was as if God picked me out of the crowd and decided to pour his glory on me. The weight of that glory was so heavy it almost felt as if someone was lying on top of me. It is a moment I will never forget; it was indeed life-changing.

For the shepherds in the field, I think it is safe to say they never forgot what they felt and the sights and sounds of the night the angels appeared in the night sky. Scripture shares that as the first angel appeared, "the glory of the Lord shone around them" (Luke 2:9). While it is true, the glory of God was no doubt shining around the angel in the sky. Scripture refers to the glory that shined around the shepherds in the field. I believe that my experience at the altar is also what the shepherds experienced as the glory of God covered them. I believe tears were streaming down their face, I believe they felt the weight of the glory of God, and I believe they loved every second of it.

The best news that I can share is that you and I can still experience the glory of God today! I believe that God desires to saturate us in His presence on a daily basis. He calls to us to come closer. God wants us to dive into His Word, sing praises to Him, and meditate on Him day and night. As we turn our eyes on Him and worship Him, He will cause His glory to shine around us. Let me encourage you today to find a place of prayer, seek the Lord, and watch what God will do!



**Dr. Matthew Turner**

*The Turner Family: Matthew, Anna, Elia, Edyth, and Ephraim. Matthew serves as the Mission USA Administrator for the CHC.*



# \*Glory\*

Christmas is my favorite time of the year. I love the lights, the trees, the music, the decorations, and I love to celebrate with my family and my friends. But out of all of those things, I love to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

When the angels came to the Shepherds, they were shouting Glory to God in the highest. To think that the angels went to the lowest of people first tells me that God loves the least of us. He loves the ones that don't feel like they're worth much, the ones that no one else loves, and the ones that the world has given up on. God didn't send Jesus to be born in a castle; he wasn't born with tons of riches; he was born in a barn and laid in a feeding trough.

When we give glory to God, we tell God how much we love him, how much we honor him, and how much we adore him. When we say glory to God, it's a symbol of our praise, and all of our praise belongs to God.

I'm so thankful that God sent his son to the Earth. He lived, and he died to show us how much he loves us. He used the lowest of people to share the message of Jesus' birth, and they became the first people to be missionaries of the gospel. The story of Jesus' birth is definitely one of the greatest accounts in the Bible, at least for me, because it shows just how much God loves each and every one of us that he gave His Son to save us.



***Isabella Arnue***

*Isabella serves as the Jr. Mission USA  
Administrator for the CHC.*



## "Well, Glory!"

We often hear this exclamation during church services, camp meetings, youth camps, and humorously, when someone unveils any kind of desert—okay, maybe that's just me. But what does "Glory" actually mean, and why did angels shout it at Jesus' birth?

Glory signifies great honor or prestige earned through notable achievements. The angels were aware of the extraordinary event unfolding on Earth. It was no ordinary night; it was the moment when God wrapped Himself in flesh. On this night, God's heart began to beat within a human chest, pumping blood that would be shed 33 years later to redeem us. The angels recognized that God had altered history forever on this magical night.

Christmas always felt magical growing up, with family gatherings, gifts, and even my aunt's weird purple concoction, which was oddly endearing. As children, we're captivated by the holiday's charm, seeing magic in every detail. We would go over to my grandmother's house, open presents, eat, and then sit around the fireplace while my grandmother tearfully read Luke chapter 2. However, as adults, the wonder often fades, overshadowed by the



### ***Rev. Anthony Baumann***

*Rev. Anthony Baumann serves as the 1st Assistant Director of Men's Ministries for the CHC.*

worries and stresses of gifts, events, schedules, and, yes, even the mysterious purple dish whose contents remain a secret. It's easy to get overwhelmed during the holidays and miss what it is really all about.

Do me a favor... When you find yourself missing the Christmas magic, remember that amazing night. Cast your mind back to the scene: a young Mary about to give birth, riding a camel (good going Joseph), the inn being full, a baby born to a virgin, swaddled and laid in a manger, Mary, Joseph, and a few barn animals witnessing this miracle, the innkeeper who didn't know that God had just been born in his stable, the star that marked the birth of redemption to all mankind.

Then the angels... This child, born and clothed in humanity yet divine, was witnessed by angels who knew his true identity. And overwhelmed by the miracle, they can't help but shout,

***"Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"***





# O, Glorious Day!

In June of 2023, Royal Rangers from the Congregational Holiness Church visited the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama, for our annual Camporee, where America's fascination and determination for space exploration is on full display. As I saw exhibits, pictures, and videos of celestial skies and distant galaxies, Scriptures like Psalm 8:3-4 flooded my mind. "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him?"

The Psalmist wrote the heavens declare the glory of God (Psalm 97:6). Flying in an airplane or star gazing in your backyard proves that point. The Prophets wrote the earth is full of His glory (Isaiah 6:3; Habakkuk 2:14). Visits to Niagara Falls or the Grand Canyon affirm those truths. A hike in the woods with blooming flowers or a stroll on the beach with roaring waves reminds us that the whole earth is filled with His glory (Psalm 72:19).

Yet the greatest display of the glory of God is not seen in the Milky Way, the Rocky Mountains, or the Pacific Ocean. The glory of Creation cannot compare to the glory of the Incarnation, for the Word who spoke the world into existence became flesh and bone and dwelled among us. The angels declared, "Glory to God in the Highest," to the Bethlehem shepherds. The disciples witnessed, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). The glory of



## **Rev. Micah Messer**

*The Messer family: Caleb, Micah, Laura, and John Mark. Rev. Micah serves the CHC as the National Royal Rangers Commander.*

God radiated in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6). His miracles were manifestations of his glory (John 2:11).

As the Father of Glory (Ephesians 1:17) His glory came first by acceptance at the altar (Isaiah 60:7). Next His glory filled the Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple in Jerusalem (Exodus 40:34; 2 Chronicles 7:2). Then the glory of latter temple was greater than the former temple because Jesus was tabernacled among us (Haggai 2:9). Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels by the power of the Holy Ghost with the glory of God in the Church (Romans 9:23; 2 Corinthians 3:18, 4:7; Ephesians 3:21). We eagerly await Jesus' triumphant return in His great glory to rule and reign for eternity (Matthew 25:31; Mark 13:26).

Soon the Holy City of New Jerusalem will be filled with the glory of God. (Revelation 21:23). Jesus prayed, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory;" (John 17:24). One day His prayer will be answered. We will see Jesus, who is the God of Glory over creation, the King of Glory with His Incarnation, and the Lord of Glory at His coronation (Psalm 29:3; Psalm 24:10; James 2:1). We shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2)!

O, Glorious Day!

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# Glory to God in the Highest

I love Christmas. The Christmas I celebrate is about the birth of the Lord Jesus, who came to this earth to redeem us. Every facet of Christmas speaks to me - from the beautiful lights that remind me He is the light of the world, to the smell of real evergreen Christmas trees, which reminds me that He is the breath in my lungs. The giving of gifts reminds me of the great gift He gave me when was born and placed in a manger, making a way for me to be reconciled to Him. With these expressions of Christmas come many different emotions, and at times, they almost overtake me as I meditate on His goodness.

As I mentioned, I love Christmas and I also anticipate Christmas. I make my lists, and I check them twice. I want to see my family and friends, and I want to talk to them, to hug them, to celebrate the joy of Christ that brings us together. The night of His birth there must have been such anticipation. Can't you imagine the angels were so excited, and about to burst to tell the shepherds the good news! In Luke Chapter 2, verses 13-14, we read the scripture "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men". When the announcement was made, it was made by a large group of angels, not just one or two. I believe they all wanted to tell the good news! There was excitement, and there was joy.

And speaking of joy, I rejoice at Christmas. When I think about the sacrifice Jesus made for me, and for the world, it is overwhelming to me. This sacrifice is a love that can not be measured, and that love is so pure and holy it makes me cry. But it's not a cry of sadness, regret or loss - it's a cry of knowing that I am truly loved, truly cared for, and that He is for me and with me - for always. No matter what season I may be in - HE IS THERE. I am never alone, and I can cast my cares on Him, knowing that all is well.

At that point, I must join with the angels in exclaiming "Glory to God in the Highest!" He is the highest and there is no other! What Jesus started at Christmas lives on today - and as we think on these things and offer our praise and thanksgiving this Christmas season, I believe we feel His glory around us. Determine to declare this Christmas season "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men!" Merry Christmas!



## **Sis. Redenna Poole**

*Sis. Redenna Poole is the wife of Bishop Scotty Poole. Sis. Poole serves the CHC as the Minister's Spouse Ministry Director.*



Three wrapped gifts are stacked vertically on the left side of the page. The top and bottom gifts are wrapped in light beige paper, while the middle gift is wrapped in dark red paper. All three are tied with wide, red ribbons in bows.

# True Glory

I would like to begin to say that the word Glory alone is still not a big enough word to explain how phenomenal it was that Jesus was born. A whole new perspective came on that day. God was not only giving the world hope and showing his Glory, He was also giving Peace and Hope.

The word “Glory” is one of many to be used because “Glory to God in the highest....” is a type of worship to the one true king of kings.

Christmas, for me, is a time to reflect on what God truly did for us even before we were born. It’s a time we see family that we usually don’t see and share that Jesus is the reason for the season. I have a huge family with a lot of aunts, uncles, and a slew of cousins, not all Christians, but they even know the Glory of the Lord and the blessings that God has allowed in our family. With everything that is happening in today’s world, we all need to come together and share Jesus as much as possible. The sinners and the saints need to wake up and understand where the Peace in the storm and chaos comes from. I am so thankful God sent His son for us to have everlasting life; no other love can even compare.

I am a senior in high school, but I have an old soul, and my heart sings the old song, “I’m getting ready to leave this world of sorrow. I’m getting ready for.. THE GATES OF PEARL”. I believe God’s people are watching both day and night for the coming of the Lord.

That is what I call true GLORY!



**Grace Davis**

*Grace serves as the Jr. General Superintendent of the CHC*



# *Online* Continuing Education

Jan 2024

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