



**December 8, 2025**

A very long time ago, a clutch of sleepy shepherds were watching over their sheep on a hillside in Palestine. It was a still, uneventful night. Suddenly the darkness was filled with a strange light. The stillness was broken by angel voices singing, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to all." So began our most beautiful and meaningful religious festival, Christmas.

Of course Christmas actually begins with Advent, the season through which we are moving now. The seasons of Advent, the season of going toward the birth of Christ, and Christmas, the time of God's physical entrance into our world, both have a long history. These seasons and their customs have developed through many centuries. Old customs and observances are refined, renewed, replaced; new ones are added. Some of our customs have pagan origins but have been "converted" by redefinition of their meanings. What is significant for us is not what they must once have meant, but rather what they mean for us today. As we get closer to Christmas, we see more and more lights filling the darkness of our world.

I try to remember every Christmas that if our greatest need had been information, God would have sent an educator. If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist. If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist. But since our greatest need was forgiveness, God sent us a Savior.

So let's deck the halls, turn from darkness into light and remember what writer Max Lucado says, "He became like us, so

we could become like him. Angels still sing and the star still beckons. God loves each one of us like there was only one of us to love." Let the lights remind us of the grace of God and God's unlimited love. And let us be grateful!

~Written by Rev. Pam Pendexter

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