

"I give you a new command: Love one another."

John 13:34 (CSB)

## Finding the Spirit of Christmas

Commonly known as *A Christmas Carol*, author Charles Dickens wrote this novella in London in 1893. It's the story of Tiny Tim, a poor crippled child who was the essence of innocence. And also, it's the spiritual journey of Ebenezer Scrooge, who changes from a miserable old miser to the very soul of Christian joy and generosity. As the book ends, Scrooge, now a changed man, declares, "I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year." And Tiny Tim told us and taught us ... "God bless us, everyone."

The novel's theme is redemption ... which is the action of saving from sin, error, or evil. This transformation promotes the very message of love and compassion which Christ brought to the world ... for you, and for me.

God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to be born as a baby to redeem the world so that we would not die, but have everlasting life. John 3:16 says, "For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

As we celebrate the birthday of Jesus, look at your own life. Are there areas that need transforming? How can your life be an example in your church as you walk the Christian journey? Christmas isn't just to be celebrated on December 25th, but every day of the year. Let this be the year that you grow closer to Christ and serve others.

*Carolyn Tomlin lives in Jackson, Tennessee, and writes for the Christian magazine market.*

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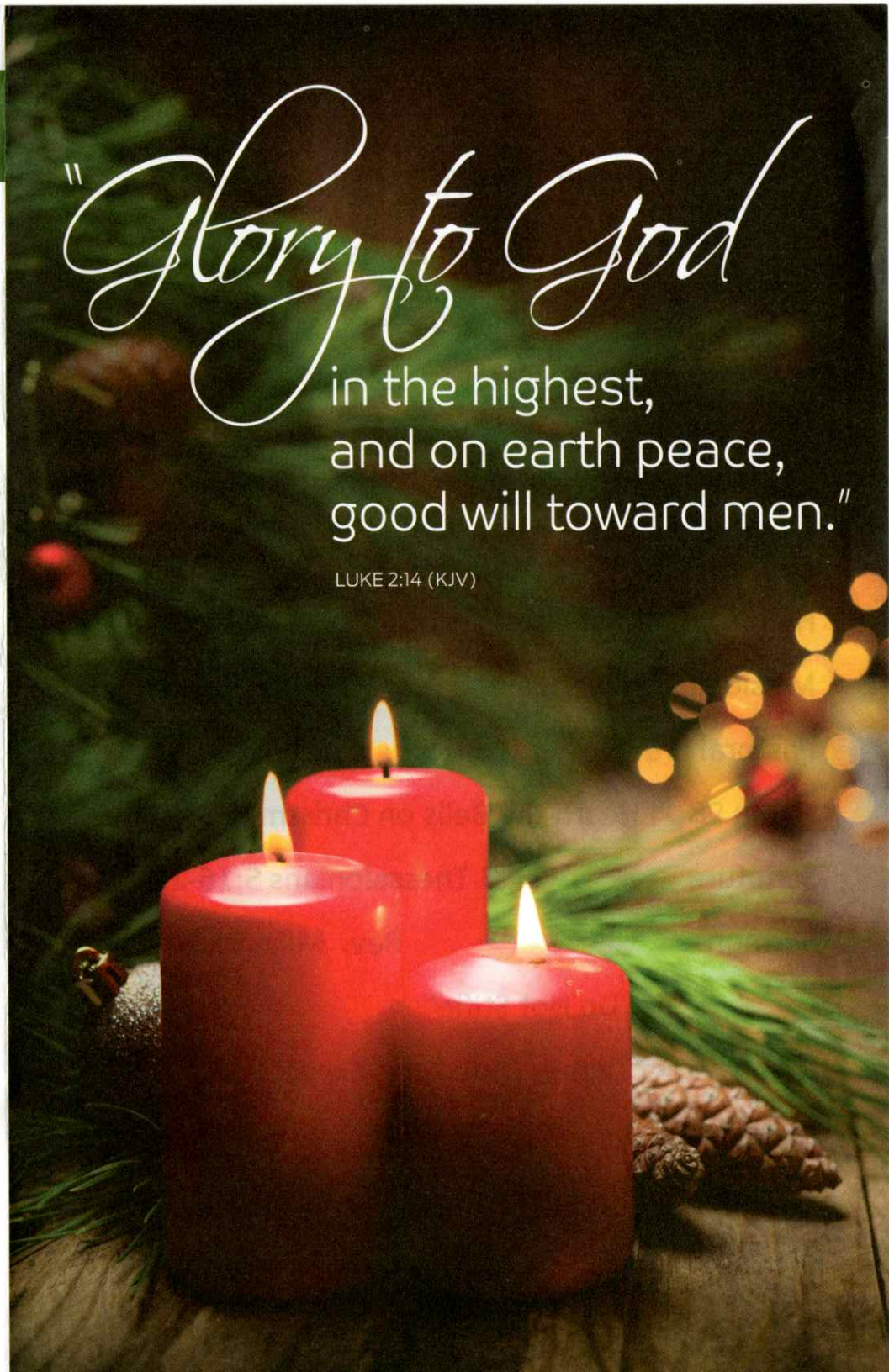
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"Glory to God  
in the highest,  
and on earth peace,  
good will toward men."

LUKE 2:14 (KJV)



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### SAPPONY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Michael Dickey

December 17, 2023

[www.sapponybaptist1773.org](http://www.sapponybaptist1773.org)

#### Invocation and Welcome

Hymn 94 "Angels From the Realms of Glory"

Hymn No 96 "Good Christian Men Rejoice"

Missionary Prayer Calendar Debbie Spiers

#### Pastoral Prayer

Hymn 98 "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"

Scripture 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Sermon Rev. Mike Dickey

"Do Not Stifle"

Hymn 77 "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

#### Benediction

Pre-read for next week: Luke 1:46-55

Sunday December 24<sup>th</sup> There will be a Christmas Social given by the Children of the church from 10:00am till 10:45am with light refreshments.

To subscribe to our text alerts, text "JOIN" to 804-430-6282. We send out prayer requests and reminders.

Be sure to look for our Daily Devotional on our website: [sapponybaptist1773.org](http://sapponybaptist1773.org)

Missed a sermon? Or just want to hear it again? Our Past sermons are available on our website, Facebook, Youtube, and your favorite podcast app.

**WISHING EVERYONE A VERY MERRY  
CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR**