

## Church Mission Christmas Devotional

*Prelude* - \_\_\_\_\_

*Opening Song* - *"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"* - congregation

*Prayer* - \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrator** - "What a glorious season is this time of Christmas. Hearts are softened. Voices are raised in worship. Kindness and mercy are re-enthroned as elements in our lives. There is an accelerated reaching out to those in distress. There is an aura of peace that comes into our homes. There is a measure of love that is not felt to the same extent at any other time of the year.

Consider "the great love of our Heavenly Father ... the incomprehensible depth of that love that found expression in the gift of His Only Begotten Son ... to come into the world to bring hope into our hearts, to bring kindness and courtesy into our relationships, and above all to save us from our sins and guide us on the way that leads to eternal life.

"Marvelous is the chronicle that began with the singing of angels at Bethlehem and ended on Golgotha's cruel cross. There is no other life to compare with His life. He was the one perfect man to walk the earth, the paragon of excellence, the singular example of perfection." (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Dec. 2000)

*"Good Christians All Rejoice"* arr. by Beryl Red (Mission Choir)

*"He Sent His Son"* arr. by Betsy Bailey (Mission Choir, cello)

**Narrator** - The mission of the Savior was promised from before the creation of the world. We read from Abraham's record: (*Abr. 3:24-25*) "And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell. "And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them:

***"...and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, for he is full of grace and truth."***

The prophet Isaiah tells us: *(Is. 7:14)* “Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.” *(Is. 9:6)* “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”

***"Silent Night"*** - violin duo (Family)

***"Seek this Jesus"*** by Rachel Mohlman (Family)

***Narrator*** - Jesus Christ, the holy babe of Bethlehem, was born as any other babe, pure, whole, and innocent. But only He, of all of the Father's spirit children, was able to maintain that total purity throughout His earthly life. Only He, the Sinless One, could make the Atonement possible. Only He, Son of the Living God, had the power to offer himself as a sacrifice, to satisfy the demands of justice, and to provide the resurrection and opportunity of eternal life for man. In John 11: 25-26, the Lord said: “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”

***"What Child Is This?"*** - arranged by Betsy Bailey (Mission Choir, Baritone soloist, cello or violin)

***"Hear the Angels Singing"*** arr. by Lloyd Larson, sung by Mission Choir

***Narrator*** - “When all is said and done, when all of history is examined, when the deepest depths of the human mind have been explored, nothing is so wonderful, so majestic, so tremendous as this act of grace, when the Son of the Almighty, the Prince of His Father's royal household, He who had once spoken as Jehovah, He who had once condescended to come to earth as a babe born in Bethlehem, gave his life in ignominy and pain, so that all of the sons and

daughters of God, of all generations of time, every one of whom must die, might walk again and live eternally. He did for us what none of us could do for ourselves... “Our joy at this season is because He came into the world. The peace that comes from Him, His infinite love which each of us may feel, and an overwhelming sense of gratitude for that which he freely gave us at so great a cost to Himself—these are of the true essence of Christmas.”  
(Gordon B. Hinckley Ensign 2000)

***"When Love Came Down"*** - by Stuart Townend (Family)

***"O Holy Night"*** - solo (Family)

***Narrator*** - Since becoming the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, President Russell M. Nelson frequently has extended an invitation to the people of the world that includes the promise of joy: “Our message to the world is simple and sincere: we invite all of God’s children on both sides of the veil to come to their Savior, receive the blessings of the holy temple, have enduring joy, and qualify for eternal life.”

Enduring joy is not a blessing reserved for a select few. Rather, every member of the Lord’s restored Church who is striving to remember and honor sacred covenants and keep the commandments can receive this gift, according to God’s will and timing. In this Christmas season, may each of us strive to appreciate more fully the supernal gift of joy. As we do so, may we begin to see with new eyes and hear with new ears as “Saints and angels sing,” as we “repeat the sounding joy,” and as we “ever worship God.”

I joyfully declare my sure witness of the living reality and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. (David A. Bednar Ensign Dec. 2019)

**Closing Song - *"Joy to the World"*** sung by Family and Mission Choir,  
Violins, Cello, Piano and Organ  
4th Verse - **Congregation joins** (*from Hymnal*)

**Closing Prayer** - \_\_\_\_\_