

Two Steeples Parish Sunday Worship ~ Teem Minister/Vicar James Ranney  
December 20, 2020

Good Morning and Blessings!

We gather today in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

Today is our 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent. Today we will light our fourth candle on our Advent wreath known as the Angels Candle- the candle of Peace.

Let me begin, by asking this simple question. How many of you have seen or encountered an angel?

If you have, it would be quite a memorable moment and not one you would forget in your lifetime. Most people have not, but once in while we may hear or read stories of these kinds of encounters, or in a close call, someone may speak of being protected by their Guardian Angel. There have been some great shows about angels, like "Highway to Heaven" and "Touched by an Angel". One of my favorite Christmas movies is "It's a Wonderful Life". In the story, George Bailey, encounters his angel Clarence after going through struggles, as George wishes he were never born. George is given a gift to witness what life of friends and family would have been, if George Bailey were never born. With the help of his guardian angel Clarence; George is given a gift and comes to the conclusion; and realization, that his life with friends and family was very important and meaningful!

He prayed a frantic prayer and wanted back into his life again. George now realized that his problems in life were never so big, and that a life with the love of family and friends, should never be taken for granted and never be wished away! The story ends with a happy scene around the Christmas tree as friends and family have come to help George in his time of need. The bell mysteriously rings on the Christmas tree as they are singing "Auld Lang Syne". Georges daughter says, "Daddy, our teacher says, every time a bell rings, an angel gets their wings!" George smiles and winks to his old friend and guardian angel, as he knows he finally got his wings!

Angels are God's messengers. God sent an angel to tell Zachariah good news, that he would have a son, John, who would prepare the hearts of the people. Six months later, an angel told Mary the good news: she would be the mother of Jesus, the Savior of the people. The angels even spoke to Joseph in dreams and to shepherds in fields.

In today's Gospel, we read in Luke, the account of when the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." Gabriel goes on to say, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end."

So, do angels have any messages for us today?  
You bet you, they do!

They have a message, the same message they told those shepherds 2,000 years ago in the Bethlehem hills, on a dark cold winters night. "Good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2: 10-11

So, now it is our turn to be God's messengers and pass on this "Good News"! Share with others that you know and meet the "Good News" that Jesus is the reason we celebrate Christmas, and that he is God's Son that came to be our Savior for All people past, present and future!

May you all be filled with the Peace, Hope, Love and Joy of Jesus as you go forth this Advent and Christmas season!

Amen

