

HOLIDAY EDITION 2017

DESTINY

M A G A Z I N E

**GOD'S CHRISTMAS
PROMISE**

**QUESTIONS FOR
A KING SEEKER**

God is for Them

**From Our
Christmas
Kitchens**

2018 RENEWALS



Merry Christmas!
from your Destiny Staff



A WORD FROM PHIL & CATHY



Welcome to Destiny Magazine, the Holiday edition. Each year it seems as if the season brings new wonder as we see the beauty of Christ's birth from different vantage points, and through different experiences. As this edition goes to print, Cathy and I will be leaving for Austin, Texas to perform the wedding of Alex Suber and Hannah Slavik. This wonderful celebration of marriage helps to underscore the many layers through which Destiny affects our lives. Alex was part of our Destiny team for several years, serving as an intern and then as part of our staff.

We became acquainted with Hannah while she was attending Covenant Life Center, a Destiny affiliated church in Victoria, Texas. As a couple they will be working with Alex's parents, serving as pastors on staff at The Oasis, a Destiny affiliated church plant in Round Rock, Texas. For me, this celebration and the Christmas season are perfectly timed. At Destiny we are a covenant family, as Christians we are part of a larger family, the family of God.

We extend our congratulations to Alex and Hannah, and pray the Lord's blessings on their marriage and ministry. In a larger sense, this Christmas season we celebrate all of you, all of your families and your ministry endeavors. We wish you each a bountiful, blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. We love you all so much.

As you read through the Holiday edition of Destiny Magazine, our hope is that you would be encouraged and blessed by each article, update, and entry from members of our covenant family. Merry Christmas.



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God's Christmas Promise

BY: DR. PHIL BRASSFIELD

I love Christmas. I've joined the ranks of the devoted. I love the lights, the tree, the decorations, the hot chocolate, even the marathon sessions of Hallmark Christmas movies that we watch one right after the other. My wife, Cathy, is to blame. She is the High Priestess of Christmas cheer and Santa's most diligent Elf! She is a Christmas girl if there ever was one.

She really didn't have to push me too hard though. Being raised in a pastor's home, Christmas was always a big deal. From my earliest recollection, our lives every Christmas season were filled with festive parties, wise men, pageants and candlelight services. It was always so exciting.

I think the thing I love most about Christmas is the hope and love the season brings. Christmas

represents God's greatest act of love, all which is good in the world and speaks a word of encouragement to our highest and most noble nature.

During the Christmas season, several Scriptures are brought center stage, engraved on greeting cards and featured in holiday programs, illuminated by the warm glow of colored lights and candlelight. One of my favorites is taken from Matthew chapter 1 verse 23. It's a prophecy of Isaiah the Prophet that says, "Behold the Virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us".

Immanuel. What a wonderful name! How powerful is it when God wants to be called "*God with us*"?

The ancients knew the power of a name. From the dawn of human civilization names have been an important part of the human experience. From their perspective names gave meaning. They identified and described the person who carried them. Names were a sort of prophecy. When a child was born, the name the parents gave him or her was believed to set things in motion, leading to the fulfillment of that name's meaning in life. Like an arrow shot from a bow by a master archer. The name revealed the character, potential and purpose of the one who carried it.

The ancient Hebrews knew God in this same way, and God seemed to be ok with it. In the Old Testament when Moses asked God to identify himself at the burning bush, God simply answered, *"I AM"*. Previously they had known God as El Elyon (Most High God) or EL Shaddai (God Almighty). But when assigned the responsibility of speaking on God's behalf to the Elders of Israel and their task master, Pharaoh, the most powerful king on earth, Moses asked God to identify His specific name. This was almost certainly to distinguish God from the plethora of pagan gods worshiped by the Egyptians.

When God said simply, *"tell them I AM"*. He used four consonants YHWH, often referred to as the Tetragrammaton. It became the foundation of the name Jehovah. As the Hebrews experienced God Jehovah in various moments of their lives, moments filled with challenges that required God's intervention, they added various addendums to the name Jehovah. God became known through these labels as well. For example, Jehovah Jireh was 'The Lord Who Provides'. Jehovah Shalom was 'The Lord is Peace'. Jehovah Roi was 'The Lord my Shepherd' and so on. God also called Himself by these names on occasion, as in the case where He told Israel in Exodus 15:26, *"I am the Lord who heals you"* (Jehovah Rophe).

But it was during the Christmas season that we are introduced to one of the great names for God ascribed to the person of Jesus Christ by the Lord Himself through the Prophet Isaiah. Matthew refers to it as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy when Christ is born.

Matthew 1:22, "So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: v23 *"Behold the Virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,"* which is translated, *"God with us."*

What a wonderful name, what a significant name, what a comforting name, Immanuel! God with us!

God With Us

One of the divine qualities we ascribe to God is Omnipresence. Omni comes from the Latin meaning all. This means God is everywhere at all times. There are a couple of theological concepts that we affirm as a result of God's Omnipresence. The first is a concept called Transcendence, the second is Immanence.

Let me briefly explain:

Because God is Omnipresent (in every space, in every time and every dimension), He, therefore, transcends the limitations of any dimension. Scientists have identified some 13 dimensions of reality, but God created them all, is Lord of them all, and present in them all. He transcends and supersedes any governing laws of nature, man or science, and rules absolutely and simultaneously in every existing dimension. Therefore we say He is Immanent. This means that He cannot be escaped, ignored or dismissed. He is Present; He acts within our lives, outside our lives, and beyond all possible dimensions of existence. He was before time began, measured and established the boundaries of the universe, and ordered the time that they will endure.

But how powerful is it that this God specifically said when Jesus was born, *"they will call His name Immanuel, God with us"* - God, Present! Jesus said later, *"I will never leave you nor forsake you but go with you even to the end."* Knowing the importance of a name, God specifically chose to be known as a God who is always present. In the Old Testament God was called Jehovah Shamma, *'God who is present'*. But in Jesus He is not only present, but *"with us"*. No matter where you go, God is present and with you! He is there when you need Him, He never takes a vacation, He is never unaware, and He is never distracted. And when you call out to Him, He always responds, *"PRESENT"* and *"I'm with you!"* In other words, *"I've got you!"* In your moments of greatness or moments of suffering and sorrow, He is there. When you win or when you lose, He is with you. In moments of victory and in moments of defeat, He is present! You are not alone!

What a promise that came to us at Christmas! What a gift! What a God! What a name! What a comfort!

He is Immanuel!

NAME THE CAROLS

**BELOW ARE ALTERNATIVE NAMES FOR WELL KNOWN CHRISTMAS CAROLS.
CAN YOU NAME THEIR REAL TITLE? PLAY THIS FUN WORD GAME AT YOUR FAMILY GATHERINGS
OR SMALL GROUP CHRISTMAS PARTY.**

1. SMALL MALE CHILD THAT CAN KEEP A BEAT.
2. DECORATE THE ENTRYWAYS
3. SIR LANCELOT WITH LARYNGITIS
4. WANTED IN DECEMBER: BOTH FORWARD INCISORS
5. THE MIDDLE OF THE EVENING HAS ARRIVED, NOT A CLOUD IN SIGHT.
6. JUBILATION TO THIS PLANET
7. 288 YULETIDE HOURS
8. FROZEN PRECIPITATION COMMENCE
9. FAR BACK IN A HAY BIN.
10. LEAVE AND BROADCAST FROM AN ELEVATED ROCK.
11. ALL OF US: SAUL, DAVID, SOLOMON
12. LISTEN, THE WINGED HEAVENLY MESSENGERS ARE PROCLAIMING TUNEFULLY.
13. ASSEMBLE EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES.
14. OH, MEMBER OF THE ROUNDTABLE WITH MISSING AREAS.
15. OH SMALL ISRAEL URBAN CENTER.
16. HITHER THEE ARRIVES KRINGLE
17. BACK AND FORTH CIRCLING ORNAMENTED EVERGREEN
18. EVERYONE HOPES FOR YOU A JOYFUL DECEMBER HOLIDAY
19. FANTASIES OF A COLORLESS DECEMBER 25TH
20. IT'S FIXIN' TO APPEAR EXTREMELY SIMILAR TO DECEMBER 25TH.



1. Little Drummer Boy, 2. Deck the Halls, 3. Silent Night, 4. All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth, 5. It Came Upon
A Midnight Clear, 6. Joy to the World, 7. The 12 Days of Christmas, 8. Let it Snow, 9. Away in a Manger, 10. Go Tell It On the
Mountain, 11. We Three Kings, 12. Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, 13. O Come All Ye Faithful, 14. O Holy Night, 15. O Little Town
of Bethlehem, 16. Here Comes Santa Clause, 17. Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree, 18. We Wish You A Merry Christmas,
19. I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas, 20. It's Beginning to Look A lot Like Christmas

Questions for a King-Seeker

By: Amos McFalls

The road had been long and treacherous. Traveling was never easy. Around every turn, there seemed to be another obstacle and another opportunity to end the journey prematurely.

In the distance, the outskirts of the city were slowly coming into view. Hopefully, when they reached the city's center, the efforts of the trip would pale in comparison to the joy of reaching their destination. This destination was one of true remarkability. This was an occurrence so unique that the stars in the night sky had changed their normal course to deliver the news - a king was born. Not just any king, but one whose story had been on the lips of prophets for generations.

As they neared the city their hearts fluttered. How could they know what to expect in this foreign land? Would the people turn them away as outcasts? How would they know where to find the king? Would their clothing be acceptable in these royal courts? Better yet, they were foreign dignitaries, would they be given permission to approach the king and offer him gifts? Would their gifts be acceptable?



As they entered the city they are shocked. There was no excitement in the air. There was no celebration. None. Things were normal. Things were continuing as they normally would. There was no indication that any royalty had been born, much less a king for which the night sky had moved.

"Let's ask someone," one of the wiser ones said. They found a man that looked as if he might know. "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." He didn't know. No one knew.

Perhaps they had missed it. It's possible they had miscalculated their celestial measurements. Even the local king, Herod, was unaware of the royal birth. Life was continuing on as if nothing had happened. They had left their normal lives expecting to find the exceptional, but only found more normal—normal people living normal lives and doing normal things. Where was the new king?

How uncomfortable it must have been for those foreigners to step into a foreign city with little knowledge of current events and culture? When they ask to see the "new king", the entire scenario becomes even more awkward by the reply they received - "Huh?"

Let's take it a step further. How different would this Biblical account appear if the wise men had approached a townspeople, asked the new king's location, and received a direction? Wouldn't the story flow much more smoothly if the person excitedly said, "I'll take you to him!" But no one did. In fact, instead of being pointed to the new king, they were directed to the old one, the despised King Herod.

When reading this account I immediately jump to the conclusion that I am one of the wise men in the story. I remember the time in which I pursued the King. I may not have crossed deserts or traveled a road beset with thieves, but I did cross the divide of uncertainty to faith. It's hard to remove ourselves from the thought that we are king-seekers. After all, who doesn't want to be the wise one in the story? There is a certain nobility found in going to great lengths to meet the king.

However, as a follower of Christ, I must understand that my role in the narrative has changed. No longer am I looking for a king, I've found Him! No longer am I on a strenuous journey of exploration, I've reached the home of the Savior and have laid my life at His feet. I now play a different part, a role in which I am an ambassador. It is now my responsibility to guide the king-seekers in the direction of the King.

In order to play this new part there are changes that must be made. While the mentality of a seeker is guarded and lends itself to protection of possessions, the mentality of an ambassador is one of service. A

seeker asks, "Can you help me?" An ambassador asks, "How can I help you?" A seeker is unsure of the exact location. An ambassador has knowledge of the location and can give direction with the least hindrances.

It might be worth considering what systems and strategies need to change in order to be better ambassadors in your own life. These steps should usher those king-seekers away from the normalcy of their lives and into something extraordinary. Our atmosphere - our actions, integrity, and resolve for excellence - should reflect one who has been in the presence of the King.

When we are approached by king-seekers, what steps have we put in place so that they find Him? It's not our responsibility to put a star in the sky, but it is our responsibility to know what it indicates - the saving grace of Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:19, 20 NLT says, "For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, 'Come back to God!'"

Our church strategy needs to reflect this thought as well. As king-seekers approach our building I'm sure they are faced with some of the same questions that the Magi faced. How can we know what to expect? Will the regulars turn us away as outcasts? Will the directions to the King make sense to us? Will the steps provided to us be marked clearly? Are these clothes acceptable? Will we be allowed to give our gifts?

I wonder what the status quo is for churches across our nation. When king-seekers arrive, are they being greeted with the extraordinary presence of the King, or the ordinary presence of man? Are they being pointed to a King worthy of a new night sky, or the dominion of human tradition? Wouldn't it be wonderful if every person and every church had a clear process for king-seekers? What must we change that these king-seekers would see our excitement for the King? What additions and subtractions are essential that king-seekers are directed to the true King and not a false one?

Wise men still seek Him, but the wisest men and women act as ambassadors to guide others into His presence.



Amos is privileged to serve Pastor Nelson Hight as a staff pastor at Church of the Crossroads in Corinth MS. He is currently a 2nd year Destiny Leadership Institute student. He and his wife Lindsey have two children, Caroline (4) and Franklin (2). You can follow him on Twitter and Instagram @amosmcfalls

THE NEXT GENERATION

TWO P.K.'S AND THEIR SPOUSES EMBRACE THEIR OWN MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES.

BAYLOR & CHARITY GRIFFIN | ACTS MISSIONARIES



My name is Baylor Griffin. Most reading this will know me as Pastor Rob Griffin's son from Oklahoma. Today, my wife, Charity, and I are incredibly excited to serve as full time missionaries in an organization called ACTS, which stands for the Antioch Center for Training and Sending. We send pioneering leaders to the unreached peoples of the 10/40 Window where we pray continually and engage in tireless church planting. We work specifically with young adults who have a desire to labor for lasting change in areas that would be considered the frontier of world missions.

We facilitate this vision by hosting two schools a year where 18-30 year olds receive lecture, training, and a taste of life amongst the unreached with one of our long-term teams. By the school's end, many of these students will have decided to buy a one-way plane ticket overseas.

Charity and I have done this training school ourselves and have each spent extended seasons in the Middle East, where we became burdened by the severe lack of missionaries and access to the Gospel in this part of the world. We realized quickly that The Lord had called us to be a voice for missionaries living in the hiddenness of the Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu worlds. Therefore, before we move overseas ourselves, we are serving the Great Commission state-side, continuing to live on the generosity of our friends and family, and giving ourselves headstrong to prayer and mobilization efforts.

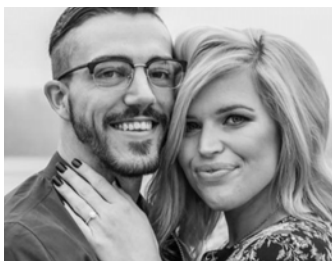
We are gripped by the fact that today, there are 5,852 unreached people groups in the 10/40 Window. There is only 1 Christian missionary for every 405,500 Muslims alone. There are over 1.06 billion unreached Hindus living in the 10/40 Window who have never heard the Gospel. Walking down the densely overcrowded streets of our favorite cities in the Middle East, knowing how great the work was, but how little just a few of us could seemingly do, we experienced the brunt of Christ's words in Matthew 9 still ringing true today: the harvest is plentiful, the laborers truly are few. We believe God is calling the Church in the West to change this.

There are three ways we ask our friends and family to be a part of what we do: You can pray. You can give. You can go.

If you would like know more about how you or your church family can partner with Charity and I and with ACTS, please email us at baylorandcharity@gmail.com. Visit the website acts.global for more information about ACTS.



ETHAN & BARBIE ESTES | FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ATHLETES



Hi, my name is Ethan Estes. I am a Destiny Leadership Institute graduate. I just recently married my best friend in the whole world, Barbie, who is also a graduate of the DLI. Together, Barbie and I love serving our community. One way that we love to serve is through an amazing organization, one that I am blessed to work for, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Since 1954, FCA's mission has been to present to coaches and athletes, and everyone they come in contact with, the challenge and adventure of receiving Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, serving Him in their relationships and in the fellowship of the church so that we will see the world impacted for Jesus Christ through their influence and experience.

FCA has four pillars of ministry called the 4 C's. These allow people involved in FCA to be laser focused on making a BIG Kingdom increase in four specific areas. The first C is the "Coaches Ministry". Ministering to the coach is the heart of FCA. We have a huge opportunity to influence the influencers. FCA believes in going "to and through the coach" to reach the team, the classroom, the band hall and many others for Christ by encouraging and empowering the coaches.

The second of the 4 C's is "Campus Ministry". In our local FCA, the vision the Lord has placed on mine and Barbie's heart is to develop disciples and empower students in our schools to reach their peers through the context of relationships. After all, life change happens in the context of relationships.

The third C is the "Camp Ministry". An FCA Camp is a certified ministry event that uses the annual theme and scripture for athletes and coaches to develop athletic skills, create influential relationships and encounter Jesus Christ. And lastly the fourth C is "Community Ministry". This ministry is the off-campus opportunities to reach coaches and athletes through the club and recreation sport environment.

My wife and I are hungry for an awakening in our nation. Although we may never reach the White House, we can empower others to reach their homes. We may never impact the NFL, but we can start on our local sports teams. If you are interested or have any questions, please reach out to me at eestes@fca.org, or go to fca.org for more information on how you can make a difference in your local FCA.





IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR DESTINY MEMBERSHIP

Destiny Ministries commissions credentialed ministers to perform all duties of a Christian Minister as provided by Holy Scriptures, under the direction of The Holy Spirit and in accordance with State, Federal and International Law. Our expectation is that credentialed ministers will conduct themselves with the absolute highest standards of ethical excellence and Christian integrity in all matters.

GENERAL LICENSE

This level of membership credential is the entry level of General License to practice Christian ministry. All ministers entering the Destiny Family must serve for one year at this credential level unless transferring an approved, existing License from a recognized Ecclesiastical organization. *Fees: \$50 Annual Certification Fee, and a suggested monthly offering of 3% of personal tithe.*

ORDINATION

This level of membership credential is the advanced level of Ordained Minister of the Gospel. This credential is reserved for those who are known to have a proven ministry, excellent reputation and have demonstrated the character of Christ with substantial experience under supervision of Spiritual authority. *Fees: \$75 Annual Certification Fee, and a suggested monthly offering of 3% of personal tithe.*

AFFILIATED MEMBERSHIP

This level of membership is for those with existing ministry credentials from a recognized Ecclesiastical organization who desire to be affiliated with the Destiny Church and Minister's Network, but do not need ministry credentials. *Fees: \$50 Annual Affiliation Fee, and a suggested monthly offering of 3% of personal tithe.*

AFFILIATED CHURCH 501(C)3 MEMBERSHIP

This level of membership is for the local church to operate as a church affiliate of the Destiny Church and Minister's Network. This level of membership provides covering through Destiny's group tax exempt status under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. *Fees: \$100 Annual Affiliation Fee, and a suggested monthly offering of 3% of the local church's operating budget.*

AFFILIATED CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

This level of membership is for those churches that have their own tax exempt status but desire affiliation with the Destiny Church and Minister's Network. *Fees: \$100 Annual Affiliation Fee, and a suggested monthly offering of 3% of the local church's operating budget.*

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NEW LOOK | *Functionality, connectivity and easy access is the theme of the new website.*

NEW WEBSITE | *The Destiny Vision Center and Destiny Leadership Institute web sites have been merged into a single robust online center for resources and connectivity to all things Destiny.*

SAME MINISTRY | *Destiny Ministries has always been and will always be dedicated to serving the Body of Christ with Excellence and dynamic ministry opportunities in a Covenant Family of Friends.*

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God is For Them

By: Landon Galloway

According to the Gospel of Matthew, as you have read elsewhere in this edition, Jesus is presented as Immanuel, "God With Us." Christmas is a poignant reminder that we are never alone because our God has come to us in the person of Jesus. He chooses to identify Himself as One who is with us, who will never leave us nor forsake us. He is the one who will be with us even until the end of the age. And because He is with us, then He is for us, and if He is for us then nothing and no one can be against us!

However, that is only part of the story. Christmas is not only about God being "with us;" it also about God being "with them." I believe that is the message that Luke is trying to get across to his readers. The birth of Jesus isn't just for "us." It's for "them." Christmas is not just about us. It's about others, particularly those who have been marginalized. When the angel appeared to the shepherds in the field, he said: "I bring you **good news of great joy** that will be for **all people**." (Luke 2:10) Good news. Great joy. All people.

These three phrases summarizes the Christmas story. Christmas is **good news**. The long awaited Messiah and the Savior of mankind became like us, lived like one of us, and ultimately gave His

life for us. Christmas is **great joy**. The coming of Christ is the cause of great celebration. Good news always brings great joy. We don't have to struggle through life alone; our long-awaited Savior has come to us. Christmas is **for all people**. This is the crux of Luke's nativity narrative.

First, The angel appears to the humble Zacharias, who belongs to belongs to the lowest rung of the priestly hierarchy. Zacharias and Elizabeth have suffered the social shame of barrenness. In a society that estimated a woman's worth primarily by her ability to bear children, one can only imagine the embarrassed experienced by Elizabeth. Luke's introduction of the priestly couple hints at how much the experience of barrenness defined their existence:

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. (Luke 1:5-7)

He had a good job. She came from a good family. They were righteous, devout, and blameless. But, they were childless. They could never outlive this reality. Their barrenness defined them. This explains why after Elizabeth discovered that she was indeed pregnant, she kept herself hidden for 5 months saying, "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people. (1:24)" She took a praise break that lasted 5 months! The reproach that had marred her entire life had been removed.

Christmas shows us that **God is with them**. He is with Zacharias and Elizabeth. He is with people that have experienced shame and disappointment. He is with those who think they have been forgotten and for those overdue for a miracle.

The second angelic visit is to the peasant, teenaged girl named Mary from the obscure village of Nazareth. The virgin Mary was engaged to the common laborer Joseph. That's right. The Messiah was birthed by peasants rather than priests or Pharisees. One would expect the Great High Priest to be born into a Levitical family. Or, perhaps the Righteous One should belong to a family of Pharisees. After all, they were the guardians of righteousness. The religious elite often scorned commoners because they could not afford to frequently pilgrimage to Jerusalem to participate in the sacrificial system and because they lacked the education to understand the minutiae of the law. However, God chose to entrust His Son to humble and lowly peasants.

Christmas shows us that **God is with them**. He is with Mary and Joseph. He is with ordinary people who feel overlooked and are stuck in obscurity. He is with those who have the wrong last name and the wrong pedigree. He is with those who have been marginalized because of their place of birth.

When Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, the two miraculously pregnant cousins take turns singing out spontaneous praise for all that God had done for them. During Mary's song, known as the Magnificat, she boasts:

His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty. (1:50-53)

Christmas shows us that **God is with them**. He is with those who fear him, particularly the lowly, the poor, and the hungry. He is with those who have been abused by powerful people. He is with those who have suffered injustice. Jesus is Savior- **God with them**.

This theme is repeated throughout the next several verses. Zacharias declares that his son, John, will go on before the Lord, who will "give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death (1:79)." **God is with them**, those who occupy the darkness and abide in the shadow of death.

Jesus' birth is announced to the lowly shepherds who were keeping the nightshift on the outskirts of town. **God is with them**, the people who are despised and isolated, relegated to the outskirts of society. The elderly duo of Simeon and Anna are the only people in the Temple to recognize Jesus' identity. The religious hierarchy castigated commoners, but God trusted them with the Christmas message. **God is with them**, the elderly who feel that their purpose is located in their past and that their best days are behind them.

This Christmas, I need to be reminded that God is with me AND that He is with them. He is with those that have been forgotten, those that are grieving, those who are lost, and those who are hurting. Christmas is good news of great joy for all people, especially those who we tend to forget about.

In the Christmas classic, *The Grinch*, the young Cindy Lou advocates for the curmudgeonly Grinch to be awarded a special Christmas honor by the people of Whoville. She is met with indignation and opposition. According to the townspeople, the honor of "Cheermeister" is reserved for those who exemplify the Christmas spirit. It would thus be inappropriate to award it the infamously grumpy Grinch. However, she has read the "Book of Who" and presents the following quote: "*But the Book does say the Cheermeister is the one who deserves a backslap or a toast. And it goes to the soul at Christmas who needs it most.*"

Our book says essentially the same thing. The good news of Christmas is primarily for those who need it the most.

DESTINY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE WELCOMES GRANT & KELLIE BOWMAN TO OUR TEAM!

We are proud to announce the addition of Grant and Kellie Bowman to the Destiny team. As you will see from their bios, Grant and Kellie both have extensive ministry and professional experience. Their initial task is to help us develop a program for the DLI alumni and will be working to keep DLI students engaged with Destiny even after they graduate. The Bowmans are a tremendous asset to the kingdom and will certainly be an asset to Destiny. Welcome to the family, Grant and Kellie!

Grant and Kellie Bowman have been involved in ministry and Christian leadership for over 24 years. They have served as senior pastors, evangelists, student pastors, and are advocates for continued education and Christian leadership training. They have traveled extensively throughout the United States and abroad, preaching, teaching, and training leaders.

In addition to their years spent in ministry, both Grant and Kellie completed their undergraduate studies at Texas Bible College in Houston Texas, and respectively their Masters of Theological Studies and MBA through Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA. Grant is a licensed Texas Real Estate Agent and Kellie serves as a Director of Client Services in the IT industry.

Grant and Kellie are both actively involved in leadership at Calvary Church in Fort Worth, TX.



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DLI STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Jared Hight

My name is Jared Hight, and I am married to my best friend Cheri. We have been married for six years; we have two beautiful daughters, Avery 4 and Eden 2 years old. Cheri and I have the honor to serve my parents, Nelson and Pam Hight as staff pastors at Church of the Crossroads in Corinth, MS. We serve the families of our community by overseeing the Next Gen and Small group departments of our church.

I graduated from Mississippi State University in 2011 with a master degree in community counseling. This allowed me to better serve my community and local church through family ministry and counseling. I enjoy spending time with my family, cheering on my MSU Bulldogs, and training for triathlons. This year I was even able to complete Ironman Chattanooga.

Many great leaders, including my father Nelson Hight and mentor Dr. Phil Brassfield, have taught me that continued education is paramount in growing as a leader and as a follower of Christ. After speaking to others who benefited from the program, I decided Destiny Leadership Institute was my next step to further my biblical training. I am currently enrolled in Core 2 of the fall semester. I enjoy the online lectures, course readings, discussion boards, and the monthly webinars. While learning so much from these resources, I have had fun interacting with other students and learning from the teaching team.



One of my favorite books in DLI so far has been Jesus on Leadership by Gene Wilkes. This book has challenged me to be a better leader of myself and others, while ultimately leading me to be more like Jesus. DLI has taught me to approach my study of the scripture in a systematic way. I am very thankful for the interaction and direction from the DLI teaching team. They have been excellent and inspirational, while teaching us to become more effective leaders. As a husband, father, staff pastor, and Ironman athlete, I have greatly benefited from being a student in DLI. At any stage of your life, if you want to learn more about the bible, theology, practical ministry, and leadership, then Destiny Leadership Institute is for you.

DLI IS NOW ENROLLING FOR THE SPRING 2018 SEMESTER.

FAVORITES FROM OUR CHRISTMAS KITCHENS

*A collection of recipes that have become
a part of our holiday traditions.*



SNICKERDOODLES

Cathy Brassfield

- 1 c. (2 sticks) butter
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 2 1/2 c. sifted all purpose flour
- 1 1/2 c. sifted conf. sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 tsp. cream of tartar

In a mixing bowl cream butter; gradually add sugar. Beat until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. In another bowl sift together flour, baking soda, cream of tartar and salt. Gradually add to creamed mixture. Chill dough for easy handling. Shape into 1 inch balls and roll in mixture of 1/4 c. sugar and 1 tsp. cinnamon. Place on baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes. Remove immediately to wire rack to cool.

RED VELVET CAKE

Jeannie Abbott

- 1 1/2 c. sugar
- 1/2 c. shortening
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp. cocoa
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2 oz. red food coloring (2 bottles, can use just one)
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 tsp. soda
- 1 tbsp. vinegar

Grease and flour three eight inch cake pans. Cream sugar and shortening. Add eggs and beat well. Sift flour, salt and cocoa three times; add alternately to cream mixture with buttermilk. Add vanilla and coloring. Fold in soda mixture with vinegar. Pour into cake pans and bake at 350 degrees for approximately 40 minutes or until done. Frost with cream cheese frosting.

CHEESY HOT RICE CASSEROLE

Kellie Bowman

2 c. Minute Rice (salt & pepper lightly or to taste)
2-3 canned jalapeno peppers; seeds removed
32 oz. sour cream
1 lb. Velveeta cheese

Cook 2 cups of rice per instructions on box. Cut jalapeno pepper very fine. When rice is cooked, stir in jalapeños and sour cream until well mixed and pour into a greased 9 x 13 inch pan. Cut Velveeta into chunks and stir into the rice mixture, reserving enough Velveeta to lay thin slices over the top of the casserole before baking. Bake at 350 degrees 25-35 minutes until cheese is melted through.

SWISS VEGETABLE MEDLEY

Amy Dew

1 bag (16 oz) frozen broccoli, carrots, and cauliflower combination
1 can condensed cream of mushroom soup
1/3 c. sour cream
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1 (4oz) jar chopped pimentos
1 cup (4 oz) shredded Swiss cheese
1 can (2.8 oz) French Fried onions

Combine vegetables, soup, 1/2c. cheese, sour cream, pepper, pimento and 1/2 can French Fried Onions. Pour into a one quart casserole. Bake covered at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Top with remaining cheese and onions. Bake uncovered 5 minutes longer.

Recipe can be doubled.

CANDY APPLE SALAD

Stephanie Powers

3 Large (or 5 small) Granny Smith Apples
5 Payday Candy Bars (or 10 Fun-sized Bars)
16 oz. cream cheese
1/2 c. brown sugar
1 tsp. vanilla

Bring cream cheese to room temperature, then add brown sugar and vanilla and mix until smooth. Set aside. Chop apples and Payday bars into bite sized pieces. Gently fold into cream cheese mixture. Cover and chill in the refrigerator. Best served same day.

For a variation, mix different kinds of apples, or for a festive look mix Granny Smith and red delicious apples.

HUMMINGBIRD CAKE

Cathy Brassfield

3 c. flour
2 c. sugar
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. soda
1 tsp. cinnamon
3 eggs, beaten
1 1/2 c. oil
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla
1 (8 oz.) can crushed pineapple, drained
2 c. chopped pecans (divided)
2 c. bananas (chopped)

Combine dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl; add eggs and oil, stirring until dry ingredients are moist. Do not beat. Stir in pineapple, 1 1/2 cups nuts and bananas. Spoon into 9 x 13 inch pan and bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes. Remove from pan and cool. Spread with frosting, and sprinkle with remaining nuts.

Frosting:

1 (8oz) pkg. cream cheese, softened
1 c. margarine, softened
16 oz. powdered sugar
2 tsp. vanilla
1/2 c. chopped pecans

Mix cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add powdered sugar. Beat until fluffy and stir in vanilla.

CRANBERRY SALAD

Jeannie Abbott

1 quart cranberries
2 c. sugar
1 pkg strawberry jello
1 c. hot water
1 envelope Knox Gelatin
1/4 c. cold water
1 orange, grated and juiced
1 c. miniature marshmallows
1 c. chopped nuts
1 can crushed pineapple

In blender grind 1 qt. cranberries, cover with 2 cups sugar and store in refrigerator overnight in a covered glass dish. The next morning dissolve 1 pkg. strawberry jello in 1 cup hot water and add 1 envelope of Knox gelatin dissolved in 1/4 cup cold water. Add grated rind and juice from 1 orange. Combine jello mixture and cranberries, add 1 cup miniature marshmallows, 1 cup chopped nuts and 1 can crushed pineapple (juice and fruit). Mix well and let set in refrigerator until firm.



A DESTINY COVENANT FAMILY OF FRIENDS
GATHERING
c o n f e r e n c e

SAVE THE DATE

**2018 GATHERING
CONFERENCE**

JUNE 5TH-7TH, 2018

