

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Luke 2:1-20
PRINT PASSAGE: Luke 2:1-16

Unexpected Messengers



WAKE UP!

to be involved in helping make change for the betterment of less-fortunate people and for justice. Period.

When one of the adults asked her why she decided to join the NAACP, she spoke of her entire experience with the ancestry company until her current status. LaShanta got Quida and a few more of her friends to join. They learned about politics, how the entire political process works, why it works, and why we need to protect it. To see the difference, LaShanta wanted to know about the Benin political process and compare it to the United States' process.



LaShanta was always a curious, outspoken child, but there was one thing she was very sure about: she knew that there was a God who protected her every day. She was confident that God would guide her and lead her in whatever she set her mind to do.

There were visitors at this week's NAACP meeting. After the meeting, they approached LaShanta and told her that they were from Benin! LaShanta was bursting with excitement. They had a message for LaShanta. They invited LaShanta and her family to come to Benin! *Come and see your heritage.* These messengers were unexpected, and so was their message. She never even thought of going to Benin. But God had it in His master plan. She thanked the messengers and rushed home as fast as possible to tell her parents, praying they would say yes to the visit.



WORD UP

Luke 2:1-16

1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. **2** (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) **3** And everyone went to their own town to register. **4** So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. **5** He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. **6** While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, **7** and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. **8** And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. **9** An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10** But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. **11** Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. **12** This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." **13** Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, **14** "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." **15** When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." **16** So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

KEY VERSE:

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." (Luke 2:15)



THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

WORK OUT

LUKE (THE PHYSICIAN) WROTE THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE FOR TODAY. LUKE IS SAID TO BE THE MOST DETAILED WRITER OF ALL THE DISCIPLES. In this passage, he recounts the birth of Jesus Christ. It begins with Joseph and Mary traveling from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be counted in a census. The trip is said to be eighty miles. Can you imagine a very pregnant Mary riding eighty miles in rough terrain on a donkey? When they reached their destination, there was nowhere in the city for them to rest. The best the city could offer was a stable. The stable did not look nice and cleaned up like the greeting cards we see at Christmas. It was dark and dirty. Some historians say that it was most likely a cave. Mary gave birth in the stable, wrapped her Son up tightly in pieces of cloth, and laid Him in a manger. This manger is said to be a trough built into the cave wall from which the animals could feed and drink. At the same time, an angel appeared to some shepherds attending to their flock at night. Shepherds were not well thought of. They were considered low-class. Perhaps this is why David's father, Jesse, forgot about him when Samuel was looking for the next king of Israel. These low-class shepherds were the first to witness the birth of Jesus. They were chosen to go and witness to everyone what they had seen and heard. Sometimes, God will choose the least to do His good work.

Fortunately, we do not have to travel anywhere to be registered for a census. Everything is done electronically now. If we can't find a hotel to stay in when we travel, we can book an Air BnB. We have come a long way; things have changed. But one thing that has not changed is God, His love, and His Word. He still has messengers and witnesses today. We have our pastors and evangelists to give us messages every day. We even see God's Scriptures on TikTok, FB, and IG. We also have witnesses who are anxious to share the goodness of God through music, spoken word, poems, plays, film, and social media.

INSIDE OUT

On a separate sheet of paper, indicate whether the following statements are true or false. If the statement is false, provide the correct answer.

1. Mary and Joseph were traveling to Egypt to register for the census.
2. When they arrived in Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary were invited to stay at a nice hotel since Mary was about to give birth.
3. Angels appeared to shepherds in a field with the message of Jesus' birth.
4. God sent the wise men to witness to all about the birth of Jesus.
5. Jesus was found wrapped in pieces of cloth lying in a trough.

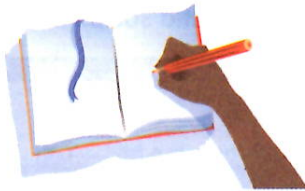


The shepherds were witnesses to the birth of Christ. You can also be a witness for Christ. You can share with others the good things that He has done for you, a family member, or a friend. God loves it when you can be a witness for Him. Witnessing helps to build the kingdom of God. So, go ahead and boldly witness for Christ!



STEPPING OUT!

Can you recall a time when you were a witness for Jesus? If you can, write that down on a sheet of paper or in your journal. Elaborate on how it made you feel and if it impacted the person to whom you witnessed. If you have not witnessed to anyone yet, write down what you would say about Jesus if you had the opportunity to witness. Read your witness to the class.



Media Mission



Use your smart device to find a video, song, image, or poem related to the lesson; search phrases such as “messenger for Christ” or “witness for Christ.” Be prepared to share what you find with your classmates, if time permits. Listen to the song “Witness” by Israel & New Breed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MXY48sH9E0>.



Create a Word Map for the Word *Messenger*

A *word map* is a visual organizer that promotes vocabulary development. Most word map organizers engage students in developing a definition, synonyms, antonyms, and a picture for a given vocabulary word or concept. Fill in the word map below for the word *messenger*.

Word Map

Related words:		
Synonyms:	<p>MESSENGER</p> <p>Word:</p> <p>Definition:</p>	Antonyms:
Word structure:	Pictures:	Association:
Example sentences:		