

## Ministry of Encouragement

### He Brought Joy!!

#### Luke 2:8-10

The news can be filled with much doom and gloom. Accidents, natural disasters, injustice, killings, treachery, scams, and relational mess are some of the horrors and problems we hear about daily. Hearing this may leave you feeling disgusted, desperate, and in despair. Yet, if we know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior we have been filled with the Holy Spirit and the fruit of the Holy Spirit is joy. We have joy which is not determined by whether things are going right or wrong around us. Joy is that deep internal feeling of jubilation and exhilaration caused by knowing Jesus. **Romans chapter 15 verse 13** reminds us that we are filled with joy and peace as we trust in God and that we overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In our text, the shepherds were out watching their flocks when an angel of the Lord appeared to them, the glory of the Lord shone all around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, **“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all people” [Luke 2:10 NIV]**. The mere announcement of the birth of Jesus Christ brought joy. This joy was not just for the shepherds and Jewish people it was for everyone. The baby that was born was the salvation, the redemption, the peace, the righteousness, and justice of the world. Mary’s baby brought hope that was out of this world. Jesus brought joy to the world!

After all we have been through and go through, we still can have joy. The joy of the Lord is our strength. We can face the troubles of the day if we have Jesus in our lives. Life is a journey and the destination for those who know Jesus Christ is heaven. So, we can endure what we have to here on earth because we know our home is in heaven. The joy that we experience the world did not give it to us, thus the world cannot take it away. Jesus brought joy!

*Reverend Dr. Brigitte A. Black*

### Prayer

Awesome God we adore You. You have brought much joy to our lives even in the midst of pain, suffering, and grief. We are jubilant that our joy is not dependent upon what is going on around us. Our joy is rooted and grounded in Your goodness and grace. In this season of waiting and preparation we sometimes get weary, wanting You to come back and set things right, bring justice, and deliverance from poverty and oppression. Yet, we know that we have to continue to work towards peace, justice, and righteousness because most of what we are experiencing has been caused by our sin and disobedience. Grant us the wisdom to care for each other and the world as You desire us to do. Let us focus on how You want the world to be and not how it is. Forgive us of our sins of omission and commission. Heal the brokenhearted, injured, and sick. This we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen!

*Reverend Dr. Brigitte A. Black*

## Stewardship Moment

*<sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;<sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NIV***

Let's begin 2019 by engaging in the stewardship of our bodies by following the Daniel Plan. The Daniel Plan has five pillars – faith, food, fitness, focus, and friends. By faith, by the power of God we will change how we treat our bodies. We will eat real food – whole foods made by God. We will avoid white sugar, white bread, white flour, and white rice. We will just move it – participate in exercise regularly. Our focus we be to honor God with our bodies. We will renew our minds and rid ourselves of stinking thinking and develop an attitude of gratitude. Finally, we need a buddy that is working with us to encourage a healthy and healthful lifestyle. Join me on The Daniel Plan forty days to better health. You are welcome to begin studying The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life; The Daniel Plan Cookbook: Healthy Eating for Life, and The Daniel Plan: Jumpstart Guide written by Rick Warren, Daniel Amen, and Mark Hyman.

*Reverend Dr. Brigitte A. Black*

## Sermon Scripture Reference

### Glad Tidings Of Great Joy!!

#### Luke 2:8-10

<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.