

# MERRY Christmas

FROM THE KB STAFF

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

### A NOTE FROM JEFF OUR MINISTRY DIRECTOR

The iconic Christmas song, "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year", was released in 1963 as part of Williams' first Christmas album named after his TV special, "The Andy Williams Christmas Album". The song was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2021, signifying its cultural significance and enduring popularity. The official music video has garnered tens of millions of views on YouTube, reflecting the timeless appeal of this holiday classic.

*"It's the most wonderful time of the year!  
With the kids jingle belling  
And everyone telling you 'Be of good cheer!'  
It's the most wonderful time of the year!"*

It is true this is a wonderful time of year, but is it for *everybody*? While in a Bible study with some men at the prison in Springfield, SD, I was reminded it may not feel like 'the most wonderful time of the year' for everyone. At my last visit I asked the men if they would like to do something special at our next Bible study, which would be the Wednesday before Christmas.

I have been doing this now for several years and it was again suggested we sing Christmas songs and share stories of a special past Christmas. But this year when I asked this I wasn't met with universal enthusiasm. One young man, whom I have known for about two years now asked, "What if we don't have happy memories of Christmas?"

It is not uncommon, when talking and listening to the men, both in prison and those released, that there is an over whelming sense of loneliness connected to this time of year. Not all have happy memories of Christmases past. For some, their families have cut them off. Possibly even more frustrating for others is the inability for various reasons to spend time with their family, even though they are willing. Some even face the threat of going back to prison if they try see their families because of parole regulations. Then the commercialism of Christmas, promising so much, just adds to the loneliness. They will describe this as a hole in their inner being. As Christians, we know what and Who can fill this hole, and it is only one thing: **a relationship with Jesus.**

This truly is a wonderful time of the year! But please remember to pray for those who have not yet experienced the true reason for the season. The birth of Jesus, God with us in the flesh, Emmanuel. He who stands at the door of our hearts and knocks for an invitation into our deepest loneliness.

*Merry Christmas!*

Jeff Haverhals

### A NOTE FROM RHONDA OUR MINISTRY & CARE ASSISTANT

Recently, while attending a worship service where the Christmas story was being told, they read Luke 2:19: *"But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart."* This made me stop and think about Mary. I can not imagine the emotions she was going through. We all respond differently to different situations. But why did Mary respond differently? The shepherds' good news was amazing, but it was not surprising or unexpected for Mary. She had received an angelic visit more than nine months earlier (Luke 1:26-33), and no doubt had countless hours contemplating the implications of that encounter.

The words "pondered them in her heart" indicate that Mary did not fully understand everything she was experiencing and learning about her Son. She knew He had a divine calling, but how could she imagine with absolute clarity what it would entail? Pondering or meditating is something I have not done on a regular basis in my life. We should all practice meditating on the work of God in our lives more often. So how might we emulate Mary?

The first step is to **seek times of prayer**, perhaps by physically taking a walk, away from distracting screens or tasks. Or by setting aside time and a space to reflect on the ways God has been present in our lives. Or by praying the Scriptures.

The second and perhaps the more difficult way, is to model Mary's decree to God and to allow this practice of **reflecting on God's work in our lives** to call us to deeper trust in Him even when we, like Mary, confront moments we do not understand.

**But Mary treasured up all these things  
and pondered them in her heart. LUKE 2:19**

Not only in this Christmas season, but all year long, let us ponder the gift of people, groups, and places we love. Like Mary, who faithfully pondered the promises of God and His working in her life allowed her to remain faithful even in the greatest sorrow, cultivating this practice of attention in our own lives will strength us to encounter whatever lies on the other side. God is always working in our lives because...

*He Loves us!!*

Rhonda Haverhals





# MERRY Christmas FROM THE KB STAFF

## A NOTE FROM TIM W. OUR DISCIPLESHIP CHAPLAIN

Greetings! Here we are already! It is almost Christmas. Having once counted the years of my former incarceration by how many Christmas seasons had gone by, my heart goes out to those still doing the same.

Kingdom Boundaries was and continues to be a valuable ministry in helping those who have spent "Christmas" and other seasons behind walls and razor wire. This ministry often goes well beyond basic needs. Some of these "extra mile" issues can be quite intensive and deeply rooted. Only the power of God's healing love provides the ultimate solution. Kingdom Boundaries strives to provide a Spirit filled environment for that process to happen. Please make an intentional point to pray for the residents. Spiritual strongholds abound and spiritual weapons must be employed.

God's blessings to all our faithful supporters. Your prayers and financial contributions are making a difference in changed and changing lives.

Tim Wendt

## A NOTE FROM TIMOTHY B. OUR DIGITAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

One of the most amazing things to me about the TRUE Christmas story is the idea that God Himself, the All-Powerful, All-Wise Creator of the Universe, chose to put on a human body and become one of us...one of His little creations! And not just any human body. He could have come as a tall, strong, fierce, militant, King, arriving with an army of angelic warriors clad in golden armor, riding on giant war horses into the capitol city of the most powerful nation on the planet, declaring His authority and establishing worldwide dominance. But instead, in all of His vast wisdom, the method God chose to use to rescue humanity from the clutches of sin and death was to become a tiny, innocent, fragile human baby, utterly dependent on a teenage mother and a poor adoptive father who lived in a small, backwater town with a pretty lame reputation.

Yet, even more remarkable than all of that (*at least to me*) is this: **He is still doing the same thing today!** Our God, full of wisdom and power, is still choosing the Way of Humility! Every time a person surrenders their life to Him, He *literally* comes and makes His home inside their heart. In essence, just like He did with young Mary, the King of All Universes and Realms, chooses to dwell inside each one of us. How is this humble? By doing so, He limits His effectiveness to reach the world around us to *our willingness* to let Him speak and move *through us*. He could show up in a million different ways, every day, anywhere on the planet... and yet, He comes to live in your heart and mine, and then *waits for us* to submit ourselves to His leading and guiding.

So, when a man or woman receives Jesus into their hearts while incarcerated, the God who created every universe comes out of prison with them, literally *inside* them, like a trojan horse. The mysterious power of God (which is able to forever change a person, and then thru them change a city, a nation, a world, and a generation) is hiding *within* those former inmates! Just like He hid for awhile inside Mary's womb. And just like He resides in you and me, as well.

**So the Word became human and made His home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.** JOHN 1:14

The enemy has done a good job of convincing society "those people" are not worth giving a second chance. "They deserve what they get. They made their bed; let them sleep in it." But, what could God do if these men and women woke up to the true potential hiding within their hearts? Like Mary said to the angel Gabriel, "I am the Lord's servant!" What if we help these children of God to recognize their true power and potential because of the God who lives *inside* of them. When God is inside a person, ANY person, He can turn the world upside down!

Thank you for supporting KB, both in prayer and financially, as we help men become more aware of the God who waits patiently inside them. It is because of your encouragement and support we are able to reach countless lives!

What does God have in store for Kingdom Boundaries in 2024? I hope YOU will continue partnering with this much-needed ministry as we find out! May God bless YOU and YOUR family, this Christmas season and throughout the next year!

Timothy Bariteau

...The Lord Himself will give you a sign.  
Behold, the virgin shall conceive  
and bear a son, and shall call  
His name Immanuel.  
ISAIAH 7:14

### Some of the men at KB would like to pray for you!

If you would like prayer for anything, whether you want to give us specific details, or keep it anonymous, simply email your prayer request to us at...

[pray@kingdomboundaries.org](mailto:pray@kingdomboundaries.org)

If you would like to make a financial donation online, go to:

<https://www.kingdomboundaries.org/donate.html>

From all of us here at Kingdom Boundaries, staff, board & residents...

We wish you and your loved ones a very  
*Blessed Holiday Season!*



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