

Pastor's Pen

The King is Born

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

On Christmas, we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For the world, it is a time of festive holiday gatherings with family and friends. It is all about decorations and buying presents. I still remember the look of surprise and joy of our five children waking up on Christmas morning to see what "Santa" had brought. While nothing is wrong with anything I just mentioned, believers must never forget what Christmas means to the elect.

Jesus Christ was born to die so we could live. The message of Christmas is the message of love from God to His children. God's love was on full display when He sent His Son to take on flesh so He could pay the penalty for our sins. This and every Christmas should bring us great joy, not because of the parties, the extra days off, the gifts, or the family gatherings, but because if there were no birth of a Savior, there would be no death of a Savior. If no death, no resurrection, and no hope for mankind. But glory to God, Jesus Christ was born. He lived a sinless life and willingly went to the cross, suffered, died, was buried, and rose from the dead.

This Christmas, we who have made Him Lord and Savior can sing, "Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let Earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him room. And Heaven and nature sing."

Your shepherd,

Pastor Mark

Grace Gems

Noel!

Every year, people sing songs like "The First Noel" at Christmas, and many wonder what a "noel" is. In French, joyeux noel means "Merry Christmas." Our modern English word comes from the Middle English nowel, which Webster's 1828 Dictionary defined as "a shout of joy or Christmas song." The roots of the word are the French noel ("Christmas season"), which may come from the Old French nael. This, in turn, is derived from the Latin natalis, meaning "birth." Since Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ, it was natural for people to refer to the celebration as the "nativity" or the "birth."

Another possible root for noel, also from the French, is the word nouvelles, meaning "news." As the popular carol says, "The first noel the angels did say / Was to certain poor shepherds. . . ." The meaning of "news" certainly makes sense in that context; however, the early usage and definition of noel seem to focus more on the idea of birth, and that is probably the more accurate meaning.

There are very few records giving the details of the earliest Christmas practices, but at least as early as the 4th century, some Christian groups were celebrating natus Christus on December 25. Since their almanac referred to the day as "the birth of Christ," it would be natural to see derivative words like nael and noel used in the same way.

In the Middle Ages, several English carols began with nowell, and French carols similarly used noel. Since early songs often used the first word as the title, a "noel" came to refer to any song about the birth of Christ. Because of this, the word now carries the dual meaning of a Christmas song and the Christmas celebration itself.

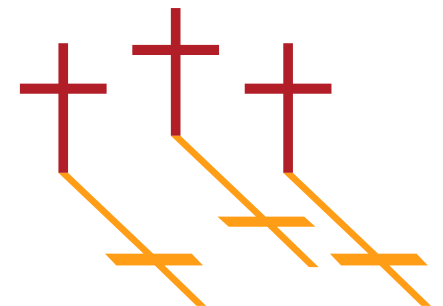
Our English carol "The First Noel" was first published in a book titled Carols Ancient and Modern, edited by William Sandys in 1823. The message of the song is the joyous pronouncement that the King of Israel has been born. When we sing the song or wish someone a joyous noel, we are following the example of the angels, announcing the good news that Jesus Christ was born, not just for Israel, but for all mankind, so we could receive forgiveness of sins through Him.

Merry Christmas from the folks @ gotquestions.com

Quote of the Week

"We can only understand Christmas in light of Easter—the cradle is given because the cross is coming."

- Alistair Begg



Weekly Gatherings

Bible Classes

Old & New Testament Classes
Ladies Class
Young Adults Young Parents
Youth Surge
Sunday Morning @ 9:30AM

Weekday Meetings

Mondays | 7PM Men's Bible Study
1st and 3rd Saturday
Women of Grace | 9AM
Wednesdays | 6:30PM AWANA

Family Groups

Thursdays @ 7PM
Please check church website
for start date and directions to each

Build the Body Teams

If you would like to serve on a BtB Team
and need to sign up, please contact the
team leader at the appropriate email
address on the back of this bulletin.

Youth Study

Wednesdays @6:30PM
Youth Study & Surge!

Service Times

Sunday Services 8AM & 11:00AM
Sunday School 9:30AM
Children's Church @11:00AM

Giving from service on 12/17/2023

General Offering5,467.62
Building Fund 9,395.00
Uganda Missions 2,470.00

Total.....\$17,332.62
Attendance 211

SOS/Uganda Christmas giving so far \$4,436.00

Build the Body Ministries

Women's Ministry-women@ghbcva.org
AWANA-awana@ghbcva.org
Outreach Ministry-outreach@ghbcva.org
Worship Ministry-worship@ghbcva.org
Men's Ministry-men@ghbcva.org
Children's Ministry-children@ghbcva.org
Youth Ministry-youth@ghbcva.org
Prayer Team-prayer@ghbcva.org
Maintenance-maintenance@ghbcva.org
Fellowship-fellowship@ghbcva.org
Communications-communications@ghbcva.org
Front Line-frontline@ghbcva.org
Security-security@ghbcva.org



Grace Harvest
Baptist Church
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ghbcva.org | 804.561.3742
9821 South Redfield Drive, Amelia, VA 23002

Grace Harvest Baptist Church

Dec 24, 2023

Welcome