



# Valley Voice

*Buffalo Run, Fillmore and Valley View*

*The United Methodist Churches  
of the Buffalo Run Charge*

*“One congregation serving the community  
and worshiping in three locations”*

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## **‘Twas the Night Before Christmas 2008**

‘Twas the night before Christmas, when all  
through the house  
We were still stirring, we might lose our house.  
The stockings were hung  
by the chimney with care,  
In despair, come morning  
few gifts would be there.  
The children were nestled  
all snug in their beds,  
Because the heat is turned back  
To save money, so we can be fed.  
And mamma in her ‘kerchief, and I in my cap  
Lie awake in the bed,  
our 401k what happened to that?  
When out on the lawn  
there arose such a clatter,  
I crawled out of bed, arthritis pain in my legs,  
the cause of that matter.  
Over to the window I made it at last.  
If I could afford health care,  
a doctor I’d find fast.  
The moon on the breast  
of the new-fallen snow.  
Lit up the town in the valley below.  
When, what to my wondering eyes did I see?  
The factory now closed, jobs gone overseas.



My apologies to the original author and any  
copyright laws I may have shattered.

My point is that the Christmas theme of Joy,  
Peace, and Love may be hard to recognize in  
the world around us. If we go back to the Bible  
we find that it wasn’t much different for those  
involved in the drama of Christ’s birth. Mary,  
engaged to Joseph and pregnant, would bring  
disgrace to the family, and Joseph would be  
shunned by the community. Mary visits  
relatives, and finds Zechariah suddenly  
stricken mute.

Israel is living in a country under Roman  
occupation heavily taxed by Rome and  
exploited by dishonest tax collectors. Now a

census is ordered which would mean even more taxes and oppression.

Mary and Joseph have the first child born in a stable in strange town and soon have to flee to Egypt because Herod wants to kill the baby.

Such circumstances present in our world both then and now are precisely the reason we need to celebrate Christmas.

On the night that Jesus was born an angel appeared to some shepherds, who were among the lowest and poorest of the people.

***"And the angel said to them, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."***

The shepherds responded:

***"Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."***

Israel had long awaited the Savior's arrival, the one who would establish God's kingdom and set them free. And because the shepherds believed they received **hope "... returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them."**

Christ came to reveal God's love for us to give us an example of how we should love and care for each other, and to save us from sin that we might be reconciled with God. I believe one of the most important messages the birth of Christ brings to all ages is Hope. Not a wishful thinking kind of hope, but a quiet assurance kind of hope that no matter how circumstances may appear God is always faithfully ready to cast His rays of love, peace, and joy into our lives if we will like the shepherds receive His promise in faith.

For 2000 years the body of Christ "the Christian church," has been sharing the message of Christmas hope.

'Twas the night before Christmas  
in Bethlehem town,  
The promise of God, quietly comes down.  
While most of the world remains unaware,  
Those who receive him, find hope for despair

Who would have guessed,  
Love, Peace, Joy and Faith  
God would send in the form of a babe.  
For 2000 years Christ's church proclaims hope.  
The difference it's made  
is beyond human scope.

In this season of life,  
Christmas you can't find  
Remember the words to the shepherd inclined  
Love Hope and Joy can be yours,  
the savior is born  
If like the shepherds you but visit the Lord.

Merry Christmas and Christ's blessing of Hope  
for the New Year,

Pastor Duane

