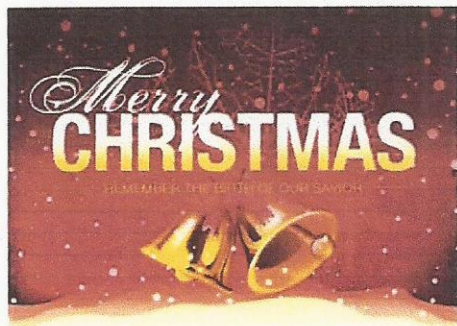


# SALEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH SHAUNAVON

## THE SOUTHWEST LUTHERAN



December 2018

A Christmas gift to unwrap NOW!



"Silver bells, Silver bells, it's Christmas time in the city.  
Ring-a-ling, hear them ring. Soon it will be Christmas Day."

So goes the song *Silver Bells*. And yes indeed very soon it will be Christmas Day. Soooo, before things go and get crazy busy for you, would you be willing to set aside 1/2 of one hour to do something special, something meaningful (and I'm not saying that other things you do aren't meaningful). It's just that right now we - you, me, anyone who is willing to partake - we have a unique, timely opportunity to do a little something that has the potential to make this Christmas a 'not so ordinary', 'same old same old' one. We can perhaps capture a little bit of what it was like that first Christmas.

Here it is: Assignment Salem - Christmas 2018:

Take out your Bible, or open up your Bible App on your phone and go to Luke Chapter 1 verses 26-56 (Mary's perspective), and then Chapter 2:1-21. And then to get a bit more perspective, especially from Joseph's point of view read Matthew 1:18-2:23.

Go over these readings two times each. One time focusing on Mary's perspective and the next time on Joseph's perspective. As you do this think about the unusual change in circumstances they each faced in otherwise being just an engaged young couple. What was it like for them? Jot down some thoughts. It would be even better, if you are married, to each share your thoughts with your spouse. Questions, ponderings and comments will bring more depth of thought and connection.

Following this, think about your own lives and the unusual changes in circumstances you have faced and those you will no doubt be facing in the future, not even knowing what might be ahead.

This is bound to give you greater insight and the Christmas story will definitely have greater meaning for you. You will be blessed - and you will bring a smile to God's face!

May you find reassurance in discovering, believing, and knowing that no matter what, God has a plan for your life and He will walk with you all the way through it, side by side.

(You may want to further your investigation and discovery by similarly reading in Luke Chapter 1 verses 5-25 and verses 57-80 about Zacharias and Elizabeth, parents of John the Baptist, whose birth and life were very much woven in with that of Jesus.)

From both Richard and I: "May the Lord bless you mightily this Christmas season with the gifts of His hope, His love, His joy and His peace." Merry Christmas!