Joy To The World our Savior Reigns Let All Heaven and Earth Resound! We sing this song at Christmas, but did you know it is not a Christmas Song? It is heralding the return of our Savior. In fact, as the Last Trumpet sounds and Christ appears, I do believe the Choirs of angels and those of us still here will be singing this very song to Herald his arrival!

We live in a cyclical world. As they say “the more things change the more they stay the same.” Which is very true, history repeats itself. And with that, Jesus, Yeshua came once as a baby soon to become man to Save mankind from sin and death. However, In God’s grand design it did not stop there. He is sending his son back again to reclaim his Bride, the Church, where we will be caught up in the air with him and taken to our new home. What a glorious gift that will be!

We have spent this Christmas season looking at the Names and Titles of Jesus Mostly “Ani” which means “I AM” and “Yeshua” which means Salvation. How comforting, how humbling that Jesus literally is everything we need at every moment of our lives.

As I sit here pondering all of this and how we continue to cycle through this life, it is ironic that we are going to John’s neurologist appointment today so he can receive his next 36 injections in hopes that it will relieve some of his symptoms and it is literally the anniversary of that horrible night’s accident. Wow a whole year. Where has the time gone and yet so much has happened. I am sure I am not the only one at this holiday time reflecting back to those we have lost, had difficult situations, been blindsided by life or had major life altering events.

Yet it is comforting to know that in those times we can call on Jehovah Jira (our provider), The Prince of

Peace, Our Comforter, Our Healer, Our Goel, Our Almighty God, Our High Priest, Our King of Kings, Jesus Yeshua Our Redeemer, Our Alpha and Omega, Our Everything for Every Moment of Every Day. What a Gift!

And God has so many other gifts in store for us! As we continue to look forward to our Lenten theme, we will explore the “Gifts of God” that he has for each and every one of us. And what awesome gifts they are! He is just waiting for us to ask.

God is all about Gifts, the meaningful ones. The gift of his Son, Salvation. The gifts that the Magi brought-- Gold to represent the King of Kings, Frankincense to honor Jesus as the High Priest and Myrrh to acknowledge the sacrificial lamb that would take away the sins of the world. The gifts that he gave the disciples and the Gift of the Holy Spirit that has been poured out on every believer, the Gift of eternal life with him in Heaven.

Unlike the other religions of this world Christ is the only way, truth and life. He is the only one who offers real salvation, a real eternal future and true Redemption for all who call on his name.

I personally would like to thank everyone who gave us cards, heartfelt gifts and the FCC for the generous Christmas gift. This pastor’s heart is full of love, humility and overwhelming gratitude to have been so blessed to shepherd two wonderful congregations!

Thank you for your support through a very challenging and trying year. Thank you for loving our family and supporting us every step of our journey and thank you for embarking on a New Year, a New vision of mission and ministry, and a desire to tell all “Come and See” and when you do “Get Used to Different!” Like how I threw this new year’s theme in?

We have so much to tell and show the world, and it is a Great Joy to the world that We Are Different, we are set apart and we are called to be the beacon of light in this dark world.

Shalom

Pastor Penny