

"Something Must Have Happened Here"
Christmas Day 2011
Hampton Baptist Church – Rev. Chris Kurtz

Perhaps the first European eyes to look upon it came during the 1540's Coronado Expedition. It is a gorge that extends some 277 miles and in some places a mile deep, leaving fantastic shapes and multi-colored peaks, canyons, ravines and layers of rock showing a record of earth's history. The Colorado River, still carrying gravel and mud, making it a cutting machine, still flows through it often in the form of rapids. On the sides of the cliffs you can still see Pueblo and cliff-dweller ruins. It has been called perhaps the most "awe-inspiring of Earth's spectacles." It is rightly called "The Grand Canyon," and is not likely to be forgotten once seen.

A man stood with his young son at the edge of the Grand Canyon one day, stunned by the beauty that lay before them. The boy said to his father, "Dad, something must have happened here!"

I can't help but wonder if we had visitors from another planet this time of year, if they might say the same thing, "Something must have happened here." Surely there is no other time during the year:

- when there are more lights lighting up our planet than at this time.
- when there is more joyous music filling the air.
- and what time other than Christmas is there more a spirit of love and sharing?

Anybody with any sensitivity at all coming upon this scene on planet earth wouldn't just say, "Something must have happened here" they would say "Something wonderful must have happened here."

I wonder what kind of answers these visitors would get if they walked up to persons on the street, saying, "Something wonderful must have happened here. Can you tell us what it was?"

Something wonderful did happen here. But it's origin and meaning cannot not be found in:

- the flashing, multi-colored strings of lights,
- in the bubble gum pop music that's constantly blasting,
- in wrapped presents or shopping malls.
- in the multitude of parties and opportunities to feast and indulge.

If these visitors are to understand Christmas and this wonderful event, they will have to be taken back in time to a stable in an obscure part of the world.

- to a village called Bethlehem...

- to the birth of an infant to peasant parents...
- to a baby whose life would become a mighty river eroding and cutting and moving away the sins of the world, leaving what is truly the most awe-inspiring sights on Earth – human beings who truly love God and one another.

Something significant happened here! It did. Something so powerful that it still touches and transforms lives today. Something so wonderful that:

- it still can be found behind the tinsel and trees,
- beneath the music and singing,
- deep within the joy and celebration,
- somehow it still has the power to bring us kneeling at a manger before the King of kings.

Something incredible did happened here! God so loved and because God did a gift was given that changed life on earth forever. But this gift was not and is not limited to a place and time. This gift given in the form of an infant child is infinite and eternal.

The life of that infant child has made a difference in our world and our existence. This gift we celebrate this morning, the birth of Jesus our Savior offers the answers to the questions of our hearts. We have been given the gifts of hope, peace, joy, love, purpose, forgiveness, and eternal life wrapped up in flesh and blood, in the baby Jesus.

Thank you God, that you did something amazing here. May your gift of Jesus make a difference and be evident in our lives.

God of love, flow in us this Christmas like the mighty Colorado, cutting away and removing anything and everything not suited to your service. Cleanse our hearts, O Lord, and make each one a Bethlehem, each soul a manger where your son might be reborn so that others might see that something, someone wonderful and amazing happened here in us and it can happen in them, too.

Amen.