

Hope Presbyterian Church
Sermon-Based Bible Study Group



December 17, 2023

“Doxology” - #3 in the series *Heaven and Nature Sing*

Texts (NIV): Luke 2: 13-14, Isaiah 9: 6-7

1. What stood out to you about the message?
2. This week’s text contains a *doxology* - a hymn or verse expressing praise to God - exuberantly delivered from the heavens by angels upon the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Think of it as one of the original Christmas carols.
 - Do you have a favorite Christmas carol? What memories or experiences does it evoke?
 - Why do Christmas carols “just not sound the same” when played or sung at times other than the Advent season?
3. **Read Luke 2: 1-12.**

Consider how these verses provide the rich context for the *doxology* proclaimed by the angels in the verses that follow.

 - What details of this account of the birth of Jesus resonate most with you? Why?
 - Why do you think it’s important that an angel appeared to shepherds before the heavenly chorus proclaimed Jesus’ birth?
4. **Read Luke 2: 13-14.**

Think about how the angels’ heavenly doxology must have been like an eruption of sound and light to anyone who would have been able to see and hear it.

 - What would their message of God’s peace have meant to the people of Israel at that time?
 - How might they have interpreted the words “those on whom his favor rests”?
5. **Read Isaiah 9:6-7.**

Consider how this Old Testament prophecy concerning God’s plan to bring peace to the world would have been a source of hope for the Israelites at the time of Jesus’s birth.

 - How do these verses help us think about a hope for God’s peace today?
 - In what ways can we help those around us for whom the season of Christmas does not bring peace?
6. How can we pray for you?