



Discussion Guide — 12/21/2025

Series: *Around the Manger: Stories of Advent*

Message: *Shepherds's Story*

Scripture: Luke 2:8-18 (NRSVUE)

Opening Prayer

God of the fields and the manger, quiet our fears and open our ears. As You met shepherds with good news of great joy, meet us now. Help us hear, hurry to Jesus, and share Your peace. Amen.

Introduction & Context

Shepherds were ordinary laborers—often overlooked, usually outdoors, protecting vulnerable flocks through long nights. Luke places the first Christmas announcement with them on purpose: heaven's glory meets earth's margins. Their fear turns to joy; their joy becomes witness.

Read Aloud: Luke 2:8–18

Discussion Questions

1. Night Watch (vv. 8–9)

- What details show how ordinary the shepherds' setting is—and how extraordinary God's arrival is?
- "The glory of the Lord shone... and they were terrified." Where does God's nearness feel overwhelming to you right now?

2. "Do Not Be Afraid"—Good News for All (vv. 10–12)

- Why is it vital that the angel calls this *good news for all the people*? Who might assume they're *not* included?
- The sign is simple: cloths and a manger. What does that reveal about how and where God wants to be found?

3. Glory & Peace (vv. 13–14)

- How do "glory to God" and "peace on earth" belong together? Where do you long to see that peace in greater Kansas City?





4. From Hearing to Hurrying (vv. 15–16)

- The shepherds say, “Let us go now...” What helps you move from fear to a next faithful step?

5. From Seeing to Sharing (vv. 17–18)

- What exactly do the shepherds share—and what *tone* do you imagine? How is witness different from pressure or performance?
- “All who heard were amazed.” What about the gospel amazes you in this season?

6. Head • Heart • Hands

- **Head:** What does it say about God’s kingdom that the first evangelists are shepherds?
- **Heart:** Where do you most need to hear “Do not be afraid”?
- **Hands:** What could “good news” look like on an ordinary weekday (specific, local, doable)?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, You found shepherds in the night and filled them with joy. Find us, too. Give us courage to go, eyes to recognize You, and love to make You known. Let Your peace take root in our city. Amen.

Key Takeaway

God’s good news finds ordinary people in ordinary places, turns fear into joy, and joy into witness.





Next Step — P.A.R. (Pray • Act • Reflect)

Pray

“Lord, show me who needs good news this week—and how You want it to flow through me.” Sit quietly for one minute; note the name or situation that comes to mind.

Act (*choose one you can do this week*)

- **Presence:** make a bedside/hospital/porch visit; offer a ride; sit and listen without fixing.
- **Hospitality:** invite someone to your table or coffee; include a neighbor in an errand or walk.
- **Encouragement:** send a personal note/text naming where you see God at work; pray **with** them.
- **Story & Invitation:** tell one person what Advent means to you; invite them to worship or a Christmas service; read Luke 2 with a child.
- **Service:** take a meal, watch kids for a single parent, help with a needed chore, accompany someone to an appointment.
- **Advocacy/Connection:** help navigate resources (utilities, housing, counseling) or connect them to a church ministry/support group.
- **Generosity:** bless a family you know is struggling (gift card, bill help, winter gear) or coordinate support with your group.

Reflect

Where did fear ease and joy rise—in them and in you? How did your action point to Jesus (not you)? What simple “good news” rhythm will you carry into the new year?

Created from original content with the assistance of ChatGPT.