



January News | 2025

HAPPY

new year

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Well, it is time to jump into the New Year.

I hope and pray that your Christmas and New Year celebrations were filled with joy, faith, and family. Since Christmas comes every year, it sometimes feels like the story of the birth of Christ is like a fairy tale or a myth that we celebrate. It becomes part of the “same old” decorations and celebrations. But I pray each year that you and your family find a new way to stand in awe of the amazing event that happened that night in a manger in Bethlehem.

The concept that God came to earth is both preposterous and incredible. Consider the night in the field for the shepherds. One moment, they are alone, and the next moment, the sky lights up with the presence of angels. The word of the angels to the shepherds was that they had a message of “great joy.” The word in the Greek is translated as “mega” joy. In other words, what was about to happen was mind-blowing. Can you imagine how overwhelmed they must have been standing there? Then just like that, in the next moment, they were back in a field all alone ~ by themselves.

What was their trek to the manger like? Did they say anything to each other, or did they walk quietly, trying to grasp what they just saw? They didn’t have the gifts like the magi; all they had was themselves to present before King Jesus. Do you think they walked into that stable and fell to their knees before the Him? I would have.

Today, worship services can often be more of a show than an event in which we realize we are drawn into the presence of a holy God. A question to consider is, have we lost the idea of the “sacredness” of worship? Do we even work anymore at creating a sacred space? Do we stand speechless in front of a cross like they did in front of a manger?

I pray for all of us this year to develop holy spaces in our lives. Moments that allow the divine to interrupt us, profoundly impact us, and humble us once again, like the shepherds, by recognizing the gift that we have been given in Jesus!!

Find His Joy in your journey,
Pastor Mike

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Christmas in Haiti - We had an incredible Christmas in Haiti!!!! The kids say thanks to all of you who gave gifts or funds toward their gifts. They were thrilled with the celebration!!!



Continue to Pray with us

Please be praying for our older children. Some of our kids are getting older and near the end of their high school education. We are cradle to career, so we have a lot to do to process them into the adult world of Haiti. A couple may work for us in the future, and one or two of them hope to attend college. Two of our older boys are very good at fixing things and working on cars. We have found a mechanics school near where they are and are trying to figure out how to enroll them as students there. One new thing this year, we are hiring an English teacher to come in regularly to the orphanage. Learning English will provide the opportunity for more jobs in the future.

Last year, 5,601 people were killed in Haiti. Gangs injured more than 2,000, and another 1,494 have been kidnapped (most have been released for ransom). In one village by Cité Soleil, 207 people were wiped out in a weekend. This was a very brutal attack. It was later reported one of the gangs went in and wiped out this elderly village. They had been accused of putting a voodoo curse on the son of the gang leader and making him terribly sick. But this is not all. There have been almost 300 executions of gang members by the locals and the police force. There is no waiting for arrests and sentencing since prisons are usually broken into and criminals are released.

The suffering is still occurring in the greater Port Au Prince area. Last year was a rough year for the southern part of the country. It continues to be in political turmoil, and the gangs control the streets. They said they would no longer attack Christian missionaries or orphanages, but there is still much chaos.

The UN has sent in more troops, but it is sort of a joke. A small contingent has arrived from Guatemala, and 8 aviation special forces troops came to El Salvador, but I'm not sure how any of this will make a difference. Please continue to pray for a miracle for peace!!! God is able and He is faithful. I believe that we will one day be back working in God's Garden, and it is a day I dream about often. May God grant it soon!!



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