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## Graphics and Audio Notes

- There **will** be a sermon starter video.
- There **will** be notes and / or scripture to show on screen during the sermon.
- There will be Holy Communion at the 9 a.m. worship service each Sunday in December.

Text highlighted in this way will have a slide prepared to be on screen.

Text highlighted in this way is a reminder for Andrew during delivery.



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## Key Questions

### What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about adopting the attitude of Jesus, particularly his down-to-earth humility.

### Why is this sermon important?

It is important because humility is a key part of the attitude of Jesus and living in the upside-down world of God's kingdom.

### What is the good news?

The good news is that God's true light has broken into the worlds' darkness in the birth of Jesus. God's kingdom is coming on earth.

### What are the next action steps?

Begin making plans for your offering on Christmas Eve which will make a difference in the lives of educators, children and families here in El Dorado and in the lives of the people half a world away in Marondera, Zimbabwe through a local United Methodist Church.

### What is the context of this sermon?

This series and sermon is adapted from the book *Down to Earth* by Mike Slaughter with Rachel Billups published through Abingdon Press.

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## Metadata

### Topics

2nd Sunday of Advent  
Down to Earth - Down to Earth Humility  
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado  
Text Online at <http://bit.ly/2dilBIQ>

December 4, 2016  
Philippians 2:5-8  
Preaching Target Word Count: 1,928  
Audio Online at <http://bit.ly/2gPerXT>  
Video Online at <http://bit.ly/2hBgPi8>

- Change Lives
- Make Disciples

- Serve
- Transformation of the World

### **Sermon Books of the Bible**

- Ephesians
- Galatians

- John
- Philippians

### **Tags**

sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, Eldorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnualConference, Advent, Christmas, love, Jesus, downtoearth

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## Philippians 2:5-8, CEB

<sup>5</sup>Adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup>Though he was in the form of God, he did not consider being equal with God something to exploit. <sup>7</sup>But he emptied himself by taking the form of a slave and by becoming like human beings. When he found himself in the form of a human, <sup>8</sup>he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

### Response to Scripture

One: The word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

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## Introduction

### Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.

### Pope Francis Washing Feet

Within weeks of assuming the papacy in March of 2013, Pope Francis washed the feet of two women at a youth prison in room. This caused brought dismay from some Roman Catholic traditionalists.

As *The Huffington Post* reported, traditionalists considered the rite a “reenactment of Jesus washing the feet of the twelve apostles before his death,” which “thus should be limited only to men.”

Simply washing the feet of prisoners was startling enough to many Roman Catholic faithful. Traditionally popes have washed the feet of twelve priests, a much “safer” and far more predictable demographic in terms of both behavior and possibly foot cleanliness.

I have been greatly impressed with this pope and inspired to see how Francis, the world leader of the planet’s largest Christian denomination, repeatedly puts aside his rights and privilege to demonstrate the mind and humility of Jesus, our down-to-earth God.

### Transition

How can we too live out a down-to-earth humility this Advent?

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*Pause*  
.....

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## Letting Go of the Old

To experience what is new this Advent season, we must let go of the old.

Old habits and ways of thinking must be replaced with new.

## Attitude of Jesus

The “mindset” (NIV) and “attitude” (NLT) of Christ Jesus that the Apostle Paul described to the Philippians must become greater than our own prejudices, presumptions, and partisan ideologies.

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*Pause*  
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## Key Scripture - Ephesians 4:22-24

In another one of Paul’s letters, he reminded the Christians in Ephesus about the necessity of renewed thinking in Ephesians 4:22-24:

“change the former way of life that was part of the person you once were, corrupted by deceitful desires. Instead, renew the thinking in your mind by the Spirit and clothe yourself with the new person created according to God’s image in justice and true holiness.”<sup>1</sup>

What is remarkable about this admonition is that it may have been written from a Roman prison cell. Paul knew how to practice what he preached.

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*Pause*  
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## Repent

The English word *repent* comes from the Greek word *metanoia*,

English - repent

Greek - metanoia

which means a change in mindset or the mind.

Our minds control our attitudes, actions, and behaviors.

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*Pause*  
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Our thoughts become actions.

Our actions become lifestyles.

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*Pause*  
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Our attitudes affect the outcomes of our lives in this world and the world beyond.

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*Pause*  
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<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 4:22-24, CEB.

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## Following a God of Relationships

To “adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus,”<sup>2</sup> we must remember that God is a God of relationships.

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*Pause*  
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## Congregational Diversity

Within our congregation, we have a diversity of people, in both socio-economic status and political ideology.

What binds us together?  
Our unity in Jesus.

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*Pause*  
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Jesus calls his followers to demonstrate a radically alternative way of living together. In the world, people organizing themselves into groups in which people tend to think alike, vote alike, look alike, and share the same economic demographic.

### **Key Scripture - Galatians 3:28**

But we read in Galatians 3:28, that in Christ’s kingdom:

“There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”<sup>3</sup>

Having the mind of Christ Jesus allows us to see people as Jesus sees them, regardless of political persuasion, sexual orientation, nationality, theological beliefs, or even the lack thereof.

Jesus never told his followers, “This is my command; you shall adhere strictly to right doctrinal beliefs and agree with one another on correct political ideology.”

As a matter of fact, Jesus left us with only one new commandment in all of his teaching.

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<sup>2</sup> Philippians 2:5, CEB.

<sup>3</sup> Galatians 3:28, CEB.

**Key Scripture - John 13:34-35**

We read in John 13:34-35:

“I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other. This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other.”<sup>4</sup>

It is not our theological positions that determine the authenticity of our faith.  
True faith is demonstrated through Christlike love.

.....  
*Pause*  
.....

To have the mind of Christ means a radical reorientation of thinking.  
A change of mind is a change of heart.  
A change of heart is a change in behavior.

.....  
*Pause*  
.....

Right thinking precedes right acting.  
Both require humility.

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## **An Upside-Down Kingdom**

**Example: Lewis Carroll and *Through the Looking-Glass***

Nineteenth-century English author Lewis Carroll wrote *Through the Looking-Glass* to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. In that sequel, Alice steps into a mirror in her living room and finds that everything is backward.

This is similar to the upside-down way Jesus demonstrated the kingdom of God.  
It is so unlike the kingdoms of the world.

.....  
*Pause*  
.....

## **Jesus' Humility as King of Kings**

Jesus is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.  
Who else had more right to use power and prestige for personal gain?

.....  
*Pause*  
.....

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<sup>4</sup> John 13:34-35, CEB.

Yet Jesus entered the world into an oppressed class of humanity, assuming the lowest position in the Roman world.

### **Key Scripture - Philippians 2:7**

Despite Jesus' supreme divinity, the Apostle Paul writes in Philippians 2:7 "he emptied himself by taking the form of a slave and by becoming like human beings."<sup>5</sup>

In his final kind act toward his disciples on planet earth, the Master of the universe humbled himself to take on the role of a slave, willingly washing the disciples' filthy feet.

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*Pause*  
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### **Sermon on the Mount**

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) begins with the Beatitudes and then expands on them. Taken alongside his remarkable teaching about Judgment Day in Matthew 25, these words further reveal the upside-down, countercultural nature of God's kingdom.

- To be blessed, you must bless others.
- To be forgiven, you must forgive others.
- To avoid being judged, you must not judge others.
- The first will be last, and the last will be first.
- You must lose yourself to find yourself.
- You must first give before you can receive.
- The poor will inherit the kingdom of heaven.
- The meek will inherit the earth.
- Peacemakers will be called children of God.
- The hungry are fed.
- Safe water is provided for the thirsty.
- The sick are ministered to.
- The prisoners are visited.
- The refugee is given shelter.
- The poor are clothed.
- There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, for all are one in Christ.

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<sup>5</sup> Philippians 2:7, CEB.



## Conclusion

### Good News

The good news is that God's true light has broken into the worlds' darkness in the birth of Jesus.

God's kingdom is coming on earth.

### Call to Action - Christmas Eve Offering

The world will begin to believe in Jesus as it sees those who call themselves Christians acting like Jesus. It is essential that our lives and our churches demonstrate these essential upside-down, kingdom of God attributes if we want to reach the world for Christ. One of the best times to reach the world for Christ is during Advent and Christmas.

#### *History of Christmas Eve Offering*

Since 2012, we have been committed to giving away 100% of our offering on Christmas Eve offering. The invitation to our congregation each year is to spend half as much on themselves for Christmas and then give an equal amount (the other half) to a cause that honors Jesus' birth.

This year, our offering on Christmas Eve will help build local and global mission partnerships with 50% going to support our partnership with Skelly Elementary School and 50% to our partnership with Nyameni United Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

#### *Local Mission Partnership - Skelly Elementary School*

Our local mission partnership is with Skelly Elementary School.

We support education.

We want to develop a working relationship with Skelly Elementary School to offer tangible support to staff after discovering their specific needs.

We want to share information about the successes, opportunities and challenges of public education with church members and others in local communities.

#### *Global Mission Partnership - Nyameni United Methodist Church*

The other partnership is with Nyameni United Methodist Church in Marondera Zimbabwe. They are a congregation of over 450, including the children and adults. They are currently worshipping in their Fellowship Hall while they are working on building a sanctuary to worship – in a similar way to the way that this congregation worshiped in our Fellowship Hall while raising funds to build the sanctuary we worship in today.

I invite you to begin making plans for your offering on Christmas Eve which will make a difference in the lives of educators, children and families here in El Dorado and in the lives of the people half a world away in Marondera, Zimbabwe through a local United Methodist Church.

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### **Invitation**

We are part of a kingdom of God movement that is tearing down the walls that stand between us.

God is doing a new thing.

Allow the living Jesus to come into your life anew this Christmas.

Dare to love others as God loves you!

### **Closing Prayer**

O God, shine the light of your hope in our lives,  
so that we will see the world with your eyes.

Jesus, come to live in us,  
so that we will have your attitude;

Holy Spirit, fill us with your faith and love,  
so that our hands help build your kingdom.

We pray for all this, both now and always.

Amen.