

There are moments in life when our Lord breaks into our everyday lives with such force that we cannot help but take notice and ponder the reality of the presence of the Lord who loves us.

Zachariah had been unable to speak during his wife, Elizabeth's, pregnancy. When asked what the newborn child's name was to be, he wrote, "John," and immediately he was able to speak and did so praising God – and everyone who had watched these things unfold were stunned, even frightened:

“Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, ‘What then will this child become?’ For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.” (Luke 1:65-66)

There is a time to ponder!

When the shepherds reported what the angels had told them concerning the birth of Jesus, “All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.” (Luke 2:18-19)

Again, there is a time to ponder.

As we near the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ on Christmas day, take a moment to ponder the wonder of the birth of our Lord and his ministry among us.

Ponder his love for you and his presence in your life now, and be glad!

Merry Christmas – E. Stanley Ott, December 21, 2010 Vol. 9, No. 41, A TIME TO PONDER

**Prayer Suggestions** (Somehow, *pondering* and *wondering* often seem to be intertwined, do they not?)

- ★ In this Advent time of ‘waiting/preparing, what have you been *pondering*?
  - ★ What thoughts from Pastor Jeff's ‘*First Family of Christmas*’ messages are you *pondering* each week?
  - ★ As you *ponder* Jesus' love for you and His presence in your life right now, what special thoughts is the Holy Spirit bringing to your mind and heart this day?
  - ★ *Pondering some wonders ...* As you meditate on the ‘Christmas Story’ from Luke 2:1-20 , during the remaining weeks of Advent and Christmas, what *wonders* will you *ponder*?
- As you *ponder*, ask God to help you to act upon some of the *wonders* of Advent/Christmas that you have and will ponder...
- ★ How do the words from this Traditional Appalachian Carol, *I Wonder as I Wander*, speak to you of *wondering* and *pondering*?

I wander as I wander out under the sky,  
 how Jesus the Savior did come for to die  
 for poor, ordinary people like you and like I:  
 I wander as I wander, out under the sky.