

TENNESSEE SUPPLEMENT

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Clarence Loyd Crump
Grand Commander

**May the joys of this Season be with all Sir Knights, and the Peace that passes
Understanding be with them and their families.
Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year.**



GENERAL ORDER NO. 4

*To the Grand Commandery of Tennessee and the Officers and Sir Knights of All
Constituent Commanderies:*

General Order No. 12 from the Grand Encampment restricted any in person gathering of the Conclaves in Tennessee but stated we could hold virtual meetings. However, the Grand Master of Tennessee put an edict out against virtual meetings in Tennessee. Grand Master Reed has given his permission for the commanderies in Tennessee to hold virtual meetings for business purposes only. All such meetings must be secured. The best way for this to occur is to have an administrator handle all log ins to ensure the participant is a member. Names of all members attending need to be listed in the minutes. There must be at least nine members participating. The Commander will declare the meeting open with prayer and pledge to our flag. Again, I stress that these meetings are for general business purposes only.

As many members as possible must be notified of such meetings and given instructions on how to access them. My suggestion is to have them on your regular meeting night and time.

Officer elections and candidate approval cannot be conducted by a virtual meeting. These must be held in person. When General Order No. 12 is lifted, you can request a dispensation to hold an election.

Virtual meetings are not mandatory. You may choose to remain dark under General Order No. 12. Remember to file your monthly reports to avoid penalty fees.

In His Service,
Clarence L. Crump
Grand Commander

Bethlehem, House of Bread

"But, thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). This prophecy, uttered by Micah in the 8th century B.C., is the only one which specifically names the birthplace of the Messiah. The story of Jesus' birth would not be complete without a reference to Bethlehem. The importance of the prophecy is that it attests to the royal lineage of Jesus, and his place as the heir of the throne of David. Further, it has significance as showing how God uses the ordinary and common to accomplish his will.

Bethlehem is an ancient town, located about six miles south of Jerusalem. Never a large town, it dates back to the time of the Patriarchs. It was near there that Benjamin was born and Rachel was buried. The name Bethlehem means, "house of bread". To understand its significance, we must travel back to the time of the judges and refer to the story of Naomi in the Book of Ruth.

The story of Naomi must be familiar to us all; how she and her family went to Moab in search of better economic prospects, how her husband and sons died there, and how her daughter-in-law Ruth refused to allow her to return home alone. On returning, Ruth and Naomi found work gleaning in the fields of Boaz, and eventually Boaz redeemed Ruth and married her.

This series of events set the stage for the birth of David in Bethlehem; he was in fact her great-grandson. It was this royal lineage that Micah had in mind when he made his great prophecy during the time of the domination by the Assyrians. Micah prophesied that a great Deliverer would come to the people of Judah. This Deliverer would be a king like David. He would come from Bethlehem, the same town as David. He would be "known" from ancient times, from the time of his ancestor, the greatest king of Israel. Micah, in prophesying the coming of this Deliverer, was telling of a time when God would deliver his people from bondage and enslavement, and restore them to their former glory. This prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus was born.

The importance of Bethlehem lies in its relative obscurity. It was from there that God chose David to be king, replacing Saul. When God chose David, the prophet Samuel was told not to rely on physical appearance, "for the Lord seeth not as man seeth... the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Sam. 16:7). Bethlehem was chosen in the same spirit, not as a powerful political capital or a major center of economic activity, but as a small town. God did not look on the size or power in human terms of either his chosen king or the city from which he came. It was in Bethlehem that Joseph and Mary had to stay in a barn, because there was no room in the inn. Again, God had chosen the humble to overshadow the proud. The birth of Jesus as a baby, born in a stable in one of the smallest towns in the land, was sublime in its message: God in his wisdom chooses the humble to perform his work, that it might be known that the power and glory is His alone.

References:

Winward, Stephen F., *A Guide to The Prophets*, John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1968, pp. 61-72.