



The first Executive Director Christmas letter to staff was written in 2001. In September of that year, the United States experienced its first terrorist attack. That morning, two commercial passenger planes were hijacked and flown into the twin towers in downtown New York. The towers collapsed in a horrifying and dramatic event. In the immediate time following, it was impossible to find out what had happened and whether or not it was true. All planes were grounded, and there was no air traffic for weeks. It was eerie to look at the skies and not see any planes. It is not possible to describe the fear and uncertainty felt by Americans.

In 2020, we are feeling some related uncertainty and fear. The source of the fear and uncertainty is different than in 2001, but the feelings are similar. Our assumptions about our safety and well-being have been significantly shaken. COVID-19 has created fears and opinions that threaten to divide our unity and to undermine our confidence in a health care system that was able to address nearly any concern we once had. Now if we get sick, we wonder if we will recover; and if we recover, we wonder if there will be long-term effects. No one knows the answer. In addition, we have come through one of the most conflictual national elections which raised questions without answers and a societal divide over values and national goals that led to open anger and hatred that we did not want to believe existed in our communities.

We are all formed and informed by the time period we live in. This means our values and character are shaped in a unique and fairly brief time period. History has many events and perspectives that we have never experienced personally, but these perspectives would probably be helpful to us in making sense of the world we live in and the stresses that exist in this present world.

Two thousand years ago, the nation of Israel was in tremendous turmoil. The issues were different than we experience today, but they were intense, full of anger, and frightening. They were a nation occupied by Roman soldiers who, for the most part, despised the Jewish people and their religion. Into this angry and unsafe time came a baby Jesus. God did not wait for peace or safety. Instead, He stepped into their lives and reassured them that He was present and would remain with them. Jesus grew and thrived in this environment. He redeemed the turmoil by reaching out and teaching truth to the people.

In times of turmoil and uncertainty, there is a tendency to feel helpless and confused. Sometimes this leads us to not step into the areas where we are needed and where we can be useful. The staff of Apostolic Christian LifePoints has incredible gifts to be used. Amidst the turmoil of what is going on in the US and in the world, you continue to be a wonderful resource and influence in the services at our facilities. Never think that what is going on around you diminishes the blessings you bring to the people you serve. If anything, it increases the value of what you bring. Thanks.

All of you also exist in families, friendship groups, communities, churches, etc. I want to encourage you to exercise your same gifts of nurturing, caring, coaching and encouraging. You can't fix the world, but you can make the part of the world you live in be a much better place. God bless you for giving these very real gifts into the people that are in your lives. I wish for you, your family and your friends a joyful and blessed Christmas as you remember the gift of Jesus that God has given to the world. Blessings at Christmas,

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