

## **The Blessing of Home** **Micah 5:2-5a**

How did you like our mini-Christmas pageant? It was wonderful!! wasn't it! So let us give a big round of applause for Sunday School kids and teacher! Thank you for sharing the joy of Christmas with us! I am so glad our kids are here with us this morning.

Some of you may still remember when your children were in Christmas pageants many years ago. Some of you are even able to remember when you were in Christmas pageants many, many years ago. Right? I still remember when I was in a Christmas pageant as a child. I don't know why, but Christmas pageants in my home church always began with a little child's greeting and welcoming of baby Jesus. Do you think that a five-year-old can offer a formal greeting? Not really. So, what really happened was one child would memorize their greeting and simply recite what they have memorized on the stage. One year, I became the greeter because nobody wanted to do it. I was the Pastor's kid so I didn't have a choice. So, I memorized my greeting and stood on the stage. You can guess what might happen to a kid when he suddenly realizes that everyone in the church is looking at him. My brain stopped working and my mind went blank. Technically, I didn't really greet people but just repeated what my Sunday school teacher read. However, no matter how I messed up, everyone at the church laughed and gave a big round of applause when I was done. That's the blessing of a home church. Isn't it? When we watch our little kids' playing, we don't evaluate their performance, but we simply enjoyed them. Because Asbury is a home for them and all of them are our precious children of Asbury UMC, we laugh together and enjoy their words, energy, their entire beings, and even their mistakes.

At the same time, we experience the joy of Christmas through these little kids. As they express their joy through singing or acting or dancing, their joy infects the rest of us. Yes. Their joy is contagious. I believe that little children in a Christmas pageant are the best witness of the good news and joy of Christmas. Age doesn't matter, size doesn't matter when it comes to sharing the joy and good news of Christ's coming.

In today's scripture, the prophet Micha said, "But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days." (5:2) God has chosen the little town, Bethlehem for God's mighty work of salvation. I believe this is good news for us. God chooses a no place like Bethlehem to be a significant someplace. God chooses a nobody like a girl named Mary, to be a somebody whom the whole world will come to know. God chooses a little baby to carry out God's wonderful plan for redemption. Today, God has chosen our Sunday School kids to share the joy of Christmas with us. I believe, God has chosen Asbury to share the love of God and the joy of the coming of our Christ with our neighbors by being a spiritual home for all people.

The joy and laughter we shared this morning is a blessing. Our Sunday school kids who brought this joy of Christmas to us are a blessing to us. This beautiful sanctuary we enjoy and the wonderful people we love are the blessing of Asbury, your spiritual home! But most of all, the baby Jesus we are waiting for during this season of Advent is the true blessing for us. Emmanuel! God is with us! He will bring hope. He will bring peace. He will bring joy and he will embody the everlasting love of God for us. How blessed we are to have this wonderful spiritual home. So, let us give thanks to God. Amen.