



# **The Nativity**

## **- Winter 2025 -**

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Despite being raised in Las Vegas, I grew up nearly always having a white Christmas. By either road tripping to Ohio to visit my grandparents, or snowmobiling into our family cabin in the mountains of Utah, there was seldom a shortage of snow. Like most of you, I've come to think of the Christmas season like a Hallmark greeting card. Snow on the ground outside, crackling flames of the fireplace inside, music playing, and presents around the tree. I've decided that I don't mind the cold weather and actually enjoy snow, but just on my terms.

As long as I can see it, touch it, and leave it...bring on the snow.

I just returned from a week of flying in Northern Kenya. To save our partners the cost of a return flight, I did a three-night layover in a small village which is home to the Rendille community. The Rendille are a mostly nomadic people who consider livestock their currency. They're constantly on the move in search of water and grazing land for their sheep, goats, and camels. Shepherds in the fields isn't a Christmas Eve nativity scene; it's a way of life. It's dry, dusty, and this time of year, downright hot. The only jingle bell around here is the one on the neck of a camel. Christmas Day will come and go without a hint of recognition for those who have yet to hear of the birth of Jesus.

Christmas in the desert of Kenya is actually much closer to the real first Christmas than my idyllic white Christmas. The manger was most likely a hot, dry, stinky, and chaotic affair, not at all like we picture this season. It makes me wonder how we got from a dusty stable to candy canes on pine trees. It reminds me that maybe in the same way I like snow, I like Christmas better on my terms. Like Ricky Bobby said in Talladega Nights, "when you say grace you can say it to grownup Jesus, or teenage Jesus, or bearded Jesus, but 'I like Christmas Jesus best.'" At times, it's easier to love baby Jesus swaddled in the manger than grown-up Jesus who asks, "who is my neighbor?" Or the adult Jesus who reminds us that no place is too remote, no life is too broken, and no culture is too different to make him known.

Whether you have a Hallmark white Christmas this season, or find yourself in a dry, desert period of life, may you be reminded that the Jesus of the manger is the same Jesus that calls us to love our neighbor, not just on our terms. Whether that's the shepherds in the deserts of Africa, or the family next door with a different worldview. May we be people who carry the story of Christmas to those around us, and may we bring light to the dark crevasses in hard-to-reach places.

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## Recent Happenings

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At AIM AIR, pilots have administrative responsibilities in addition to flight needs. After holding the role of Chief Pilot for many years, I have transitioned into a new management role as Associate Manager.

Based on his experience prior to AIM AIR, David has accepted the role of Assistant Director of Operations. We are excited for these changes and look forward to contributing in new ways alongside the AIM AIR team.

## I'm Thankful

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We are thankful to be back home in Kenya! It is nice to settle in together.

I am thankful for the safe flying and sunny skies that I've had the past few months. It's good to be back in East African airspace and land airplanes on dirt runways.

## Prayer Requests

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David is working to convert his South African pilot license to a Kenyan pilot license. Please pray for all the paperwork involved.

I am beginning the interview research process of my PhD journey. Please pray for good understanding and learning along the way.

# Friends and Family

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We hope that you and your family are well this holiday season. Life on the equator in Kenya brings plenty of sunshine and mango season. Laundry dries quickly on the clothesline and the sunny skies are good for flying.

After our wedding in the States, we had a short time in Germany for a wedding celebration and some residency needs. We arrived in Nairobi in September and were able to quickly settle into

work. While life at AIM AIR is familiar for me, Kenya and AIM AIR is completely new to David. Even so, he has been able to culturally draw on his past experience serving at Mercy Air in South Africa. We have been learning to settle into married life together as we also work as colleagues.

I have been flying operationally and continue to provide training to new members of the AIM AIR team. David began flying as well, working on the many steps involved in the Kenyan pilot license conversion process. We hope that his license will be approved by the government before the end of the year. Just recently, we traveled to AIM AIR's second base in Arua, Uganda. The trip was helpful for David to see what life is like in Uganda and to spend time with our Arua-based teammates. AIM AIR has asked us to relocate to Arua for the month of February to cover flight needs. We found the trip to be helpful preparation to know how we can better assist.

I continue to enjoy my studies through Fuller Seminary. A critical step of the dissertation process is the research portion, which begins in January! Interviews and research itself will take approximately six months. I am conducting a case study on AIM AIR, seeking to learn more about the intersection of missionary aviation and AIM's wider mission toward reaching unreached people groups. The goal of this research is to better understand how the field of missionary aviation might be used strategically to further the gospel in the decades to come.

David and I are both doing well. It's been nice being home in Kenya as we work to settle into life together. We are healthy, enjoying flying, and are developing good routines as a married couple. As it's somewhat nontraditional, it might be helpful to share that David has taken my last name. I will integrate his last name as a second middle name. Going forward, we simply felt that the Gray family name suited us well.

Thank you for your generosity and prayer, specifically throughout the past year. I remain encouraged by your care and am deeply grateful for your partnership. I hope you know the impact that you have in ministry, and toward us personally, is the kindest Christmas gift possible. Wishing you and your family the very best this

Christmas season.

With Love,  
Lindsey, for David, too



Flying together at AIM AIR



Sunset in Northern Kenya