

Sunrise Christian Church

December 2017 Family Newsletter

L3- Called as a church to fully Love God, to Learn to be like Jesus, and to Lead others to the saving knowledge of Christ.

From heaven to us



The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Gospel of John 1:14

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That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it - I John 1:1-2.



The cast of characters

At Jesus' birth there was a cast of characters-witnesses of this great event. His mother, Mary, of course, was there. So too was Joseph, Mary's husband and Jesus' step-father. The angels who sang about his birth were there. And the shepherds, fresh from the field, were there as witnesses. The animals, as part of God's creation, were there to witness this great event. And, of course, the Wise Men- said to be named Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar- men who had traveled from afar just to be there; each bearing a gift for our newborn King.

Our Nativity sets try to recreate this exciting story. And in these cast of characters we are able to remember again the holy story of Christ's birth!

Why Angels, why shepherds, and why Wise Men from afar?

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The angel announced the heavenly message, saying, "I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord"- **Luke 2:10-11**. His message represented God's heart for mankind. While the shepherds represent the common man- the

ones looked down on by those in authority, yet the ones Jesus identified himself with! And the Wise Men? They represented those considered "outsiders"- the people thought to have been left out of God's plans of redemption, but were not!

Jesus- Prince of Peace

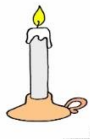


"In the last days," says the prophet Isaiah, "the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.

Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths."

The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD"- **Isaiah 2: 2-5**.



This season of light

Recently, Scentsy, makers of scented warmers and fragrances, installed at their headquarters a Christmas display with over 730,000 in it. And though not on this scale, many people will put up some kind of Christmas lights during this season. Which begs the question: “Why?” Why do we enjoy lights so much?

In part, I believe it’s because this is the darkest time of year. And, in part, because we enjoy something bright and beautiful.

Which raises another question: “How far can a person see a light?”

Interestingly, research has been done on this. In 1941, scientists at Columbia University who specialized in vision research found that under ideal conditions a candle flame could be seen up to 30 miles away. Now that’s a long ways!

Yet, most of us live in areas filled with street lights, yard lights, house lights and such, therefore will never have a chance to test this. Yet consider that many places of the world are still without electric light, thus having to stumble around in the darkness.

So was it in the days of Jesus’ birth- only their blindness was a spiritual blindness as well. So it’s no wonder that John could write in his gospel concerning Jesus: “*The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him*”- 1:9-10.

So, how are your spiritual eyes, can you see Jesus clearly?

If not, maybe you and I need to spend more time with Him.



Time with Jesus-

Reading the New Testament in a year

To read the whole Bible takes about 70 hours; to read just the New Testament about 19 hours. But what if we slowed it down so that it’s not a race and took a whole year to focus just on the New Testament, to take time to read and reflect on what we’ve read?

Starting in January, we, as a church, are going to start into reading the New Testament using a reading and reflection program developed by Navigators called **5X5X5**. This stands for “5 minutes a day, 5 days a week, and 5 ways to dig deeper.”

Will you join us? I hope so. I know good things will come from the time we spend with Jesus.

Bill

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December events at SCC:

Saturday, Dec. 2- Faithful Men *men’s breakfast*, 7:30am, at Rusty’s

Sunday, Dec. 3- *Baskets of Love* food collection, and *Crockpot Sunday*

Saturday, Dec. 9- SCC’s *Ladies’ Christmas Bruch*, 9:30am, at the church

Sunday, Dec. 10- SCC’s *Christmas Dinner*

Sunday, Dec. 31- SCC’s *New Year’s party* (if people are interested)

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Community events in December:

Peace on Earth: *A Christmas concert*- Friday, Dec. 1, 7:30pm, at TVCC’s Meyer-McLean theater

Help Them to Hope concert- Sunday, Dec. 3, at 3pm, at Meyer-McLean theater.

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The pastor asked the class, “Why was Jesus born in Bethlehem?” One seemingly smart boy raised his hands and replied, “Because that’s where his mother was.”

A Sunday school teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem. Quickly, one student in the back answered: “They probably couldn’t get a baby-sitter for him.”

The fourth-grade class was being told the Christmas story about the three Wise Men bringing gifts to Baby Jesus.

One young girl who had recently become the big sister of a newborn baby brother said: “Well, I guess gold and all that stuff is alright, but I’ll bet Mary really wished someone had of brought some diapers too.”

A minister was testing the children’s Bible knowledge by asking them what the word “Amen” meant.

A little boy in the back raised his hand and said: “Tha-tha-tha-that’s all folks!”

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May your Christmas and New Year be blessed