



THE LORD'S DAY
December 17, 2023
WE GATHER TO WORSHIP
10:00 a.m.

PRELUDE *Piano/Chancel Organ*

CALL TO WORSHIP & STRIKING THE HOUR *"Adeste Fideles" The Carillon Bells*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

† INTROIT *"The King is Coming"* Page 763
 † *Please stand as you are able.* (Verse 1)

† HYMN *"Angels We Have Heard on High"* Page 278
 (Verses 1,3,4)

† PRAYER OF THE DAY AND THE LORD'S PRAYER
 † ANTHEM *"Gloria Patri"* Page 813

HYMN *"What Child Is This"* Page 281
 (All Verses)

**WE PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER AND
 RECITE GOD'S COVENANT PROMISES**

PASTORAL PRAYER
 RESPONSORIAL *"Psalm 66"* *Psalter 66^B*
 Sung To The Tune of: *"O' Little Town of Bethlehem"*
 (Verses 7,10)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

**WE RETURN OUR TIME, TALENT
 AND TREASURE UNTO THE LORD**

RECEIVING THE TITHES AND OFFERINGS
 † DOXOLOGY AND OFFERTORY PRAYER



**WE LIFT OUR
 VOICES IN PRAISE**

HYMN *"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"* Page 251
 (Verses 1,2,4)

SPECIAL MUSIC

**EXPOSITION OF THE WORD
 AND CONFESSION OF FAITH**

THE SERMON
"Wrestling With Rejoicing."
 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18

† THE APOSTLES' CREED
 † CLOSING HYMN *"Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee"* Page 271
 (Verses 1,2)

† BENEDICTION

† ANTHEM *"The Family of God"* Page 419

**DEPART IN PEACE TO
 LOVE AND SERVE THE LORD**

*If you are visiting with us today, we're glad you're here.
 We are ordinary people on an extraordinary journey,
 learning to love and serve like Jesus. Come with Us!*



In this constantly changing world, our goal is to reflect and recapture the historic and classical worship of Almighty God. Central to our service is the proclamation of the Word and a biblical understanding of the Sacraments in the tradition of the Evangelical and Reformed faith.

OUR MISSION
 TO PRESENT CHRIST TO EVERYONE,
 EVERYWHERE, AT EVERY AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITY.



THE LESSONS FOR USE ON THE
 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ YEAR B
 Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 • Psalm 126
 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18

WE AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING:

- The Holy Trinity of God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- God has revealed Himself fully and decisively in Holy Scripture. We believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God and our guide for faith and life.
- There is only one way to Salvation - through Jesus Christ.
- The sanctity of human life based on our creation in the image of God and our election by God for service in His Kingdom. This leads us to respectfully affirm the sanctity of life at every stage, from conception to ordinary death.
- The Biblical principles of immutable gender and sexuality: The exclusive union of one man and one woman in marriage; and fidelity to its vows. And, chastity outside of marriage for the sake of the Kingdom.
- God made all people from one man and although people can be distinguished by different ethnicities and nationalities, we are all one human race and absolute equals before God in creation, the need for repentance, and the offer of redemption.
- That the mission of the Church is to spread the Good News of the Gospel in every word and deed. Proclaiming to the world the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and seeking to bring every person into a life of faith, discipleship, and submission to Him.

ATTENDANCE
 LAST SUNDAY: 126

Are you interested in Church Membership? We receive new members the last Sunday of each month. Please see Pastor Kler today.

Our Church believes in financial transparency and so our Quarterly Reports are displayed on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.



GIVING REPORT	
Week Ending December 10, 2023	
\$4,042	
Sunday General Giving	2,687
Online General Giving	230
Total General	2,917
Less 3% to Building	-88
Less 10% to Missions	-292
Net Revenue	2,538
Designated Giving	
Building Maintenance	88
Gals	25
Hospitality	50
Missions	1,342
Total Designated Giving	1,504
Net Revenue	2,538
Designated Giving	1,504
Total Receipts	\$4,042

Monthly Reports are posted in the Fellowship Hall.

AROUND THIS TIME of year, a slew of videos, articles, and blogs appear, all trying to say something meaningful about Christmas. Some will decry the blatant commercialization of Christmas and the loss of its "true spirit." Though often left vague, it



Christmas: Hedonism, Heathen, or Helping Hand, But Are These The Only Options?

usually has something to do with families and friendships, listening to nostalgic music, and enjoying some overall good cheer but, ultimately, in the process, reducing the holiday to a kind of wholesome hedonism, but a hedonism nonetheless. Others, more piously minded, will decry Christmas as a pagan holiday, arguing that all men and women of the true faith should reconsider celebrating the holiday due to its obviously non-Christian roots (which, by the way, is patently false, as I hope these articles have shown). Still, others will try to be novel in their thinking about Christmas, suggesting that rather than focusing on the angelic appearances (first to Mary and then the shepherds) that, society should summon up the "better angels of its nature." These will demand seeing Christmas as a time for recommitting to the never-ending work of social justice, CRT, and non-binarily love; to total equality in all things; and to canceling any and everybody who disagrees with you, regardless of whether it is Christmas or not (which will likely upset those wishing for nostalgic Christmases full of wholesome, good cheer). Christmas rumblings like these may all contain some valid points about the holiday, but they all miss the forest for the trees (the Christmas trees, that is). Because what Christmas is really about is not toys or tiny reindeer, not Teutonic paganism or tribal connections, not twisted affections or trite progressive slogans – no, what Christmas is really about - is good theology. So, let's tackle these options one at a time.

Firstly, hedonism of any kind, nostalgic or not, is always wrong – we are never to "eat, drink, and be merry" just for the sake of itself. As Christians, our celebrations must always convey a message and point to a meaning. That message is the Gospel, and its meaning points us to a man - The God-man Jesus Christ.

The second argument is that Christmas is pagan. Well, we speak the names of pagan gods daily, and most people don't even notice. Wednesday gets its Name from Woten (Odin,) the Norse king of the god, Thursday is Thor's Day, and Saturday is Saturn's Day. Even the word English itself comes from the Norse god Yngvi. In other words, our language bears the marks of a long story. It is a story in which false gods die, and phony religions perish. Their names come to nothing, but One Name remains. The Name above all names that will outlast them all - Jesus Christ.

Argument number three- let's shift our focus away from holiday trappings or holy musings and concentrate instead on the misunderstood and mistreated. There is nothing wrong with helping the poor and needy (that should be on our list all year long), but if all we're doing for our fellow man is giving gifts, or food, or a friendly visit, or volunteering our time, then we aren't showing them the fullest or truest kind of love! as one theologian put it: "It is the height of lovelessness to let men's souls go on to destruction while we provide a thousand charities for their bodies." What have we done if we share our food, money, clothing, and time this time of year but don't share the true meaning of Christmas?

So, what is Christmas all about? It's about good theology, and all good and godly theology is always and only about Jesus Christ. He truly is the "reason for the Season," so celebrate Christmas this year and do it with gusto, make much of it, be merry, and most of all, keep Christ in All of It. ~ MERRY CHRISTMAS.



The Chancel Flowers Are Placed by:

Bob Mitchell and Linda Walchak
in celebration of Doris' 97th Birthday

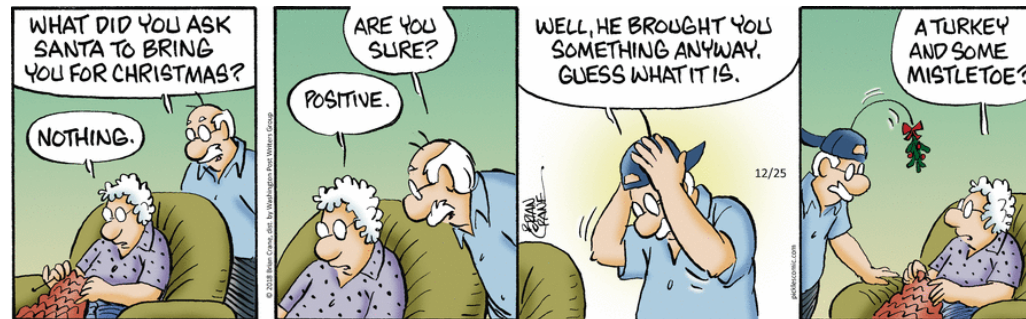


Peter and Carol Simon
in loving memory of their son, Jason

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- DECEMBER 2023-----
- Christmas Eve Day Service.....Sunday, December 24, at 10:00 a.m.
 - Christmas Eve Service.....Sunday, December 24, at 6:30 p.m.
- JANUARY 2024-----
- GAL's Meeting.....Monday, January 8th at 12:30
 - Board Meeting.....Tuesday, January 9th at 5:00 p.m.
 - Guy's Lunch.....Thursday, January 12th at 11:00 a.m.
 - ~~~ Guy's Prayer Group.....Thursday, January 12th at 10:30 a.m. -

-----REGULAR SCHEDULE-----



THE ELDERS
TEACHING & WORSHIP

Rev. H. Joseph Kler
Senior Pastor / L.F.O.C. Chaplain
Rev. John O. Strauss
Worship Leader / Minister of Music

THE DEACONS
Jim Leitzke, Gary Hatrick

OUR MUSICIANS
Ann Dantuma
Pianist/Organist
Donna Zenisek-Huber
Flutist

SOUND BOOTH
Ric Romyn, Joe Negron,
Jonathan Kler

To contact Board President
John Vosteen, please call:
813-731-2803

To contact
the Pastor, please call:
813-323-0802

Jesus Christ the only-begotten
Son of God for our sins, came down
from Heaven upon Earth and took
upon him a human nature of like passions
with us, was begotten of the
holy virgin and of the Holy Ghost,
and was made man.

—Cyril of Jerusalem 315–386

CONNECT WITH US ONLINE AT:

www.fcczhills.org

Email: fcczh@aol.com

Or Phone: 813-780-6027

Monday – Friday: 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.



FAIRVIEW

COMMUNITY CHURCH of ZEPHYRHILLS
...a Christ-centered, Reformed faith fellowship.

Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing, but
Encourage one another as the Day of the Lord draws near. -Hebrews 10:25

The THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Wrestling With Rejoicing!



7900 Fort King Road – Zephyrhills, FL 33541

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