

family was not a safe place and gatherings like these refresh the pain and renew the injuries. For still more it is a reminder of loneliness or estrangement, rather than family or celebration. It seems our world revolves around such dichotomies. Celebration and grief, joy and sorrow, or happiness and anguish. It reminds me of the brokenness of this life. Designed by a God who called it very good, sin has ravaged our planet spreading ruin and despair.

Thousands of years ago God came, not insulated by powerful angels with flaming swords on a fire breathing steed to slay evil. He did not arrive into a family with all the advantages of wealth, power and influence.

No, God came in the most vulnerable of positions, born to the ordinary, into a community of the average, in the midst of the plainest of circumstances. Jesus, God with us, entered the world in an out of the way place, in humble circumstances. No doubt the host of heaven peered over the observation wall, noses pressed to the glass, in wonder of what was to come.

His mother, a young girl of tender age was not spared the trauma of birth. His father would have acutely felt the burden of caring for a new son, with the additional responsibility of knowing it was God's son. But no golden ticket was given the family, the way would be filled with Herods, Pilates, and the opposition.

The joy of his birth juxtaposed against the reality of the cross. It seems the brokenness would only be repaired by a God who could be vulnerable. That is the Good News.

*Grace and peace,
Carl*

Where belonging to God means belonging to each other

*St John Church of Christ
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Flying to the Rock

St John Church of Christ

December 24, 2017

As Tom and I processed the next few weeks, we were working out our timing so each of us would have holiday time with our families. He and Pam are gone to Kansas City this weekend for their Christmas there, Janet and I leave after services here to pick up her aunt in Oklahoma before spending time with her family in Lubbock.

Tom said, "It looks like you might be really short on Sunday. A lot of people will be traveling this weekend."

That is often the case around the holiday time. Families coming in and out, efforts made to prioritize the relationships. For many this is a joyous time of the year.

No doubt, for some Christmas time is a sad time, another Blue Christmas. Some will push through a holiday as others celebrate, but the grief of loss is too great for them. For others it will be the painful memories of times when

SUNDAY: Leisure Homestead Service—9:30 am
Bible Study for all ages—10:00 am
Worship Service—10:45 am
WEDNESDAY: Adult Bible Study—7:30 pm
Youth Group—7:30 pm (@ Carl's)
ELDERS: Richard Brensing, Teddy Gingrich, Terry Sallee,
George Shelton, Tom Turner
DEACONS: Jerry Kinnamon, Chris Mansel, Orrin Feril
TREASURER: Richard Brensing

WORSHIP ORDER FOR DECEMBER 24, 2017

SONG LEADER: Richard Brensing
GATHERING SONGS:
No. 1012—Go Tell It on the Mountain (vs 1)
No. 264—O Come, Let Us Adore Him (vs 1, 2)
WELCOME: Richard Brensing
SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 1:18-24 (Kolton Sizemore)
SONGS: No. 995—It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (vs 1)
No. 997—O Come, All Ye Faithful (vs 1, 3)
No. 1018—Joy to the World
No. 1003—Silent Night! Holy Night!
PRAYER: Gary Hornbaker
SONG: No. 1001—Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (vs 1)
COMMUNION: Jerry Kinnamon
Clint Kinnamon
Fred Johnson
Ned Marks
Memory Work: Carl Feril
SONG: No. 999—The First Noel (vs 1)
LESSON: Carl Feril (*Children's Bible Hour*)
SONG: No. 907—Hark, the Gentle Voice (vs 1)
PRAYER: Teddy Gingrich

(CCLI #2440129)

WELCOME VISITORS

We are pleased you have joined us in worship and hope that you will come again!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT CLASS

The parenting class on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm at Carl & Janet's home will take a break over the holidays—resuming again on Wed, January 10th.

WOMEN WALKING WITH GOD

The Women Walking with God conference hosted by the North-side congregation in Wichita will be April 13-14, 2018. If you register before January 31st, the rate is reduced at \$63.00.

UPDATE FROM RICK OWENS

Please take time to read the latest newsletter from Rick Owens that is posted, for an update on the work in Mexico.

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."



Luke 2:8-12

PRAYER REQUESTS

Orvalee Aldrich—in Wesley Medical Center in Wichita; to have a heart cath
Beckett Miller (Tom's nephew's son) seizures
Pam's friend's wife, a teacher from Hutchinson Community College, has MS
Katherine Suiter—cancer
Elmer Schuette (Marla's brother-in-law) shoulder fracture
George Shelton—eyesight issues
Crystal Easley (Terry & Linda Welch's daughter) - Stage 4 cancer
Sherri Owens
Clint Bonner—diagnosed with multiple myeloma
David Ivy (Marilyn's brother, in Washington) - Emphysema, on oxygen and has difficulty breathing
Jim Sorensen (Tara's brother-in-law) brain cancer
Larry Carter (Gary's friend in Missouri)
Marilyn Sprawka (Don Rukan's sister) - cancer
Jenny Walker (Carol's sister)
Roger Dick—ongoing cancer treatments
Theo Birkett (Tara's mother)
Jim Soukup (Gingrich's son-in-law [Shari's husband])
June Cornwell—Kenwood Plaza
Glennys Sallabedra (Tom's mother) - Stafford Leisure Homestead

POTLUCK LUNCH

Due to the holidays, there will be NO potluck lunch this Sunday or next. We will resume these on Sunday, January 7, 2018.

Church website: www.stjohnchurchofchrist.org