

TODAY’S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader /Opening Prayer by: Ken Coleman

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Kelly McCain

#797 Lord, We Come Before Thee Now

#800 What a Friend We Have in Jesus

Scripture Reading by: Brooks McKelroy

#719 Love One Another

Lord’s Supper and Contribution

#613 Hold, To God’s Unchanging Hand

Sermon: "The Confrontation of Christmas"

Matthew 2:1-3

#903 There is Power in the Blood

#722 Let the Beauty of Jesus Be Seen in Me

Closing Prayer by: David Smith

Welcome by Bobby Rader

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Kelly McCain

#539 Higher Ground

#545 Precious Memories

Scripture Reading: Tristan Strickhausen

Opening Prayer: Wayne Noonkester

#548 The Lily of the Valley

Sermon: “One Word: Father”

Ephesians 1:3-6

#568 Jesus, Rose of Sharon

#611 Heavenly Sunlight

Closing Prayer: Jerry Mallernee

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship

Wednesday: 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

Dec. 22, 2019

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

Galatians 5:1

Merry Christmas (Again)

I printed this article, written by Reuel Lemmons and published in Firm Foundation years ago, at this same time last year. But recently I have received some questions about celebrating Christmas and it seems particularly relevant, so I make no apologies for repeating it. I think this editorial addresses the mixed feelings some of us have about the Christmas season better than just about anything I have ever read on the subject. BP

We are again at that time on the calendar when the Western world pauses to acknowledge that Jesus Christ was born in the world. The date makes little difference. And we heartily agree that some other time of year suits the occasion best, but that makes little actual difference. We also agree that the celebration of a special religious holiday has no foundation in scripture, and that it had its sources in pagan rites and apostate festivals. This will acknowledge in advance all those letters differing with us in what we are about to say here.

Personally, we are glad that the world, bent on carnage and drunk on hedonism takes time out to acknowledge that God has sent his Son into the world. Even atheists, like the stones of the ground, cry out. We deplore the fact that men make merchandise of the occasion – as the moneychangers took advantage of the opportunity in the temple – but even they help the world to stop and take note of God’s gift to man. In a world of war they talk about peace; in a world of hate they talk about love; in a world of sorrow they talk about joy. All the advertising, all the decorations, all the plans for family gatherings call attention to the fact that there is something better in the world than the rat race.

A lot of attention is given in the Bible to the birth of Jesus. The gospels abound in details. The numbering, the birth, the stable, the flight into Egypt – there was a lot of excitement in both heaven and earth when God sent his Son into the world. Without controversy the greatest event in all human history was heralded by that star that shone over Bethlehem. One might argue the merits of the cross as the greatest, but had there been no manger there would have been no cross. With the coming of the Son of God in human flesh a love was born that the world had never before known. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.” With all we think we know about love, we can grasp but a very small concept of that love. No wonder the angels sang!

The eloquence of tongue and pen have been exhausted in paying homage to the babe of Bethlehem, the man of Galilee and the lamb on the cross. Limited as we are by our humanism it is impossible

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Derrick Loften is at home recovering from burns.

Phillip Cottle is in Methodist Hospital.

Continued Prayers

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, Gary Nielsen, Harold & Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Jackie David, Frank & Tina Garcia, Dayla Hale, Doris Trahan, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Barry Johnson

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Dr. Ronald Davis, Larry Hicks, Mark Wilcox, Bill Lunceford, J. P. Williams

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa,
Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Plastic Bags

The Food Bank is in need of plastic grocery bags and **egg cartons**. A barrel is in the foyer.

Upcoming Activities

No Elders, Minister meeting this week.

Holiday Schedule

There will be **no services** on Christmas Night, Wednesday, Dec. 25th.

The office will be closed Dec. 25th and 26th.

Ladies Bible Class will not meet again until Jan. 8th.

The Liberty Lions Club asks for our continued support of their flag program. For the annual fee of \$175, they will display 6 flags on the front of our property for 6 holidays through the year. We do not pay for the flags from the church treasury, but individual members contribute funds towards this program and we deposit and write the check to them. If you are interested in doing so, please make your check for however much you want to Liberty Church of Christ and write **FLAGS** in the memo and give to the front office or Robert. Thanks.

Privilege to Serve **Sunday, Dec. 22nd**

Communion Preparation: Debby McKinzie

Nursery Attendants: Tania Balch, Pat Hobbs

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Dec. 29th: Cheryl Mast

Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Dec. 29th: Jane Tinkle, Rita Upton

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for us to grasp the full significance of what God did in Christ at that time. About the best we can do is acknowledge that if he had not come into the world we would die without hope of heaven. He was the light shining in the dark place. “They that sat in darkness saw a great light.”

We can understand the love of a mother for her child. We can even understand the love of a man who might give his life for his country. But it is beyond us to understand the love of a God who would rob Heaven to bless earth; empty Glory to fill us with glory. It was no natural affection that made God send Jesus into the world. What he did at Bethlehem matured until it became what he did at the cross. It is fitting that we should pause and note that we didn’t earn it; it was an act of grace.

History is sometimes turned around by the smallest of events, and destiny is balanced on the point of a pin. The almost totally unnoticed event of Bethlehem has affected the world more than all the battles that were ever fought or all the governments that have ever convened. For four thousand years sin-cursed man had hoped for the seed of woman that would bruise the serpent’s head, and for two thousand years the Jews had looked for a Messiah. But when he came they didn’t recognize him. He came in the seclusion of a stable, in the darkness of night, and in the guise of a man. The greatest forces of all time do not come with powerful explosions or the noise of racing chariots; they come on silent wings. The power of love is such a force. And grace and goodness make little racket.

In a night without light came the Light. In a world without hope, hope was born. In the midst of despair there was the singing of angels. They had but a star, but we have Son-light. The hopes and fears of all the years were pinned, whether the shepherds realized it or not, upon a little baby in a young mother’s arms. Really, that is where hope still lies.

Wise men brought him gifts. But their gold, frankincense and myrrh have long since turned to dust. It was the best they had, and they set precedent for our giving gifts, but they gave only gifts that perish. We have an opportunity to give a living sacrifice. If giving is the test of loving, then let us give the consecration of our lives. He himself has said, “Greater love hath no man than this: that a man would lay down his life for his friend.”

After all, it isn’t the gaudy tinsel in which the gift is wrapped, nor is it the extravagant price paid for it, it is the heart that is given with the gift that really makes the gift worth receiving.

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

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