



First Edition December 2015



First Baptist Church of San Mateo 2801 Alameda de las Pulgas San Mateo, CA 94403 650-345-1965 www.fbcsanmateo.org

CHRISTMAS IS SO MUCH MORE!

By Pastor Marc Heinz

Christmas is a time of awe and wonder, a joyous time when we celebrate the mystery of Jesus Christ's birth. As we celebrate His birth may we remember the hope that is ours because He lives!

I believe that memories are at the very heart of Christmas. If you don't agree, take just a moment to reflect on your life. What do you remember about your childhood? Being a teenager? Or those early years as an adult? What about when your children or grandchildren were little? How many of your most precious and wonderful memories are associated with Christmas?

Think about the many Christmases you have spent with family and friends and all those treasured family traditions. How about your first Christmas with your spouse or child? Do you remember the year you got the bike you wanted? Or that special doll? What about the year you couldn't be home for Christmas? What about your last Christmas with a loved one?

When I think about Christmas, so many treasured memories begin to fill my mind. Good ones. Cutting the family tree.

Playing with my sister. Singing carols. Trying to find just the right gift for family and friends. The first Christmas with Candace and the last Christmas I spent with my mom and dad. And on and on it goes.

While our personal experiences will vary, I would imagine that your memory is filled with remembrances of Christmases past because there is something about Christmas that seems to magnify our experiences and highlight them in our minds. While these memories of Christmas are both special and precious, we dare not lose sight of the fact that the heart of Christmas, the main event that ought draw our focus and stir our memories is Jesus Christ!

That's why first and foremost, Christmas is a time to remember and celebrate what God has done for you! As far as I'm concerned the greatest possible memory, is realizing afresh just how much God loved you and me to send Jesus, His love wrapped so beautifully in a package we could all receive and understand and appreciate. Why, if He hadn't done that, we wouldn't even have a reason to celebrate. The simple

truth is that Jesus is the reason for Christmas! As we celebrate this special time of the year, may we stay focused on that truth, and our Savior Jesus Christ, who came that we might live.

I know that you will be busy this holiday season. You will be told each day how many shopping days you have left before Christmas. You will be bombarded with things like wrapping, decorating, baking, parties, and family gatherings. Your calendar will be so full that there will be little or no room left. But as believers in Jesus Christ, Christmas is so much more than all that! It is a time to stop and think about God's great love and where you would be without Jesus.

As we gather together during this special season it is my hope that each of us will be encouraged by God's love, and reminded of the true meaning of Christmas. During this special season my thoughts and prayers will often be with you! May your Christmas be blessed in a multitude of ways by Him who is worthy of all our praise! Have a joyous Christmas and New Year!

FB



**Consummate
Man**

**Men's Monthly
Breakfast is
December 5,
8:30 a.m.**

Paint



Decorate



*Day
December 5*

Right after the
Men's Breakfast.



*Christmas Eve
Service
11:00 p.m.*

**Special offerings for the month of
December will be the Chapel
Restoration fund.**

**A Look Ahead
to January 3, 2016**



**Breakfast at Church at 8:45am
followed by a
Combined Service at 10:00am**

Before Christmas for the last few years, I've read a 25 day Advent devotional by John Piper called, "Good News of Great Joy." It's been wonderful to take a deeper and fresh look at the true purpose of Christmas, which has led to experiencing Him in new and more powerful ways. This year I'd love to share it with you to help you prepare to worship and thank the Lord this Christmas season for coming to earth to bring about His Kingdom and to save us into it. To whet your appetite and inspire you to go further and deeper in your walk with Christ this season I'll give you the introduction to the devotional:

WHAT DOES JESUS WANT THIS CHRISTMAS?

"Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world." — John 17:24

What does Jesus want this Christmas? We can see the answer in His prayers. What does He ask God for? His longest prayer is John 17. The climax of His desire is in verse 24. Among all the undeserving sinners in the world, there are those whom God has "given to Jesus." These are those whom God has drawn to the Son (John 6:44, 65). These are Christians — people who have "received" Jesus as the crucified and risen Savior and Lord and Treasure of their lives (John 1:12; 3:17; 6:35; 10:11, 17–18; 20:28). Jesus says He wants them to be with him.

Sometimes we hear people say that God created man because He was lonely. So they say, "God created us so that we would be with him." Does Jesus agree with this? Well, he does say that He really wants us to be with Him! Yes, absolutely, but why? Consider the rest of the verse. Why does Jesus want us to be with Him?

"to see my glory that You [Father] have given me because You loved me before the foundation of the world."

That would be a strange way of expressing His loneliness. "I want them with Me so they can see My glory." In fact, it doesn't express His loneliness. It expresses His concern for the satisfaction of our longing, not His loneliness.

Jesus is not lonely. He and the Fa-

ther and the Spirit are profoundly satisfied in the fellowship of the Trinity. We, not He, are starving for something. And what Jesus wants for Christmas is for us to experience what we were really made for — seeing and savoring His glory. Oh, that God would make this sink in to our souls! Jesus made us (John 1:3) to see his glory.

Just before He goes to the cross He pleads His deepest desires with the Father: "*Father, I desire [I desire!] that they ... may be with me where I am, to see my glory.*" But that is only half of what Jesus wants in these final, climactic verses of his prayer. I just said we were really made for seeing and savoring His glory. Is that what He wants — that we not only see His glory but savor it, relish it, delight in it, treasure it, love it? Consider verse 26, the very last verse:

I made known to them Your Name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them.

That is the end of the prayer. What is Jesus's final goal for us? Not that we simply see His glory, but that we love Him with the same love that the Father has for Him: "*that the love with which You [Father] have loved Me may be in them.*"

Jesus's longing and goal is that we see His glory and then that we be able to love what we see with the same love that the Father has for the Son. And He doesn't mean that we merely imitate the love of the Father for the Son. He means the Father's very love becomes our love for the Son — that we love the Son with the love of the Father for the Son.

This is what the Spirit becomes and bestows in our lives: Love for the Son by the Father through the Spirit.

What Jesus wants most for Christmas is that His elect be gathered in and then get what they want and need most—to see His glory and then savor it with the very savoring of the Father for the Son.

What I want most for Christmas this year is to join you (and many others) in seeing Christ in all His fullness and that we together be able to love what we see with a love far beyond our own half-hearted human capacities. This is our goal in these Advent devotionals. We want together to see and savor this

Jesus whose first "advent" (coming) we celebrate, and whose second advent we anticipate.

This is what Jesus prays for us this Christmas: "*Father, show them My glory and give them the very delight in Me that You have in Me.*" Oh, may we see Christ with the eyes of God and savor Christ with the heart of God. That is the essence of heaven. That is the gift Christ came to purchase for sinners at the cost of His death in our place.

If you'd like to read more and join me on this Advent devotional journey, then go to:

www.desiringgod.org/books/good-news-of-great-joy

Download the devotional in pdf form. Also, if you are currently using the bible app on your phone from YouVersion, you can find this devotional under "Reading Plans."

May God powerfully and richly bless you with more of Himself as you seek Him with all your heart this Christmas!!!

Weekly Events



CAD - High School Group - Tuesdays, 7:15-9:00pm (Except on Dec 15)

TNT - Jr. High School Group - Thursdays, 7:00-8:45pm
Youth Service - All Grades - Sundays, 11:00-12:15pm

Special Events

CAD - Ice Skating @ SM outdoor rink - Dec 8 @ 7:00-9:00pm, \$12

TNT - Ice Skating @ SM outdoor rink - Dec 10 @ 7:00-8:45pm, \$12

Christmas Party - CAD/TNT - Dec 17 @ 7:00pm, bring a \$5 gift and a friend.



First Baptist Church
 2801 Alameda de las Pulgas
 San Mateo, California 94403

Daily Bible Readings

The following Bible readings
 are provided by
biblegateway.com

December

Tues.	1	2 Corinthians 10-13
Wed.	2	Galatians 1-3
Thurs.	3	Galatians 4-6
Fri.	4	Ephesians 1-3
Sat.	5	Ephesians 4-6
Sun.	6	Philippians 1-4
Mon.	7	Colossians 1-4
Tues.	8	1 Thessalonians 1-5
Wed.	9	2 Thessalonians 1-3
Thurs.	10	1 Timothy 1-3
Fri.	11	Timothy 4-6
Sat.	12	2 Timothy 1-4
Sun.	13	Titus 1-3
Mon.	14	Philemon
Tues.	15	Hebrews 1-3
Wed.	16	Hebrews 4-6
Thurs.	17	Hebrews 7-9
Fri.	18	Hebrews 10-13
Sat.	19	James 1-3
Sun.	20	James 4-5
Mon.	21	1 Peter 1-5
Tues.	22	2 Peter 1-3
Wed.	23	1 John 1-3
Thurs.	24	1 John 4-5
Fri.	25	2 John, 3 John, and Jude
Sat.	26	Revelation 1-3
Sun.	27	Revelation 4-6
Mon.	28	Revelation 7-9
Tues.	29	Revelation 10-12
Wed.	30	Revelation 13-15
Thurs	31	Revelation 16-18
		Revelation 19-22

*Do you have a prayer
 request?*

*The Prayer Box is available
 in the narthex.*

The Pastoral staff will pray for you.



*Have you ever considered honoring
 a loved one by providing a bouquet of
 flowers for the sanctuary? Several dates
 are available. Sign up in the notebook on
 the counter in the narthex. We ask and
 appreciate a \$40 gift for each arrangement.*

*The office staff will order your bouquet
 to be delivered -- so convenient, and so
 appreciated by your loved ones.*

FBC WOMEN'S *Ministry*



Christmas Luncheon

To Us a Child Is Born

Come and enjoy lunch together.
December 12, from 11:00 am until 2:00 p.m. in
the Chapel. Cost is \$10.00.
See Sandy Murray for tickets.

There will be a gift exchange (\$10.00 limit).
Invite your lady friends and family.



Gifts to Restore

By Doris Waddell

You may have noticed the Special Offerings for the month of December will be for the restoration of the Chapel. This reminded me of one of the times when the Israelites were given the opportunity to make offerings for the restoration the temple and as the work continued, they realized more had been given more than was needed and they were asked to stop! Can you just imagine how we could rejoice if that happened at First Baptist Church of San Mateo?

Please pray with me that this will be a time like that. God has been blessing us way beyond our imagination and this will be a wonderful way to thank Him.

Then we can rejoice and continue to stand in awe of Him again for all He keeps doing for us. Will you decide how God would have you help? Let's see what He will do now!

Remember, it's not the amount needed that we should be considering when we decide how much to give, but how much we love our Savior who established His church. Have you ever been in a church where you were told to stop giving?

Save the Date
February 26-28

**Women's
Winter Retreat at**





December 2015



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
SUNDAY MORNINGS: 9:30am Bible Studies for Children and Adults Contemporary Style Worship 11:00am Bible Studies for Adults and All Youth Classical Style Worship	1 7pm Al-Anon 7pm C.A.D.	2 6:30 pm Midweek Ser 8pm Worship Rehearsal	3 3pm Youth Band Reh. 7pm TNT	4 8:30am Men's Breakfast 10am Painting the Chapel 10am Decorating the Church	5	
6 Communion	7 7pm Al-Anon 7-9pm CAD Skating at SM outdoor rink	8 6:30 pm Midweek Ser. 8pm Worship Rehearsal	9 3pm Youth Band Reh. 7-9pm TNT Skating at SM outdoor rink	10 11am - 2pm Women's Ministry Christmas Lunch (CHAPEL)	11	12
13	14 7pm Al-Anon (No CAD tonight)	15 7 pm Christmas Celebration 8pm Worship Rehearsal	16 3pm Youth Band Reh. 7pm CAD/TNT Christmas Party	17	18	19
20	21 7pm Al-Anon 7pm C.A.D.	22 6:30 pm Midweek Ser 8pm Worship Rehearsal	23 11pm Christmas Eve Service	24 Christmas Day	25	26
27	28 7pm Al-Anon 7pm C.A.D.	29 6:30 pm Midweek Ser. 8pm Worship Rehearsal	30 New Year's Eve	31	All Events Are Subject to Change.	