

**Covenant Church Newsletter**  
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A Christ centered covenant community;

Loving God,  
Loving people,  
Making disciples

**December 2019**

**Pastor's Ponderings**

In my devotional reading I came across something by Loretta Ross-Gotta (*Watch for the Light*). Writing in a "return to simplicity" mode, she wonders what would happen if we were all to leave the Christmas decorations up in the attic. Instead of glitter and glow, go to someone in need she suggests, and say, "Here, all I have is Christ."

She continues, "What if on Christmas Eve people came and sat in the dim pews and someone stood up and said, 'Something happened here while we were all out at the malls, while we were baking cookies and fretting about whether we bought our brother-in-law the right gift: Christ was born. God is here.'"

The business about not decorating didn't do much for me, but I have been absolutely captivated by the idea that beneath and beyond all our holiday exercises...all we have is Christ. Whether at Christmas or at any other time of the year...all we have is Christ. In the midst of all we do to be "religious," past all our efforts aimed at "spirituality"...all we have is Christ.

There is a simplicity in this thought as compelling as the manger, and a stillness as deep as a snow-blanketed landscape. It is so easy to be so busy with so much. I don't know about you, but most of what I do in the day is good and needful and right. Tending to my work, my family, my health. But each task, each chore, each act of kindness takes a little more time, and soon I find that my time is all gone. I forget that it's God's time to begin with, and that God can well decide when my day is full and it's time to be at peace. I have my list, doggone it, and I can't stop until it's all done.

Into the midst of all this busy do-gooding comes the word that brings me up short -- "all I have is Christ." He is, of course, why we do a good portion of what we do, and at the end of the day, He is all that matters.

As we enter Advent we are invited to enter into the craving of advent and the sumptuous feast of Christmas. We will have Christmas Eve Candlelight service on December 24th at 7:00pm. But please don't be misled or confused. Amidst the twinkling lights and greenery, beyond the bell and the carol, past the sermon and even the sacrament, all we have is Christ.

And that is enough.

In Christ  
Brant

## FROM THE CLERK

If you haven't already done so, make sure you get signed up to work on a Saturday (or two or three) to help build our Habitat for Humanity House. Work began November 16. Thanks to those who have already signed up and to the Deacons for preparing lunch for the workers. Our Mission Team is also helping at the 5K run for Seeds of Hope on January 11.

Besides the two new banners at the front of our Worship Center, we are ordering a new and larger banner to be displayed at the end of our building. More postcards are going to be sent out to new residents for the Christmas Season. We again plan to have a candlelight service on Christmas Eve at 7:00 PM.

Pastor Brant and the Session are going to have a Planning and Visioning Retreat after our new officer elections in February. Has God been encouraging you to be an Elder in our church? Or maybe just to step up in your ministry as we seek to move forward?

If you weren't able to participate in our 2020 Pledge Dedication during worship on November 24, you can still turn a pledge card in to our treasurer, Derek Moore, or our financial officer, Carol Smith. The yellow pledge cards will be available on the back table.

Be sure to check out our new welcome video which will be on our website soon thanks to Pastor Brant and camera man and editor Brayden Moore.

## Tina's Insights

*Tina Hudson was a beloved former member, who for a while wrote devotional thoughts for the website. Over the coming months we will post her devotions in the newsletter...*

We watched Polar Express last night. I love the music, but never saw the movie. As we laughed at all the antics of the kids, and talked about the meaning of each new experience, I thought of the difference between just "believing" and in whom we believed.

The little boy had to believe in Santa, and the "meaning of Christmas" in order to hear the sleigh bell ring. He was finally able to say "I believe" and of course, he heard the bell ring (as did his little sister). Unfortunately, his parents had lost the glow.

How wonderful that we never need to "lose the glow". So many places in scripture we are told in Whom to believe (John 3:16; 6:47; Acts 16:31). Then we are also told the result of that belief. We are assured, again and again, that He is the One who maintains our relationship, He is the One who is faithful to "do it". Never once are we faced with no longer hearing that wonderful sound of salvation that rings eternally in our hearts.

Oh, there are times when the evil one would have us think our Lord has abandoned us. There are circumstances and people in our lives that convince us that He is too busy to listen, or that He doesn't care about our difficulties. Like all the ups and downs in Polar Express, we start to believe that He really doesn't exist; or if He does, He stopped working in our lives.

It's like finding ourselves immersed in Star Wars or Raiders of the Lost Ark rather than an encouraging holiday flick. We watched as the kids experienced dark tunnels, wrong turns, people who have their own agenda, fear of the unknown up ahead and the pain of the present. But the young boy finally said those words "I believe" and the sleigh bell rang.

Why is there fun and excitement this time of year? Why can we hear bells ringing and people singing? Because of the birth of Jesus Christ. It's historical. Believe in Him or not, the season is full of His goodness, His grace. And for those who do believe, there is not just a season of joy but an eternity.

"I came that they might have life and have it abundantly" John 10:10b

Believe me, believing Him makes it all worthwhile. Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with every good and perfect gift sent from the Father of Lights.

### **Men's Bible Study**

The men of the church meet at the church each Thursday at 11:00am, all men are welcome and you can bring a sack lunch if you like.

### **Neighborhood Help Team**

The Neighborhood Help Team is continuing a service for those who could use a little bit of help. We would like to help you in replacing A/C filters or with some landscape trimming on the 4th Saturday of each month. Contact Nelson Moore in person or call him @ 520-483-0461.

### **December Calendars**

- 1 Communion
- 5 Worship Team, 1:00pm
- 7 Habitat for Humanity workday in Arizona City, 7:30am-12:30pm, lunch is provided.
- 10 Ladies Luncheon, 12:00pm at Mary Moore's, bring a guest.
- 11 Prayers at the flagpole at McCartney Ranch Elementary, 7:15am
- 11 Prayer Night 6:30pm
- 12 Session Meeting, 6:00pm
- 14 Habitat for Humanity workday in Arizona City, 7:30am-12:30pm, lunch is provided.
- 21 Habitat for Humanity workday in Arizona City, 7:30am-12:30pm, lunch is provided.
- 24 Christmas Eve Service, 7:00pm

### **December Birthdays**

- 13 Rex Little
- 28 Cody Cowan

### **December Anniversaries**

No Anniversaries

