

Will You Miss Christmas?

Few people would willingly pass up the Christmas celebration. Each year vast sums of money and endless hours of preparation are spent in anticipation of this most festive of all holidays. Nobody wants to miss the joys of the Christmas season, yet each year multitudes really do miss Christmas. They don't intend to—they don't even realize that it has happened—but the fact is that Christmas slips by and they never see it.

People have been missing Christmas right from the start. On the night of the Savior's birth the town of Bethlehem slept while the shepherds made their way through its streets to worship at his rude cradle. Similarly, the city of Jerusalem was totally unaware of what had happened only a few miles away until strangers from the East appeared and asked, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" Even the religious leaders who knew of the promise of his coming missed the event for which they had taught Israel to watch.

Why do people miss Christmas? Why were the people of Bethlehem and the scribes of Jerusalem unaware of the tremendous event that took place in their midst? They missed it because they were looking for the wrong thing. They were not looking for a display of the grace of God; they were waiting for a demonstration of the glory of Israel. They were not conscious of personal sin or their need of a Savior; their minds were astir with the visions of royal pomp and national power. And so though they were looking for the great event foretold in their Scriptures, they missed it because they had distorted and misread its meaning.

Will you miss Christmas? You will unless you focus upon the only thing that really matters. Unless you bow in amazement at God's love in sending his Son to die for your sin, you are missing the wonder of Christmas. Unless you rejoice in the grace of Christ in becoming poor that you might be made rich, you cannot experience the joy of Christmas. Christmas is God drawing near to sinful man with his saving grace. Don't miss it!

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world... Titus 2:11, 12

*And the Word
became flesh,
and dwelt among
us...*

John 1:14

Covenant Presbyterian Church
1623 University Avenue, Berkeley, California 94703
www.berkeleyopc.org

MORNING WORSHIP – 11:00 A.M.

THE LORD CALLS US TO HIMSELF

Salutation and Call to Worship

*Hymn of Praise # 218

“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

*Invocation

*Hymn of Praise # 110

“Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah”

CONFESSION OF SIN AND THE LORD'S ASSURANCE

The Law of God

Matthew 22:37-40

Confession of Sin (Congregation in Unison)

Lord God, Eternal and Almighty Father: We acknowledge before your holy majesty that we are poor sinners, conceived and born in guilt and in corruption, prone to do evil, unable of our own power to do good. Because of our sin, we endlessly violate your holy commandments. But, O Lord, we repent and turn away from all our offenses. We condemn ourselves and our evil ways, asking you, through your grace, to relieve our distress. Remind us of your compassion, O Father of mercies. Remind us of all the benefits that are ours in Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. We also ask that you grant us daily increase of the grace of your Holy Spirit, and produce in us the fruits of holiness and of righteousness, which are pleasing in your sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Matthew 11:28-29 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

OFFERING OURSELVES IN THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER

Worship in Giving

Hymn of Thanksgiving # 225

“Once in Royal David's City”

Worship in Prayer

Interlude

*Congregation Standing

We extend a cordial welcome to each visitor!

Wayne K. Forkner, Minister

510-928-8024

THE LORD FEEDS US FROM HIS WORD

*Hymn of Preparation # 142

“Lord, Thy Word Abideth”

Sermon Text

Luke 23:1-12

Sermon

THE KING OF THE JEWS?

*Hymn of Response # 217

“All My Heart This Night Rejoices”

THE LORD DISMISSES US WITH HIS BLESSING

*Gloria Patri (Praising our Gracious Lord)

734

*The Lord's Benediction

Announcements

Today, 12:30pm. Potluck luncheon following the morning worship service. All are welcome.

Tuesday, 7:30pm. Weekly Bible Study at the church or via Zoom. Our Bible study at the church begins with dinner at 7:00pm, followed by a time of study at 7:30pm. For information on attending the study via Zoom, please send an email to Pastor Wayne at wforkner86@mac.com.

Tuesday, December 24. Please join us for a Christmas Eve hike in Tilden (weather permitting) followed by Board games and Christmas treats at the church. Come for one or both events!

12:30pm - 2ish: Meet at the Brook Picnic Area off of Brook Rd near the Carousel. The hike is a 3-mile loop. (Wildcat Gorge --> Meadows Canyon --> Curran Trail). (See insert for map.)

~2:30pm - 4:30pm Board Games and Christmas treats at Church. Feel free to invite a friend and bring some Christmas cookies to share if you like. There will be plenty of cookies and hot drinks to enjoy together. Contact Victor (404-384-9668) with any questions.

Sunday, January 5, 2025, 10:00am. The adult Sunday School class will resume. We will be studying the book of Colossians.