

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

December 27, 2020



*Sharing the
Truth of Christ's
Love by Caring
for the Needs
of Everyone!*

SUNDAY SERVICE

9:00 am
(Communion celebrated
every Sunday)

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

(ages 3 - 4th Grade)
September - May, 10:00 am

CONFIRMATION CLASS

(5th - 8th Grades)
September - May, 6:00 pm

HIGH SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL

(9th - 12th Grades)
September - May, 10:00 am

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

September - May, 10:00 am

GOD CAME DOWN

David Mathias, *Desiring God* article reprint

The allure of Christmas has a strange power over us, even the unbelieving and seemingly secularized. The season has a kind of draw, a type of "spirit" or "magic," that makes the winter solstice festival every bit as big today, in an increasingly post-Christian society, as it was in the 1950s.

Why does Christmas have this magnetism, even in a society that has tried to empty it of its origin in Christ? The real magic of Christmas is not gifts and goodies, new toys and familiar traditions, indoor warmth and outdoor snow. What lies at the very heart of Christmas, and whispers even to souls seeking to "suppress the truth" (Romans 1:18), is the most stunning and significant fact in the history of the world: that God himself became one of us. The God who created our world, and us humans at the apex of his creation, came into our world as human not just for show, but for our salvation.

The glory of Christmas is not that it marks the birth of some great religious leader, but that it celebrates the long-anticipated coming of God himself.

Christmas is supernatural. And our naturalistic society is starving deep down for something beyond the natural, rarely admitting it, and not really knowing why. Christmas taps into

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Prayer Requests



Those who are seeking healing and comfort during a difficult time: Kristy Bartels, Jean Brewer, Rhonda Driver (Rose Harmon's daughter), Neva (Rose Harmon's sister), Peyton Howard and Family (Sonja Sporleder's niece), Ernst Kohn, Dennis Roush, Denny Sunderlage, Hollyn Thomas (Dave & Carol Bahr's newest great-granddaughter), Marilyn Thompson, and John Wieg.

Members who are residing at care centers: Meta Meyer and Ellen Nelson at The Sheridan at Tyler Creek, and Fern Warfel at Tower Hill Care Center.

Members experiencing difficulties in getting around: Alta Dittman, Mary Jane Lindaas, Mabel Maas, Doris Meilahn, Eleanor Miller, and Betty Roush.

People suffering from physical, emotional, economic, or coronavirus (COVID-19) pain, and residents at Deer Path Assisted Living.

St. Peter's Mission to be revealed by the Holy Spirit and inform us of how to share Jesus' love with our neighbors.



Attendance



ATTENDANCE

Dec. 2: 20
Dec. 6: 46
Dec. 9: 18
Dec. 13: 54
Dec. 16: 22
Dec. 20: 50
Dec. 23: 18
Dec. 24:
Dec. 27:

Altar Flowers



Altar Flowers are always, first and foremost, given for the glory of God.

We will be taking down Christmas decorations on Sunday, January 10 after the service. If you're able to stay afterwards to help, that would be greatly appreciated.

Food Pantry Update

We served 40 households in December, which totaled 146 people.

Items we are short on are: tissues (Kleenex etc), shampoo, (no conditioner at this time),, variety salad dressings, ketchup, cans of diced tomatoes (15 oz. cans), tomato sauce (15 oz. and 8 oz. cans), & tomato paste 6 oz. cans.

Monetary donations may be mailed to Burlington/Hampshire Area Food Pantry, P.O. Box 651 Hampshire, IL 60140.

Any questions or large donations, please call Dorothy @ 847-683-3071.

Thanks for your support of the Food Pantry!



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something arcane in the human soul and woos us, even when it's inconsistent with a mind that professes unbelief.

HE CAME FROM HEAVEN

For those of us who do gladly confess the Christ of Christmas — as our Lord, Savior, and greatest Treasure — we know why Christmas is indeed enchanted. Because at the very heart is the essence of the supernatural: God himself entering into our realm. At Christmas God “came down” (Genesis 11:5), not just to see the Babel built of human sin, and inflict righteous judgment from the outside, but to be human and work his mercy from within.



The glory of Christmas is not that it marks the birth of some great religious leader, but that it celebrates the long-anticipated coming of God himself — the arrival for which God wired our souls from the beginning to ache. “Bethlehem . . . from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days” (Micah 5:2).

What God so stunningly reveals at that first Noël is that when he himself finally does come, it is not in cloud or wind or fire or earthquake, or even simply in a still, small voice. But he comes in the fullness of his creation: as human. He comes as one of us, and dignifies our own species in doing so. He comes not as a bird of the air, beast of the field, or great sea creature. Even more impressive than a talking lion is God himself as fully human. Christmas marks his “being born in the likeness of men” — the very God who made man, and has long endured our sin with great patience, now scandalously “found in human form” (Philippians 2:7–8).

HE CAME AS A SERVANT

It is wonder enough that he “came down” at all. But when he did, he came not in human glory and comfort and prestige, but he “emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant” (Philippians 2:7). He came not only as creature, but in poverty, in weakness, in humility. He came as one who rose from supper, laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. (John 13:4–5)

For a brief moment, on the hill of his transfiguration, three of his disciples caught a glimpse of the divine-human glory for which he was destined. “He was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light” (Matthew 17:2). But the Jesus they knew, day in and day out, on the roads of backwater Galilee was no dignitary. “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head” (Luke 9:58). His disciples learned firsthand that “even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve” (Mark 10:45).

ALL THE WAY TO DEATH

Such service extended, and deepened, far beyond the mere inconveniences of life, into costly self-sacrifice, even the final sacrifice. He came not just to serve but “to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

It was one thing to wash his men’s feet. That was unforgettable, but only a tiny foretaste of his true service. It was another thing to rise from supper, lead them out to the garden, wait in agony for his captors, and walk

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December Worship Assistants

	ELDERS	USHERS	GREETERS	READERS	ALTAR GUILD
Sunday, December 27	Bob Felbinger	Fred Rackow	Sally Hartje & Nancy Miller	Fern Petersen	Paul & Darlene Tegtmeier

Birthdays	
December 25	Chuck Petersen
December 26	Mike Bensko
Baptismal Anniversary	
December 22	Chase Wacker Katie Wacker Mason Wacker

This Week at St. Peter's		
Sunday, December 27	Worship, with Communion	9:00 am
	Christian Education	10:00 am
December 21- January 4	LSP OFF FOR CHRISTMAS BREAK	
Friday, January 1	OFFICE CLOSED <i>New Year's Day</i>	

Thank You from Concordia Seminary

Thanks so much to St. Peter's for remembering our Seminary students with such a wonderful and generous gifts. We are thankful and blessed to have caring individuals as you. We have gotten your gifts distributed to the families.



This is such a blessing to our students and their families on their journey to becoming pastors. Your gifts will help make things a little easier for our students and their families. God bless you.

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alone the literally excruciating path that foot-washing anticipated: "he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:8).

TO RESCUE HIS PEOPLE

But this was no mere descent from heaven, as a servant, all the way to death. This was descent for a purpose. This was humility on mission. The death that God himself came to die was no an accident of history. He came to die, and live again. The extent of his people's rebellion was matched, and surpassed, only by the extent of his final sacrifice. And in so doing he showed us the very heart of love — his own and his Father's. "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

The magic of Christmas is not just that God himself came from heaven as man. And it is not just that he humbled himself as a servant to meet the needs of others. And it's not even just that he came to die, to unfold his service all the way to death. The magic is that he came down, and did all that, to rescue us. Such was the promise of God's messenger from the time of his announcement: "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

He came down to rescue us from sin and restore us to the final joy for which we were made: to know and enjoy him. He came to reconcile us "to himself" (Colossians 1:20). He came not to supply us with the bells and whistles of a commercial Christmas, but he "suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, *that he might bring us to God*" (1 Peter 3:18).

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Church Office Hours
Monday-Friday
9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Pastor's Office Hours
Mon., Wed., Thurs.
10:00 am - 4:30 pm
Tues., Fri.
10:00 am - 12:30 pm