



New Life Christian Community

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Cor 5:17

Sun, November 26, 2017

Vol. 11, Issue 8

Pastoral Ponderings

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. (Luke 2:1-7).

Okay, it's not quite December. Technically speaking, or should I say liturgically speaking, the first Sunday of Advent is not until next week. Yet, here you are reading the opening verses of Luke while Pastor Chandler talks about Christmas and the leftover turkey is still waiting to be consumed in the fridge. But, if I am being totally open and transparent with you, I love the Christmas season! I just can't wait for December to talk about it. I made my poor wife put up the Christmas tree on Thanksgiving morning. It's okay to laugh. Really, my love for the Christmas season was hammered into me from childhood by my mother. I blame her and I kid you not, she put her Christmas tree up November 12th.

As the Christmas season approaches this year, I wanted to pause and challenge each of us to consider, "Is there room for Christ in this holiday season?"

Let's key in on the very last phrase of verse seven. The decree for a registration went out in Syria. As people returned to their homelands, Bethlehem, this relatively small town only a handful of miles from Jerusalem was packed and overcrowded. The city was filled to the brim so much so that there was no room left for Mary and Joseph to have their baby. They were left to the cattle's dwelling place and given a manger as a bed.

The text is making a great comparison between Caesar Augustus and Jesus. The Emperor of Rome ruled from the luxury of a palace. His birthday was celebrated by choirs in imperial temples. Caesar Augustus was praised as the Emperor who brought about peace throughout the whole Roman Empire (Pax Romana). He was hailed as the savior and lord of Rome and was constantly praised by world powers.

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this week [events]

- | | |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| 11.26 | Forge @ 6:30 |
| 11.29 | Immerse @ 6:15 |
| 11.30 | Men's Bible study @ 6:30 am |
| 11.30 | Women's Bible Study @ 9:30 am |
| 11.30 | GriefShare |

Pastoral Ponderings cont.

By contrast, Jesus was given a bed fit for animals, praised by lowly shepherds, and ignored by the world even though, as the Savior and Lord of the universe, he was bringing the eternal peace of God.

So, is there room for the King of kings in our hearts this year? Or are we focused on some worldly god? Are we focused on the new box office hits entering the theaters in December (this is especially pointed at me since The Last Jedi comes out soon)? Are we focused on our traditions or holiday agendas? Are we praising gifts given by human hands?

Let us make room in the inn of our hearts this year. Focus on Jesus Christ, praise the true gift giver, and be captivated by the wonderful truth that God became a man and dwelt among us.

Sovereign Grace Music has a song that captures the essence of what I have been considering:

Oh, our hearts, as busy as Bethlehem
Hear Him knock, don't say there's no room in the inn
Through the cradle, cross, and grave
See the love of God displayed
Now He's risen and He reigns
Praise the Name above all names!

To help each of us focus on Christ this holiday season, we have made available a reading/devotional booklet that will offer daily Bible readings and thought-provoking questions for discussion. The booklet will help us, as a church, turn our attention to Christ. These readings will also bolster the three Sunday evening Christmas services this December 10th, 17th, and 24th.

You can get a physical copy of the reading plan today on the entry table or download a colorful and wonderfully designed digital eBook on the New Life website today (I highly recommend downloading the eBook).

Let me be the first to say, Merry Christmas.
Chandler

Upcoming Events

Special Sunday Services

The Coming King Sunday evening services. Join us for three special Sunday evening services to celebrate the joy of Christmas. Sundays December 10th, 17th, and 24th at 6:30 pm. Make sure to get the devotional eBook "The Coming King."

Attention Young Adults

Attention young adults! Come hang out next Friday, December 1 at Josh Nelson's home (537 Round Lake Ct. Osceola 54020). There are two qualifications for those invited: you must be post high school age and unmarried. We will be gathering at 6:30 for snacks and games. Bring your best game face!

Surviving The Holiday (GriefShare Event)

Grieving? Know someone who is? When you are grieving a loved one's death, the holiday season can be especially painful. Our Surviving the Holidays seminar is December 2, 9:30 am - Noon. This GriefShare event helps participants prepare for the holidays and even discover hope for the future. Guests will receive a Survival Guide booklet. Ages 12-18 are welcome if they have experienced the death of a loved one. RSVP is appreciated, but not required. This morning of support is free. Flyers are available on the entrance table.

Pancake Breakfast

Save the date! Cecelia Gustafson is once again going on a mission trip to Tapestries of Life in Mexico. She is looking for prayer and financial support. Would you consider joining in support of her service to Jesus? On Saturday, December 9th at 8:00 am, Cecelia is organizing a pancake breakfast in order to raise support for the trip. Bring the whole family! All proceeds will go directly to the ministry unto the orphans in Northern Mexico.

Nov. Memory Verse

"Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples!"

1 Chronicles 16:8

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newlifechristiancommunity.org

Find Links to:

- Events • Sermons Online
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meal [teams]

Dec. 3rd Potluck Team 2

Dec. 10th Meal Team 7

Dec. 17th Meal Team 1

Today's Passage



Pastor Tony will be teaching from the Book of Mark.
Our passage for today is Mark 15:16-20.

Sermon Notes

New Life has an Instagram account! Follow us @newlifechristiancommunity

Sign up in the entry way to be added to New Life Connect

201 State Road 35 N, Dresser, WI ~Sunday service starts at 9:30 am
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