



Tidings and Treasures - December, 2021



Dear Friends in Christ,

The basic truth of Christmas, celebrating the birth of Jesus the Messiah, God Incarnate, is plenty of reason for us all to rejoice and worship. But we've piled such an additional load onto our Christmas observance that worship is often almost lost in the shuffle. Think about what weight Christmas has to bear: we send Christmas cards to people we contact at no other time of the year. We have to put up wreaths and Christmas trees and lights. There's the Christmas dinner to plan and cook. And then we have Christmas presents to buy. However, the four Sundays of Advent each have a specific theme or focus on which we should dwell. The purpose of each theme is to spend time reflecting on the true meaning of the season - the life of Jesus.

Week 1: Hope Isaiah 9:2, 6-7: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned...For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Week 2: Preparation Isaiah 40:3-5: "A voice of one calling: 'In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'"

Week 3: Joy (or peace) Philippians 4:4,7: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Week 4: Love John 3:16-19, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil."

We are thankful for all of our members and friends who use the lessons we have learned during Advent to support our work at PVEC. **Your Generosity is Changing Lives.** Right now we are supporting the neighborhood children with our Angel Tree, Pajama and Book Drive for Christmas. We are supporting parents with our Food Pantry, gift cards, craft opportunities, and breakfast programs. So be proud of what we accomplish with your time and donations.

And now a little joke:



Epiphany (January 6th) - The only mention of the Magi (Wise Men) in the Bible is in Matthew's Gospel 2:1-12 (the 12th day of Christmas) Here's a portion of the story: "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him... When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh." (Matthew 2:1-3, 10-11).

Merry Christmas - Blessings, Donna