



In the Loop

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Listening and Talking . . . by Rev. Tom Cici

Remember that old proverb: “It’s better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.” Indeed so. Over two thousand and twenty years ago, God brought Christ into the world as a human being to show us the light which created the world, the light of love in which we live our lives. It is our part to walk in that light. It is our part to live in that light, and share that light with our world. Every time we lift up Jesus Christ, every time we stand tall for Jesus Christ, every time we live in the Spirit of Christ or share the truth of Christ with others, we are punching holes in the darkness!

So, we believers in the Word of God – the incarnation of Christ – give testimony as John did. We who believe that God resurrected Jesus Christ from the dead, we believers who live in Christ, we believers who are glorified to God and reconciled to others, give testimony as John says. We have come to believe in the power of life to create and transform, and we simply must tell others – certainly with our words, but even more importantly with our lives. God’s transforming power begins to make us more and more alive the sooner we all come to believe in God’s power of life over the powers of death.

The powers of life are shown to us by Jesus Christ, and include such powers as humility, mercy, vulnerability, powerlessness, self-giving love, optimism, gifts of Holy Spirit, compassionate love, joy, peace, forgiveness, new life, and trusting in God (to name a few). The powers of death which we create involve selfishness, negativity, closed-minded prejudice, hate, envy, jealousy, ignorance, anxiety-ridden fear, violence, poverty and injustice. God’s transforming powers of life heals us from the effects of those powers of death in our lives.



The words “eternal life” in that most memorable verse, John 3:16, points to a Jewish concept in which God’s reign of life will reign completely over all the powers of death. John 3:16 is testifying to this: the communion of God, Spirit, in Christ, who is embracing us (loving us) now, calls us to be in God’s power of life right now! We can have eternal life in Christ with God beginning now! Today! This is huge!

Are we learning and teaching others that kind words are powers of life? Are we learning, and teaching others that expressing thanksgiving and respect for others are powerful ways of life? This is our calling: to speak and to act in right relationships with others to reflect kindness, appreciation, and love; to fill the air with the encouragement of new life; and to profess the power of trusting in God.

Blessings to all as we share and live in God’s Love together!

We Are Participating in a New Epiphany Theme

Our overall theme throughout the 2025 season of Epiphany is “*A New Vision of God.*” The season of Epiphany will begin when we celebrate Epiphany Sunday on January 5th and will continue until Transfiguration Sunday, March 02, 2025.

This is the agenda of our sermon series, “*A New Vision of God,*” by Pastor Tom:

<u>Dates:</u>	<u>Scriptures:</u>	<u>Themes:</u>
Jan 05, 2025	Matthew 2:1-12	Epiphany Sunday
Jan 12, 2025	Psalms 42:1-3, 5, 7-8	Trust in one another: The Body of Christ
Jan 19, 2025	Psalms 57:1-3, 5, 7-11	Healing Presence of Christ
Jan 26, 2025	Psalms 77:1-14	Order to Disorder to Reorder (Renewal)
Feb 02, 2025	Psalms 86:1-12, 15	Our Images of God Shape Us
Feb 09, 2025	Psalms 102:1-2, 11-12, 17-18, 24-28	Christ Is Our Foundation
Feb 16, 2025	Psalms 131	Experiencing Christ Through Humility
Feb 23, 2025	Psalms 146:1-8	See Christ in the Lowly

In the narrative of the Magi visiting Jesus the Christ Child, the Magi received directions from the writings of the Prophet Micah and Second Samuel to determine Bethlehem as the physical location (Matthew 2:5-6). What they found was a very different kind of ruler than the usual kings of Israel or Rome. Instead of a violent ruler who wields a sword, they found a humble sovereign ruler who wields merciful justice, love and peace to bring the “*Realm of God*” into our world.

In the same manner, we can determine from some of the Psalms how to find and experience Christ during these troubled times. Many people are experiencing shock, disillusionment, and loss of orientation. Many people are hurt and angry. We may ask, “Where is Christ now?”

During my vacation, I spent a few days studying The Psalms, the longest and arguably the most read book in the Bible. I was immediately strengthened and “resourced” when I found seven psalms of lamentation that deeply spoke to my present experience, and perhaps yours, too. I offer them to you in hopes that they might do the same.



OUR VISION STATEMENT
Spreading the message of God's Love,
in our church and in our community,
through caring for each other.

We Are Listening to Pastor Tom's Podcasts

Pastor Tom continues to put his live podcasts, called "Daily Inspirations," on YouTube and our website. These are a "live" podcast in which Tom can receive "Chats" online while he's recording the Daily Inspiration. During the Holidays, YouTube sent this memo to our account: "**New Achievement: 10 hours of watch time.** Great Job! You're in the zone and your audience is loving it." Further analytics by YouTube shows that our account received 88 views in 28 days with 0.9 hours per day of viewing.

To see videos of his podcasts, visit our website: www.centennialcc.org. Once you are on our website, click "worship" at the top of the page, and then click "online." You will have a choice: Tom's videos are on the left (click the image of Pastor Tom), and our worship services are on the right (click the image of our church). You can also listen to previous videos by clicking on the three "bars" in the upper right corner of Tom's image and choosing a podcast from the list. Please contact Jerry, our Administrative Assistant if you have any questions or need further assistance.

Upcoming podcasts are scheduled for **1:30 p.m. on Monday through Friday**. Anyone can "chat" with Pastor Tom during the podcast from 1:30 to 1:35 or longer. Later, anyone can view and listen to the podcast by visiting our website. We hope this will be beneficial for you and our community. Please let us know how we are doing and how we can further assist you. Thank you!

Daily Inspirations by Pastor Tom Cici



Sunday Worship 10:15AM



BULLETIN JANUARY 12, 2025

Thank you! Thank you!



- A glorious Thank You to our prayer warriors who respond to our prayer requests.
- A big “Thank you” to everyone who gives offerings of financial donations to our General Fund, to the Disciples Mission Fund, and to our Loose Change Offering which supports our outreach program for nonmembers. Your donations are very much needed, appreciated and helpful. Again, thank you!!
- Thank you to everyone who lit an Advent Candle and/or read the corresponding reflection for our worship services during this Advent/Christmas season.
- A huge “Thank you” to everyone who participated in our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: Our Worship committee who planned it; Anyone who had a role in it; Joe Peebles, Jack Keefe and Michael Schoeninger proved technical support; EVERYONE who attended or participated virtually in the service. It was wonderful.
- Thank you to our Deacons and Elders who step in when someone is ill or away.

Happy New Year Christian Brothers and Sisters!

Thank you for supporting Outreach in 2024. You helped make a difference in a lot of needy people’s lives.

January 2025 Outreach’s theme is “Souper Bowl”. We are hoping you will donate cans of soup (preferably with a pop top), pop tops from pop or beer cans (for the Arc), and can openers. Our official collection date is Sunday, January 12th; however, your donation will be graciously accepted all January. Your donations will support the CWF Blessing Box.



Outreach still has Christmas food baskets with either a ham or a turkey to donate to needy families. If you know of a needy family, contact any Outreach group member, and we’ll take care of the rest.

May this year, 2025, be happy and healthy for you and your family.

Your Outreach Group

January 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5	6	7	8	9 TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah Board Meeting 6P-FH	10	11
12 Second Sunday Food Pantry Worship 10:15A	13 Trustees 11A-GH	14 CWF 9:30A-FH	15 Bridge 12P-GH Choir-6:30P	16 Worship Cmte 10A-FH Monthly Prayer Service: 5P-FH TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah Book Club 6:30P	17	18
19 Worship 10:15A	20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day PRC 12P-Isaiah	21	22 Bridge 12P-GH Choir-6:30P	23 Ladies Luncheon 11:30A TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah Men's Dinner 6P-Garden of Paradise	24	25
26 Loose Change Offering Worship 10:15A	27	28 Elders 6:30P-FH	29 Bridge 12P-GH Choir-6:30P	30 TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah	31	February 1



Continuing Prayers

Paul Dawson, JoAnne Pritchard, Janice, Sarah Hiatt, Susie, Western North Carolina, Nathan, Perry Watson, Hope's baby August, Debbie Holiday, Sisters Kelly Bestful and Lisa Behl, Randy Seibert, Tim, Kris Carius, Leonard Bates, Greg Firkus and Pat Murphy, Charlie Middleton, James, Neil, Cameron Cook, Jackie Steinhilber, Megan Brown, Mannie Martinez, Ann Burmaster, Ron Geske, Pam, Dick Tarter, Scott Griffith, Jessica, Marsha, Pete Rasmussen, Fern Scaggs

At Home/Assisted Living

At home-Doris Miller, Frieda Foland; The Pointe, Pontiac-Rae Geske;

Nursing Home

The Arc-Rev. Barbara Short, Don Short; Westminster-Anita Poling; Earl McIntyre; Evergreen Village-Pat Iloff; Hopedale Nursing Home-Dick Tarter; Accolade, Pontiac-Ron Geske;

Military

Mark Brien, Keyla Folsom, Troy Guyran, Benjamin Horn, Michael Iverson, John Thomas, Darrell Walton, Glen Whitecotton, Christopher Wilson-Poston

January Birthdays and Anniversaries	
Becky Hines	01/10
Esther Sengpiel	01/12
Kay Davis	01/15
Laurel Poshard	01/27
Ron and Rae Ann Geske	01/29

Our challenge for the week –

Pray this prayer every day –

Loving and merciful God, we give our anxieties to you. Your love casts out fears. May we experience your Presence within us, leading us, networking and coordinating small communities of faith. Direct us all.

[Wait and listen.]