



In the Loop

Centennial Christian Church
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12 January, 2023
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Listening and Talking . . . by Rev. Tom Cici

This coming Sunday is our second Sunday in our Epiphany series, “Heaven on Earth.” Epiphany is the celebration of the divine manifestation of the divine nature of Jesus Christ to the whole world as represented by the Magi. “Epiphany” is the manifestation or appearance or perception of a divine being, such as Christ, in a person’s life.

We see this in Apostle Paul’s experience where Paul’s conversion initially takes place after hearing Jesus say, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” (See Acts 9:1-9). At first, Paul defends himself as if to say, ‘Jesus, I wasn’t persecuting you; just these other people.’ Ultimately, Paul comes up with this wonderful image of the mystical body of Christ in which there is a union or communion between Jesus and God’s people. What you do to one, you do to the whole. Until we understand that, we don’t understand Paul at the ground level (nor do we understand the Gospels). Everything proceeds from that.

God had not expelled or eliminated Paul’s former egotistical (false and fabricated) self, but instead “incorporated” him into the Christ Self creating Paul into a new self. Jesus grafted him into the Wholeness of God who welcomes and loves all creation. This is the total basis of Paul’s joyful hope, love, and daring self-confidence to proclaim the good news so that everyone else may experience the same transformation and ecstasy.



I would like you to look at your own spiritual autobiography and see how you were formed. Where were you, and how were you led when God showed God’s face to you? It’s at that level that you know God is attached to you, guiding and encouraging you, and you are living in God’s loving and merciful life – and you know that you know.

Personally, I believe that Jesus Christ has come to transform the entire world. By looking at the breakthroughs of medicine, the epiphany of God’s attachment to the world is shown through the healing presence of Christ. Before Jesus came to reveal the Kingdom of God – fully welcoming, loving and merciful – most everyone believed illness was caused by cruel gods, and those who healed others practiced evil witchcraft. But today men and women are encouraged to learn about the human body and help God heal others.

Discussions of racism and gender are still touchy in some circles of conversation. But there are new winds of truth blowing through the world. Institutional racism and sexism are breaking down. There’s not enough room here to discuss this fully right now. But the Good News is that Christ comes not just to take away these old shelters, but to offer us a new one: to abide in Christ Self – to abide in God’s love and let God abide in each one of us. This is the gracious invitation that is always before us.

Blessings on all as we Journey together in Epiphany.

Need Homes for Food Baskets

The Christmas season has been extended! Our Christmas Food Basket Program, to help feed needy families, has six (6) dinners available for distribution. Each dinner consists of a frozen turkey or ham, and a large box full of can goods and other non-perishable food items to cook a complete Christmas dinner. If you would like to help our less fortunate brothers and sisters have one or two nice meals, please lovingly encourage them to call the Centennial Christian Church office (309) 828-2185 Monday thru Thursday 8 AM – 2 PM. Assistance will be available. We would like to have a home for these food baskets by February 1, 2023.

CWF Cookies

CWF is sending cookies to college students and those in the armed services. Please contact the office with a name and address or use sign-up sheet by the elevator. People receiving the cookies must be related to someone in our church family. Deadline for information is February 5th.

Hoping to hear from you soon.

Blessings

CWF



Celebrate the Holidays
with Joy, Compassion
& Community



*Thank you for your
kindness in 2022. May
2023 bless you and the
Church in many ways.
Love ~
Tricia Larkin*

January 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				12 TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah Board Meeting 6P-FH	13	14
15 Second Sunday Food Pantry Adult Bible Study 9A-Isaiah Worship *10:15A	16 Martin Luther King Day Church office will be open	17	18 Adult Bible Study 10:30A-Isaiah Bridge 12P-GH Choir Practice 6:30P	19 Pastoral Relations 11A-FH TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah Book Club 6:30P	20	21
22 Adult Bible Study 9A-Isaiah Worship *10:15A	23	24 Elders 6:30P	25 Adult Bible Study 10:30A-Isaiah Bridge 12P-GH Choir Practice 6:30P	26 Ladies Luncheon 11:30A TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah Men's Dinner 6P	27	28
29 Loose Change Collection Adult Bible Study 9A-Isaiah Worship *10:15A	30	31	February 1 Adult Bible Study 10:30A-Isaiah Bridge 12P-GH Choir Practice 6:30P	2 Outreach 5P-FH TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah	3	4

*Online worship <https://www.facebook.com/pg/centennialcc.org>

FH-Fellowship Hall GH-Great Hall

Men's Dinner January 26 at 6PM

The Men's dinner will be held at Shannon's Five Star Restaurant located at 1305 S Mercer Ave. Bloomington.

Join us for good food and fellowship!



Prayer Request

Arlene, sister of Sue Miller, has pneumonia and an aneurism and is being made comfortable in her home. Please pray for Arlene and her family.

Continuing Prayers

Cole, David, Terry Foland, Ron and Rae Geske, Scott Griffith, Janis, Marilyn, Lexi Peterson, Denny Pritchard, Pete Rasmussen, Fern Scaggs, Kathy Scott, Marian Wrinkle

At Home/Assisted Living

Myerling Home-Ruth Roley; Home-Doris Miller

Nursing Home

Heritage Manor-Tom (Billy) Robey, Rev. Barbara Short, Don Short; Anita Poling (Westminster);
Martin Health -Earl McIntyre

Military

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

Prayers for CCIW congregations and ministries: Parkway Gardens CC, Chicago; FCC Girard; FCC Cadillac, MI, School of Ministry

**Our challenge for the week –
Pray this prayer every day –**

God of joy and love, teach me how I might love today. Come into my heart with forgiveness and compassion, that I might always draw strength from your abiding Presence in my life. Thank you, gracious God, for your divine love in all creation. [Wait and listen.]

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