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December 17, 2021



FROM THE SENIOR MINISTER: The Christmas Story



Santa has a lot of territory to cover. So when our son Connor was a toddler, Santa came to our house on Christmas Eve. Somehow Santa always came by and left some goodies under the tree while we were at the 5:30 Children's and Family service. This meant that we were on a tight time schedule that was carefully crafted.

One year, I asked our older children, Kyle and Karmen, to stay back and finish up the dessert preparations before they joined us for the 5:30 service. All they really needed to do was to make the raspberry sauce in the blender. They had both worked in restaurants and I knew they would do a good job on the sauce. Except that the lid on the blender was loose. And so they ended up with raspberry sauce all over the ceiling, the floor, the walls, the backslash, and themselves.

That was more than 20 years ago now. But we still laugh about it. And it is a good reminder to me that things just fall apart sometimes. Especially during the holidays. The best laid plans often fall apart. So much else can go wrong. A family member ends up in the hospital just before Christmas. A loved one passes away and is not there in his or her customary seat at the annual celebration. An argument within the family leaves folks feeling bruised and hurt.

Which is why I love the gospels' stories of Jesus' birth so much. Both Luke and Matthew tell us that things did not go according to plan. Luke tells us that Mary was startled when the pink line turned blue on the pregnancy test, "how can this be since I have no husband?" Matthew tells us that King Herod is out to kill the newborn king and so both the wise men and Joseph try to evade his murderous rage by sneaking around to find safe passage. Mary and Joseph had to place Jesus in a feed trough instead of a crib because there was no Pottery Barn nursery in sight.

The gospel of John tells the Christmas story like this: "And the word became flesh and lived among us." And John reminds us that though Jesus came directly into the mess of real human life, "the world did not know him." God, the holy one, comes with love into the messes of our own lives.

Grace and Peace,

Carla

To send a message to Carla, click [HERE](#).

WORSHIP WITH US

Worship with us in person at 9:01 (sanctuary), 10:00 (chapel) or 11:00 (sanctuary) a.m. Click [HERE](#) to view our live stream.

IN WORSHIP THIS WEEK

Dec. 19- Making Room for the Holy, Part 3- Searching, based on Matthew 2:1-12. Dr. Mike Graves preaching.

Miss last Sunday's worship? Watch it [HERE](#).



CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE

5:30 p.m. – Children and families service. Children will be invited to dress as angels or shepherds and will join the Holy family during the service. This service will also be live streamed at cccckc.org.

8:00 and 11:00 p.m. – Welcome back to the Sanctuary on the holiest evening of the year. The magic of Christmas comes alive in candlelight and song during these traditional services featuring the Kansas City Brass. The 8:00 p.m. service will be live streamed at cccckc.org and will be rebroadcast at 11:00 p.m.

Post-Christmas Schedule

On Sun., Dec. 26, there will be one service only at 10:30 a.m. No Sunday School; child care will be available. Rev. Tyler Heston preaching. The church will be closed on Mon., Dec. 27. Regular worship times resume on Sun., Jan. 2

YEAR END GIVING

If you would like to make a year-end gift to support the church's general budget, you may do so by:

- Clicking [here](#) and choosing year end from the drop down menu
- Mailing your check postmarked by December 31.
- Delivering a check to the church by December 31. (The church offices will be closed Fri., Dec. 31, but a secure dropbox will be available outside of the east entrance for you to place any last-minute donations for 2021)

MASK UPDATE

Although the city of Kansas City, Missouri's indoor mask mandate has expired, we are asking anyone entering our buildings to continue wearing a mask on Sundays and during weekdays while the Preschool and Parents' Day Out programs are in session. We are keeping this policy in place for now because children under the age of 5 are not eligible for vaccinations, and because full vaccine immunity for children ages 5-12 takes up to five weeks from the date of the first shot. Thank you for your continued efforts to keep the most vulnerable among our church community safe.



2021 CHRISTMAS OFFERING



Meet Naseer Al Zuhairi, who was forced to flee his home in 2005 and now lives in Kansas City. He tells his story [HERE](#)...

Imagine that suddenly your life is turned upside down. You need to leave your home, family and friends. You are transported to another country and temporarily housed in a crowded camp, then sent to a strange city where you don't speak or understand the language. This is the situation for many of today's refugees.

Della Lamb Community Services, our partner in the northeast area of Kansas City is receiving and resettling these refugees, a big task requiring significant resources. Our area is expected to resettle hundreds of families. Each needs a place to live, furniture and household supplies, language and cultural training, and help finding a job. They are families arriving with almost nothing.

This year, our offering team has designated Della Lamb and their work in resettling refugees as the recipient of our Christmas Offering.

Hebrews 13:2 reads: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." And the Bible often admonishes us to help the strangers in our land, often including them with orphans and widows, those who lacked community or family support.

Many of the refugees are here because they supported young Americans when they were strangers in these very refugees' native lands. They now need our support as strangers in our land.

Please give what you can to the Christmas Offering by:

- clicking [HERE](#) and choosing Christmas Offering from the drop down menu
- sending or delivering your check, marked Christmas Offering, to church
- texting the word 'Christmas' to 816-484-3399

SPIRE CHAMBER ENSEMBLE'S MESSIAH CONCERT

As a thank you to Country Club Christian Church for the recent Centennial Concert collaboration, the Spire Chamber Ensemble is offering a 30 percent discount on tickets to its upcoming Messiah concert, Mon., Dec. 20 at 7:00 p.m. Spire performs this masterpiece with period instruments in Helzberg Hall. Tickets [HERE](#). USE PROMO CODE: HANDEL2.



LIVE NATIVITY AND CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Thank you to everyone who helped with and attended the Live Nativity and Christmas Festival on Sat., Dec. 11. Ralphie the camel was a big hit and attracted drive-by visitors all afternoon! If you had your photo taken in front of the Christmas tree, it will be available for pick up on Sun., Dec. 19. Or contact [April](#) for pick up arrangements.



BIBLE AND ART TOUR OF ITALY

May 30-June 9, 2022

A few spaces remain on this tour which was originally scheduled pre-pandemic. This unforgettable tour of world-class museums, cathedrals, Renaissance architecture, and the Tuscan countryside is led by Donna Houtteman, a docent at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Rev. Carla Aday and Dr. Mike Graves. In addition to guided tours, there will be free days for leisure and day trips. For more information contact Dr. Mike Graves, mikeg@cccckc.org.



CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CAMP, July 23-30, 2022

Join families and individuals from our congregation for a week of hiking, horseback riding, fishing, crafting, relaxing and fun at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado. The group of 60-90 folks from all generations stays in a lodge with lovely mountain views and enjoys the home cooked meals provided by volunteer chefs from our church. If you don't like to camp but you love the mountains, this is the place for you. Click [HERE](#) for more information. Please let [April](#) know if you are interested in attending.



Meeting you where you are and walking alongside you
on your spiritual journey to a life with greater meaning.



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