

Coming This Month...

Come, Let Us Adore Him!

DECEMBER—

- 3 Men's Breakfast*
- Decorating Day*
- 6 Deacons & Trustees Meet*
- 7,14,21 Advent Services*
- 8 WMF Christmas Luncheon*
- 18 Sunday School Breakfast*
- Caroling and Pizza*
- 24 Christmas Eve Service*
- 25 Christmas Day Service*



Bethany Free Lutheran Church
451 34th St.
Astoria, OR 97103

Jesus is the Son of God, yet is fully God

As the carbohydrate and turkey induced stupor of Thanksgiving feasts wear off, we open our eyes to the next season of the year beloved by so many, Christmas. For many this season brings a welcome respite to all the negative news we are bombarded with on a seemingly constant basis. The increasingly cold weather is fought back with peppermint sticks and hot chocolate. Music recorded by Bing Crosby and Burl Ives helps set the mood while we decorate our homes and make our Christmas plans.

For Christians, Christmas is much more than just a fun holiday to give gifts and enjoy being with family. It is a time where we celebrate Jesus Christ coming to earth and taking on flesh and blood. The fact that Jesus came and was born of a woman is special for many reasons. Jesus became flesh and blood so that we could better understand God. Because Jesus was and is fully human, He knows our weaknesses. And probably the most important result of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, is that Jesus' entrance into the world as a baby boy began the final fulfillment of the long-awaited Messiah. The concept of the Messiah revolves around the sad reality that all humankind is sinful and in need of saving. Because we all have sinned and violated God's perfect law, we have earned eternal punishment in hell. The good news is that God has provided a way out of this horrible reality. Jesus would take our place in being punished, and when we place our faith in Him, we receive the complete and full forgiveness of all our sins.

The Christian message is simple enough to explain to a child, yet has complexities that cause many intelligent adults to scratch their heads. One such complexity is rightly understanding who Jesus Christ is. While Jesus was born as a child to an earthly mother, He was not a simple boy that became a man. He was and is fully God. This applied to Jesus before His conception inside of Mary, in Mary's belly, while He walked on earth, as well as after His resurrection from the grave. While Jesus became a man, He always existed as God. Colossians 2:9 reminds us that Jesus isn't partially God, but fully God, "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form..." (NIV). It is extremely important for

people to understand that Jesus is not a minor god, or partially god, or a spirit child that became a god. Jesus was and is fully God.

John 1:14 is one of the greatest Christmas verses in the entire Bible because it summarizes the incarnation of Jesus Christ, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (NAS). The New American Standard version of the Bible was used because it translated this verse with a peculiar word, begotten. This verse explains that Jesus was begotten from God the Father. Does this make Jesus as the Son of God lesser since He was begotten by the Father? No this can't be, because Jesus clearly makes the claim that He and God the Father are one (John 10:30). Yet there are some difficult passages in the Bible that could allude to Jesus being lesser, so what gives?

Jesus was not born of God the way humans are born; Jesus is eternally existent. Jesus had no beginning, He always existed from before the beginning. What happened at the Christmas event in human history that is so unique is that God the Son came to earth and took on flesh and lived among us. And as Jesus came to earth, He lowered Himself in His **role**, by fulfilling the law's requirements on our behalf, and eventually became our sacrificial lamb, who was slain for our sins. This was made possible when Jesus took on flesh and blood and became as His creation. Yet in Christ's **nature**, He was still fully God. So even though Jesus took on flesh and blood, and became a man- Jesus is fully and completely God. What we must make clear is that while Jesus had a different and subservient **role** to God the Father and God the Spirit as a suffering servant who would die for our sins, in Jesus **nature** He is equal to the Father and the Spirit in all ways.

Celebrate the simple message of Jesus Christ taking on flesh and being born as a baby this season. Yet chew on the complex understanding of how Jesus fulfilled a role that placed him in a role that is different and subservient to the God the Father, while still being fully equal to the Father in His nature as being fully divine.

Pastor Rich Carr

Worship With Us

8:45 A.M. Glad Tidings Radio 1370 A.M.

9:30 A.M. Sunday School (all ages welcome)

11:00 a.m. Worship Services

Live Stream

We live stream our 11:00 a.m. Sunday worship services on Facebook Live (Bethany Free Lutheran Church) Links can be found on our website: bethanyfree.com. Sermons after can be found on our YouTube -Bethany Free Lutheran, Astoria, Oregon

Men's Breakfast

Men's breakfast and prayer will be December 3rd at 8:00 A.M. at the church. Cooking starts around 7:15 A.M. if you would like to help.

Decorating Day



We will be decorating the church for the Christmas Season, Saturday December 3rd at 10 A.M.. Come and enjoy a festive morning of decorating.

Church Council Meeting

Board of Deacons and Trustees will meet for a partial budget meeting Tuesday, December 6 at 6:00 P.M.

WMF Meeting

Women's Missionary Federation (WMF)



Thursday December 8th, at 11:00 A.M. Is the Christmas potluck luncheon, all ladies are welcome. Come and share your Christmas memories.

Bethany Sewing Ministry

Sewing will be December 1st and 15th at 10:00 A.M. All sewing skills are welcome. A lunch is provided.

Advent Services

Wednesday evenings at 7:00 P.M.
November 30th, December 7,14 & 21st



Christmas Services

Christmas Day service at 11:00 A.M. No Sunday School

Christmas Eve Candle Light service at 10:00 P.M.

Christmas Caroling

Sunday December 18th at 4 P.M. Join us for Christmas caroling and share in singing the good news of Christ's coming. We will meet at Eric Paulson's home (195 W. Kensington, Astoria) Following caroling, we will be going back to Eric's home for pizza. You're welcome to bring veggies or treats to share.



Brown Bag Ministry

Every Tuesday at 1:30 P.M. Each week our Brown Bag Ministry prepares as many as 100 or more brown bag lunches that are distributed to the homeless by local nonprofits and individuals. Each lunch is created to feed the body and share the good news of God's love and salvation through Jesus. Join us in packing the bags.

Praise & Worship Band

We are looking to form a praise and worship band. We are looking for anyone who can play and instrument or sing contemporary worship songs to contact Pastor Rich Carr 971-988-9886. A rehearsal time will be announced once a few people are interested.

Thank you ❤️

A **Big Thank You** to everyone for the Thanksgiving/Fall Festival! Everything from the decorations, food, music and fellowship. It is so great to gather with our church family!

