

Coming This Month...

# Come, Let Us Adore Him!

*December*

*2 Men's Breakfast*

*Decorating Day*

*6 Deacons & Trustees Meet*

*6,13,20 Advent Services*

*11 WMF Christmas Luncheon*

*17 Caroling and Pizza*

*24 Sunday School Celebration*

*Christmas Eve Service*

*25 Christmas Day Service*



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Should we celebrate Christmas?

For many the celebration of Christmas is a rich tradition that reminds us of the importance of Jesus Christ taking on flesh, thereby fulfilling multiple Biblical prophecies, as well as marking the time when the Devil's evil plan for mankind began to crumble. It is an important holiday for Christians worldwide. Yet there are people who have made numerous claims that Christmas is in fact a pagan holiday, that it is actually rooted in the worship of a false god or gods, and that the various trappings of the holiday such as decorated Christmas trees, lights, and feasting are actually evil.

I want to briefly address some of the spurious claims about Christmas in this article, and help us to rest assured knowing that if we choose to celebrate Christmas, we can celebrate it with a clean conscience and jolly ole fun! First of all, Biblically it is neither wrong or right for a believer to set apart certain holidays to remember, or to celebrate an event such as the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Colossians 2:16-17 says, "Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ." (ESV)

God tells us in His Word that we can worship Him on Saturday (the original Sabbath day), Sunday (the new day Christians choose to worship God because Christ rose from the dead on Sunday), or on another day of the week because it fits better into our schedule. What's important is that we worship God. A further application of this Scripture passage is that if we choose to set aside a special holiday to worship God, and others don't like that holiday we have created, it's no big deal. We don't need to be worried about being judged by others, nor do we need to judge individuals based on special holy days they decide to use to worship God.

While we have the freedom to worship God in many different ways, and on different days on the calendar should we worship God on Christmas if it really has it's roots in pagan mythology? Before you answer that question, more information should be revealed on this issue. A belief that has gained traction fairly

recently is that Christmas was actually celebrated long before Christ came to earth and took on flesh. It has at it's roots an Egyptian Sun god named Horus who was supposedly born of a virgin on December 25<sup>th</sup> and even raised men from the dead. This claim comes from the writings of Gerald Massey (1828-1907). Massey was heavily influenced by Darwin and believed that the Christian "idea" evolved from other spiritual writings that predated Christianity. Is the concept of Jesus Christ a reworked idea of an Egyptian god named Horus as Massey claimed?

Massey's claims were put to the test shortly after he published them. Leading scholars of ancient Egypt found no validity in any of his claims about Horus and Christ, and many denounced Massey as a hack. Massey further damaged his credibility when he claimed that the Biblical character of Herod the Great actually comes from a myth about an evil snake called "Herrut." Not only is Herod the Great mentioned in the Bible as a real person, many historical non-Biblical documents also reference Herod the Great as a real man. Despite Massey's claims being denounced as blatantly wrong and false, some today still reference the Horus myth in an attempt to destroy the real significance behind the Biblical Christmas event.

This Christmas season I invite you to worship God with great fervor and passion. Our church is beautiful, and the extra decorations help to remind us that truly this is a special season to enjoy and worship God. Enjoy your Christmas tree, garland, lights and eggnog. Attend the Christmas concerts, parties, and family events. Regardless of whatever new trend or secret knowledge that has "recently been unearthed" involving the "truth" about Christmas, remember that we celebrate this season with Christ as the focal point. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6, ESV).

Pastor Rich Carr



## Worship With Us

8:45 A.M. Glad Tidings Radio 1370 A.M. 9:30 A.M. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship Services

## New Live Stream

The new livestream Subsplash app is now up and running. We live stream our 11:00 A.M. Sunday worship services on Subsplash. With the Holiday season upon us now we are also live streaming the Wednesday Advent Services, and both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day service. You can download the Subsplash app.. Not only does it give you just the current service but you can find the full library of past services that have been live streamed and search a particular service based on the topic of the sermon. The app also has a weekly Bible reading amongst other things. This is a great app for a cellphone which allows you to quickly connect but you are also able to chat and message in it. If you still prefer Facebook we are still there on our page but with the issues that Facebook has given us it was time to move away from them as a primary app. Sunday sermons are also posted on the same day on our YouTube channel. You can find links to all of these on our website at [www.bethanyfree.com](http://www.bethanyfree.com)



## Men's Prayer Breakfast

Will be December 2, 8:00 A.M. Cooking starts around 7:15 A.M. if you would like to help. We would love to have more men join us.

## Deacons & Trustees Meeting

Wednesday December 6, 5:30 P.M



## WMF Meeting

Women's Missionary Federation Christmas Gathering will be Monday December 11, 11:00 A.M. Potluck with a ham provided.

Hosted by Brenda Carr at her home. All Ladies Welcome!

## Bethany Sewing Ministry

December 7 at 10:00 A.M. They will resume on January 4th. All sewing skills are welcome. A lunch is provided. We work on quilts that mostly are sent to the AFLC Alaska Missions in Naknek, AK



## Brown Bag Ministry

Every Tuesday, 1:30 P.M. Weekly our Brown Bag Ministry prepares as many as 300 or more brown bag lunches that are distributed in the community, we are always grateful for any volunteers.

## Small Group Bible Study



Pastor Rich's SGBS will be meeting at his home Dec. 14 & 28 at 6:30 pm. Anyone is welcome to join. Call for information on other groups that may be meeting.



## Church Decorating

We will be decorating the church for the Christmas Season, Saturday December 2nd at 10 A.M.. Come and enjoy a festive morning of decorating.

## Advent Services

Wednesday evenings at 7:00 P.M., December 6, 13 & 20



## Christmas Caroling

Sunday December 17th 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 and swimming. You're welcome to bring veggies or treats to share.

## Sunday School

We will be having a special Christmas Sunday School on Dec. 24th at 9:30 A.M. we will be having doughnuts, cider, singing & crafts. Everyone is welcome to join us in celebrating Jesus's birth.

## Christmas Services

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

Christmas Day service at 10:00 A.M.



## Prayer & Praise Band

We will be starting a Contemporary Prayer & Praise Service in January. The group has been meeting Sunday evenings at 7pm to practice. They can always use singers and people who play musical instruments.

## Youth Fundraiser

The youth is collecting old candles to make Firestarter's with and then sell at a later date. If you have any old ones laying around they would love to take them off your hands.