



**Being human,
Being love**

225 East Exchange Street
Spring Lake, Michigan 49456

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www.christ-community.net

Christ Community Church is an open and affirming spiritual community. We are grateful to have you with us today. We invite you to introduce yourself to a staff member or Ministry Council host or fill out a pew card. Welcome!

Ian Lawton

Executive Minister, Preaching and Theological Inquiry

Bob Kleinheksel

Minister of Care and Social Justice

Allison Rockey

Communications and Outreach Ministry

Brad Vander Ark

Audio/Visual and Online Ministry

Roger Schuring

Facility Maintenance

Jacqueline Rose Fisher

Director of Fine Arts

Toni Van Dyken

Interfaith Minister and Spiritual Director

Kim Bazzy

Children's Ministry

Chad Beyer

Youth Ministry

Barb Kelly

Nursery Care

Alicia Grennan Stewart

Administrative Assistant

Brian Drabczyk

Sound Technician

Office Reception Hours

Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Building Hours

Monday - Thursday 7:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Celebrating the Birth of Genius

Sunday, December 21, 2008

Christ Community Church

Welcoming music

Variations of Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly

Jacqueline Rose Fisher

John Hebden Schaffner

Welcome and news of the community

Lighting the Advent candles

We light these candles to remind us of the divine spark within and between.

[Candles are lit during the Choral Welcome.]

Choral welcome

Domine Fili Unigenite

Sanctuary Choir

from Gloria by Antonio Vivaldi

The Birth of Genius

Look now! It is happening again! Love like a high spring tide is swelling to fullness and overflowing the banks of our small concerns. And here again is the star, that white flame of truth blazing the way for us through a desert of tired ways. Once more comes the music, angel song that lifts our hearts and tunes our ears to the harmony of the universe, making us wonder how we ever could have forgotten. And now the magi within us gathers up gifts of gold and myrrh, while that other part of ourselves, the impulsive, reckless shepherd, runs helter-skelter with arms outstretched to embrace the wonder of it all. We have no words to contain our praise. We ache with awe, we tremble with miracle, as once again, in the small, rough stable of our lives, Christ is born.

— Joy Cowley, *Aotearoa Psalms*

One: Christ is born in our lives as wise silence, as universal beauty, as the eternal One. When it breaks through our intellect,

All: It is genius;

One: When it breathes through our will,

All: It is virtue;

One: When it flows through our affections,

All: It is love.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson *The Oversoul*

Participants:

Preacher

Ian Lawton

Liturgist

Bob Kleinheksel

Organist

Jacqueline Rose Fisher

Musicians

Sanctuary Choir

Ari Beighley

Julia Yob

Betty Van Till

Sound booth

Brian Drabczyk

Video cameras

Brad Vander Ark

Ministry Council hosts

Randy Borns

Dave Register

Ushers

Gay Maria Ray (Captain)

Don Anderson

Aaron Dean

Renea Hesselink

Kristin Jolink

Todd Kuypers

Cathy Martin

Jean McCabe

Tom Webber

Gina Zornes

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C3 Kids and C3 Youth News

C3 Kids and C3 Youth will be focusing on the season of Advent in their programs today. They will also be looking at the ways Jesus was a social activist.

C3 Youth 7th & 8th Grade Students—

mark your calendars now for January 24 and January 25 for our lock-in and snow adventure. More details will come as the date nears, so stay tuned for this fun event!

***Hymn**

O Ancient Love

O ancient love, processing through the ages:

O hidden love, revealed in human form:

O promised love, the dream of seers and sages:

O living Love, within our hearts be born.

O homeless love, that dwells among the stranger:

O lowly love, that knows the mighty's scorn:

O hungry love, that lay within a manger:

O living Love, within our hearts be born.

O gentle love, caressing those in sorrow:

O tender love, that comforts those forlorn:

O hopeful love, that promises tomorrow:

O living Love, within our hearts be born.

O suff'ring love, that bears our human weakness:

O boundless love, that rises with the morn:

O mighty love, concealed in infant meekness:

O living Love, within our hearts be born.

words: Michael Joncas, tune: Londonderry Air

Children's concert

Lisa Chorny

Angel Band

Silent Night

We Wish you a Merry Christmas

Musical inspiration

Ari Beighley & Julia Yob

Where Are You, Christmas?

from Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas

Words and music by James Homer, Will Jennings, and Mariah Carey

Prayer

Bob Kleinheksel

Readings: Christmas is the sunrise on every human birth

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country,
⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

– Luke 1:39-45

Readings: Christmas is the sunrise on every human birth

Jesus came into the world to unveil the essence and scope of humanity. French philosopher Pascal said, it is through Jesus of Nazareth that we learn who we truly are, and what birth and death really mean. The genius of humanity is revealed fully in Jesus; that's why he stands at the centre of human history. However, with most people focusing more on the events surrounding his birth, the essence of Christmas itself tends to get lost.

God creates us with a mandate to embody love and compassion for the whole of creation. This makes our birth a significant and momentous affair. That is why Christmas is a celebration of life. Life is a festival; it is a celebration. This implies moving from the individual to the group, from the self to the world around. It is a mockery to celebrate Christmas and still remain oblivious of the purity, profundity and purpose of our own life. In a spiritual sense, Christmas is the sunrise on every human birth. It is a pointer to the worth of every human life and its unimaginable possibilities; it is an invitation to venture beyond the narrow range of our self-centred way of life.

— Valson Thampu

Sermon

Christmas is a Celebration of Genius in Every Person

Ian Lawton

Offertory

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

Jacqueline Rose Fisher & Betty Van Till

Chip Davis, Mannheim Steamroller

*Congregational song

Now Is the Season of the Year

*Now is the season of the year, in which we celebrate
The birth of one who taught that love has pow'r to cast out hate,
Who through his life gave all of us example, good and great.*

Refrain: *O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

*Not he alone, the sages all the great truth declare,
That if we work in harmony and have the will to dare,
Then we can make life paradise and all of life more fair. Refrain*

*Then let us join in amity with all who live on earth,
For ev'ryone the world around is born of equal worth.
And if with love we share our lives then sorrow turns to mirth. Refrain
tune: God Rest You Merry words: B. Payne*

*Blessing

The moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise occur... whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.

— Goethe

*Postlude

Jacqueline Rose Fisher

Upcoming events, programs & themes

Christmas Eve Gatherings

7:00 p.m. Family Program

You will not want to miss our incredible Christmas Eve gathering, The 'More' of Christmas. This program, perfect for families, features the story of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, the story of the Birth of Jesus, and even a special appearance from Santa Claus.

9:00 p.m. Carol Sing

Love Christmas carols? Join us for a 30-minute carol sing-along this Christmas Eve.

9:30 p.m. Christmas Eve with Vivaldi Gloria

Join us for a nostalgic Christmas Eve gathering including Eucharist, Christmas carols, telling of the Christmas story, and special choral presentation of Vivaldi Gloria with soloists Diane Van Wesep, Suzanne Velarde and Vickie Clock; and a String Quartet.

Sunday, December 28

As we look forward to the New Year with anticipation, we will begin with a reflection on the past by asking what gives meaning and purpose to our lives? How are our lives enhanced by religion and spirituality? How do our experiences of community impact our daily lives? Examining these questions will help guide our lives in the New Year. Bob Kleinheksel will be preaching this morning. The music will be a treat of Christmas Jazz by Checker's Morton.

Sunday, January 4

Don't miss the special treat of guest lecturer, Jim Burklo. We are honored to have such a well-respected kindred spirit on the progressive path with us for our gathering and a brunch and lecture following.

Church family news

Toni Van Dyken is recovering after surgery.

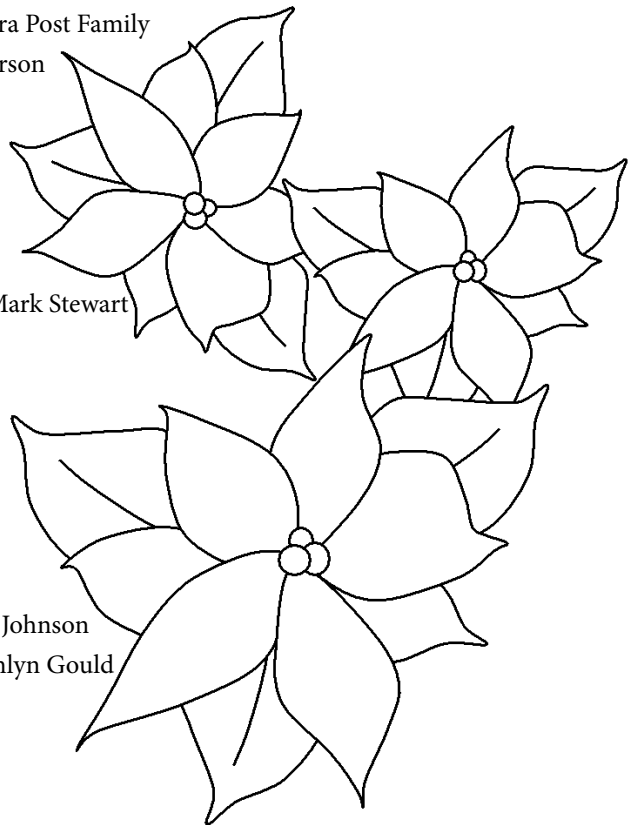


PLEASE RECYCLE THIS BULLETIN

The poinsettia flowers displayed in the Sanctuary have been generously sponsored in honor and in memory of loved ones who have greatly impacted this community.

In Memory of...

Jane & Chuck Stuthard by Cathy & Bruce Martin
Sybil & John Raeside, Irene Orłowski by Jack Raeside & Judy Leese
Everette Schwemin, & Esther & Bill Koski by Carol & Greg Schwemin
Bill Wasserberger & John Edwards by Ray & Sue Edwards
Frank Tosa, Jr. & John McAfoos by Tom & Kathy Tosa
Susan Werly Rosset, Gerritt Swiftney, Lillian Beghtol Gillhespy, David & Francis Nedervelt and Charles & Elizabeth Werly
by Karen Swiftney, Patti Werly & Monte Beghtol
Mary Jane Kars by Jennifer Jurgens
Bob Scheifile by his family
Ken Lyons by Alice Lyons
Sandy Betz, Meriwether Gilmore, Lucy Diebel by Park & Carolyn Gilmore
Menno Klouw by William & Kathy Klouw
Ethan Archer by the Flanders Family
WC Dingman & William Day by Robert & Anne Dingman
ER & Catherine Post; Adrianna Medendorp by Edward & Barbara Post Family
Charles Finkbeiner & Beatrice Anderson by Cindy & Don Anderson
Carl Juhl by Marji Juhl, Bud and Mic
Nicholas & Richard Dykehouse by Nancy Dykehouse & family
Doris Shell by Jeanne Shell
Gary Beyer & Nicole Beyer by Sally J. Beyer
Bob Scheifele by Brad Springer & Katie Alguire
Mildred Winona Grennan & John Edward Stewart by Alicia & Mark Stewart



In Honor of...

Lazaro, Louise & Eleanor Vega by Lesley VanLeeuwen-Vega
Our eight grandchildren by Bob & Nancy Halle
Ed Orłowski & our parents by Jack Raeside & Judy Leese
Our children Kate & Sy Spears & Zac Johnson by Wayne & Pat Johnson
Francile Boelens Schultz, Kristian, Emmeline & Delaney by Kathlyn Gould
Don and Cindy Anderson by The Scheifeles
Ruth Klouw by William & Kathy Klouw
The Clark - Stephens - Winebarger family by Shelly Stephens
Our children, grand & great by Len & Dorie France
Barack Obama by Roger & JoAnn Martin
Ian Lawton & Bob Kleinheksel by Kathlyn Gould