



From the Pastor's Desk...

DECEMBER 2020

Dear Cup family and friends,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and darkness has not overcome it. -John 1:1-5

These verses are some of the most famous in all of Scripture, and come near the end of our annual Christmas Eve festival of Lessons and Carols. John gives us the 'wide angle' view of Christmas. Rather than giving us a close up of a particular work of God in a particular time and place, as Luke gives us in 2:1-7 and 3:1-2, John spans all eternity in a single paragraph. And yet when we zero in on the pre-existent Jesus arriving on earth, we're shocked to learn that He receives a hostile reception.

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. -John 1:9-11

This 'darkness' isn't neutral toward the light, it's hostile. The word translated 'overcome' in verse 5 can also be translated 'understood', as in, 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not understood it.' Like so many of those intergalactic encounter movies, the powers on earth are threatened by what they don't understand. As a result, there's usually a battle where every weapon on earth is fired upon this unknown force. In the case of this true story, however, the weapons pointed against Jesus come not only from Roman spears, but proud, stubborn hearts, hardened by the demonic fury of hell. In defense? God offers the flesh of a baby, who grows into a humble, loving carpenter from Nazareth. The battle seems tragically, even grotesquely one-sided, and seems to end in a horrible execution on a hill by the city dump called 'the skull.' Yet John tells us, when the smoke clears, it is the Light, it is Jesus Christ that overcomes! In fact, we're told it is through the cross that Jesus' glory is seen (12:23-28, 13:31)

To all who did receive him, to those who believed in name, he gave the right to become children of God. . . The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. - John 1:12, 14

2020 has been a season of darkness for our planet in a way that we haven't experienced in quite a long time. The challenges are daunting for us personally, and as a community of faith. Many of you are risking your health and safety in order to help neighbors, patients, or family members in need. Please know that God is very aware of your plight, and Christmas reminds us that God is providing hope in place of despair, peace in place of fear, and light that overcomes the darkness.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. . . Out of (the Word's) fullness we have all received grace upon grace. The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. - John 1:6-7, 16-17

John the Baptist's job is now ours as Christ-followers in this generation. WE aren't the Light, but we bear witness to him, and his ability to overcome even the most fearsome storms. May this Christmas, this New Year provide daily reminders to you – and those you witness to! – of the light of God that will guide and deliver us home.

Blessings,
Pastor Scott



Cookie pickup for cookies ordered from the Crosscurrent Youth will be Monday 12/14 6p-7p and Tuesday 12/15 10a-2p. Thank you for supporting the youth mission trip and retreat fund.

The Church Office will be CLOSED December 24th, 25th, 31st and January 1st.



**Christmas Eve Worship
Thursday, Dec. 24th
4pm
CUP Church Parking Lot**



In an effort to better streamline the information that comes through the church office, Jenn will be creating a Microsoft Access Database with members information. This database will help us be more efficient in some of the routine office tasks such as creating labels for mailing and updating the directory.

We ask that each member please fill out the attached form and turn it into the offering basket or to the office by the end of the year. Forms can also be emailed to office@cupepc.org. Additional forms can be found on the entryway table or on the website www.cupepc.org.

Thank you for helping us go digital!

Pastor Scott will be out of the office December 27th through January 2nd.



Thank you to everyone who provided a 'faith promise' pledge for financial giving in 2021. This provides the best information we can receive from the congregation about the 'treasure' side of our ministry at Cup church, to go along with the 'time' and 'talents' that we offer. Last year, we received an average of \$2,760 a week in pledged giving. For next year to date, we are expecting an average pledged income of \$2,489 weekly. If you have plans to give financially to the church in the coming year, please contact the office at 724-843-1594. Any information you share is treated confidentially. And again, thank you for your ongoing generosity to the Lord's work through Cup Church.

In addition, our denomination's stated clerk, Jeff Jeremiah, sent a letter out to each church reminding us that the CARES Act passed this spring provides additional tax benefits for certain charitable giving until December 31, 2020. If you use a financial or tax advisor, ask them if you can benefit from this provision this year.

*For unto us
a child
is born.
To us
a son is given
Isaiah 9:6*



DECEMBER Calendar

<u>December 1</u>	5:45p DEACONS 7:00p Worship Committee
<u>December 13</u>	6:00p Crosscurrent 'Bob Ross' Night
<u>December 14</u>	6-8:00p Cookie Pickup 7:00p TRUSTEES
<u>December 15</u>	10-2:00p Cookie Pickup 7:00p SESSION
<u>December 20</u>	10:30am Lesson & Carols Service 6:00p Crosscurrent Christmas Party
<u>December 22</u>	6:00p Mini's YG Christmas Party
<u>December 24</u>	OFFICE CLOSED 4:00p Parking Lot Christmas Eve Service
<u>December 25</u>	OFFICE CLOSED
<u>December 27</u>	10:30a ONLINE ONLY Worship
<u>December 31</u>	OFFICE CLOSED



 * This reminder may be a little early, but *
 * as we look forward (or not!) to Winter *
 * weather, please remember that we are *
 * now linked with WPXI Channel 11 for *
 * any closings that may occur. *

Weekly Meetings...

Monday Afternoon 1:00pm
Adult Bible Study (Library)
 (Resumes in 2021)

Tuesday Evening 6:00pm
Mini's Youth Group ZOOM
 (NO Mini's 12/29)

Wednesday Evening 6:30pm
Young Adult Small Group

Thursday Morning 8:30am
Prayer with the Pastor - FB LIVE

Thursday Morning 9:00am (ZOOM)
Women's Small Group
 (Resumes 1/8/2021)

Thursday Afternoon 3:00pm
Crosscurrent 'Connect' ZOOM
 (No Connect 12/24 or 12/31)

Thursday Evening 7:00pm
Bell Choir Practice

Saturday Morning 7:30am
Men's Group @ Eat 'n Park
 (No Group 12/26 thru 1/23/21)

Sunday Evening 6:00pm
Crosscurrent Youth Group ZOOM
 (NO Crosscurrent 12/27)

The Legend of the Candy Cane

Many years ago, a candy maker wanted to make a candy at Christmas time that would serve as a witness to his Christian faith.

He wanted to incorporate several symbols for the birth, ministry and death of Jesus. He began with a stick of pure white hard candy; white to symbolize the Virgin Birth and the sinless nature of Jesus; hard to symbolize the solid rock, the foundation of the Church; firmness to represent the promise of God.

The candymaker made the candy in the form of a "J" to represent the name of Jesus, who came to earth as our Savior. He thought it could also represent the staff of the Good Shepherd, with which he reached down into the ditches of the world to lift out the fallen lambs who, like all sheep, have gone astray.

Thinking that the candy was somewhat plain, the candymaker stained it with red stripes. He used three small stripes to show the stripes of the scourging Jesus received, by which we are healed. The large red stripe was for the blood shed by Christ on the cross so that we could have the promise of eternal life. Unfortunately, the candy became known as a candy cane - a meaningless decoration seen at Christmas time.

But the true meaning is still there for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.



Merry Christmas!

Wow, 2020 has definitely been an interesting year with quite a few speed bumps! However we are so blessed at CUP Church to still be able to “gather” even if not in the way we are used to. Crosscurrent Youth are still meeting even though we are now fully virtual on Sundays. Please keep an eye on Facebook for updates. This past month we still had some nice weather which allowed for outside meetings for a time. Friendsgiving was virtual this year which made for an interesting night. Things will look different in December but we will still have fun!! Thank you to all who have supported the Youth Group with purchasing cookies from our sale to help with upcoming Mission/Retreat costs.

Crosscurrent Connect Group on Thursdays via zoom at 3-330pm is still happening!

Mini’s Youth Group will still be meeting Tuesday nights 6-7 via zoom. If you need more info on Mini’s please contact Ms. Joel.

With the world feeling upside down and down right scary at times I encourage you to allow yourselves time to breath this Advent Season. The youth have been given a daily devotional book to encourage them to open their hearts to a relationship with God! I strongly encourage all of us to do the same. Jesus is coming again friends! I look forward to that Beautiful Day! A friend shared a “new” Christmas song with me and as I listened to the words it touched my heart. I hope as you read them you see and feel the love your Savoir has for YOU! He was born to SAVE US! He wants your brokenness. You do not need to have it all together to come before the feet of Jesus. Bring him your problems. I promise he has the answers! Come to the feet of Jesus for his love is pure!

Praying daily for the CUP Church Family, our community and the world!

May the Peace of God fill your hearts and homes this Christmas Season!

Your sister in Christ,

Joel Cuniff

CUP Children and Youth Director



Crosscurrent Sunday's 6-715PM
December 6th
December 13th
December 20th Christmas Party
December 27th NYE Party TBA

Mini's Tuesday's 6-7PM
December 8th
December 15th
December 22nd Christmas Party

O Come, All You Unfaithful
Sovereign Grace

O come, all you unfaithful
Come, weak and unstable
Come, know you are not alone

O come, barren and waiting ones
Weary of praying, come
See what your God has done

Christ is born, Christ is born
Christ is born for you

O come, bitter and broken
Come with fears unspoken
Come, taste of His perfect love

O come, guilty and hiding ones
There is no need to run
See what your God has done

He's the Lamb who was given
Slain for our pardon
His promise is peace
For those who believe