

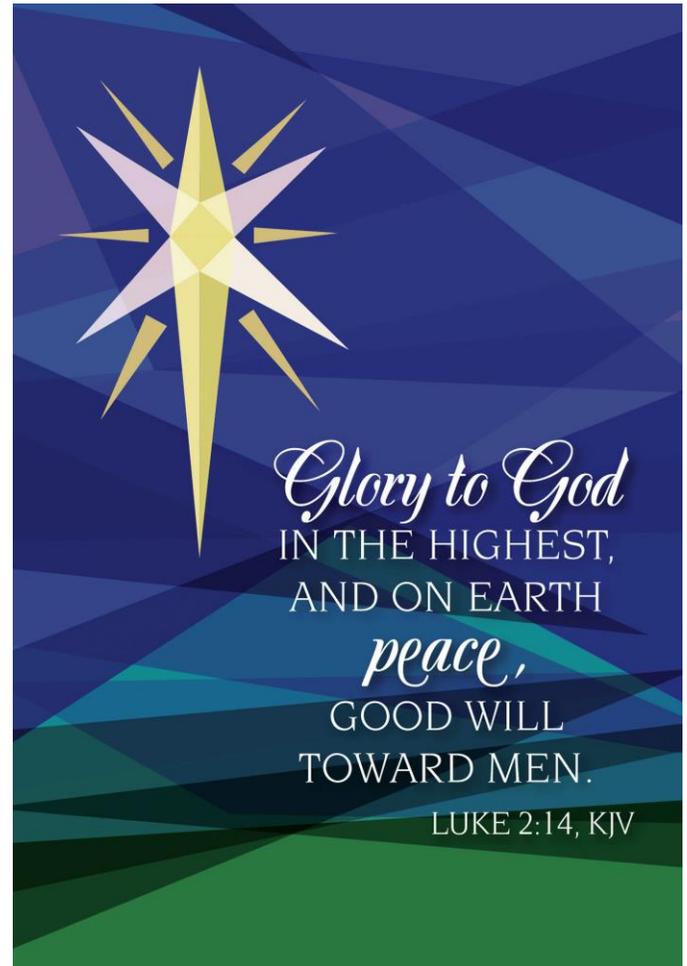
The 2020 Elections – A Kingdom Perspective

By Dr. Steven John Bassett

Most everyone reading this today is at least somewhat familiar with the present and continuing dilemma surrounding the 2020 elections. Each, with our own opinion, knows what the stakes are based on the outcome. Therefore, with much anticipation many remain postured to either rejoice or anguish over the results. There is no doubt there are key issues that remain uncertain until the legal processes conclude. However, what if we as citizens of heaven were to shift our focus off the possible outcomes of the election and just place our trust in God and His purpose in all this. In order to do this, we would have to set aside our own emotions, thoughts, and desires (our own will) to embrace God's will in this matter. We would also have to be willing to accept the reality that God's purpose in all this may or may not align with our own desires.

Therefore, for those who claim to be in Christ, this is a time to step back and realize that God is in control. Furthermore, as His servants, we need to place our trust in Him in all things during our stay here in this world. The scripture offers many examples of what this means. For instance, I am sure it was not Daniel's desire to be thrown into the lion's den, but because he was obedient in yielding to God's will he was thrown in with the lions against his own desires. Likewise, the Apostle Paul, against his own desires, was stoned, persecuted, thrown in prison, and eventually beheaded all because he chose to trust God as an obedient servant by surrendering to His will. Accordingly, I could go on and on with these examples, but I am confident you understand where our hearts and focus should be in all matters.

Consequently, those of us who are in Christ already know we are not in this world to pursue fulfillment of our own desires, even when they



appear to be noble. Instead, we remain here in this world for the sole purpose of fulfilling the desires of our Lord. Hence, as His disciples, we must follow His lead, which is and always has been to serve the kingdom of heaven by doing the will of the Father. Subsequently, whether the individuals we chose in this election win or lose, we must not lose sight of the fact that God is in control. Moreover, as citizens of heaven (foreigners in this world), whoever the elected leaders are in this world, the Lord our God is our King and Ruler. Thus, it is for this very reason we must serve **His kingdom** according to **His desires** in spite of our own personal desires.

The scriptures are filled with examples of God's will toward those appointed over us in this

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"A Kingdom Perspective," continued...

world. *"First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be offered for everyone—for kings and all those in authority—so that we may lead tranquil and quiet lives in all godliness and dignity. This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all—the testimony that was given at just the right time" (1 Timothy 2:1-6). "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which is from God. The authorities that exist have been appointed by God" (Romans 13:1). "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to the king as the supreme authority, or to governors as those sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorance of foolish men. Live in freedom, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. Treat everyone with high regard: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king" (1 Peter 2:13-17). "Remind the believers to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient and ready for every good work" (Titus 3:1).*

Therefore, we must pray for whoever is elected without partiality. Likewise, we must realize that we are citizens of heaven who are called to serve His kingdom first and foremost. *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and turn away from evil" (Proverbs 3:5-7). Finally, we must stop living as though this world is our home. "For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not from the Father but from the world" (1 John*

2:16). Hence, be in prayer for the things that are according to God's will and not our own will. Jesus said, *"So then, this is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:9-10).*



Please join us for our traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service on Thursday, December 24, at 7 PM. We will have a "lessons and carols" service with scripture readings telling the Christmas story. There will be lots of Christmas carols as we celebrate the coming incarnation of our Savior.

As with our Sunday Church Service there are limits on in-person attendance. We hope to live stream the Christmas Eve Service so others can worship with us remotely. Stay tuned for further details as the date approaches!



Elders' Corner

By Ed MacQueen

I pray this finds you well. It's a special time of year; having celebrated Thanksgiving last week, the Christmas season is now upon us! I confess I will miss many of the things which normally bring good cheer this time of year—holiday parties, the children's pageant, and our church Christmas dinner, to name a few. I expect you could make a list as well. I pray that in this time the Lord preserves you in good health and allows you to focus on the central themes of the season. Without so many of the usual activities we enjoy at Christmas, it's my hope that we will take advantage of the opportunity to praise God for the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ His son.

This season, as much as ever, God is to be praised for his goodness towards His people. Amid the tumult that has surrounded us for these eight months, God has not waived or let go. He has continued to provide for our daily needs, continued to encourage us when we need it most, and continued to have mercy on us when we lose faith or doubt His ways. By sending His Son to live among us and take our place on the cross, God showed that there was nothing He wouldn't do for His children. The same God is keeping us now, the only firm foundation in a constantly shifting world.

Last week my family read through the book of James, and I'd like to share a portion which I found especially timely. In the third chapter God drives home the importance of the tongue—*how great a forest a little fire kindles!* The scripture points out the inconsistency of a spring which brings forth both fresh water and salt. The scripture says this is the same inconsistency which arises when from the same tongue come praises to God and curses to men, who are made in God's image. It turns out to curse our fellow man is to malign the very God by whom he was created and is as illogical as a grapevine which bears figs. This lesson was a helpful reminder to me given the divisive times in which we find ourselves.

This Christmas season may we praise God for sending His son to live among us, and may we do so as springs which brings forth fresh water. While

our present circumstances are unlike anything we've seen before, the love and sacrifice of the Christmas message is unshakeable. Christ took on flesh, overcame every temptation common to man, and ultimately paid the price of sin so that everyone who believes would be free. May we faithfully bless His name this Christmas, for the life we have, for the love we share, and for the eternal hope we have through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Financial Update

(through October 31, 2020)

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want..."

| | Actual | Budget |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Income | \$170,087 | \$241,667 |
| Expense | \$221,866 | \$241,612 |

Windsor Chapel has sent \$32,738 to our missionary partners this year. That's 19% of your giving!

Communion

Join the Windsor Chapel family on December 6 in celebration of the Lord's Supper.

As you enter the church doors you will pick up an individually packaged set of elements—both bread and cup. The package opens from both ends making it quite easy to keep them separate.



For those uncomfortable with meeting inside, we have some options. There will be a closed container containing the elements outside the church doors during the week of December 1. You can pick up a set and celebrate with us live at home. If you are attending services on Sunday, you can pick up a set of elements from the foyer on your way in. Or you can come to church on Sunday, pick up the elements from a container outside the door, and tune into FM 88.9. You can hear the service live, celebrate together, and remain socially distant. It will be great to celebrate the Lord's Supper together, wherever you are.

Worship Team News

By Don Ober



The Miracle of Christ's Arrival

With Advent approaching this month our church bookkeeper, Helen Cull, who also plays keyboards for the worship team, will be discussing one of her favorite Advent songs. If there was ever a time to sing unto the Lord, Christmas and Easter would certainly be high on that list! Here is Helen's song report for December!

Hail the Arrival

By Helen Cull

When Don offered me the chance to share a favorite song for the month of December, I thought, "Great, there are so many songs I love about Advent and Christmas!" Then I realized, "Wait, there are so many songs I love about Advent and Christmas!" But it did turn out to be a fairly easy choice. For the last few years, the Worship Team has chosen one song with part of it to be sung each week after the lighting of the Advent candle. This year we will be using "Arrival" by Hillsong Worship.

This song captures the miracle that happened when the Creator of the universe chose to step down from His throne and enter His creation as a man. While I love the music that was written for this theme and, of course, there is a fun keyboard part that sounds a little like bells, it is the many word pictures illustrated by the lyrics that capture my imagination and expand my understanding of what happened that night 2000 years ago when Jesus was born.

When we think about the Christmas story, we usually look at Luke or Matthew. However, John offers a different view to make sure that we are in no doubt that the baby born to Mary and Joseph was Emmanuel, God with us.

"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...The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-3, 14)

The verses expand my thinking about what actually transpired when the Creator became a man – the artisan stepping into His painting, the architect inside His plan, the author climbing into the pages of His book and the playwright stepping into His play. The infinite God who has no beginning or end became confined in time, "the infinite, infant God" as the chorus says.

This all points to a purpose. *"No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made Him known."* (John 1:18) God knows us and wants us to know Him. This has been His plan since before the creation of the world and is expressed beautifully in these lyrics:

*The monarch of the stars, the King above all kings
The ruler of my heart and the Savior for my sins
The one who sees what lies in each and ev'ry soul
Embraced our finite eyes and now we can see our God*

I hope you enjoy singing this song with us as we prepare to celebrate "the arrival of our Maker (and Savior)."

Happy Birthday!

Blessings to all who celebrate a birthday this month. May you feel the love, joy and presence of the Lord as we all celebrate your special day with prayers and warmest wishes. 

| | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Tatiana Morozova | December 4 |
| John Ambrose | December 8 |
| Brenna Herrity | December 9 |
| Bryan Westbrook | December 9 |
| Bridget Bernheisel | December 10 |
| Stephen Masticola | December 15 |
| Kentaro Yamamoto | December 16 |
| Ethan Ventura | December 17 |
| Ed MacQueen | December 18 |
| Tosin Dada | December 21 |
| Karen Bruno | December 23 |
| Larry Berrill, Jr. | December 24 |
| Charles Muldrow | December 27 |
| Timothy Berrill | December 28 |

Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in
and among us*



By Cindy Bills

Immanuel

A couple of years ago, Ken and I had the privilege and pleasure of visiting Italy to celebrate our 40th anniversary. It was a glorious trip for us, and we were able to appreciate a gorgeous part of God's creation and the creative efforts His creatures. The most challenging part of our trip was that despite our "off-season" timing, we had to appreciate our surroundings with thousands of other tourists.

But on one occasion in Rome, we found ourselves in a relatively small church with very few visitors. We had just enjoyed a stunning tour of the Pantheon, a Catholic church converted from a Roman temple. Just behind the Pantheon is another Catholic church, this one built on the site of another Roman temple.

The basilica now known as Santa Maria sopra Minerva was quiet and dimly lit. The breathtaking architecture was topped by a beautiful blue vaulted ceiling. Artwork in the form of sculpture and painting was everywhere. As we approached the altar, we encountered a spectacular, larger-than-life marble sculpture of Christ, created by none other than Michelangelo.

Apart from the beauty, complexity, and power of the work, it was the location and position of the sculpture that caught my attention. The statue was on a fairly low platform with no barrier in place. It was readily accessible to any and all admirers. A sign was posted reminding viewers to not touch this magnificent work of art. But, Christ's right foot, which was most exposed to passersby, had been

touched, so much so that its toes were noticeably worn away.

As compelling as the desire to touch was, I obeyed the sign and admired the work by sight alone. The experience has stayed with me, though, and it has provoked me to think about it since that visit. I believe that the "Do Not Touch" sign was appropriate for that irreplaceable piece of High Renaissance art. But that sign is in complete contradiction to the subject represented by the art.

Jesus was anything and everything but "Do Not Touch." From His birth as a baby held in His lower-class mother's arms, to random children, to lepers, to the Samaritan woman, to unclean women, to sinners of both genders—Jesus spent His incarnation being approachable and touchable. And His life on earth ended with His sacrifice on the cross, covering our sins to pay for our access to the God's high, holy throne.

This is the essence of Christmas. The second member of the Triune God has become Immanuel, our accessible, personal God-with-us. Just as Jesus welcomed the prostitute who bathed Jesus' feet with her tears and hair, He invites us to touch His feet. And He is not a marble statue of great significance: He is of far greater worth! The Creator of the universe welcomes us into His presence. May we welcome Him into our hearts, homes, and lives....

Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557 or cynthialbills@gmail.com to continue the dialogue....

If you have any items or information you would like to share in the newsletter, please e-mail:

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An Open Letter to My Friend

By Janet Berrill

To My Friend,

I am writing this letter to give you a gift, although it may not seem like that to you. It is my hope that you will listen to what I have to say knowing that it is because I care for you that I write. I see something in you that I believe is hurting you. I had it for a long time, and I know how it hurt me. I still have it today to a lesser degree, but God has worked in me to set me free and the joy and peace I experience as a result are so worth the effort to get here.

Let me be specific. I am talking about pride. Pride is something that everyone has but few admit to. The more pride a person has, the less likely they are to admit it. Proud people tend to get angry and indignant if someone accuses them of being proud. Pride can take on many forms. As I said, pride ran deep in me, so I know a thing or two about it. Let me tell you about my experience.

I used to be very proud, especially within my family. Looking back, I can see the signs of pride in me: being defensive, justifying myself, anger, unwilling to listen to advice from others ("Who are you to tell me what to do?"), always thinking I was right.

Let me give you some personal examples: one time I drafted a letter and asked Larry to read it over. He had some suggestions on how to make it better. Rather than change the letter, I explained to him why I chose to write what I did. I became defensive and justified what I had written. In hindsight, I realized that I was being proud. When I asked him to look it over, what I really wanted was for him to tell me it was a great letter the way it was. After all, I was always right and certainly something I wrote could not be improved. A second example: if Larry made a suggestion about something I could do differently with the kids or around the house, I would get angry—who was he to tell me my way was wrong? I know what is best, not him. The pride in me would not allow me to listen to what he

had to say, even if it was beneficial. I believed that I was always right, and I certainly knew better how to take care of the kids!

Then one day in church God spoke to my heart through the sermon and told me that it was okay if I didn't do everything perfectly. His grace was sufficient. This was a personal message from God to me that changed my life. It was okay for me to be wrong. I no longer had to defend my way or justify what I did. It was so freeing! After coming home from church I remember Larry offering me some advice related to the kids and he started with, "I know you're going to tell me why what you did was right, but ...". And I remember thinking in my head, "NO! Actually, I'm not going to! I'm not going to defend myself because it's okay if I am wrong! What do you suggest?" It was so freeing!

Now, I didn't go from being a proud person to being humble in an instant. I can choose to want to not be a proud person, but I find myself incapable of stopping the pride. Thanks be to God that He wants to rid me of pride even more than I want to get rid of it, and He is capable of taking it from me.

What do I do? In my prayer time I ask God to continue to set me free from pride because I can't do it myself. I acknowledge my dependence on Him and tell Him that I want to cooperate with Him as He works to set me free from pride. Then, during the day if I feel the Spirit's nudge pointing out to me that I am being proud, I thank Him for showing it to me, confess that I am being proud, and ask Him to free me from it. As God continues to work in me to rid me of pride, I am experiencing peace like never before. And that is the gift I want you to have.

I have told you how God has worked and is still working in me to rid me of pride, but that is my story. You have your own, and it will be different than mine. But the end result will be the same if you decide you want to be free of pride. There will be a new peace and joy that you haven't experienced before. It will change your life. Let me know if you want to talk further with me about this.

Your sister in Christ,

Janet

