

December Newsletter 2015

To Know Christ,
To Make Him Known,
To Build His Kingdom.

From The Pastor:

Each year at Christmas time we all get swept up in the Christmas Spirit, we celebrate, we eat copious amounts of food, and we exchange gifts. I would like us to pause and consider what we are actually celebrating, namely the incarnation. We are celebrating the fact that God became human in the person of Jesus Christ. Here are four thoughts Tim Keller gives that we must take in to account if as the hymn says that in Jesus we can “veiled in flesh the Godhead see”.

First, **if Jesus is God**, it is not enough to simply believe in him or even to obey him. He is to be worshipped (2 Corinthians 3:18), reveled in, savored, and rejoiced in. The purpose of our lives is to behold his glory and beauty (John 17:24.) Jesus is God—and therefore he should be the ultimate beauty and satisfaction for our heart. Second, if Jesus is God, he must be given the central priority of our lives. Jesus’ claim to be God is a polarizing statement. If he is not who he said he is, he should be mocked or utterly ignored. If he is who he said, he is he should be adored completely—we should center our lives entirely around him. Jesus is God—and therefore he should be the pre-eminent concern of our choices, the ultimate Lord of over our wills. Third, if Jesus is God, his salvation is of infinite value. His blood was shed as a ‘ransom’ (Mark 10:45) to pay for our sins. But his blood was the blood of God (Acts 20:28)! Imagine how valuable that is! He is able to save ‘to the uttermost’ (Heb. 7:25-King James Version.) No sin is too great to be forgiven; no corruption is too great to be healed. Jesus is God— and therefore he should bring complete rest and assurance to our consciences. Fourth, if Jesus is God, then salvation is by grace. In every

other religion the founder is a human being sent by God to show us what to do to be saved. But Jesus is God come himself. If we could save ourselves by our performance, God would have only needed to inform us what to do for salvation, and he could have sent a prophet. His personal coming, however, means he did not just tell us what we had to do to be saved, but he did for us all that we could not do ourselves.

It is equally important that we understand that if **Jesus is also really fully human** it has great practical importance for our lives. We should have the ability to recognize the humility it took for Christ to lower himself to our status and not be taken in by appearances. It means we should not fall victim to the false idea that only the spiritual is important, but matter also matters. It means that no matter what we face in this life we should find great hope because he became human to penetrate the darkness and make all things new. Lastly we should take comfort when we suffer because he has known our sorrows.

The incarnation means that for whatever reason God chose to let us fall into a condition of being limited, to suffer, to be subject to sorrows and death—he has nonetheless had the honesty and the courage to take his own medicine... He himself has gone through the whole of human experience—from the trivial irritations of family life and the cramping restrictions of hard work and lack of money to the worst horrors of pain and humiliation, defeat, despair, and death... He was born in poverty and... suffered infinite pain—all for us—and thought it well worth his while. — Dorothy Sayers

Consider these things and have a very Merry Christmas!

Pastor Jason

Sunday Morning Schedule

Bible Studies for All Ages 9:30

"The Gospel Project"

Children's Sunday School ~ Infants - 6th grade
In the Fellowship Hall classrooms

Youth Bible Study 7th – 12th grade
In the Fellowship Hall

Adult Bible Study
In the Youth Room of the Parsonage

Worship Service

10:30 - 11:30

Fellowship following service

Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols

December 24th

6:00 pm.

Wednesday Night Bible Study

**Bible Study does not meet on the first
Wednesday of the month.**

**In observance of Christmas Bible Study will
not meet on Wednesday, December 23rd.**

In the Sanctuary at 7:00pm we will be studying
The Gospel of Mark.

Join us for a time of prayer, singing, and bible
study. Pastor Jason will be teaching.

Children's Ministry in the fellowship hall
classrooms, they are learning from The Jesus
Storybook Bible.

Youth Ministry Intern

St. Paul Evangelical Church is currently looking
for a Part Time Youth ministry intern.

The goal of this position is to provide a point
person for our youth age students (7th-12th).

This is a critical age group and we hope to
provide opportunities for growth, discipleship,
and of course fun for them through a Christ
Centered, Gospel Focused youth ministry. We

have reached out to area Seminaries and
College Campus Ministries looking for potential
candidates. If you know someone who might
be interested, we would love to hear from
them. All inquiries and applications should
come to Pastor Jason.

Upcoming Events

SPEC Supper Club

Wednesday, December 2nd at 6:00 pm.
They will decorate the Fellowship Hall at 4 pm.

Women's Fellowship

Annual Christmas Party

Thursday, December 3rd at noon. Christmas
party, spiral ham provided, please bring a side
dish and/or dessert. Secret Pal gift exchange.
Homebound baskets this year will be quilts.

For more information, please contact the
church office at 210-658-5874.

Cibolo City Parade Participation

St. Paul will participate in the 2nd Annual City
of Cibolo Holiday Parade and Holiday
Extravaganza Saturday, December 12, 2015.

All are invited. A sign-up sheet, in order to
make sure we have enough room, will be on
the hall table. We will be riding on a flatbed
trailer. Dress in Christmas attire. We will sing
Christmas carols. We will meet at 8:30 am at
Everyday Christian Church, 950 N. Main St.
The parade starts at 10:00 am and will end at
City Hall. Santa will come for a visit! Parents
bring your cameras. Holiday vendors will be at
city hall from 10 am to 7 pm. School choirs will
perform. For more information, please contact
the church office at 210-658-5874 or by email
at admin@StPaulCibolo.com.

Christmas Program and Potluck Meal

Sunday, December 13th will be the Christmas
Program during worship service in the
sanctuary, followed by a potluck meal. Please
bring a dish and enjoy good fellowship and
food with friends and family.

**The Sewing Sisters ~ December 10th
In observance of Christmas, they will not
meet on December 24th.**

They meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month in the parsonage from 9-11 am. All are welcome to come and enjoy good fellowship and ministry. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

Council Meeting

Monday, December 14th at 7:00 pm

11th Annual Christmas Breakfast

St. Paul will again host a community wide free breakfast on Thursday, December 17th from 8:30 – 10:30 am. All are invited and welcome.

There will be delicious food, door prizes, entertainment, fun and fellowship.

Volunteers are needed to serve.

Donations of baked goods, either store bought or homemade would be greatly appreciated as well as donations of items for door prizes and gift bags for the door prizes. Please contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

Taking Down of the Greens

Saturday, January 2nd, at 10 am. All are invited to come and help take down the Christmas decorations. Many hands make light work. For more information, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

General Announcements

Christmas Sock & Mitten Tree

Benefiting Guadalupe Valley Family Violence Shelter in Seguin. Socks and mittens/gloves for boys and girls size infant to 17 years as well as socks and mittens/gloves for women. Just pin them to the Christmas tree in the hall. If you have any questions, contact the church office at 210-658-5874. Donations will be accepted through December 20th.

Operation Christmas Child

The church would like to thank all those who participated in our sixth year of Operation Christmas Child. 25 boxes were collected. A special thank you to the Ford family for heading up this wonderful ministry

and delivering the boxes to a designated drop off site.

Flower Calendar

Fellowship Servers / Ushers

For the 2016 year we have a sign-up sheet for each, flowers, fellowship serving and ushering. They are on the wall in the Fellowship Hall for your selection of a Sunday.

Sign up early in order to choose the Sunday you prefer.

Church Offices Closed

In observance of Christmas & the New Year the church offices will be closed Thursday & Friday, December 24th & 25th and Thursday & Friday, Dec. 31st and Jan. 1st.

Advent Readers

If you would like to volunteer to light an Advent Candle and do the readings, there is a sign up sheet in the hallway.

Christmas Eve Service

~9 Lessons and Carols~

Readers needed for scriptures during the worship service. Please see Pastor Jason if you would like to volunteer.

Prakash Mission Challenge

Thank you to all who donated, the challenge has been met!

Liturgy Sign Up

If you would like to contribute to the worship service by reading the liturgy, there is a sign up sheet on the table in the hallway.

Contact Information Needed

If you are a member and took directory pictures, we should have updated information on you and your family. If you have an e-mail address that the church might not have, if you are a regular attendee but haven't formally joined the church we would ask that you fill out the "Guest Card" attached to the bulletin or provide the church Secretary with your information. We are gearing up to bring many new ministries and would like to be able to contact you in the manner you prefer, i.e. telephone, e-mail, or regular post, to inform you of the details.

Service Opportunity

If you are looking for a way to serve the church and like working with computers, we have the perfect spot for you. The A/V Team runs the computer and sound for the service on Sunday mornings. You would be able to serve the church and not miss worship. The computer part is a simple program to use and the sound board is basic as well. Please consider sitting upstairs for a Sunday or two in order to find out what all is involved. For more information, please contact Beth Johnson at 210-658-5874 or by e-mail at Beth@StPaulCibolo.com.

SPEC Supper Club ~ Community Outreach

Preparing and serving a meal for the needy of the community once a month on the first Wednesday. Your thoughts and prayers are appreciated as we attempt to help our brothers and sisters that may need a helping hand. Donations as well as volunteers are always welcome. Please see Rich A, Don & Marion D, or Willie & Ann S.

Women's Fellowship

Recycled Card Program

In Support for St. Jude's Children's Homes

Used greeting cards, front cover only, can be dropped off in the designated box located in the Fellowship Hall. They will then be sent to St. Jude's Children's Home, for use by Kids' Corp., a program of the children at St. Jude's Ranch to learn entrepreneurship skills. The children participate in making the new cards by attaching a new back and then selling them. For information on purchasing of cards go to http://www.stjudesranch.org/help_card.php. For more information please contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

Prayer Team

If you are willing to receive e-mails or phone tree messages with prayer requests, please give Pastor Willie Stratemann your e-mail address or phone number.

Ushers and Greeters

If you can help usher on Sunday mornings, please sign up on the sheet in the

Fellowship Hall or contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

Women's Fellowship

Cookbooks Available

The cookbooks are available in the church office or after church in the Fellowship Hall. They are \$15.00 each and have over 800 recipes. They would make a wonderful gift for family and friends.

R.A.C.A.P. Pantry Needs:

RACAP is still in need of sponsors for their Christmas Holiday Meal Basket Program, with the most urgent need being sponsors willing to provide gifts for children ages infant through 17 years of age. If you are willing to sponsor a family for the meal and/or gifts for children, please let Beth Johnson know as soon as possible. RACAP is also in dire need of the following items for the regular food pantry as well as the items listed below for the Holiday Meal Baskets we are preparing.

Holiday Items Needed: Chicken broth / Flour Stuffing Mix / Granulated Sugar (4 lb. bag) / Brown Sugar (1 lb.) / Evaporated Milk / Canned Pumpkin / Yams / Fruit Cocktail / Cranberry Sauce Green Beans / Corn

Regular Pantry Needs: Breakfast cereals – hot and cold / Peanut Butter & Jelly / Ramen Noodles / Spaghetti Sauce & Pastas / Meat Helpers / Canned Meats (no tuna) / Canned Fruits Macaroni & Cheese / Dish Soap / Laundry Detergent

Reminder: Due to health regulations R.A.C.A.P. is not allowed to accept any donations that are not in their original container or have been opened.

Read Through the Bible in a Year program from Tabletalk daily devotional
(Tabletalk is \$23/year and can be ordered at 1-800-435-4343)

December Readings

Old Testament: Ezekiel 47 - Malachi 4
New Testament: 1 John 3 - Revelation 22

Notification of Events - If you would like to be notified of St. Paul events, via Google calendar alerts, please send your e-mail to admin@stpaulcibolo.com with a notation for e-mail alerts.

If your church organization needs an announcement put into the Newsletter, the cutoff date is the 23rd of the month and if you need an announcement put into the bulletin, the cutoff date is Tuesday of that week at noon.

Church Office Hours ~ Monday - Friday
8:00 am to 12:00 pm

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 16

42 Q. Since Christ has died for us, why do we still have to die?

A. Our death does not pay the debt of our sins. Rather, it puts an end to our sinning and is our entrance into eternal life.

43 Q. What further advantage do we receive from Christ's sacrifice and death on the cross?

A. Through Christ's death our old selves are crucified, put to death, and buried with Him, so that the evil desires of the flesh may no longer rule us, but that instead we may dedicate ourselves as an offering of gratitude to Him.

44 Q. Why does the creed add: "He descended into hell"?

A. To assure me in times of personal crisis and temptation that Christ my Lord, by suffering unspeakable anguish, pain, and terror of soul, especially on the cross but also earlier, has delivered me from the anguish and torment of hell.

Lord's Day 17

45 Q. How does Christ's resurrection benefit us?

A. First, by His Resurrection He has overcome death, so that He might make us share in the righteousness He won for us by His death. Second, by His power we too are already now

resurrected to a new life. Third, Christ's resurrection is a guarantee of our glorious resurrection.

Attendance for October 26 - November 22

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Exodus 20:8

As His custom was, Jesus worshipped on the Sabbath day. Luke 4:16

Date	Worship	Nursery	Total
November 1	93	4	97
November 8	68	4	72
November 15	65	2	67
November 22	73	7	80

Giving Report for October 26 - November 22

"Bring the whole tithe into...My house, and test Me in this," says the Lord Almighty,

"and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of Heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it."

Malachi 3:10

Undesignated (env/checks/loose plate)	12,732.52
Communion	27.00
New Building Fund	150.00
Building Use	800.00
Prakash India Mission	2,280.00
R.A.C.A.P.	900.00
SPEC	10.00
Pass Thru	597.90
E. A. Minister	100.00
Pumpkin Patch Profit	2,836.43
TOTAL	20,433.85

Weekly undesignated giving average for this time period was: \$3,183.

Weekly undesignated giving needed to meet budget is \$3,488.

St. Paul Staff

Jason Ford, Pastor

Jason@stpaulcibolo.com

Elaine McIntyre, Organist

tindo@gvec.net

Beth Johnson, Secretary

Beth@stpaulcibolo.com

Robert Webb, Custodian

Webbsondra@yahoo.com

St. Paul Evangelical Church

Historic Downtown Cibolo

{Corner of Main Street and Loop 539}

108 S. Main St., Cibolo, Texas 78108

Telephone {210} 658-5874

Serving the Lord since 1876

A mission-focused, kingdom-building family of Christ-followers seeking to be faithful to
Jesus' Great Commission {Go and make disciples ...} Matthew 28:19 and
His Great Commandment {Love the Lord your God ... and your neighbor as yourself.} Luke 10:27