



BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF W.A.

For the Testimony and Glory of Jesus Christ

December 18th, 2016

SUNDAY COMBINED WORSHIP SERVICE

1 Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father
And to the Son
And to the Holy Ghost,
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
World without end.
Amen. Amen.

Preparatory Hymn

Kenny Tan

Prelude

Winnie Lim

Call to Worship

Dn Joel Wong/Sonny Lim

*Hymn

HOP 4 Holy, Holy, Holy

*Invocation/Gloria Patri 1

Responsive Reading

Psalms 119:49-56

Hymn

HOP 212 How Firm a Foundation

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings

*Doxology 2/Offertory Prayer

Scripture Reading

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

Hymn

HOP 313 Lord, Speak to Me, that I May Speak

Pastoral Prayer/Message

Pastor Joseph Poon/Yew Jinn Chieng

Love Never Fails

*Hymn

HOP 251 O To Be Like Thee!

*Benediction/Threefold Amen

Announcements

*The Lord Bless You and Keep You 3

*Congregation Standing



Theme for 2016: "SANCTIFIED, AND MEET FOR THE MASTER'S USE" (2 Timothy 2:21)

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PASTORAL LETTER

Dear BPCWAians, can we celebrate Christmas? I felt it would be useful to address this question this week because there are some Christians who are against celebrating it. Let me first begin by making it clear that celebrating Christmas is not wrong. The important considerations in celebrating Christmas are the motives and the way in which Christmas is celebrated. There are typically 4 major objections against Christmas, which we will deal with.

Objection #1: Christ was not born on 25th December. It is granted that no one can ascertain the date and it was likely not even to have been in December. However, Christians do not celebrate Christmas because we believe it was Christ's exact date of birth. Our motive is to remember the Birth and Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. And to do so, we gather to worship and to adore Him. That is why we sing, "Come and behold Him, Born the King of Angels; O come, let us adore Him,...Christ the Lord. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning, Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n; Word of the Father, now in the flesh appearing!" Well, some may say, "we can do that everyday". But if so, why should Christians be against it when, once a year, Christians around the world gather in their churches to exalt and praise God for the coming of Christ the King and Saviour? We are celebrating a momentous event, not a specific date.

Objection #2: Christmas has pagan roots and traditions. There are different renderings of the origins and historical reasons of Christmas. The Romans, Greeks, and Persians did celebrate pagan religious festivals which were linked to 25th December. So, some Christians in those times would celebrate the birth of the Saviour, in contrast to the worship of the false pagan gods. For

those who argue that we cannot celebrate Christmas because there happens to be an apparent link to pagan gods, then they should also denounce the naming of the 7 days of the week. This is because each day is linked to and named after a pagan god: Sunday (sun god), Monday (moon god), Tuesday (Tiw - god of war and law), Wednesday (Wodan - all father of gods), Thursday (Thor - god of thunder), Friday (Frigg or Venus goddess of fertility and love), Saturday (Saturn - god of agriculture). So does it mean that we should not use Sunday for worship because there is a link to the sun god? We celebrate Christmas in reverence to Christ our Lord, which is why we do not include what the pagans do in their celebrations. We do not have reindeers, Santa Claus, elves, mistletoes, or include any superstitions, myths, or fables.

Objection #3: The Bible is against observing holy days. Some quote Gal 4:10-11 “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. (11) I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.” Paul was speaking against keeping special occasions as if such observances would contribute to their salvation. We do not celebrate Christmas thinking that we gain merit from God in any way. We do so in love and adoration, in remembrance of His coming to save us. The Bible does show that God’s people held annual celebrations in worship, remembrance and thanksgiving to God for major events. For instance, Purim (Esther 9:26-32) was a Jewish festival. Our Lord Jesus did not rebuke the Jews, but did Himself attend the Jewish annual celebrations such as “Feast of the Dedication” or Hanukkah (John 10:22). Based upon these evidences, we know that it is not wrong for the church to celebrate Christ’s birth by having special annual worship services to praise God, especially for the gift of His only begotten Son, the Saviour.

Objection #4: Christmas is highly commercialised. We are certainly against the drunkenness, ungodly revelling, materialistic and inordinate spending and shopping that characterises the world. But just because the world distorts what Christians intend for the praise and worship of God, it does not mean that we should stop organising a yearly thanksgiving and remembrance of His Incarnation. The world perverts sex and marriage. But we do not stop getting married because of that. Without a doubt, we should not participate in the world's carnal hedonism at Christmas. Instead it is a time wherein we should spend remembering the Christian's reasons for celebrating Christmas - Christ's Birth, God's Promise of the Saviour, God's Glorious Son becoming Man to save man, and sing "Glory to God, all glory in the highest"! Moreover, it is also an opportune time for the Gospel message in Christ's birth. It is a time when carols and messages tell the Glorious Gospel story... Luke 2:14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Yours in our Lord's service
Pastor

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRAISE & PETITION

- 1. Mandarin Care Group Meeting** will be held tonight in church. Dinner will begin at 6 pm followed by message at 7 pm. We will begin a new study on the series “The Christian Armour” (Ephesians 6:10-18). Brother Yew Jinn will be speaking. Please bring a dish to share. All are welcome.
- 2. Christmas Gospel Meeting & Carolling** is on this Friday. Please meet at 6:50 pm for Carolling at 7 pm with the Gospel Meeting beginning at 7:30 pm. Invitations available in the foyer also include details about our Christmas Day worship service and Christmas lunch. Pray for this outreach and do invite your friends and family to come.
- 3. Parking** is available at both sides of the church. Please look for parking in the other section if one side is full. But if parking is full at both sides, and you do need to park behind another vehicle, please move it away immediately after service so that others can leave.
- 4. Christmas Service:** Will be held on 25th December together with the 10 am Sunday Worship Service. Do invite family and friends to join us for our Worship service to give thanks for God’s gift of His Son for man’s salvation. All are welcome to stay for Christmas lunch following Service next Sunday. Since photographs of the children’s Christmas song item will be published on our church facebook page (Bible-Presbyterian Church of WA (BPCWA)), parents are requested not to move to the front to take photographs during the Worship Service.
- 5. Watchnight Thanksgiving Worship Service:** Will be held on Saturday, 31st December 7:30 pm. Do come to give thanks and praise to God for His preservation through the past year.

6. Far Eastern Bible College online courses: The closing date to register for these courses is December 25th. If you wish to enrol, please fill out the form on the foyer table, and hand it to Mark Heath with the course fees.

7. Thanksgiving and Prayer Items:

- Thank God for the opportunity to continue to proclaim God's salvation in Christ during this Christmas season. May all of us use this opportunity to spread the gospel to those around us.
- Pray for the Mandarin Care Group meeting tonight that God will use this to edify His saints and build bonds with each other. Pray for brother Yew Jinn as he prepares the message.
- Pray for the Christmas Gospel meeting's planning and preparation, as well as the Christmas fellowship lunch to follow.
- Pray that God will direct the 2017 planning for all activities to build up saints in the church.
- Pray for the Sunday School teachers to continue to faithfully teach the children about God through His Word.
- Pray for those seeking employment and the spiritually discouraged to find direction, grace and joy in our Lord and His Word.
- Pray for those returning to their home countries or travelling during the year end, that they will stay close to the Lord while they are away.
- Pray for continued unity of BPCWA. Pray that God will call a full time resident Chinese Minister to BPCWA according to His will and timing.

SERVICE DUTY	18/12 COMBINED	25/12 CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE
Speaker/Interpreter	Pstr Joseph Poon/Yew Jinn Chieng	Pstr Joseph Poon/Yew Jinn Chieng
Worship Leader/Interpreter	Dn Joel Wong/Sonny Lim	Dn Michael Lee/Dn Joel Wong
Prep Hymns	Kenny Tan	Jason Tey
Musician(s)	Winnie Lim	Sharon Poon
Welcomers (Foyer)	Claude Yiu, Esther Yiu, Mark Heath	Eddie Foo, Carol Wee, Albert Ho
Offering Stewards *To Help Count Offering	*Dn Adrian Cheng, *Yi Choong Liew Eugene Leong, Edward Ee, Mark Heath Dn Michael Lee	*Caleb Cheng, *Kenny Chia, Jason Tey Eddie Foo, Pei Shion Chai Dn Stephen Chia
Ushers (Sanctuary)	Yi Choong Liew, Ellainne Cheng Lilian Cheo	Edward Ee, Yi Jye Chieng, Yi Mey Tan
P.A. System	Albert Ho	Yi Choong Liew
Kitchen Duties	Lilian Cheo, Irene Yap, Yi Jye Chieng Valerie Wan, Edward Ee	Yi Min Chieng, Yi San Chieng Lily Liow, Shuin Ning Jong
Transport	Eugene Leong (0401 155 386) / Allan Ang (0433 032 709)	

Old Folks' Home Ministry		
Subiaco	Edward Ee (Hannah Th'ng)	Yew Jinn Chieng (Hannah Th'ng)
South Perth	Hall A: Yew Jinn Chieng Hall B: Caleb Cheng	Hall A: Pstr Joseph Poon Hall B: Allan Ang
Berrington	Edward Ee (Hannah Th'ng)	Yew Jinn Chieng (Hannah Th'ng)
Bull Creek	Kenny Tan	Mark Heath

APPOINTMENTS OF THE WEEK			
Tuesday	20/12	10:00 am	Mandarin Bible Study
		7:30 pm	Prayer Meeting: Pstr Joseph Poon/Yew Jinn Chieng, Kenny Tan, Yung Tsing Mew
Friday	23/12	7:30 pm	Christmas Gospel Meeting & Carolling
Sunday	25/12	8:30 am	Pre-Service Prayer Meeting
		9:00 am	English & Mandarin Sunday School/English & Mandarin Basic Bible Knowledge Class
		10:00 am	Christmas Worship Service
		12:15 pm	Church Van Depart
		2:00 pm	Nursing Home: Concorde – 25 Anstey Street, South Perth Onslow Gardens – 39 Hamersley Road, Subiaco
		3:30 pm	Nursing Home: Berrington, Subiaco – 45 Bishop St, Jolimont Bull Creek – RAAFA Memorial Estate, 2 Bull Creek Drive, Bull Creek WA 6149

ATTENDANCE & OFFERINGS (11/12)

Attendance: 189 (Combined-155; JSS-34); Prayer Meeting: 66

Offerings in Total: \$8158.70; General Fund: \$8158.70

(#4154-Library-\$70.00; #4155-\$71.00; #4156-\$57.50; #4157-\$377.50)

SHORTER CATECHISM: Which is the second commandment? The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:4-6; Deuteronomy 5:8-10)