



# CHRIST CHURCH PRESS

The Monthly Newsletter of Christ Church, Presbyterian  
4201 Southern Pines Drive, Evans, Georgia, 30809

Volume 8, Issue 12

December 2012

## Born of the Virgin Mary

by R. C. Sproul

### Birthdays

- Dec. 03 ..... Vic Chrjapin
- 04 ..... Marita Myers
- 05 ..... Martha Holley
- 06 ..... Allyn Dyer
- 08 ..... McDonald Law
- 09 ..... John Clark
- 10..... Aaron Caruso
- 11..... Paul Lyday
- 11..... Natalie Parish
- 12..... Mike Boyd
- 12..... Oliver Brown
- 18..... Owen Long
- 18..... Al Lovingood
- 18..... Brian Marter
- 19..... Catherine Norkus
- 27..... David Chew
- 31..... Whit Caldwell

### Anniversaries

- Dec. 12.... Mary Lou & Richard Turner
- 17..... Jane & George Bowen
- 28 ..... Margaret & Scott Doss
- 31..... Maria & Roy Emerson

Along with the great theologian and philosopher Anselm of Canterbury we ask the question, *Cur deus homo?* Why the God-man? When we look at the biblical answer to that question, we see that the purpose behind the incarnation of Christ is to fulfill His work as God's appointed Mediator. It is said in 1 Timothy 2:5: "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself ...." Now, the Bible speaks of many mediators with a small or lower case "m." A mediator is an agent who stands between two parties who are estranged and in need of reconciliation. But when Paul writes to Timothy of a solitary Mediator, a single Mediator, with a capital "M," he's referring to that Mediator who is the supreme Intercessor between God and fallen humanity. This Mediator, Jesus Christ, is indeed the God-man.

In the early centuries of the church, with the office of mediator and the ministry of reconciliation in view, the church had to deal with heretical movements that would disturb the balance of this mediating character of Christ. Our one Mediator, who stands as an agent to reconcile God and man, is the One who participates both in deity and in humanity. In the gospel of John, we read that it was the eternal Logos, the Word, who became flesh and dwelt among us. It was the second person of the Trinity who took upon Himself a human nature to work out our redemption. In the fifth century at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, the church had to fight against a sinister teaching called the Monophysite heresy. The term *monophysite* is derived from the prefix *mono*, which means "one," and from the root *phusis*, which means "nature" or "essence." The heretic Eutyches taught that Christ, in the incarnation, had a single nature, which he called a "theanthropic nature." This theanthropic nature (which combines the word *theos*, meaning "God," and *anthropos*, meaning "man") gives us a Savior who is a hybrid, but under close scrutiny would be seen to be one who was neither God nor man. The Monophysite heresy obscured the distinction between God and man, giving us either a deified human or a humanized deity. It was against the backdrop of this heresy that the Chalcedonian Creed insisted Christ possesses two distinct natures, divine and human. He is *vere homo* (truly human) and *vere Deus* (truly divine, or truly God). These two natures are united in the mystery of the incarnation, but it is important according to Christian orthodoxy that we understand the divine nature of Christ is fully God and the human nature is fully human. So this one person who had two natures, divine and human, was perfectly suited to be our Mediator between God and men. An earlier church council, the Council of Nicea in 325, had declared that Christ came "for us men, and for our salvation." That is, His mission was to reconcile the estrangement that existed between God and humanity.

It is important to note that for Christ to be our perfect Mediator, the incarnation was not a union between God and an angel, or between God and a brutish creature such as an elephant or a chimpanzee. The reconciliation that was needed was between God and human beings. In His role as Mediator and the God-man, Jesus assumed the office of the second Adam, or what the Bible calls the last Adam.

*continued on page 2*

## Born of the Virgin Mary (continued)

He entered into a corporate solidarity with our humanity, being a representative like unto Adam in his representation. Paul, for example, in his letter to the Romans gives the contrast between the original Adam and Jesus as the second Adam. In Romans 5, verse 15, he says, "For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many." Here we observe the contrast between the calamity that came upon the human race because of the disobedience of the original Adam and the glory that comes to believers because of Christ's obedience. Paul goes on to say in verse 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous." Adam functioned in the role of a mediator, and he failed miserably in his task. That failure was rectified by the perfect success of Christ, the God-man. We read later in Paul's letter to the Corinthians these words: "And so it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living being.' The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man" (1 Cor. 15:45).

We see then the purpose of the first advent of Christ. The Logos took upon Himself a human nature, the Word became flesh to effect our redemption by fulfilling the role of the perfect Mediator between God and man. The new Adam is our champion, our representative, who satisfies the demands of God's law for us and wins for us the blessing that God promised to His creatures if we would obey His law. Like Adam, we failed to obey the Law, but the new Adam, our Mediator, has fulfilled the Law perfectly for us and won for us the crown of redemption. That is the foundation for the joy of Christmas.

From Ligonier Ministries and R.C. Sproul. © Tabletalk magazine.

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## Our Christmas Traditions: Why Do We Do That?

Traditions have meaning, but it's possible to observe them, even for years, without fully appreciating their meaning. At Christ Church, there are two very visible traditions in our observance of Advent: the Advent Wreath and the Chrismon Tree. Here's some insight into "why we do that."

### The Advent Wreath

The five candles of the Advent Wreath each point to the long-awaited coming of our Savior. Each Sunday during Advent the number of candles lit increases as a representation of our greater longing for the appearance of the Messiah.

The word "Advent" means "coming." At Christ Church we observe Advent as a reminder that we live between the times: after Christ's coming as the Child of Bethlehem, and looking forward to His second coming as the King of Glory. The first purple candle, known as "The Prophet's Candle" signifies the hope of the coming Messiah seen in the prophecies of the Old Testament. *"Hear now, O house of David! ...the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:13-14*

The second purple candle, known as "The Bethlehem Candle" reminds us that God in Christ appeared to men in the most humble manner. Bethlehem was a small town in the territory of the least powerful of all the tribes of Israel. *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." Micah 5:2.*

The rose candle, lit on the third Sunday of Advent, is called the "Shepherds' Candle." It reminds us that the angels announced the most glorious news of the birth of the Savior to simple shepherds outside of Bethlehem. Upon hearing the message, these shepherds departed immediately to find Mary, Joseph, and the newborn baby. *When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. Luke 2:15-16.*

The third purple candle, the last to be lit in the outer circle of the wreath, is known as "The Angels' Candle." It represents the message of peace with God through Christ that the heavenly host delivered on the night of the Messiah's birth. *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" Luke 2:13-14*

The white candle in the wreath's center is called "The Christ Candle," and is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Sunday to symbolize the birth of Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, the Light of the world. *Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." John 8:12*

# Our Christmas Traditions: Why Do We Do That? (continued)

## The Chrismon Tree

If you've ever worshipped at Christ Church during Advent, you know that there is another tradition that we observe: the Chrismon Tree. Unlike a Christmas tree, the Chrismon Tree is a proclamation of the Gospel of Christ in symbolic form. The word "Chrismon" comes from two words: "Christ" and "Monogram." Traditionally, Chrismon ornaments are handmade from gold and white materials and represent the birth, life, death, resurrection, and reign of our Lord, Jesus Christ. The Chrismons on our tree were made over the past few years by members and friends of our congregation. A Chrismon tree is an evergreen, symbolizing the eternal life we have through Christ's sacrifice for us. White lights are used on the tree to represent Christ, "the light of the world" (John 8:12). At some point, having a nativity scene or ornament became a Chrismon Tree tradition. See if you can find the nativity ornament on our tree among the Chrismons.

As we consider our Chrismon Tree this Advent season, let us turn our hearts again to the message of salvation and remember our Savior's life and work.



## Mark Your Calendar

Friday, December 7 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Westminster Schools  
Christmas Choral Concert

Friday, December 14 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Christmas Fellowship

Sunday, December 16 @ 6:00 p.m.  
Christmas Festival Service

Monday, December 24 @ 5:00 p.m.  
Christmas Eve Service

The church office will be closed:  
December 25  
January 1

## Missionary Spotlight

### Missions Update – December, 2012

Please be in prayer for these missionaries and agencies during December. As you pray, consider the needs you would have if you were in their place such as:

- Trusting the Lord in all things,
- Having the spiritual and physical strength to complete the tasks before them,
- Being patient, kind and gentle in their service,
- Having courage in demonstrating the love of Christ.

### Missionaries Prayer Focus

- Paul Volpitto, Augusta School of Biblical Studies (ASBS), Augusta, Georgia
- Bruce and Barbara Wannemacher, Mission to the World (PCA), South Africa
- *Missionaries in harm's way*
- AGAPE Ministry, Augusta, Georgia

### Praise and Prayer Requests

*Eliseo and Paula Guadagno, Operation Mobilization, Italy*

- Thank God for His goodness towards Eliseo and Paula as they were recently able to take a long weekend away by themselves. This is something they have not been able to do in a long time, so it was a great blessing.
- Pray for the financial situation of the OM training center where they work. A course they had planned to teach, "OM Arts School of Mission," was recently cancelled, causing them financial difficulty. Please pray that the Lord will provide for their needs.

*Heritage Academy, Augusta, Georgia*

- Pray for members of the Heritage Academy staff who have health issues.
- Pray that God would fully supply their support needs.
- Pray for spouses of staff members who are not fully employed.
- Pray for Heritage to offer Gospel-centered responses to parents.

*Tim and Lana Higginbotham, NAIM, Vancouver, Canada*

- Pray for the transition to new software for NAIM to go more smoothly.
- Pray for a spirit of unity on the NAIM Team, that differing views will not hinder the work of the ministry.
- Pray that young people who attended the annual Youth Winter Retreat and made new commitments to Christ will remain committed to the faith in spite of the difficulties they will face at home.



## A SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 6:00 P.M.

*Christ Church, Presbyterian  
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## December Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Worship 7:30 p.m. Youth Gathering (Townsend Home)		7 p.m. Joint Session / Diaconate Mtng	7 p.m. Choir Christmas Rehearsal	9:30 a.m. Women's Morning Bible Study (Townsend Home) 7 p.m. - Adult Bible Study (Moncrief Home)	7 a.m. Men's Prayer Meeting 7 p.m. Westminster Schools Choral Concert	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
11 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Worship			7 p.m. Choir Christmas Rehearsal	9:30 a.m. Women's Morning Bible Study (Townsend Home)	7 a.m. Men's Prayer Meeting 7 p.m. Christmas Fellowship (Covenant Hall)	2:30 p.m. Choir Christmas Rehearsal
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
11 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Christmas Festival Service					7 a.m. Men's Prayer Meeting	
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29
11 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Worship  11 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Worship	5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship	CHRISTMAS DAY			7 a.m. Men's Prayer Meeting	