



“Where God’s Love Transforms Lives”

Worship at CITD

Covid 19 Update: Our on-campus worship services and activities are temporarily suspended. While we are unable to worship together in person, we continue to worship online each week. Please join us. Worship services are available each Sunday at 10:00 AM. [Click here](#) to view the current worship service. Together, WE ARE THE CHURCH!

This Sunday, Rev. Galene Boyett will give the sermon which is entitled, **Baby John: What Will This Child Become?** The scripture is **Luke 1:57-80**.

Zoom Meetings This Week

December 20 - Fellowship Time, 11:00 a.m. ([click to join](#))

December 20 - Sunday School Class, "The Psalms: An Expression of Life", 2:00 p.m. ([click to join](#))

December 21 - Men's Bible Study, 7:00 p.m.

December 22 - Tuesday Women's Bible Study, 11:00 a.m. ([click to join](#))

December 22 - Prayer Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m., ([click to join](#))

December 24 - "Come As You are Christmas Eve", 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

December 24 - Traditional Christmas Eve Worship Service, on-line, 7:00 p.m. ([Click to join](#))

"Come As You Are Christmas Eve"

On Christmas Eve (December 24), from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., enter the south parking lot from Sweetwater and you will find Christmas Music, Gifts for the Kids, Bell Choir and prayer intercessors. At 7:00 p.m., our online Christmas Eve Worship Service will start and as with our other services it can be watched anytime after 7:00 p.m.

Online Worship Service Advent/Christmas Sermon Series

During Advent, we undertake a sermon series based on the book “Five Questions of Christmas” by Rob Burkhart. Each Sunday of Advent we will explore a person involved in the Christmas story and their question to God. Then we will explore two more people in the Christmas story, before finishing our series with the question of the Magi at Epiphany. The series will discuss Zechariah, Mary, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, the shepherds, Joseph, and the magi. Join us online during this holy season for this special series.

How to Pray a Christmas Carol

When you sing, you pray twice—even if you’re the only one who can hear it this year.

by **Rick Hamlin**, Posted in **How to Pray**, Dec 11, 2020

Christmas is coming and music fills the spheres (not to mention the playlists and earbuds). Normally this time of year I’d be singing in choir or joining friends at holiday parties, singing carols around a fire. Can’t do that this year. Ugh.

But though I’m not singing in big groups, doesn’t mean I can’t turn to the carols. Load a few up, listen to the words, hum along. In fact, you can pray a carol as well as sing it. As the old saying goes, “When you sing, you pray twice.” Even if you’re the only one who can hear.

Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn king.

That first Christmas started with the angels singing to the shepherds. Add your voice to the chorus. I used to wonder why God would need us to praise Him. Then it dawned on me: it’s not just for God; it’s for us. Praising God makes you feel good.

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie.

God brings miracles to the most unlikely places and most unexpected people. Nothing grand or fancy about Mary and Joseph, and Bethlehem was just a tiny speck on the map. And yet God chose that place and those people, like God chooses us.

The third verse of this carol has one of the loveliest lines: “Where meek souls will receive Him, still/The dear Christ enters in.” What a prayer! Let Christ enter in.

It came upon a midnight clear, That glorious song of old.

Not only can God’s choices be unexpected but so can His timing. In the middle of the night, in the midst of our darkness, in the waning days of a pandemic, the message comes: “Peace on earth goodwill to men/From heaven’s all gracious King!” Peace for us. When we need it.

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed.

This was one of the first songs I ever learned. I was barely out of the crib myself. The lyrics are the perfect lullaby and prayer, even for grown-ups.

Look at that third verse: "Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay/Close by me forever,/And love me, I pray..." Then, now and for all time. Don't wait for Christmas. Sing it now. Sing it six months from now. Sing and pray it anytime.

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright.

Not for nothing, this one is everybody's favorite carol. Having a rough day? Feeling particularly anxious? Just hum it to yourself. Languish in that calm, that reassurance. All will be well. God is in charge.

The last verse is the best sort of Amen possible. "Silent night, holy night,/Son of God, love's pure light/Radiant beams from Thy holy face/With the dawn of redeeming grace,/Jesus, Lord at Thy birth..." Feel the heavenly light dawn inside of you. It's the love of Jesus. Pure light.

Amen.

The Psalms: An Expression of Life

CITD's Sunday afternoon Zoom Bible Study is a study of Psalms. Pastor Galene will lead this study and supply notes to participants.

The Psalms are considered a reflection of our lives: our joys and sorrows, our doubts, fear, complaints and celebrations. They are needful expressions of our community's faith, as well as speaking to individuals.

Bring your Bible, start a notebook of your own reflections on the Psalms, and join us on Zoom at 2:00 p.m. on Sundays. If you want to receive study notes, contact the church office with an email address where the notes can be sent. Also, please state if you need a PDF, or if Word format will work.

Fellowship Time Zoom Meeting - 11:00 a.m. on Sundays

The Fellowship Time Zoom Meeting is now at 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. Join us after worship and visit with your church friends.

New Worship Committee

Pastor Galene would like to form a worship committee. Anyone interested in adding their thoughts or elbow grease to worship activities should contact her as soon as possible. Contact Pastor Galene at 602-992-1960 or pastor@crossinthedesert.org

Volunteers to make Phone Calls to follows up on Membership Information Forms

We need volunteers to help make phone calls to members who have not returned their Membership Information form that was mailed in September. Please call the church office (602-992 -1960) if you would like to volunteer to make phone calls or give us any missing or incorrect information for your Membership Form.

We are looking for people who would like to be liturgists on our pre-recorded worship services. If you are interested, please call Linda in the Church Office, 602-992-1960.

If your small group is meeting via Zoom, please let Linda in the Church Office, 602-992-1960, know so that we can keep the church calendar up-to-date.
