

## **These Holy Days: *By a Different Drummer***

Rev. Scott McGinnis - First Presb. Church of Newton, KS - Dec. 12, 2021

Wise men (and the Little Drummer Boy) brought Jesus gifts at the first Christmas. Frankincense, Myrrh, and a Drum Solo. Wise men and women, boys and girls, do the same thing today. How do we bring Him gifts today in the absence of Him being with us physically?

We listen to a different drummer, the drum beat, shall we say, of the Holy Spirit. Stay in step with the Spirit and we will find Jesus. Jesus says He comes to us in those who are hurting, those who feel far from God's love. What do we then do? We show them our love. Yes, our love. How do we show our love at Christmastime? Gifts, cards, e-cards, coffee-times, dinners, brunch.

How did God show His love at Christmas? Baby Jesus. Sunday School answer. At the first Christmas, God showed His love in the form of a newborn baby when life was very messy for His people. It was a real display of God's love.

How startling it is that God would show His unending love by being born a child. A child in need of help, a baby who needed love and nurture. Yet how often is our true need to love, not just be loved.

God then lived His terrible two's, his adolescence, and his acne faced years. God showed up and his great aunts

pinched his cheeks until they hurt and he lived in human form as a child and so God knows what it is like to live our lives. Jesus lived everything this life has to offer to be with us and for us and to show us His love. Jesus as a helpful newborn that first Christmas and Jesus now the Savior of the World is worthy of our love.

And we know that this love comes back to us, because God is love. A pastor friend once said, *“If you want to know what God the Father looks like, look at Jesus. If you want to worship God the Father, worship Jesus. Because Jesus is always pointing to the Father, showing us the Father, glorifying the Father.”* There in the relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is a loving relationship we’re invited into. When we see the Father’s heart through Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, we see the Father’s heart is one that pursues us wanting us to accept His love.

Today, as it was at the first Christmas, to proclaim that “Jesus is our hope” is to walk to the beat of a different drummer. Christmas is the celebration and remembering that God pursues us to love us. God is the first mover.

This week I have a Christmas assignment for you. Bring a gift to someone considered unlovable. Give it as a gift of mercy to someone outside of your normal Christmas giving. Someone at New Jerusalem Mission, or New Hope Shelter, or the staff at a favorite restaurant, like

Curtis C's. Maybe gifts or a thank you note for the volunteers at Newton Medical Center.

This winter there will be people slipping through the cracks of our economy and our families and they may need help. How can you show them love this Christmas? We are called at Christmas and all year through to look for and serve those in need. We can let the light of Christ shine in our lives through the way we love others.