

# *The Master's Message*

## *The Newsletter of the Church of the Master*

### *December, 2025*

*Virtual Adult Bible Study*  
*Wednesday, 7:00 PM*  
*Saturday, 12:00*

*2783 Lafayette Avenue*  
*Bronx, N.Y. 10465*  
*718-597-6298*

*Sunday Worship*  
*Sunday 11:00 am*

[WWW.COTMBRONX.ORG](http://WWW.COTMBRONX.ORG)

*Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden, Pastor*



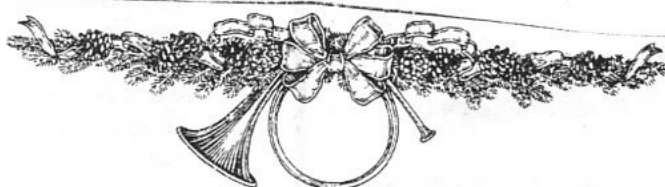
# Christmas Gifts

When people think of Christmas, they think of gifts. But those gifts are there because of the Greatest Gift of all, Jesus Christ our Lord, born as a baby in a manger in the little town of Bethlehem so long ago. While he himself is the Gift, he comes bearing gifts with our names on them that we need to treasure and share.

**FORGIVENESS** Unwrap the very special gift of forgiveness, which each of us needs, even if we don't think we do. All of us are indeed born sinful and cannot free ourselves of our sinfulness on our own. We need our Savior Jesus, who is born a sinless baby to take our place on the cross to rid us of every sin.



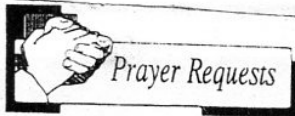
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## \*SPECIAL DATES\*

- Second Sunday of Advent, December 7<sup>th</sup>
- Third Sunday of Advent, December 14<sup>th</sup>
- Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21<sup>st</sup>
- First day of winter, December 21<sup>st</sup>
- Christmas Eve, December 24<sup>th</sup>
- Christmas Day, December 25<sup>th</sup>
- New Year's Eve, December 31<sup>st</sup>

## \*News From the Pews\*



Continue praying for:  
Allen Ford, Carole Mahon,  
Loretta Byrd, John Bruno,  
Alice & Alex Rivera

Our **Online Bible Study** meets  
Wednesday at 7:00 PM and Saturday at 12:00.  
Contact Ron Rivera (917-716-8273)  
for information on joining



## DECK-THE-HALLS

is scheduled for Friday,  
December 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM.  
Please come help decorate the church  
for the Christmas season.



## Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a symbol of watchfulness and increasing joy as we anticipate Jesus' birth. The wreath's circular shape symbolizes eternity, or life without end. The candles remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World — he brought light and life to a dark world (see John 1:4-5). On each of the four Sundays of Advent, we light a new candle. As the light grows, so do our hope and joy.



## \*CHURCH CHUCKLES\*

Uncle Bill had the reputation of being a curmudgeon. He always seemed to have something to grumble about. Bill's friends and family were used to his demeanor and usually took it with a grain of salt. One year, while Bill's relatives were decorating for Christmas, his young nephew wondered aloud, "Do you think Uncle Bill will put up a negativity scene again this year?"

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A pastor had Christmas dinner at the home of a couple in his church. After he left, the wife said to her husband, "I think he stole a dinner knife!" This bothered her for a whole year. A year later the couple had the pastor for dinner again. Unable to resist, the wife asked, "Did you steal one of our dinner knives last year?" The pastor replied, "No...I put it inside your Bible."

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The pastor performed a beautiful wedding ceremony and had been asked to give a speech at the reception also. The father of the bride went over to the minister and asked, "Would you like to begin your speech now, or should we let everyone enjoy themselves a little while longer?"

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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The director of the Christmas pageant is still looking for wise men. No experience necessary



## Our hearts' desire

As his parents labored on a foreign mission field, their young son attended school in America. When Christmas Day came, the school's headmaster tried to cheer up the boy. The headmaster asked what he most wanted for Christmas.

For the boy, the answer came easily. He pointed to a framed picture of his father and said, "I would like most of all for my father to step out of that frame." (No doubt he felt the same way about his mother.)

The deepest meaning of Christmas is about God's stepping out of the "frame" of the universe, out of heaven, and revealing the greatest love ever seen among men.

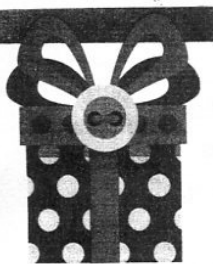
John's account of this Good News sums it up: "And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14, NRSV).



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Traveling in the company of those we love  
is home in motion.

Leigh Hunt



**PRESENCE** The present that blesses us all because of Christmas is the presence of Christ with us always. God who sits on his throne above in heaven, out of his great love for us, sent his Son to earth to be with us. Christ was born both God and man that he might fully know us as human beings and bring us power from on high.



**HOPE** For the Children of Israel, it seemed like all hope was gone. Thousands of years had passed without the coming of a Savior that God had promised to their ancestors and through the prophets. But then Christ was born, and the gift of hope came with him. Because of the Christ Child, all hope was restored in the promises of God and in the future yet to come.

**PEACE** The angel choirs announce the wondrous gift of peace to the shepherds on the Bethlehem hillside on that first Christmas night. The earth, more than ever, is in need of peace from our Prince of Peace. The peace that our Savior brings goes straight to the hearts of each one of us. It provides us with calm certainty that we are in good hands with our God and we will never be separated from him.



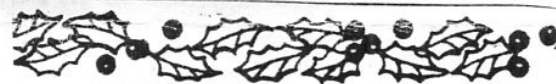
## Dining during the holidays

The American Diabetes Association recommends eating mindfully and planning ahead for the holidays. Have a snack on hand to prevent low blood sugar or keep tabs on your sugar and/or alcoholic beverages. Remember, if you overdo it at one meal, don't give up. Try following the plate method: Fill half your plate with vegetables, a quarter with protein and a quarter with carbohydrates.



**LOVE** Many people call Jesus "love incarnate" because he reveals the very love of God in human form. Jesus would spend his ministry declaring to the people to love God and to love each other, just as he has loved us. His love is seen most dramatically in his sacrifice on the cross for us and his resurrection from the dead. Christ's gift of love is a love that is unconditional, never fading and ever growing deeper.

**GRACE** Through the coming of Christ, who was born, died and rose for us, we now live in his amazing grace. This sweet sound of freedom allows us to live without shame, guilt or fear. Our lives are released from all that held us back that we might glorify him abundantly.



**JOY** The Christmas angel said the Good News was of great joy. This gift of joy is a spiritual state of mind that recognizes that we are blessed in every circumstance by the birth of Christ. Our joy in Jesus celebrates that even when we are sad or struggling, our Savior is among us to comfort and encourage and guide.







## December Newsletter Article – Joy to the World, the Lord is Come!

December brings the joy of the blessed Advent Season. Despite the cold chill of winter, our hearts are warmed as we reflect on and celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Our Heavenly Father is the giver of every good and perfect gift. Some 2,000 years ago, God gave us the greatest gift humankind has ever known, on that Christmas morn, God sent us Salvation in the person of his only begotten Son, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, his earthly mother. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." (2 Cor. 9:15). May we not allow the grinch of the world to steal our joy this Advent Season. Let us instead focus on the beauty of the Season. Let us remember the lyrics of the gospel song "This joy that I have, the world didn't give it and the world can't take it away!" Let us not allow the commercialization of Christmas cause us to lose the hope and the joy of the Season. Let us remember that Jesus is the reason, and the only reason, for the Season! Most importantly as we praise God for the birth of our blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ, let the true meaning of the Season sustain us! Let the wonderful sounds, sights and smells of Christmas lift our spirits. May all your Christmases be filled with Hope, Peace, Joy and Love as we join our voices to sing the ageless Christmas song—

"Joy to the World the Lord is Come, Let earth receive her king,  
Let every heart prepare him room, And heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing."

Shalom to you now and Merry Christmas to all!

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden  
Pastor  
Church of the Master

### Christmas is proof

Christmas is a time to be happy! ... A time for celebrating and sharing. For God stoops down to be one of us, born as a poor baby so that we can be rich. He does not leave us to get along as best we can. He joins us where we are. God is committed to us. Christmas is proof that God cares. That is why we celebrate — and show our care in turn to those who need it.

—F. Hebart



- "At Bethlehem, God demonstrated that to love is to give."

