



Calvin Commentary

Come celebrate Christmas at John Calvin!

Cantata “Christmas Oratorio” 10:30AM on December 14

Presented by JCPC Chancel Choir, Organ, Soloists, Harp, Strings
(from the LA Philharmonic Orchestra)

Christmas Luncheon immediately following the Cantata

Please bring a dessert to share.

Lunch is sponsored by The Presbyterian Women

Christmas Eve

5:00PM: Family Service (Children take part in the service)

7:00PM: Lesson and Carols, Candlelight Service, Communion

- **December 5: White Elephant Party**

- **December 13: Christmas Angel Breakfast**

- **December 14: Cantata and Luncheon**

- **Christmas Eve Worship**

5:00PM and 7:00PM



From the Study Window

Advent is a four week period in which the church, joyfully remembers the coming of Christ and eagerly looks forward to His coming again. Beginning with the Sunday nearest November 30th, the season is observed for the four Sunday's prior to Christmas. The season of Advent came into being toward the middle of the sixth century. At first, the Advent Season was defined as the six Sundays leading up to Christmas. This was then reduced to four Sundays by Pope St. Gregory the Great (591-604).

Before the seventh century, Christmas was a secondary dimension of the life of the church. But as it came to take on more and more importance, so did the season of Advent. As this was occurring, Advent became more solemn. It moved just from being a time to prepare for Christmas, to a time to look forward to the glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Today, Sunday's of Advent reflect this double perspective of waiting for the Second Coming of Jesus and preparation for the celebration of incarnation.

God's incarnation in our midst did not come in the form of some instant or earth shattering event that immediately changed the corridors of world power. Instead God chose to come into the world as we all do, as a baby who was laid in a manger, in the midst of a chaotic world. God did not choose to make

himself known to us as an angel or a superhuman spirit, but as a human being. In so doing, God put the divine stamp of approval on human life. Christmas, the incarnation of Christ, means that what God wills and accomplishes in the world is not the creation of religious people but the creation of human beings. Not just the salvation of our souls but the renewal of our flesh and blood humanity; not the ability to escape from our human existence but the ability, thankfully, to accept and courageously, to live fully human lives both now in this world and in the new heaven and earth to come. In this same incarnational way, God comes to us day by day, through the working of the Spirit, and through the Scriptures and the Sacraments, making the ordinary extraordinary; the broken whole; and redeeming and restoring the past, present, and future.

This message of Advent is clear in the lectionary readings for the season. Together they create a vision which gives us a glimpse of the salvation God is accomplishing. We do not need to spend our time trying to figure out exactly when Christ will return or worrying about the things that may happen in the meantime. God's reign has already broken into our world through the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ. His Kingdom is near and it is coming, even as it is already arrived but not fully realized. We are to remain watchful, and aware, and to be prepared for the

final coming. In the meantime we are to share God's love with the world that desperately needs such love.

In Christ's Service,

Rev. Harry Brown



Children and their families are invited to attend the JCPC Fifth Annual

CHRISTMAS ANGEL BREAKFAST

Saturday, December 13th

In the JCPC Fellowship Hall

Reservations required for one of two seating's:

9:00-10:00 am

Or

10:30-11:30 am

Seating is limited.

Come enjoy

Pancakes, Sausage, Fruit Salad

Chocolate Milk and Fruit Juice

Christmas Carols and Crafts

Hear a special reading of the Christmas Story



Photos with the Christmas Angel by the Christmas Tree

Please RSVP by Friday, December 5 to laurierobinson.pmo@gmail.com

And indicate a choice of seating time with the number in your party

Please bring a donation of travel size toiletries for Program of Hope for the Homeless

MUSIC NOTES by William R. Memmott

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

...and so is the Christmas Concert and Luncheon at John Calvin Presbyterian Church. On Sunday morning, December 14 at 10:30 a.m. the church will resound with soloists, chorus, strings (from the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra), harp and organ in a full performance of Camille Saint-Saens' "Christmas Oratorio."

Each year as I choose the special seasonal music, this magnificent lyrical work comes to mind. But it is scored too high for our forces to manage with beauty. The only solution was to transpose the out-of-range sections so the soloists and chorus can more easily manage them.

The Christmas story is simply sung with familiar texts from the Bible, especially focusing on those used in the traditional Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning services. Saint-Saens' melodies (he was 23 when he wrote this piece) are beautiful, and the instrumental accompaniments are lush with Romantic expressiveness, especially the harp for the trio "My soul doth magnify." Following a Wednesday night choir rehearsal I find myself humming the "Alleluia's" the next day.

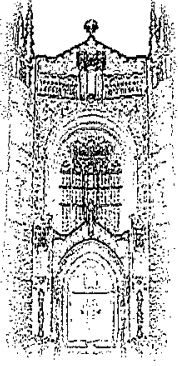
We have sung Bach and Britten, Vaughan Williams and Handel, but nothing surpasses this wonderful work. For the offertory, we will present my choral arrangement of music from Saint-Saens' "Organ Symphony." The service will open with a unique old canon on the words "Glory be to God" by the 15th century French composer Guillaume Dufay, sung in procession.

Our soloists, Sandy Cranfill, Sharon Fortin, Kelly Kron and Danny Cain, will be joined by guests David Bloom (tenor) and Aaron Ambeau (bass).

Be sure to invite your friends and family to this special day of celebration.

Members and Friends of John Calvin Church and Playschool,

We extend a huge THANK YOU to everyone that contributed fall and winter clothes and coats to the Program of Hope. Your support in this request for help was overwhelming and heartwarming to all. John Calvin and First Presbyterian Program of Hope thanks you for sharing and being a blessing to those in need.



FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN

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Tel: 504.888.1375

Tuesday, November 18, 2014

Re: Coats from JC Preschool Children and Parents

Dear Children and Parents of John Calvin Preschool,

Thank you so much for your ENORMOUS and kind donations to the Program of Hope clothing pantry! This program serves over 120 people a week who are cold, hungry and need a place to live. The coats you collected made many people very very hanppy! There were so many coats that we ran out of space in the closets and had to stack things on tables in the church itself! I hope that you will come to visit us one Wednesday and see the coats being worn!!

We are also very thankful that you have donated so many items--maybe as much as 200 items!--to those who are in need in our community. Winter Coats can be scarce in New Orleans as are warm shoes, gloves and scarves, and the things that you sent will be so helpful as we move into this deep cold, that there will be many people blessed by your kindness this season!

We give thanks for the dedication of John Calvin Preschool to partner with us in our common work to do Jesus' mission in the world--may God's choicest blessings for a great Thanksgiving and a meaningful Advent season rest with you all.

Please do come back soon to volunteer! (Clothing Sorting-Mondays 1-2.30 pm; Clothing Distribution-Wednesdays from 9-11 am)

Grace and peace,

Rev. Fred J Powell, III,

Pastor, First Presbyterian

