

November 8, 2019

KEEPING JESUS FIRST

As I noted in my November newsletter article, *Keeping Jesus First* in our lives is a challenge, especially for me during the holiday season. I am finding that even the things that are meant to enhance our love for our Savior can be the very things that keep us so busy we can miss Him. Do you feel the pressure? Our world is so full of traveling, buying presents, family visits, church activities which are all good things. However, sometimes these things, if we are not careful can cause us to miss the *"reason for the season"*. So, to help maintain our focus, I want to invite us to be intentional in KEEPING JESUS FIRST. I want to lead us to worship experiences and gentle reminders that help us keep our focus on *"seeking Him and His Kingdom First"*. (Matthew 6:33) Please consider these commitments that might help us "keep Jesus First" during the holiday season...



Celebrating Advent

One way we can *"keep Jesus First"* is to be intentional in our celebrations during the holiday season. Our church will incorporate celebrating Advent into our weekly worship experiences again this year. Please plan on attending our worship during December and inviting others to join with us. Our Family Ministry Team is preparing resources, which will assist each of us in leading our families to focus on the coming of Jesus. Advent is simply celebrating the coming of Christ at His Incarnation. In the church calendar, it is the period beginning four Sundays before Christmas. This year it begins on Sunday December 1st. It is observed as a season of prayer and personal reflection in preparing for Emmanuel (*God with Us*). Advent is the story of the wondrous moment when God entered our world to make things right. It is the greatest story ever told and HE changes everything—including the way we celebrate HIM during Christmas. If you want an intentional strategy to help keep *"Jesus First"* in all of our lives; let's make advent a central part of our Christmas celebration and traditions. Advent brings a different emphasis to Christmas. It focuses our worship on The One true King and the Advent of His Kingdom as He brings hope to our world. Join me as together we commit to worship Him fully, spend less, give more, and love all like Jesus loves. Let's work to keep *"Jesus First"* as we celebrate Christmas.

- Along with the resources our Family Ministry will provide, also see this link for other helpful resources to assist in your familie's celebration of Advent: www.adventconspiracy.org

Let's KEEP JESUS FIRST through our giving

I invite you and your family to consider a *"Jesus First"* offering through Faith Fellowship to our King for Christmas. As we go about buying gifts this Christmas season for all those we love, prayerfully consider giving an offering to our Lord that represents our love to Him "FIRST". Commit to spend less and give more to the Lord and His work this Christmas. As we give, these offerings will allow us to progress towards our 2019 Budget goals and help project our ministry goals for 2020. One way we might keep *"Jesus First"* is to give to His Church "first".

Keep JESUS FIRST through Communion and prayer

Celebrating the Lord's Supper together is a central part of our fellowship with one another and our Lord. The Lord commanded us to observe this celebration in His remembrance (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24). *"For whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes"*. So, accepting the Lord's invitation is not just remembering in looking back but also as we look forward to the hope of His imminent return! In the next few weeks, we will gather for some sweet times of communion together to remember and focus on our Lord.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend these special events.

- Tuesday November 26th at 6:00 PM – Church-wide Thanksgiving potluck supper with prayer and praise
- Wednesday December 4th at 6:30 PM - Deacon led prayer and Communion Service
- Saturday and Sunday, December 7th and 8th – our special Christmas Celebration *"It's the Most Wonderful Time of The Year"* and special fellowship following the programs
- Tuesday December 24th – Special Christmas Eve Service of Carols, Candles, and Communion service.

I am prayerful that these special times of worship will enhance our efforts to *"keep Jesus First"* this holiday season.

Pastor Garry

"We are a faith fellowship of believers on our journey together with our Lord... meeting needs, mending hearts."