



Christmas Eve Services

3pm & 5pm ~ Sanctuary

Speaker: Fred McGhee

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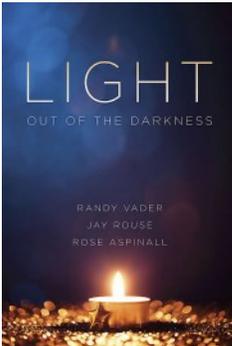
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Worship Choir Christmas Musical

"Light Out of the Darkness" ~ Sunday, December 20th at 6pm in the Family Life Center

On the first day of creation, after God created the heavens and the earth, He spoke light into being. 2 Corinthians 4:6 tells us, "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ." Light illuminates - darkness hides. Light gives direction - darkness gives delusion. Light gives life - darkness gives despair.

Featuring solos by Kenny Holley, Bonnie Norwood, Robin Ransom, David Rice, and Sandy Sharp. ■



Kelly's Korner

"Joy" to the World

By: Kelly Combs

I'm depressed. Although I set myself up to do everything "right" this holiday season, going to the gym 3 days a week, taking an anti-depressant, and seeing a grief counselor, I am still depressed. And that's okay.

My husband died on Christmas Eve, 2013. just 2 years ago. And I am grieving. The songs and the decorations draw me back to the place of watching my husband die from cancer.

I do not want to allow Satan to steal my joy. I am fighting tooth and nail, but losing the battle against grief. Perhaps you too are feeling sadness, depression, or grief this holiday season. I want to let you know, it's okay.



When Jesus came to Lazarus' tomb, the Bible tells us in John 11:33, "When Jesus saw her (Lazarus' sister, Mary) weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and troubled."

The Bible doesn't then tell us, Jesus said, "Don't cry, I'm going to raise him from the dead." He doesn't say, "Don't be sad, I'm going to fix this!" No, in a short but profound verse, John 11:35 simply says, "Jesus wept." He wept. Knowing that Lazarus would be standing with them, alive, in an instant, Jesus still wept. Because He felt the sadness of those with Him. And it was okay.

When well-meaning Christians tell hurting Christians that we should have joy, it can make the hurting person feel like a "bad" Christian. Jesus first empathized with the grieving, and

shared their pain. He did not chastise them for failing to have joy.

Psalm 30:5 says, "Weeping may last for the night, but joy comes in the morning." It does not say, "Do not weep." It does not say, "Why are you sad? You should feel joyful." It acknowledges the fact that, while we may have a season of sadness, we can have the hope of knowing joy is coming.

This is echoed in Ecclesiastes, that there is a season for everything, "There is a time to mourn, and a time to dance."

For me, December is my time to mourn.

But in my mourning, my suffering, I can know what Paul says in Romans 3, that "suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."

If you are battling grief or depression this holiday season, I urge you to share your concerns with a trusted friend, pastor or counselor. But know that it's okay to be sad. We may not have "joy," but we can have hope. We do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. (1Thes 4:13)

Our hope is in Jesus. The hope of knowing that joy is coming. The hope of knowing He will intercede for us. The hope of knowing that this is just a season, and that we will dance again. It's okay to not feel joyous in this moment. But hold firmly to hope. Joy comes in the morning.

*Yes, my soul, find rest in God;
my hope comes from Him.
Psalm 62:5 ■*

December Giving Campaign

December 6, 2015 - January 10, 2016

Goal: \$150,000



Out with the Old and In with the New!

By: Kevin Bartlett

Every year about this time, we start reflecting on things past and contemplating on the things that lie ahead. We tell ourselves that we will do things differently, save money, lose weight, exercise more, eat healthier, you know what I mean, we lie to ourselves. Within a few short weeks, maybe even days, we are back to our old ways saying, "I really shouldn't do this, but maybe just this one time", and then one time turns into every time. Be truthful, you know you have said this or something similar while breaking a pledge to yourself. Personally, I have broken so many promises to myself that my shadow tried to divorce me so as not to be seen with a liar. I don't know if it's a lack of will power or just laziness, not wanting to put in the effort to make change work, that keeps us from really achieving our New Year's resolutions, but I have a sneaking suspicion that there is more to it than that, something deeper and darker. I believe that Satan exploits our weaknesses in these small things to try and convince us that we cannot change any part of our lives, so why try?

Ephesians 4:22 says, "You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires". Our "deceitful desires" are what hold us back from changing. We get comfortable with every aspect of what we are doing in our lives, whether it be overeating or overspending. Even in our exercise routine, or lack of exercise, we let our desire to be comfortable overrule what we know in our hearts would be best for us. We even become comfortable with our sins. Some years back, Brett Rush had a song out titled, "Wash Me Away." I remember it well because it was one of the first songs that really spoke to me when I decided that, to make my life better, I had to let God have control of all of me, the 24/7 me, not just the Sunday morning me. The chorus goes like this, "Wash me away, wash me away, until only You remain, wash me away". If we let the atoning blood of Jesus wash away all of our deceitful, sinful desires, change is not only easier, it has so much more meaning. When we want change just to please our carnal nature, it's superficial at best. But to change because we want to please the One who gave His life for us, well that's a change that goes clear down into your soul. Suddenly you want to change your finances to make a difference for Christ; you want to change your health to have the strength to do what He has prepared for you to do. It becomes much bigger than just change for the sake of change, it becomes change to make a difference for the kingdom of God.

Every year we look at New Year's day as a start to something fresh, a clean slate, a blank canvas to work with. I think it's a perfect time to start living what the apostle Paul



wrote to the Ephesians in chapter 4 verses 23- 27, "to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all of one body. In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold." In all we do, we must look through the lens of faith, seeking only what God would have us do and not letting Satan have the upper hand on us because of our weaknesses. When we put on the new self, the power and might of the Holy Spirit can protect us from Satan's slings and arrows. And the grace of Jesus Christ cleanses us of the mistakes of the past, which is like poking a finger in Satan's eye.

Ephesians 4:32-5:2 says, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as Christ forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Oh what a world we could create if just those of us who love Christ could follow these instructions! Imagine the family gatherings where there is no strife because of past hurts. Imagine the peace and joy in the hearts of the lonely and outcast if we could show such compassion and love as Christ has shown us. Think of the good that could be done if we sacrifice just part of our lives in service to the One who sacrificed it all for us.

So go ahead and make your New Year's resolutions. But this year, let's use the power of prayer and our desire to please God to give our resolutions a real opportunity to succeed. And let's make those resolutions something that has some real meaning, both to us and to God.

May the God of infinite compassion and strength bless your upcoming year! ■



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The mission of Fairmount Christian Church:

To develop followers of Jesus who:

Love God,
Love People and
Introduce the world
to Christ



The Forecaster is
best viewed online @
fairmountchristian.org

Our Church: December 13, 2015

Welcome to our Newest Members...

Curtis & Frances Carpenter transferred their memberships on December 13th.

The Church Office will be closed on the following dates:

Thursday & Friday
December 24-25

Friday

January 1, 2016

The Forecaster will not be published on Wednesday, December 23rd.

Attendance & Giving

8:15 Worship Service: 174
Children's Worship: 8

9:30 Worship Service: 468
Children's Worship: 92

11:00 Traditional Worship: 207
Contemporary Worship: 202
Children's Worship: 113

Total: 1,264

Bible School: 668

Budget Requirements: \$38,605

Budget Receipts: \$37,114



Sermon Series Continues Sunday!

Your Church Staff:

- Rick Raines - Senior Minister
- Chris Santasiere - Associate Minister
- Mike Langley - Associate Minister
- Tracy Thomas - Worship/Music Minister
- Mike Campbell - Youth Minister
- Ashley Sears - Children's Director
- Rose Williams - Early Childhood Director
- Bob Massey - Business Administrator
- Veronica Brewster - Office Manager
- Jef Powell - Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Barry Will - Technology Director
- Debra Houston - Ministerial Administrative Assistant
- Chris Branch - Administrative Assistant
- Carolyn Holmes - Administrative Assistant
- Lauren McCormick - Administrative Assistant
- Morgan McMullin - Administrative Assistant
- Crystal Griffin - Children's Administrative Assistant
- Amber Grubbs - Children's Administrative Assistant
- Krista Barnes - Youth Min. Administrative Assistant