

A Nativity Like No Other

“But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman...”
Galatians 4:4

Nativity. Maybe some of you have brought out your Nativity display for the Christmas season. Ever wonder what that word means—*Nativity*? I always assumed it meant the manger scene of the birth of Jesus, but I looked it up and it simply means “the general time and place of someone’s birth.” So my nativity was in Devils Lake, North Dakota, May 25, 19???. (I’m not saying anymore on that!) But nobody ever uses that word that way anymore. Nobody ever says, “Hey! When was your nativity?” In our world, the word always means the nativity of Jesus. His birth had such an impact that the time and place of His birth came to define the word “Nativity.”

It’s amazing how familiarity leads us to an ignorance of the word itself. Maybe that happens at Christmas. Familiarity often breeds contempt. We put up our Christmas trees and our Christmas lights, we go out and buy everybody Christmas presents, we go to parties and we go to church on Christmas Eve, and that’s Christmas. And like so many Nativity scenes, Christmas becomes all too familiar—so familiar that we don’t even know what it means anymore.

So who is that little Baby lying in the hay? What makes His Nativity so important? What makes Christmas more special than all the lights, parties and presents?

One of the great mystery stories of G.K. Chesterton is entitled *The Man Who Was Thursday*. Jesus is the “Man who was Christmas,” for Christmas is embodied in a person. We sing “It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas,” but Christmas is not really a season. In the mid-South, farmers used to try to get their crop to market in December so they could have some “Christmas money,” but Christmas is not money. We say we are going home for Christmas, but Christmas is not a date on the calendar. We talk about our Christmas dinner, but Christmas is neither a feast nor a fancy dessert. Christmas is a Person. Nativity is about the most important birth that ever took place in human history. It was the “Nativity” when the “Son of God became a man, so that men could become sons of God” (C.S. Lewis).

You think about that now. Amen.

Pastor Rick

Join a Home Small Group!

Are you interested in a small group? You can meet new people and have an opportunity to study the Word at a deeper level. Groups meet at different locations and times throughout the week. New groups forming now!

_____ Yes! I/We would like to join a home group in January.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

(Place form in the Offering or turn in at the Information Desk.)

Sunday Schedule at BPEFC

9:00 AM

Worship Service	Sanctuary
Nursery (Birth to two years)	Room 100
Chicks (Birth date in 2007)	102
Lambs (Birth date in 2006)	103
Giraffes (Birth date in 2005)	104
5’s and K (Birth date in 2003 & 2004)	105

Adult Bible Fellowships

Young Marrieds (and Committed Couples)	112/113
Mosaic (Multi-generational, singles/marrieds)	108/109

10:30 AM

Worship Service	Sanctuary
Nursery (Birth to two years)	Room 100
Chicks (Birth date in 2007)	102
Lambs (Birth date in 2006)	103
Giraffes (Birth date in 2005)	104
5’s and K (Birth date in 2003 & 2004)	106
<i>K.Z. & Company</i> (Grades 1–6)	Fellowship Hall
Youth Worship Service (Grades 7–12)	Youth Room

Adult Bible Fellowships

Salt (Elem. & Youth Parents)	108/109
In-Betweeners (Singles/Marrieds, 50+)	112/113
Prime Timers (Senior Adults)	114

BPEFC Pastoral Staff

Rick Ensrud, Senior Pastor - ext. 11

Dan Carlson, Adult Ministry Pastor - ext. 12

David Durey, Executive Adult Ministry Pastor - ext. 13

Jeff Gagnon, Executive Ministries/Missions Pastor - ext. 22

Leane Gondek, Children’s Ministries Director - ext. 27

Josh Major, Young Adult Ministries Pastor - ext. 14

David Myles, Community Outreach Pastor - ext. 29

Jena Pietari, Student Ministries Director - ext. 15

Luke Turner, Worship Ministries Director - ext. 37



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www.BrooklynParkChurch.org

Welcome to Brooklyn Park Evangelical Free Church!

We're so glad you have joined us today. Our goal is to help you connect with God in worship and connect with others in meaningful relationships. Please let us know if we can help you in any way.

Worship Services Offered:

- 9:00 AM:** Traditions
- 10:30 AM:** Multi-cultural
- 10:30 AM:** Youth Worship Service (Grades 7–12)

Guests . . . after the service, you are invited to the Guest Reception Area (in the West Foyer) to meet with staff and learn more about our church.

December 20, 2009—All-Church News

- **Blood Pressure Screening:** TODAY, 10:00—10:45 AM, near the Nursery.
- **Joni & Friends Special Delivery Packages:** Pick up a package or two to deliver to someone from our church as an encouragement. There are still 27 packages to deliver before Christmas. Stop by the Care Kiosk today.
- **Remembrance Tree:** Make an ornament in memory of a loved one you are missing this Christmas. Hang it on the Remembrance Tree at the Care Kiosk.
- **Baker's Square Pie Gift Certificates:** Support *Celebrate Recovery* (and its training of leaders) by purchasing \$13 pie certificates, good for specific pies, at any time. Stop by the Care Ministries Kiosk today. They make great gifts!
- **Christmas Services:** Christmas Eve—4:30 PM Candlelight Service, featuring African Choir, *Total Praise*, AND 10:00 PM Candlelight Service featuring Tonia Hughes; Christmas Day—10:00 AM Celebration Service.
- **New Small Groups Forming:** Beginning the week of January 3, join a six-week study on *Prayer: Does It Make a Difference?* Sign up in the Foyer today.
- **Band of Brothers Men's Breakfast:** Saturday, January 9, 8:00—9:30 AM. Guys, gear up for awesome food, special drawings, info about upcoming guys' studies and more. Sign up at the Adult Ministries Kiosk in the Foyer.
- **Second Harvest Food Distribution:** Friday, January 22, 6:00—8:00 PM. **Volunteers are needed in the afternoon and evening.** To sign up, go to the church's web site: www.BrooklynParkChurch.org/2harvest. First-time volunteers: please contact Dean at 612-386-8395 or derwerf@comcast.net.
- **Celebration Jam Concert Event:** Saturday, January 30, 2010. Mark your calendar! Enjoy a FREE dinner at 5:30 PM and FREE concert at 7:00 PM. Don't miss a great event for your friends and family! More details to come.
- **New Member:** The Elder Board would like to present Ben Shannon to the Congregation for consideration as a new member of BPEFC. Comments can be directed to Elder Chairman, Tom Jenson.

For more information on other church news, see *News & Notes*.

Christ: The Ascended and Seated Savior

John 17:1, 5; Philippians 2:9—11; Ephesians 1:20b—23

The Jesus Chronicles: Rediscovering the Christ of Christmas series has taken us from before time began when the Word (Jesus) was “*in the beginning, and the Word was with God and the Word was God*” (John 1:1) to the moment when the Word (Jesus) became flesh and dwelt among us (stepped down to move into our neighborhood) (John 1:14). The reason the Christmas season is special is because the eternal Christ came into this world and became a human being, but without sin. That is why He is the perfect Savior of us all. He is truly human yet perfectly pure, and therefore could be our sacrifice for our sin to a just God. But what about now? What is Christ like? Our culture is increasingly out of step with the Gospel. In order to live faithfully, we need to know what He has been doing since He left this world almost 2,000 years ago and ascended in the heavens and seated Himself at the right hand of God the Father. We will never truly appreciate and worship the Christ of the manager without understanding how we should regard Christ today in this culture. We must constantly refresh our vision of who Jesus is.

1. **Jesus prays the real Lord's Prayer. (John 17:1—5)**
 - Jesus, the Master, prays for Himself in John 17:5.
 - Jesus tells the Father He has done everything He was sent to do.
 - Jesus makes only one request in this prayer: “*Glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you.*” John 17:1
 - He's praying for a reversal of His “stepping down” into our world.
† Philippians 2:6—8
2. **What does Jesus' request mean? (Philippians 2:9—11)**
 - The Father said, “yes” to this request. Jesus was glorified.
 - Today, Jesus is not our Christmas Season stereotypical image.
 - The Gospels never described Christ's physical attributes.
† “*He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire Him.*” Isaiah 53:2b
 - How should we picture Jesus this Christmas? (Revelation 1:10, 12—18)
 - Today, Jesus is glorious.
 - We serve the Jesus Who comes after the prayer of John 17—a glorified Christ.
3. **What is the glorified Jesus doing now? (Ephesians 1:20b—23)**
 - He is seated at the Father's right hand—a place of victory and honor.
† “*But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.*” Hebrews 10:12
 - † “*Now Christ has gone to heaven. He is seated in the place of honor next to God, and all the angels and authorities and powers accept his authority.*” 1 Peter 3:22 (NLT)
 - o He is our High Priest and Mediator. (Hebrews 4:14—16)
 - o He is our Sovereign Lord and Master. (Hebrews 2:7—8)
 - o He is our constant Companion and Friend. (Hebrews 2:11, Hebrews 6:17—18)

CONCLUSION: A glimpse of the glorified and seated Jesus will transform everything you do.

1. It will transform your worship.
2. It will transform your obedience.
3. It will transform your confidence.

Weekly Calendar

(For more details, visit www.BrooklynParkChurch.org.)

Sunday, December 20

Monday, December 21

Tuesday, December 22

5:45—7:00 AM Intercessors' Prayer Time
5:15 PM Prayer Gathering/W. Foyer/Join us!
6:00 PM Support Group Meal and Worship
6:30 PM *Quilters' Fellowship*
7:00 PM Support Group Meetings

Wednesday, December 23

5:45—7:00 AM Intercessors' Prayer Time

Thursday, December 24

4:30 PM **CHRISTmas Eve**
10:00 PM Candlelight Service with *Total Praise*
Candlelight Service with Tonia Hughes

Friday, December 25

10:00 AM **Merry CHRISTmas!**
Christmas Worship Service

Saturday, December 26

Stewardship Matters

2009—2010 Annual Budget:	1,493,000
Budget needed fiscal year-to-date:	689,088
Giving/Revenue year-to-date:	604,087
Difference in budget needed and giving YTD:	(85,001)
Weekly budget needed:	28,712
Amount received December 13:	26,639
4 Our Future (Capital Campaign) Commitments:	1,100,000
4 Our Future Giving:	447,277

Next Step Class

You are invited to attend the *Next Step Class* on Wednesday, January 20, from 6:00—9:00 PM, to explore ministry and membership at BPEFC. We highlight our Core Values, Beliefs, Missions, Local Ministries, Steps to Membership, and create a Personal Ministry Profile based on your personality, possessions (gifts and abilities) and passion (to help you select a place of service). After attending the class, you have the opportunity to join the church.

Yes! I'm/We're interested in attending the class on January 20.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

(Place form in the Offering or turn in at the Information Desk.)