

December 19, 2021

## A Message from Jacob Marley

Bah! Humbug!

No, this wasn't first uttered by Pastor Kevin, but rather, by Ebenezer Scrooge, Charles Dickens' immortal fictional anti-hero. Cynicism had hardened his heart to nearly everything and everyone around him.

Did you know that "Bah! Humbug!" would have been a high-level profanity in Victorian England? It seems mild compared to books, movies and Netflix programs of today. But it demeaned that which was holy, in this case, the sanctity of Christmas

Christmas is a "holy-day." That often gets demeaned by even the most well-meaning of us, God's children. Just take a moment and think of all the complaints you may have uttered this Christmas – or in Christmases past. "It's too commercial!" "Put Christ back in Christmas!" "All the trappings are wrong!" There are even many who will try to argue that Christmas isn't even biblical. It was taken from pagan worship rituals and the church has tried to make something of that. Bah! Humbug!

Well, it's time to stop raining on Christ's parade. Let's not profane this "holy-day" where we remember—and celebrate—the Incarnation: God became man.

Yes, Christmas is a time of commerce, but isn't that what the giving of gifts is? Let's not let gift giving be an ugly thing. Perhaps beautify this year by giving something to those who really have needs, not simply wants.

Was Christmas stolen from pagan ideas? Maybe. But good for those early Christians. Plunder the Egyptians, the ancient Israelites were told. At least those early saints had enough sense and wisdom to turn from Mithras to Jesus.

Should we shout and scream "Put Christ back in Christmas!"? I have news for you: Christ never left Christmas. Jingle Bells will never replace Silent Night in the believer's heart. Thanksgiving may degenerate into Turkey Day, but Christmas is always going to be Christmas. So, as those who look to that Son of God who became a man in order that the sons of men might become sons of God, let's sing His name loudly and clearly to all who will listen. Hold up His beauty, not our ugliness in grumbling and complaining.

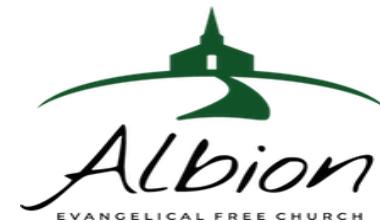
We rejoice this time of year because of Christmas. We do this because we can't—indeed, no one can—get rid of Christ. Satan has been trying for centuries and continues to fail! Yes, sinful man has a keen ability to profane the sacred, but even they, in the darkness of their depravity recognize this time of sacred holiness.

God has touched the earth in a very special way. He walked upon it. And when He was born in the City of David over 2,000 years ago now, He gave us something profoundly holy. Christmas is the holiest of holy days.

Heed Jacob Marley's message to Scrooge: "Don't be a Scrooge this Christmas...or any Christmas."

Come, let us adore Him!

# Welcome to our time of Worship



December 19, 2021

## Welcome & Family Matters

### Looking for our Savior

*God With Us* (responsive reading) — hymn #242

*Emmanuel* — hymn #243

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* — hymn #244

## Scripture Reading & Prayers of Praise & Petition

Revelation 19:13–16

Reed Arvidson

## Let the Children Come & Behold Their Savior

*O Little Town of Bethlehem* — hymn #270

*Away in a Manger* — hymn #262

*The Spirit of Christmas Present* – Children's Sermon

*While Shepherds Watched* — hymn #272

*What Child Is This?* — hymn #281

## Apostles' Creed

*A Communion Hymn for Christmas* — hymn #287

## Gathering Around the Lord's Table

### Closing Song of Doxology

*O Come, Let Us Adore Him* — hymn #196

All offerings, gifts, and tithes may be placed in the Offering Box at the door to the foyer. Thank you for your generosity.

Please know that our service is being recorded and uploaded to our church website: [albionfreechurch.org](http://albionfreechurch.org). We also are streaming live on Facebook Live during the service as well.

# Coming Up These Next Few Weeks...

**Sunday Morning Study books:** Please pick up your books in the back of the church by the bulletin board.

## Christmas Eve Service

You're invited to a candlelit Christmas Eve service. Come and enjoy Christmas carols and a special Christmas message, ending with the lighting of Candles – an Albion favorite tradition.



## **Please add your family's Christmas card to the bulletin board!**

We would love to see your greetings and pictures!

**Our tradition is simple:** please put the money you save NOT sending a card to everyone in the church into the present box. All donations will be given to a family in need this Christmas. Help us make Christmas a little brighter for a family this year.



**Food Shelf** - is asking for **Pancake mix and syrup** for December. **Meals in a can** (Manwich, Spaghetti O's, Spaghetti Sauce) for January through March 2022,

## **Thank you...**

*I am so thankful for cards and prayers I have received for my surgery.*

\* David Donley

**Jim Peterson, Tom's brother, is so very thankful for all the prayers and concern during his recent hospitalization with COVID.**

May God bless you all.

# Ministry Opportunities This Week:



- Today:** 9:00 am Sunday Morning Studies  
10:00 am Worship Service - **geared toward children**
- Tuesday:** 9:30 am Prayer in the West Room
- Wednesday:** 5:30 pm Worship Team Practice  
**\*\* NO Wednesday night activities**
- Saturday:** **\*\* NO Men's Gathering**
- Friday:** 5:30 pm **Christmas Eve Service**
- Sunday:** **\*\* NO Sunday Morning studies**  
9:00 am Worship Team Practice  
10:00 am Worship Service

## Prayers & Praises:

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances..."

*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

- Give thanks that David Donley is recovering well after his neck surgery.
- Give thanks that Carl Johnson, MaryAnn Jergensen's brother-in-law is home and recovering well following his bout with COVID.
- Lift up members of our own congregation who are sick, either with mild cases of the COVID virus or with other illnesses at this time. May their hearts always look to the Lord for all things.
- Pray for our Christmas Eve service this coming Friday at 5.30pm. Ask that God would bless with good weather, good attendance, families who seek the Savior, and hearts to be moved closer to Him.
- Pray for the salvation of souls this Christmas season, as they hear that which is oh so familiar. May the Spirit make it like the first time they ever heard it and receive Jesus, Emmanuel.

## **Contact Information:**

Albion Free Church  
11480 5<sup>th</sup> St. NW  
Cokato, MN 55321  
320-286-5442

Albionfreechurch.org  
kevin@albionfreechurch.org  
kyle@albionfreechurch.org  
kelly@albionfreechurch.org