



# Community

December 2021

**Pender Island Community Church**  
<http://www.penderislandcommunitychurch.ca>

**Welcome to your community church  
home on Pender Island!**

## **Christmas Eve**

You are welcome to join us for Christmas Eve Service. We follow public health guidelines - which means we keep the building well ventilated and suggest everyone be masked when moving about or singing and at all times when the church is more than half capacity.

Oh, and don't forget to bundle up!

**Christmas Hymn Sing  
December 5 @ 2pm**

**Christmas Eve Service  
December 24 @ 7pm**

<http://www.picchurch.ca/>

**Email:**

[pendercommunitychurch@gmail.com](mailto:pendercommunitychurch@gmail.com)



“Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among  
those with whom he is pleased!”

## **Why We Celebrate Christmas?.**

On the surface, the answer to that question is obvious. Christmas is about the birth of Jesus! True, but the story is much more complex than that! Christmas was put forth by the church to replace pagan beliefs with the everlasting light of the Son of God. In fact there is no agreement amongst historians or theologians as to the specific date Jesus was born.

By naming 25 December as the birth of Jesus, the church made a strategic move - bringing the Kingdom of God to what had been a dark time - quite literally and spiritually. They did so by replacing empty festivities centred on false pagan belief with the truth of Jesus Christ, saviour of the world, who has come in the flesh.

So why celebrate on the 25<sup>th</sup>? Think of it as an answer to hopelessness, superstition, and dark powers. An answer that says *God has come into the world with the greatest offer of peace ever made*. He came as a newborn and made Himself as we are; as we started in life, as we live life and finally, even unto death. He did so with a simple aim: to bring us back to God while replacing what would have been our destiny with the offer of His eternal life.

And that is worth celebrating every day of the year not just at Christmas!

Christmas



## 'Modern Christmas'

The feeling and sense of Christmas as it resides in our collective memories is one that is likely more similar to Buckingham Palace than Bethlehem.

The Christmas tree, originally from Germany, came to popularity in Britain due to the influence of Prince Albert. Images of Queen Victoria and the family around a Christmas tree forever changed how we celebrated Christmas - in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the world.

≈ Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy ... ≈

## Make Christmas More

Christmas is celebrated in some fashion or other by people of many faiths and creeds. It is even celebrated by people who have no belief in God. And while the joy of Christmas and its message of peace and life to all is universal in appeal, we can all too easily miss what makes Christmas truly special.

To truly celebrate Christmas is to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. As we recognize who He truly is - God come in the flesh to rescue us - we come to understand the fantastic offer of God's redeeming love.

Jesus' entry into the world to save all who put their trust in Him and to give the gift of eternal life is aimed directly at you!

If you sense the need to come and find out who the Christ of Christmas really is, start by saying a simple prayer: "Lord Jesus, I need you, teach me to know you. Forgive all my trespasses and grant me eternal life with you."

## Love God; go to church?

The apostle John tells us *"We know that we have crossed over from death to life because we love our fellow Christians."* (1 John 3:14). Those words remind us of what John records Jesus saying: *"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another"* (John 13:35).

In fact the command to love our believers is given by Jesus (John 13:34). Yet, how, can we love our fellow believers if we do not even 'see' them? The bible does not envision the 'lone ranger' Christian. To love God is to love your brothers and sisters in the faith. And this is perhaps one of the reasons why gathering together in church is not a custom but is one of the hallmarks of those who truly love God and find assurance in Him (1 John 3:18-20).

