

## **Luke 2:41-52**

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it.

Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them.

Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

Within us, among us, before us,  
**CHRIST IS COME TO MAKE ALL THINGS NEW**

I no longer live but Christ lives in me...

**Saint Paul to the Galatians**

...Christ in you, the hope of glory

**Saint Paul to the Colossians**

...so that Christ may dwell in your hearts...

**Saint Paul to the Ephesians**

When daughter #1 was a student at the Kansas City Art Institute, she would leave the house early and come home very late. This was worrisome for awhile. Then we began to realize that she was in her element and, as they say, following her passion, and thriving. There was not much Kathy and I could say. It turned out very well-----she is really good at graphic design.

I think it was in her sophomore year at K State that daughter #2 either texted or called or emailed, I cannot remember, to tell us she was dropping a class because she was putting in more hours at work than she had originally planned. Hmmmm. Ok. Well, we thought, hopefully she will still graduate on time etc. How can you be critical of a child who seems very motivated to work? I think this happened two more times in subsequent semesters. Work getting in the way of school. Now it was clear that she would need an extra semester to graduate. A little more money for us, but again, how can one feel bad about such a situation? That part time job turned into a full time job when she finally did graduate and by everything we can see it's a fabulous job.

I look at them and think to myself Kathy did a fabulous job raising these girls when I wasn't in the room because I don't have a clue what I did to make them so amazing...not perfect mind you..... they have their foibles as do we all. But in many good ways with all our kids my expectations have been exceeded.

So Mary and Joseph----having lost their 12 year old son, find him finally in the Temple in conversation with the teachers. They are exasperated as we can see in the text but how can they really be critical here? It was the best possible outcome in this situation. An outcome more wonderful than they could have imagined. Prior to the temple, can you imagine where they first looked? At the arcade perhaps. At the comic book store? At the go cart track? At the emergency room? At the police station? So many places in Jerusalem where a 12 year old could get into trouble.

Much to their surprise and relief, he had all this time been at church talking to the pastor.

And he's pretty matter of fact about it isn't he? "Why wouldn't I be here?"

I can see Mary and Joseph looking at each other here and thinking Yes we know he is God's son but he's only 12 for God's sake---three days of freedom in Jerusalem and he's talking Scripture with the pastor? How did this kid get to be so wonderful right under our noses? Expectations were definitely exceeded here.

"Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you?" Paul writes to his friends in the church at Corinth.

This Gospel of the indwelling Christ is at the very heart of the Christian Faith. And today's text can illuminate it for us a bit.

The truth of the matter is that sometimes, if not all the time, the indwelling Christ is first----going to do what he will do, whether it fits with your expectations or not, and second----the indwelling Christ will ALWAYS, ALWAYS exceed your expectations.

He will always be at work in us for our healing and wholeness in ways far beyond what we could ask or imagine.

And we see it here already in the ONE story we have in the Gospels from Jesus' childhood. Quite by surprise, as Mary and Joseph are doing what they have done for many years with Jesus, travel to Jerusalem for the Passover and travel back home again with family and friends, quite by surprise, they realize Jesus is missing. He's slipped from view. He's not where they are used to having him and finding him. This forces a disruption in their routine. They have to change course, even reverse course to locate him again.

The indwelling Christ has his wisdom. Sometimes as we are rushing along in our lives, even doing many good things along the way, the indwelling Christ will stop and wait. At some point we will sense his absence, he's not where we expect him to be. We may have to go looking for him. And when we find him we will always discover that there is more to him than we had previously realized----we thought we knew him. But there was more to learn.

Did you not know... .? He says

So this indwelling Christ will do what he will do, always with the loving intention to reveal himself more deeply and fully, and to gently enlarge our capacity to trust him. When he says things that confuse us, and when he turns up missing from where we expect to see him, we are being enlarged interiorly, stretched, so that he might fill us utterly and bring our anxious hearts to rest.

# "...IN DIVINE AND HUMAN FAVOR."

NORTH OAK CHRISTIAN CHURCH-DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

December 30, 2018

In Jesus' Name, Greetings!

Music for Gathering

Joy to the world!

**THE LORD IS COME! LET EARTH RECEIVE HER KING!**

Let every heart prepare him room

**AND HEAVEN AND NATURE SING, AND HEAVEN AND NATURE SING!**

**AND HEAVEN AND HEAVEN AND NATURE SING!**

Lighting of the Candles

"Tell out my soul the greatness of the Lord!" Luke 1

**150 Hark the Herald Angels Sing vss 1 and 3**

Sharing Christ's Peace

**147 Away in a Manger**

The Morning Prayer and Musical Response

Silence

"So tenderly has he looked upon his servant..." Luke 1

Children's Circle

All children thru 5<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to come forward. A small outreach offering will be collected for our money jar. Following this time of sharing and prayer, children may attend their very own

"Worship and Wonder" time together in our classroom annex. Child care is offered for infants and toddlers but they are also welcome in the sanctuary.

Prayer for Illumination

Wondrous God, purify the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit

**THAT WE MAY PERFECTLY LOVE YOU AND MAGNIFY YOUR HOLY NAME, AMEN**

THE GOSPEL LUKE 2: 41-52

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost**

**As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, amen amen.**

The Meditation "Did You Not Know?" Rev. Rob Carr

**Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.**

Silent and spoken personal prayers of thanksgiving confession, intercession

Halleluia Debbie Rommel

The Offering

**Praise God from Whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below**

**Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost**

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.  
As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

**420 I Come With Joy**

Jesus of Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Calvary, come and be born in us  
**JESUS OF MARY AND JOSEPH, OF WORKSHOP AND TEMPLE**  
Come and be born in us  
**LOOK AND SEE, WE HAVE BROUGHT OUR BREAD AND WINE**  
**WE HAVE BROUGHT OUR FLESH AND BLOOD**

Welcome to the Table  
The Words of Institution

Look and see, the same Spirit which lives in your flesh  
**IS LIVING IN YOUR PEOPLE HERE**  
Look at us and let us look at you and see you now  
**COME AND BE BORN IN US**

The Communion Prayer  
**The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever, amen.**

Following the Lord's Prayer, please come forward by rows to receive the loaf and the cup.  
The cup is non-alcoholic by choice of the congregation  
Gluten free crackers are available on the table for those who prefer this option  
Children also celebrate communion weekly as part of "Worship and Wonder"

**148 O Come All Ye Faithful vss 1 and 4**

Grant us your light O Lord  
**THAT THE DARKNESS IN OUR HEARTS, BEING WHOLLY PASSED AWAY,**  
**WE MAY COME AT LAST TO THE LIGHT WHICH IS CHRIST, AMEN.**

**TO OUR GUESTS----WELCOME!**

**SHAPED BY GOD'S WORD AND GRACED AT CHRIST'S TABLE**  
**WE WALK HUMBLY, LOVE DEEPLY, LIVE SIMPLY, AND SERVE JOYFULLY**

We are delighted to include you today. Your presence and participation is a gift to us all. We hope you experience among us the warm spirit of our family of faith and the gracious touch of Christ upon your life. Refreshments and welcoming conversation are available before and after worship in the Community Room just down the hall. More information about NOCC and the Disciples of Christ is available via Facebook and these websites

[www.nocckc.org](http://www.nocckc.org) [www.kcdisciples.org](http://www.kcdisciples.org) [www.disciples.org](http://www.disciples.org)

### **Blessings at Year's End--Howard Thurman**

I remember with gratitude the fruits of the labors of others, which I have shared as a part of the normal experience of daily living.

I remember the beautiful things that I have seen, heard, and felt - some as a result of seeking on my part, and many that came unheralded into my path, warming my heart and rejoicing my spirit.

I remember the moments of distress that proved to be groundless and those that taught me profoundly about the evilness of evil and the goodness of good.

I remember the new people I have met, from whom I have caught glimpses of the meaning of my own life and true character of human dignity.

I remember the dreams that haunted me during the year, keeping me mindful of goals and hopes which I did not realize but from which I drew inspiration to sustain my life and keep steady my purposes.

I remember the awareness of the Spirit of God that sought me out in my aloneness and gave to me a sense of assurance that undercut my despair and confirmed my life with new courage and abiding hope.

I've heard that there was a secret chord, that David played and it pleased the Lord  
But you don't really care for music do you?  
It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth, the minor fall, the major lift  
The baffled king composing Halleluia, Halleluia, Halleluia, Halleluia, Halleluia  
Come all and see the newborn King of Bethlehem  
So beautiful is the child of the Virgin Mary, beautiful indeed  
True God of the world, Halleluia, Halleluia, Halleluia, Halleluia  
Praise, praise forever, give praise to the heavens to the beautiful King Jehovah  
We exalt the King of kings, and the angels sing Psalms for Him  
Halleluia, Halleluia, Halleluia, Halleluia  
Jesus is Christ, let us worship Him on the Sabbath Day Halleluia!  
Praise the Father of the highest heaven, our Savior the King  
Halleluia Halleluia Halleluia Halleluia!

**Leonard Cohen**