

EXCELLENT LOVE



**20
DECEMBER
2020**

ED.LXLVI.12.2020

Bethany International Church
THE HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS

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SENIOR PASTOR

Ps Djohan Handojo

PASTOR

Ps Daniel Prajogo

Associate Pastor

Ps Unggul Santika
Ps Iwan Adinugroho

Next Generation Pastor

Ps Rudy Nurtanaya

Pastoral Care

Ps Lily Karto

Prophetic, Praise & Worship Pastor

Ps Hemah Demak Panjaitan
Ps Suzana Tahir

Teaching Pastor

Ps Daniel Hardjosuwito

Mission & Evangelism Pastor

Ps Gideon Gunawan

Office Manager

Ps Suzana Tahir

CONTACT US



Bethany International Church



office@bethanymelb.org.au



[@bicmelbourne](https://www.instagram.com/bicmelbourne)



www.bethanymelb.org.au



+61396999077

Foreword

Congratulations! You've made it through to the last month of 2020!

It has been a tough year for everyone and many of us want this year to end soon, hoping that 2021 will be a much better year. As we enter the final month of the year, let's look back on what happened throughout the year, shall we?

We started the year with a list of resolutions, a strong motivation to be better, to start strong and to finish strong. We believed that the start of a new decade would be a fresh start. However, many unexpected things happened. In the first few days, Melbourne was covered with smoke from the bushfire. When we thought it's over, a few months into the year, we were forced to stay home because of the pandemic. We lived in isolation for two months before the restriction relaxed and we started to meet our friends again, still with a safe distance. But then the second wave started after less than two months of freedom, with another extended lockdown until recently.

Our expectations for the new decade crumbled down early in the year and we end up losing a lot of things. We may feel hopeless, lonely, and anxious. But throughout the year, I learned to change my focus. Our situation may be helpless, but it's our choice to be hopeless. We may be alone and isolated, but it's our choice to feel lonely. Our plans may not work out, but it's our choice to be anxious. The situation is far from being good, but we have a good God by our side. He is our source of hope. He never leaves us nor forsakes us. He knows our needs and He has great plans for our life.

So, whatever happens next, let's make the right choices. Let's reflect more on His goodness rather than on what we're facing and let His peace guard our hearts as we finish this tough year in His gracious, loving hands.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
(Philippians 4:6-7)

HELLO *new comers!*

Welcome to Bethany International Church Melbourne.
So glad that you are here with us. We want to help make your
first experience at BIC Melbourne a great one!



GET CONNECTED

Christian journey shouldn't be alone because it is a community project. Join our Community of Love (COOL) every Friday 7PM!

LET US CONTACT YOU



Lastly, please enjoy a cup of coffee on us! 



COOL LIST



MAIN

Canaan	Kezia, Freddie
Ephratah	Steven, Henry
Berea - Bethesda	Romy
Bethlehem	Felix, Fransisca
Jordan	Sony, Wilfred
Horeb	Ferry, Febria
Bethany	Paulus, Erina
Bethel	Christy, Elvina
Cana	Bobby
Philadelphia - Pniel	Dwi, Vero
Moriah	Elve, Calista
Ephraim	Kevin L, Sonia
Ekklesia	Edo, Ica
Emmaus	Fabian, Priska
Galilee	Kevin Y, Corine
Gennesaret	Reinetta, Albert
Gilgal - Carmel	Erika, Mike
Hebron - Philippi	Yoseph, Rian
Zion	Monica, Raymond
Eden	Jennifer

FAMILY

Antioch	Andy, Iwan
Tiberias	Andre, Albert
Gethsemane	Michael, Rudy
Jerusalem	Hestu
Mt Hermon	Lily, Unggul
Phillipi	Hariyanto, Ivan
Shekinah	Alice
Tabernacle	Sandi
Westal	Michael

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Macedonia	Eric, Alicia
Shiloh	Daniel, Clarissa

NEXT GEN

Judea	Valentina, Sylvio
Judah	Aldo, Kezia M.
Israel	Catherine, Jerry
Jeremiah	Sinta, Kevin W.
Heaven	Pauline



COOL REFLECTION

The purpose of Christmas

BY VALERIE SETIONO



Everyone can agree that 2020 was a tough year. But here we are in the last month of the year, approaching what everyone says the most wonderful time of the year, it's Christmas! Despite having less freedom to host Christmas gatherings with our loved ones, I'm personally very excited for Christmas.

This year's Christmas – with its limited festivities and gatherings – 'forced' us to stop with all the busyness of annual gift-giving and party planning, instead we can sit back and remember what the true meaning and purpose of Christmas is.

What really is the purpose of Christmas?

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

First and foremost, God’s motivation behind Christmas is love. And because of His great love, He gave His one and only Son as the first Christmas gift. Jesus was the original Christmas gift. This is repeated in 1 John 4:9-10: “This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”

The best expression of love is not our presents, but our presence. If we really want people to know how much we love them, we wouldn’t send a representative to tell them, we have to come personally. And that’s what God did for us on Christmas. He didn’t just send us gifts, He didn’t send an angel

or a representative to speak to us, but He came Himself – this is what makes Christmas different.

Jesus came to this world to become one of us because God wants to communicate with us. “The reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth” (John 18:37) and “the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32). “Jesus is the light to reveal God to the nations” (Luke 2:32), He is the true light of Christmas that reveals who God is. Because Jesus came, we know that God is not distant and detached, that He cared for us and concerned about us and He is merciful. If Jesus didn’t come, we wouldn’t know that God is loving, that He is forgiving and He has a purpose for our life.

We need the light of Christ to know where we are heading, and we need the love of Christ to feel confident that our life is secure in His hands.

We are the reason

We often heard the phrase “Jesus is the reason for the season” – while this is true, what is also true is that “we are the reason for the season”. As Rick Warren puts it, “the only reason we have Christmas is because Jesus Christ came for your benefit. If you didn’t need Jesus Christ, if you didn’t need a saviour, if you didn’t need to know God, God wouldn’t have wasted the effort to come into Earth.” This hits me. I know Jesus came into this world out of His love for us, but a lot of time I thought that it’s because He wants to do it, but really it’s because we are the ones who need Him to come.

God sacrificed Himself to show how much He loves us. This is real love: it’s sacrificial. In most old stories of kings, the people sacrifice themselves to serve the king. But in the Christmas story, the King sacrificed Himself for the people. He humbled Himself, became human, born in a barn to peasants, and He did

“**It’s about love – He wants us to be able to feel and experience love from the love Himself because He is love.**”

it all because of love. And I believe that even if we're the only person to ever live on earth, Jesus still would've come to earth and died on the cross for us, because He loves us personally.

That is why, Christmas is also about enabling a relationship with God. Jesus came so that we "may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). He didn't come for us to have religion, but for a relationship. "In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will" (Ephesians 1:4-5). He has always planned to adopt us into His family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus. The reason we are alive is because God wants to love us. Our Heavenly Father loves us so much, that without coercion He adopted us into His family to be loved by Him forever, and for us to learn to love Him back forever. And from that day we are adopted into God's family, God changed our name and we would belong to Him forever no

matter what we do wrong. Can you see "how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ" (Ephesians 3:18)? It's wide enough to be everywhere, long enough to last forever, deep enough to handle anything, and high enough to overlook any of your mistakes.

And this is what Christmas is all about. It's about love – He wants us to be able to feel and experience love from the love Himself because He is love. It's always reassuring to know that nothing we can do can make God stop loving us, because His love is based on who He is not what we've done.

This Christmas, why don't we remind ourselves of this love, the real love that we wouldn't find anywhere else. And let this love renew our passion in serving Him and seeking Him, so that we can enter the new year with an assurance that we are loved, for we are His children and He is longing for a relationship with us.

WEEKLY DEVOTION

20 DECEMBER

Mikha 6 - 7

Ayat Renungan:
Mikha 6 : 8

“Hai manusia,
telah
diberitahukan
kepadamu apa
yang baik. Dan
apakah yang
dituntut TUHAN
dari padamu:
selain berlaku
adil, mencintai
kesetiaan, dan
hidup dengan
rendah hati di
hadapan Allahmu?”

21 DECEMBER

Nahum 1 - 3

Ayat Renungan:
Nahum 1 : 7

“TUHAN itu baik;
Ia adalah tempat
pengungsian
pada waktu
kesusahan;
Ia mengenal
orang-orang
yang berindung
kepada-Nya”

22 DECEMBER

Habakuk 1 - 3

Ayat Renungan:
Habakuk 2 : 14

“Sebab bumi akan
penuh dengan
pengetahuan
tentang
kemuliaan
TUHAN, seperti
air yang menutupi
dasar laut.”

23 DECEMBER

Zefanya 1 - 3

Ayat Renungan:
Zefanya 3 : 17

“TUHAN Allahmu
ada di antaramu
sebagai pahlawan
yang memberi
kemenangan.
Ia bergirang
karena engkau
dengan sukacita,
Ia membaharui
engkau dalam
kasih-Nya, Ia
bersorak-sorak
karena engkau
dengan sorak-
sorai,”

24 DECEMBER

Hagai 1 - 2

Ayat Renungan:
Hagai 2 : 6

“sesuai dengan janji yang telah Kuikat dengan kamu pada waktu kamu keluar dari Mesir. Dan Roh-Ku tetap tinggal di tengah-tengahmu. Janganlah takut!”

25 DECEMBER

Zakharia 1 - 3

Ayat Renungan:
Maleakhi 4 : 2

“Tetapi kamu yang takut akan nama-Ku, bagimu akan terbit surya kebenaran dengan kesembuhan pada sayapnya. Kamu akan keluar dan berjingkrak-jingkrak seperti anak lembu lepas kandang.”

26 DECEMBER

Zakharia 4 - 7

Ayat Renungan:
Zakharia 4 : 6

“Maka berbicaralah ia, katanya: “Inilah firman TUHAN kepada Zerubabel bunyinya: Bukan dengan keperkasaan dan bukan dengan kekuatan, melainkan dengan roh-Ku, firman TUHAN semesta alam.”

The social media check

BY KEZIA JOCELYN



Some like to say that there are “two sides of everything”, I believe this is true especially when it comes to social media. It is arguable that the idea of social media as a tool that connects people and overrides physical boundaries of communication is inherently good. Mark Zuckerberg once stated that his vision for creating Facebook was “to build a global community”. Social media – at least on its good side – is providing us with connection, information, inspiration, community, creativity, and learning like never before. It is robust, it is real-time, and we do benefit a lot from it.

However, with no means of belittling the positive side of social media, we cannot avoid the other side of the coin. Due to the nature of social media platforms being free to use, it is then constructed to profit from advertising. And only one thing is true of an advertising business – our attention becomes their most valuable commodity. These social media companies will find ways to constantly capture our attention through features that utilise machine learning and artificial intelligence technologies. Increasingly, we are being unconsciously controlled by their algorithm, making us feel like it's harder and harder to actually switch off and not fall into its rabbit hole.

Apart from the business model nature of social media, we also need to be very careful with its content. These days, social media timelines are mostly filled with rash reactions, raw emotions, and offensive opinions as

If we are not rooted in our identity in Christ and we don't anchor our attitude towards social media with the acknowledgment that we are children of God, then envy, discontent, anxiety, and insecurity will ultimately overrule our lives.

if everything needs to be expressed online immediately. The root of these behaviours is none other than our pride, our needs for validation and superiority. As believers, we know that pride is our flesh's biggest desire and the spirit's biggest enemy. And if this is what social media companies leverage most from, no wonder these companies are the most powerful in the world and their users are the most desperate and stressed generation in the whole history of humanity. Our thoughts and emotions are constantly being tossed and turned within every new

post we encounter which have detrimental and integral effects on our mental and spiritual states. If we are not rooted in our identity in Christ and we don't anchor our attitude towards social media with the acknowledgment that we are children of God, then envy, discontent, anxiety, and insecurity will ultimately overrule our lives.

Knowing this, we need to take a step back and ask the Holy Spirit to rebuke and remind us of God's truth. We are to evaluate our heart's attitudes whenever we consume or share stuff on social media. When we are consuming, being aware of our heart's conditions by asking God to reveal it to us will help us have a healthy perspective on whatever we see online. For example, if we're in the midst of a trying time, such that it's difficult to rejoice with others, then unplugging from social media for some time might be the wisest thing to do. The same goes for when we are sharing or posting online in that we need to be aware of our prideful nature. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6:1 "Beware of practising your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven". It's always wise to ask ourselves, am I bragging? Am I all caught up in this "thrill" of getting validation? Why am I posting this? Why did I even take a

picture of this in the first place? What's the purpose? We need to learn to have humility like Jesus, who in all His divine power chose to only glorify His Father in Heaven. Even as the Son of God and Saviour of the world, he humbled himself by taking on human flesh and dying on the cross, all to fulfil the will of His Father. This is contrary to what the world believes – and exactly what will set us apart as witnesses and followers of Christ in this social media day and age.

Last but not least, we also need to be aware of the amount of time we spend scrolling through social media over the time we prioritise for God in worship and quiet time as well as for our main responsibilities and obligation whether it is at home, school, ministry, or the workplace. Here, complacency is our biggest enemy. When we find our comfort in being submerged in the social media realm, constantly scrolling through without being aware of the potential dangers of it, we are under the influence of social media and are not present with the world around us. That defeats God's purpose for us which is to be His light and representative of His Kingdom in this world. Let us all ponder upon this and ask God for wisdom over our use of social media so that we might become victorious and not slaves of it.

MINISTRY LIST

VOCAL



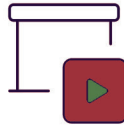
Jessica Sutiono

MUSICIAN



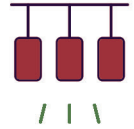
Raynaldo Ali

MULTIMEDIA



Budi Sendjaja

LIGHTING



Budi Sendjaja

SOUND



Steven Santika

USHER



Elbert Pranoto

TRANSLATOR



Elbert Pranoto

CARING



Felix Hariyadi

DANCER



Priska Sunaryo

DRAMA



Jennifer Chandra

SUNDAY SCHOOL



Reinetta Tanujaya

HOSPITALITY



Tasmin Ifah

INTERCESSOR



Monica Haryanto

MISSION



Felix Chietra

MEDIA ART



Sonia Pranatha

COMMUNITY KITCHEN



Yolanda Tjong

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms"

PODCAST



Ravello Satria

YOUTH



Rio Susanto

**We invite you to join our
online service every Sunday
from 8.30 am onwards**

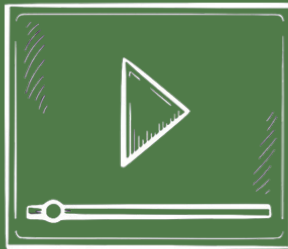
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<https://www.bethanymelb.org.au>

Youtube:

Bethany International Church Melbourne



**Let's celebrate the Lord's Day
together!**