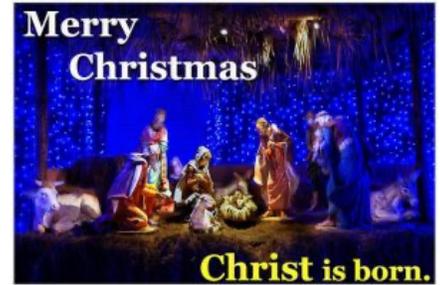


Greetings to all the Eden Members, Fellow Worshipers and Friends:

A year like no other year is about to come to a close. We have moved through the Thanksgiving Holiday. It was not the same as in the past due to the recommendation of not coming together as a family. I'm sure there were many who did and I pray no Covid spread will happen. But, as we know, right now Hancock County is seeing an increase in the number of cases and sadly, the number of deaths. From what I read in the papers and on-line articles, Thanksgiving has become one of the most important holidays to celebrate. I suppose that might be because it still is known as Thanksgiving. Christmas has been overtaken with the "PC" crowd and more and more people are seeing this time of year as "happy holidays." I'm hoping that those who really understand the Biblical importance of this season will hold fast to "Merry Christmas" even when wished a "happy holiday."



At church we have been sharing the Advent Wreath as we have for many years. We've had three Sunday's as I write this. Those candles represent Hope, Peace and Joy. The remaining two candles will be for December 20 and Christmas Eve. These represent Love with the final center white candle representing Christ and would be used at our Christmas Eve Candles and Carols service on December 24. However, Christmas Eve 2020 will be different for us. We are working on having a Christmas Eve service with only a few invited people to share readings and songs. We will present the service live on Face Book at the time we would normally meet – 5:00 p.m. I hope you will find us on Eden Baptist Church's Face Book page.



I'm sure you have been watching the world situation during all of 2020 and have observed just how the peace and tranquility of the world has been turned upside down in so many places and in ugly ways. We certainly can say the same for our own country as we have witnessed the ever increasing numbers of shootings, acts of terrorism and actions of people against people.

Any time we enter the Christmas Season and attempt to celebrate the real reason for this season, which is, of course, the birth of the Christ, I want to remind you again of the words of Isaiah as he writes of the coming Messiah. This and the other scripture verses we used before and are always important to be reminded of again.

(Isa 9:6 NIV) For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

It's important to remember that Isaiah was writing of this event some 800 years before the actual birth of Jesus. With the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Isaiah brings to the people of Israel an important reason for living in the dark times of their day, **HOPE**. The history (neither the time nor space to get into all of that in this letter) was one of upheaval, war, captivity, slavery and despair. Isaiah is giving people **HOPE** for the future by writing of the coming Messiah and used these descriptive words that paint a picture of the coming Christ Child who would fulfill the Davidic Covenant. You can read about God's promise of the Christ Child coming through the "line of David" by turning to these references in your Bible: **(2nd Samuel 7: 1st Chronicles 17:11-14; 2nd Chronicles 6:16)**

This is an unconditional covenant made between God and David by which God promises David and Israel that the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would come from the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah and would establish a kingdom that would endure forever.

As we know, that kingdom has yet to be established and is referred to as happening when people speak of the **“second coming of Christ”** which is yet still future and we are told we know not the time or place for His return. See the following scriptures regarding this event: **(Matthew 24:36, 44; Matthew 25:13; Mark 13:33)**

However, in the mean time, those wonderful descriptive words Isaiah used, I believe, are still valid in today's world as we await the “advent” of Jesus' second coming. So, a short “sermon” on what those precious words mean especially for us today in such a gloomy world.

***Wonderful Counselor:** Christ's position as our Wonderful Counselor means we can trust Him to listen to our problems and guide us in the right direction **(Proverbs 3:6)**. We can be sure He is listening because He told us to pray to Him about our worries **(Philippians 4:6; James 1:5)**. We can be certain He has our best interests at heart because He loves us **(1 John 4:19)**. And His love is so wide and deep (and wonderful) that we cannot fully understand it **(Romans 5:8)**. ***(<http://www.gotquestions.org/>)**

Mighty God: As you read both the old and the New Testament you find so much written describing the work of Jesus. All of His miracles and involvement with the people of His day, but most important for us is His Mighty Power. Power displayed as He walked those 33 years on the face of the earth and mightily demonstrated as He faced all those who opposed Him particularly at His arrest, trial, crucifixion, and burial. However, on that Sunday morning we have come to call Easter, Jesus demonstrated a Mighty God quality as he conquered death demonstrated by his resurrection. You can read the full story in **LUKE 24**.

Everlasting Father: We all know the meaning of everlasting and if Jesus is the Son of God then all the titles found in Isaiah 9:6 fit. The psalmist said this: **(Psa 90:2 NIV) Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.** Jeremiah said this continuing the theme of “everlasting.” **(Jer 31:3 NIV) The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.** It is that love that brings the fatherly quality to Jesus. That fatherly quality allows, even invites everyone, to a special personal relationship with Him. That relationship is summed up in what the Apostle Paul said to the Ephesian believers:

Eph 2:4-10 NIV **But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, (5) made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. (6) And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, (7) in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. (8) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- (9) not by works, so that no one can boast. (10) For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

Finally, **the Prince of Peace:** In this world everyone longs for peace. Yet we are fully aware of how lacking real peace is. From a biblical perspective there are two very important types of peace. I have spoken of them many times over the years. **Peace with God** is the primary purpose of Jesus' birth. From the time of the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve failed to follow God's simple statement to not eat the fruit of the tree of life, there has been disobedience (sin) in the world. According to God's established plan, sin was to be paid for on an annual basis with a blood sacrifice on the Day of Atonement.

However, God knew that process was not sufficient so His perfect plan built on Love was conceived. He designed a “perfect lamb” that would pay the ultimate price for “Peace with God.” The beloved words of the Apostle John say it all:

Joh 3:16-18 NIV **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. (17) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (18) Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.**

It is the birth of Christ we celebrate at this time of year that has made peace with God possible. We are a sinful people and in order for us to have true **“Peace with God”** we need to confess we are a sinful people and

openly and in love accept the gift of peace (**salvation**) God desires us to have. For some reason, it is a gift that many people still choose not to accept. I pray you are not one who has rejected this wonderful gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus.

The Apostle Peter said: **2Pe 3:9 NIV The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.** Time will run out. This is the perfect season to come to Christ or recommit your relationship to Him.

As world events continue to unfold, we are getting closer everyday to that time when Jesus will return to set up his kingdom as spoken of in God's word. Please don't be on the outside looking in....

In the past, we have enclosed an offering envelop should you desire to present an offering to the Lord. These funds are used for Eden's outreach ministries. We have supported the Maine Sea Coast Mission, fuel assistance programs, the local food pantry, Baptist Youth Camp and families we become aware of that have needs



We ask that you mail any offering you wish to donate to: **EDEN BAPTIST CHURCH, 195 BAY VIEW DR. BAR HARBOR, ME 04609.** Please mark your memo line as "**Christmas.**" Thank you for any gift you share.

Because of the Covid issue we are making this letter available as an email attachment, a post on our Eden Baptist Church Face Book page and our web page @ **edenbaptistmaine.org** which is a work in progress.

Eden Baptist is currently in a self imposed lockdown. As mentioned above the virus is moving rapidly through our Hancock County area and most of our Eden family is in the "danger zone" so exercising an abundance of caution we've decided to not gather for Sunday Worship until the virus spread is reduced or stopped. We are presenting our worship service by way of Face Book live with Susan Mann playing the prelude @ 8:50 a.m. and the revised worship service beginning @ 9:00 a.m.

In reflecting on 2020 it has been a year of not happenings at Eden. We did not have an in person Easter Service, we did not have our summer sale, band concert and the hot dog stand, we did not have our fall sale and luncheon but we did have a baptism this summer at the swimming pool of the Best Western Motel just a short distance from the church. We did not have the joy of the summer visitors we often have join us in worship when they vacation here. We did have the opportunity to return to live worship in early June. We did not miss but one Sunday in March when we were first shut down. After that, we went live on Face Book from my home and when we were allowed to come together again at church in early June we were able to be live from the church. That has really been a blessing. We don't have a huge following but we have folks around the state, Florida, North Carolina and Georgia that I know of. If you are reading this and want to join us just go to our Eden Baptist Church Face Book page around 8:50 a.m.

Please stay safe. We look forward to the time we can be together again in worship. Our prayer for the remainder of 2020 and into 2021 is that we will remain safe and serve our Lord with grace.

That other Peace spoken of above is the "**Peace of God.**" Jesus said these comforting words to His disciples just before his own crucifixion.

Joh 14:27 ESV Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

I pray that your relationship with Jesus allows you to feel and rest in the Peace of God in these troubled times

Kathy joins me in wishing all a very Merry CHRISTmas and a prosperous New Year.

Joyously in service to our Lord and Savior.....

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob".