"Christmas is Questionable" is a 7-week preaching series through which I am encouraging you to deeply engage the Biblical narrative of the Incarnation with new eyes. You are being encouraged to look at the story with the eyes of a questioner; the eyes of one on a quest seeking the truth of what it all means, without tradition, nostalgia, or blind faith. In fact, my prayer is that your eyes see more richly the beauty that is Christmas by pursuing the questions...

To accompany our preaching series, these next three issues of the Marion Methodist will offer three questions that Christmas answers. Today #1: Why would God become a person?

Jessica McClure was just a toddler in 1987 when she fell into an 8” well casing in her parents’ backyard. Her little body plummeted 22 feet down the pipe where she became stuck. The good folks of Texas did not look down into the pipe and shout encouraging words to “Baby Jessica” coaxing her to climb back up from where she had come. No.

Engineers, medical professionals, equipment operators and everyone with a shovel or a prayer rushed to that backyard. There was no way she could get herself out of that hole so, working around the clock for 58 hours to do whatever was necessary, they went down to where she was and got her. Theologians sometimes refer to Christmas as the condescension of God. What they mean is that God created the world free and witnessed, nearly immediately, that human beings with free choice would often choose a way that leads to their own destruction.

The pit humanity falls into is darker than the one little Jessica experienced. Our pit is the pit of total spiritual darkness created by sin and leading to death. Seeing us in that pit, in a mess of our own doing, the Lord did not/does not stand at the precipice of it and shout down happy encouraging death. Seeing us in that pit, the Lord did not

The Nicene Creed, one of the great statements of what Christians believe, says it this way (DON'T SKIP THE LONG QUOTE. Bold print is my emphasis):

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. And his kingdom will have no end.

Read it again. Why would God become a person? You.

Pastor Mike

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iTunes Podcast - Sermon Audio
itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/marion-methodist/id562893153

Each week on Tuesday, the church sends out an email detailing the events taking place in the next seven days, and devoting some space to explain a little more about one of the multitude of ministries and missions in which we participate. To sign up to receive this email each week, please contact the church office at (319) 377-4856 or by email at info@marionmethodist.org.

Marion First United Methodist Church
5050 REC Drive
Sunday Morning Worship
8:15 AM
Spirited Traditional - Sanctuary
Pathfinders Outreach - Room E60
9:15 AM
Fellowship - The Center
Children's Fellowship and Adult Classes
10:15 AM
Contemporary Praise - Sanctuary
Children's Sunday School

Upcoming Sermons

For any information needing to be published in the Marion Methodist newsletter, please contact the church office.
(info@marionmethodist.org)
Prayer is a powerful way of caring for each other in our Marion Methodist family. There are several avenues open to everyone – the prayer cards on Sunday morning and the prayer request link in the weekly email, are two that are used most often.

Prayers of thanksgiving for our wonderful church and church family. Blessings of safe travel and great times with family and friends during this Thanksgiving holiday time. Pray for those who are in need of food and shelter, or those who feel alone. May we find ways to reach out to them and bring comfort.

Marion Methodist is Praying for:

- Prayers of thanksgiving for our wonderful church and church family.
- Blessings of safe travel and great times with family and friends during this Thanksgiving holiday time.
- Pray for those who are in need of food and shelter, or those who feel alone.
- May we find ways to reach out to them and bring comfort.

Marion Methodist is Praying for:

TV Broadcast

Marion Methodist worship services are typically rebroadcast on Mediacom or ImOn Channel 4 at 7:00 PM on Monday evenings. There is a multweek delay between when a sermon is preached and when it airs on TV.

Meal Schedule:

- **Wednesday Night:** Marion Methodist
  - 12/4 - Kettle House Bakery
  - 12/11 - Hy-Vee

Wednesday Night at Marion Methodist is every Wednesday. From 5:45 pm to 6:15 pm we have a Meal (Free Will Offering) and from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm we have activities for all ages.

Pathfinders Worship & Outreach (Preschool - 5th Grade): Focuses on praise and worship for kids. Children will also learn how they can make a difference for the people in our community.

4:12 Youth Group: Junior High Worship 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm (Sanctuary). High School Worship 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm (Sanctuary).

Adult Classes: Come for a midweek boost. Check out classes at www.marionmethodist.org

Nursery: Offered in the Nursery
Christmas at Marion Methodist

We know your family is already planning for the holidays. Make a Christmas Eve service part of your holiday plan. This year we will be worshiping God three times on Christmas Eve.

2:00, 4:00 and 6:00 PM services of Carols and Candlelight

On Christmas Eve, Holy Communion will be served in Room 100 from 2:30 PM-6:00 PM. Come with your family and friends and receive communion as part of your Christmas Eve observance.

Proceeds from Historic Building to Transform Campaign?
The Simplest Answer to this question is: “No.”

Years ago, not knowing what we might receive in the sale of the historic property and desiring to benefit future generations with the proceeds, the Board of Trustees discerned it best to set the money aside for two specific purposes, neither being the mortgage of our new facility.

The Carnegie Building’s heating and cooling system was in grave need of replacement. The boilers had played out and many years of water with high mineral content running through them had clogged the pipes. So, priority one was to replace the entire heating and cooling system which has been done.

The second priority was future repairs at the Church. Non-mandated deposits had greatly benefitted the programs of the church when the front steps had to be replaced and a chimney had to be secured. This “money set aside” allowed the church to simply make the repairs without additional fund drives. The desire of these funds is to provide the same type of coverage for furnaces, roofs, refrigerators, etc. that will no longer be new in 20 years. Thus, these funds are invested for deferred maintenance. A brief accounting:

Sale of Church $590,000
First half gross at closing $300,000
Net at closing after expenses $238,430
Carnegie HVAC project $113,659
Deposited for deferred maintenance $124,771
2nd Mortgage due from Pentecostal church 1/10/2021 $290,000
Total deposit for deferred maintenance will be $414,771

He is Born

A handbell Christmas Concert
Touched of Brass - Bell Castles - Jubilation - A Wonderful Noise

Sunday, December 8 at 4:00
Marion Methodist Church
5050 REC Drive, Marion

No Admission charged, instead bring a non-perishable food item to benefit the Marion Food Pantry
Soup Supper immediately following

The handbell choirs of Marion Methodist have no admission fee for their December 8th handbell concert, other than a requested non-perishable food item for the Marion Food Pantry. The choirs would love to have the congregation of Marion Methodist partner with them on their concert date, December 8, whereby extra non-perishable food items for the Marion Food Pantry would be brought to the church. The food pantry is in need of our donations and it would be great to support the pantry with extra food on this day! Thank you!

Capture the Moments

The Christmas photo booth is returning soon for your holiday pictures. The decorations ministry will be setting things up early and leaving it up longer this year!!

Gather your family and grab your friends for some great photo opportunities each Sunday 12/8-1/5

Share your photos with us on social media!

Thank You

Dear Marion Methodist,

Thank you so much for your amazing food pantry donation for our Veterans!! Our Veterans are humbled and honored to accept such a wonderful gift!! If I or the Freedom Foundation may ever be of assistance to you or your congregation, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully,
Freedom Foundation

Christmas Cookies

Again this year the United Methodist Women are sponsoring a cookie drive so that we can share some Christmas cheer with the folks who frequent our Marion Food Pantry. This invitation for cookies is for everyone at Marion Methodist who is able to bring a plate (or more) of yummy Christmas cookies to The Center on Sunday morning, December 15. We will pack 150 plates for the pantry and if there is more, there are plans to share those too. Bring as many as your heart desires---they will be appreciated very much. It is always nice to have some decorated ones for the top of the plate.

Packing will start at 9:15 on Dec. 15, and we invite all helpers.

Christmas Cookies for the Food Pantry
Bring cookies to Church before the 9:15 AM service on December 8
Cookies will be packed and distributed to the Food Pantry on December 17 & 18

Capture the Moments

The Christmas photo booth is returning soon for your holiday pictures. The decorations ministry will be setting things up early and leaving it up longer this year!!

Gather your family and grab your friends for some great photo opportunities each Sunday 12/8-1/5

Share your photos with us on social media!
Our Congregation Shares Its Concern & Christian Love...

DEATHS:
November 5: Curtis Cope, father of Dana (Carter) LeBeau and grandfather of Colin LeBeau
November 13: Monita Ebersole, mother of Carolyn (Larry) Munson
November 14: Mabel Alt, mother of Sandy (Karen) Alt. Family includes grandson Jason (Tracy) Alt, and great-grandchildren Jill and Connor Alt
November 18: Carla Wahlers, mother of Jennifer and Kyle VanDyke

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**The Marion Methodist newsletter deadline schedule**

Articles for our Marion Methodist need to be submitted by due date at 12:00 PM. You may email them to jwildman@marionmethodist.org with newsletter in the subject line. Please send any information or images as an attachment. If you do not have access to a computer, you may call or bring to the office items to be published. We ask that you honor the deadlines listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Arrived in Mail</th>
<th>Date Articles Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/4</td>
<td>12/27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/15/2020</td>
<td>1/1/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/24/2020</td>
<td>1/15/2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Pantry Partners for Marion Food Pantry**

We help folks in need by supplying items for the Marion Churches Food Pantry. You may bring the following items to church any time during each month. Please put your contributions in the Mission Depot in The Center or the Church Office.

December: Pudding and Gelatin Mixes
January: Macaroni & Cheese
February: Canned Fruit
March: Peanut Butter
April: Macaroni and Cheese
May: Toilet Tissue

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**BAPTISMS:**
November 17: son of Jennifer and Kyle VanDyke

November 13: of Jan (Steve) Dickinson

grand-children Jill and Connor Alt

grandson Jason (Tracy) Alt, and great-grandchildren Jill and Connor Alt

FREEDOM CELEBRATION!

December 8
Children’s Christmas Program
10:15 AM Service

December 8
“He is Born” Handbell Celebration of Christmas
4:00 PM Sanctuary
Soup Supper following concert

December 8
Compassionate Friends Memorial Service
7:00 PM Sanctuary

December 15
“Messiah Heaven’s Glory” A Christmas Worship Experience
8:15 and 10:15 AM Services

December 22
Worship at 8:15 and 10:15 AM

December 24
Christmas Eve Services
2:00, 4:00, and 6:00 PM Carols and Candlelight

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**FREEDOM CELEBRATION!**

Thank you, Marion Methodist Church, for making FREEDOM a huge success!