

# St John Church of Christ

November 15, 2020

**Now meeting Online Only**

## Bedlam House

**ONLINE**



*Bethlem Royal Hospital, England*

A new online Adult Bible Study begins this morning at 10:30. It's based on John McKeel's recent book, *Peter the Friend of Jesus Speaks*. Our programs are available over the internet starting Sundays at 10:30 for Adult Class and 11:00 for Worship. Just visit

[www.StJohnChurchOfChrist.org](http://www.StJohnChurchOfChrist.org)

and select "Sermons" from the menubar at the top, or click this link to visit our page on YouTube:

[St. John Church of Christ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)



In 1274 A.D. a hospital called "St. Mary of Bethlehem" was established in England. Two centuries later the hospital was converted into an insane asylum. In those days, care of the mentally ill was cruel and closely akin to a prison. All day long the screams and shouts and pleas poured out of the doors and windows. It was a sad place of chaos and confusion and the name "Bethlehem" – the house of peace – was corrupted into "Bedlam" and a new word found its way into the English language.

Jan and I found ourselves in Arizona the day after Thanksgiving – on "Black Friday." Because there is an hour difference between California and Arizona, we were wide-awake at 4:00 A.M. and decided to go to the mall and see what all the shopping fuss was all about. It was cold, raining and pitch black, but still, we had trouble finding a place to park. Some people had camped out on the sidewalk the night before just to be there for the race to the discounted television sets! Insanity ruled as crass consumerism ran unbridled through the mall. Wrong size? Just throw it on the floor and keep exca-

vating. Coupons filled the air. Christmas carols blared and tempers flared.

We sat back and watched the show. There were the scientific shoppers who knew what they wanted and had carefully scouted the terrain the day before. There were team players as mom guarded the shopping cart and sent her minions on missions of consumption. "Mine! Mine! Mine!" It reminded me of a flock of seagulls fighting over a hot dog bun at the beach. I'd like to report that we rose above the fray, but alas I walked out with three pairs of shoes and a microwave gadget that makes hard-boiled eggs "without the messy shell."

A few years ago, Jan and I visited Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus. Bethlehem is famous for her ancient olive trees and still, today shepherds tend their sheep in the hills below the village. And even though there is a massive, ancient church there commemorating the place of the birth of the Lord, it isn't hard to imagine what it must have been like the night Christ was born. Yes, there was

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the chaos of the crowded village outside, but in the cave (for caves are still used as stables), in a stone manger lined with straw, a tiny baby was tightly wrapped in swaddling clothes. That child brought hope and salvation into the world in the most wondrous way. I can't help but smile as I meditate on that moment and I wish the bedlam of Black Friday could be transformed back into the peace of Bethlehem.



## A Hymn Story

A preacher told the church he would let whoever gave the biggest contribution pick out three hymns for the next Sunday. When he announced the winner, a sweet elderly lady, she was told to pick out three hymns. She stood up and pointed to three handsome gentlemen and said, "I'll take him, and him, and him."

We've been praying constantly for the Turner family in Great Bend. As you know little Maren has been wrestling with her bone marrow transplant and associated issues. Please continue to pray for her.

The corona virus continues to spread in Stafford county. Carl and Janet have both been infected and are both home wrestling with the virus. So far the symptoms have been mild. Let's pray it remains that way as they both heal.

Meanwhile, John's friend Paul in Washington State, and Stan's friend Curtis in Pratt are both dealing with pancreatic cancer and have earnestly desired our prayers.

These are dangerous times and we need to continue to pray for our healthcare professionals, those in assisted living facilities, and our schools. Sadly, the numbers are the highest yet in Stafford county (30 active cases as we went to press). We need to pray hard!

Let's follow the Apostle Paul's admonition and pray for our newly elected officials:

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

## News & Prayer Requests



## A Place for Pictures

