



# “THE STARTER”

December 2019

Rev. Carl Hammer, Minister

Our email: [1stcongregperu@sbcglobal.net](mailto:1stcongregperu@sbcglobal.net)

Web page: [firstcongregationalperu.net](http://firstcongregationalperu.net)

Phone 815-223-0722

## The Cross in the Manger

If there is no cross in the manger,  
There is no Christmas.

If the Babe doesn't become the adult,  
There is no Bethlehem star.

If there is no commitment in us,  
There are no wise men searching.

If we offer no cup of cold water,  
There is no gold, frankincense or myrrhh.

If there is no praising God's name,  
There are no angels singing.

If there is no spirit of alleluia,  
There are no shepherds watching.

If there is no standing up, no speaking out,  
There is no Herod, no flight to Egypt.

If there is no room in our inn,  
Then 'Merry Christmas' mocks the Christ  
child and the Holy family is just a holiday  
card and God will loathe our fest and  
festivals.

If there is no reconciliation,  
We cannot call Christ 'Prince of Peace'.

If we cannot go now even unto Golgotha,  
There is no Christmas in us.

If Christmas is not now, if Christ is not born into  
every day present, then what is all the noise  
about?



## Calling All Men

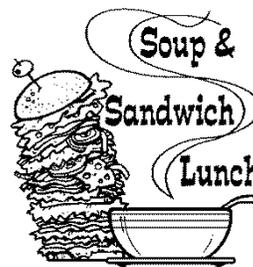
What a better way is there to  
start the day than men  
enjoying breakfast and a time of  
devotion. Sign up for the Men's  
Breakfast on December 14<sup>th</sup> at  
8:00 a.m.

## Eternal Light

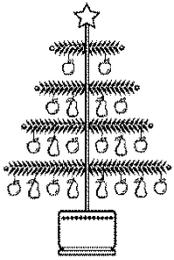
Christmas occurred when God invaded Earth in a  
strange and marvelous way. A special child was  
born to improbable parents in a unlikely place at  
an inconvenient time and in an unwelcoming  
world. Yet heaven's light pierced the darkness and  
shone through the life of that unique baby. That  
light was and is an eternal light. God's light in  
Christ is a saving light that can keep the world  
from total destruction, from the ultimate darkness.  
The message is always true. "The light shines in  
the darkness and the darkness did not overcome  
it." (John 1:5) And it never will!



Our very special  
Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service at  
11:00 p.m. is filled with  
music and praise for our  
newborn King. Please join  
us!



Our next Soup and  
Sandwich Supper is  
Wednesday, December  
18<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 6:30.  
Please sign up on the  
Welcome Table if you  
can make soups,  
sandwich fixins, cookies and help serve. So many  
are blessed by this simple act of sharing supper  
and fellowship.



Tag Tree

We are collecting gifts for two different groups this year. There are RED tags with first names. These are a local family of five who have had a tragedy in their lives. These gifts can be wrapped.

There are GREEN tags for delivery to PADS. These items are not to be wrapped.

This is our opportunity to share the love of Christ and give someone a bright spot of cheer this Christmas season.

Please have all gifts returned to the church by December 22<sup>nd</sup>. Thank you for your generous hearts!



We will be getting poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary and for our shut-ins. Should you wish to purchase one of these plants, please sign up on the Welcome Table. The cost this year is \$8.00.



The Chart of signing up to provide altar flowers during 202 is now on the bulletin board in the hallway.



If you use offering envelopes, the new ones for 2020 will be ready for pick up on the welcome table very soon. If you would like to start using envelopes, please see Dawn.



Painting Party

Our December 7<sup>th</sup> painting party has been postponed until January. Watch your bulletin for the new date.

How can I serve?

There are many ways you can serve to contribute to our worship services next year. Are you willing to greet? Be a liturgist? Be an usher? Give a children's message? Care for the little ones in Children's Church? Prayerfully consider what God would have you do on Sunday mornings. Sign up on the Welcome table.



Retiring

Our dear friend, Rev. Karl Johnson, is retiring at the end of this month. He has been interim minister at LaMoille following his service here. It will be hard to picture him at home with his feet up! A card of congratulations and best wishes can be sent to:

Rev. Karl & Connie Johnson  
428 E. Thompson St.  
Princeton, Ill. 61356



A Year of Thanks

Thank you to all of you who use the talents God has blessed you with to keep this church alive and thriving....

Those who serve on boards, those who bake for fellowship hour every week, those who teach our children, those who sing in the choir every week, those who trim bushes and pull weeds, those who provide soup for our monthly supper, those who serve turkey on Thanksgiving, those who visit shut-ins, those who fill the foot pantry/PADS baskets, those who change light bulbs, those who continually pray and those who quietly do things for this church unnoticed by others.... Thank you! Your rich rewards await you



Helping the Homeless

The Mission Board is asking for your help in helping the homeless at PADS. They are in need of socks. Men's socks, women's socks and kid's socks. Put them in the basket labeled PADS in the hallway. Thank you!



Congratulations, Mario!

Mario Berg attained his certification and badge by completing his God and Faith course, with the help of Pastor Carl. He was awarded these by Sara O'Dell, Cub Scout Cubmaster.



Prayer List

\*\*Pray for the health of Jane McClintock, Char & Pete Belski, Sonny & Ryan Whittington, Roger Gabrielse, Beth Flaherty, Bernene Dahl, Sandy Starr, Marilyn Cobb, Matt

\*\*Please pray for daily grace for our shut-ins:

Myrle Sapienza      Beth Flaherty  
Carol Edgcomb

\*\* Pray for Pastor Roy Jacob & Peace Mission in India caring for children and widows

\*\* Pray for Ed & Jane Skowron

\*\* Pray for Jews for Jesus

\*\* Pray for the Surbers and Supply & Multiply

\*\* Pray for Abigail Women's Clinic

\*\* Pray for Berean Prison Ministry

\*\* Pray for Transport for Christ

\*\* Pray for PADS bringing shelter to the Homeless



Our Annual Meeting will be held January 26, 2020. Those responsible for reports to be included in the Annual Report are asked to have them submitted by January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**The BEST WAY**  
to appreciate  **PASTOR** is by praying  
**FOR HIM.**

Only God is perfect. To the rest of us,  
He gave all kinds of wrinkles and  
cracks. If we were perfect, the light  
He shines on us would just bounce  
right off. But the wrinkles, they catch  
the light. And the cracks, that's how  
the light gets inside us.

Wm. Kent Krueger

**P**- Personal  
Pray for his personal life and relationship with God  
(Matt. 6:33; Ps. 119:133)

**A**- Administration  
Pray for him to have wisdom and good time management  
(Col. 1:9-12; Ps. 90:12)

**S**- Study  
Pray for his sermon preparation (2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17)

**T**- Trials  
Pray for his protection and endurance of trials  
(John 17:13-21; James 1:2-4)

**O**- Oversight  
Pray for him as he shepherds the church flock (1 Peter 5:1-4)

**R**- Relationships  
Pray for his marriage and family (1 Timothy 3:2-4)

Cat talk

Research indicates that 95 percent of cat owners admit that they talk to their cats. It is also indicated that 100 percent of the cats in question don't care.