

Putting the X back in XMAS

(Excerpts from Dec. 2012 pastor's message)

X is the Greek letter Chi and it is Christ's initial. The C and the H together represent the beginning letters of the title. Together with the Greek letter Rho we have the Chi-Rho, a popular Christian symbol. You could call it Christ's monogram.

Signs have been commonplace in recent years saying, "Keep Christ in Christmas," as if the X in Xmas were a negating or a canceling out of Christ. The truth is so far away from this fear-based notion! The Chi does not cross out, but abbreviates the Christ mass while still keeping Christ fully in the word – Xmas.

The other nice thing about Xmas is that the X can be seen as the Cross itself. When I look at Xmas I see it translated as Cross-mas. The connection between the Christ mass and the Cross is significant. It is this promised Babe of Bethlehem who is born in order to die – for us – on a X.

The X could also stand for expectations. This may be a little more of a stretch but it is consistent with the expectation of the season of Advent as we prepare for and hope for the Xmas and the X-child.

Our new church year begins with an Advent message of expectation:

Xpect the coming of the Son of Man
Xpect the Word made Flesh.
Xpect the Babe of Bethlehem.
Xpect our Beautiful Savior.
Put the X back in your Xmas!

We are full of expectations and rightfully so. God has made us promises. God has cut us covenants. God has told us what to expect.

This Advent and Xmas, Xpect Jesus to transform your life. Xpect an answer prayer. Xpect radical forgiveness and ultra-liberal grace. Xpect Jesus to convert your attitude and your gratitude. Xpect Jesus to take charge of your finances. Xpect Jesus to involve you in service for the sake of the world for which he was born and died.

This X does not cancel out. Instead, it is on this X that he redeems us, and calls us into his mission.

Happy Xmas, Pastor Chris Carr