

A Christmas Note

Hello everyone,

Christmas, what a wonderful time of the year. I have always loved Christmas. It started when I was way younger than I am now. My father grew Christmas trees and my mom and helpers would make hundreds of wreaths, swags, and grave blankets to sell during the Christmas season. There were a few snowy evenings that I remember when I would be out selling Christmas trees under the lights while my dad kept a burn barrel going with the trimmings from the trees. My brothers and I would stand around the burn barrel declaring “best tree salesman” while warming our hands waiting for the next customer. My dad gave us a dollar for every tree we sold! I know he thinks I do not remember, but he still owes me \$6. As us kids grew older we went off to college and started new careers, the tree farm shrunk, and the land was slowly sold off. The family Christmas time together was soon only a day or so instead of spending a month working and laughing selling wreaths and trees. I sure wish I would have valued those days much more.

It all is just a memory now. I even find myself under pressure to create a Christmas as magical for my children as my parents did for my brothers, sister and me. It is hard to match. Time does strain many parts of the “way it used to be” but there is a very special part of Christmas that we shared together for the longest time and that was Christmas Eve service - that special night when Grandpa, Grandma, Mom, Dad, and the kids joined together, at church, to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This part of Christmas is something I cherish now as I spend Christmas Eve service with my wife and children celebrating the birth of our Savior, together with everyone in the congregation. The wonderful songs, the Gospel of the Birth, the candles....it is so calming and offers inner peace which is otherwise seldom achieved. It is this that I shared with my parents at Christmas and share now with my children, so they too will share with their new family.

I am sure you also have some wonderful Christmas memories. It is such a magical time of the year. Sharing love and laughter with family and friends makes this season so extra special. There are many opportunities this month, here at Christ Lutheran, to share as we travel the season of Advent. A few special days are arriving fast. December 17 is the Christmas Program where all who gather will enjoy sounds and songs from our bells, worship and children’s choirs plus the wonderful Sunday School Christmas program, “A Play In A Manger.” It will all start at 5:30 p.m. December 24 is, of course, Christmas Eve. With Christmas Eve falling on Sunday, we will all have the opportunity to gather Sunday morning at 10 a.m. for a combined service and then we can share in the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior at the three available Christmas Eve services, which will be at 5 p.m., 7 p.m., & 10 p.m.

On behalf of Church Council and Pastor Polly, I would like to extend a very heartfelt thank you for the trust that everyone has shown, and we wish you all a very Joyous and Wonderful Christmas! May it be special.

Take care, everyone. See you at Church!

God Bless!

Thomas Goetsch
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