

Southwest Church of the Nazarene

CHURCH NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 16, 2020 – VOLUME 39

THE MAN AND THE BIRDS Author Unknown, as told by Paul Harvey

One of the Christmas classics I have come to enjoy is Paul Harvey's retelling of *The Man and the Birds*. It is a wonderful truth for us today.

The man to whom I'm going to introduce you was not a scrooge, he was a kind decent, mostly good man. Generous to his family, upright in his dealings with other men. But he just didn't believe all that incarnation stuff which the churches proclaim at Christmas Time. It just didn't make sense and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just couldn't swallow the Jesus Story, about God coming to Earth as a man.

"I'm truly sorry to distress you," he told his wife, "but I'm not going with you to church this Christmas Eve." He said he'd feel like a hypocrite. That he'd much rather just stay at home, but that he would wait up for them. And so he stayed and they went to the midnight service.

Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier and then went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound... Then another, and then another. Sort of a thump or a thud... At first, he thought someone must be throwing snowballs against his living room window. But when he went to the front door to investigate, he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They'd been caught in the storm and, in a desperate search for shelter, had tried to fly through his large landscape window.

Well, he couldn't let the poor creatures lie there and freeze, so he remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter if he could direct the birds to it.

Quickly he put on a coat, galoshes, tramped through the deepening snow to the barn. He opened the doors wide and turned on a light, but the birds did not come in. He figured food would entice them in. So, he hurried back to the house, fetched breadcrumbs, sprinkled them on the snow, making a trail to the yellow-lighted, wide-open doorway of the stable. But to his dismay, the birds ignored the breadcrumbs, and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow. He tried catching them... He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them waving his arms... Instead, they scattered in every direction, except into the warm, lighted barn.

And then, he realized that they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature. If only I could think of some way to let them know that they can trust me... That I am not trying to hurt them, but to help them. But how? Because any move he made tended to frighten them, confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him.

"If only I could be a bird," he thought to himself, "and mingle with them and speak their language. Then I could tell them not to be afraid. Then I could show them the way to safe, warm... to the safe warm barn. But I would have to be one of them so they could see and hear and understand."

At that moment, the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sounds of the wind. And he stood there listening to the bells – "Adeste Fidelis" – listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas.

And he sank to his knees in the snow.

Praises:

- Praise the Lord for our Southwest kids! Twelve children sang two Christmas songs and played the bells to “O Holy Night,” while dressed in their reindeer antlers. Thank you, Renee Plank and Cindy Robinson for working so well with the kids each week!
- Praise the Lord for our Youth Praise Team! It was a beautiful time of worship led by Lara Hoaglan, Preston and Peyton Broce, and Daniel Greene, along with Saralynn Vawter playing. We are so blessed with gifted singers and musicians!
- Praise the Lord for our RIOT Youth Group! They had an exciting progressive dinner and put their reindeer displays out for all to see. They are a sight to see. 😊
- Praise the Lord for good attendance! Even amidst all the virus concerns, we continue to have over 100 each week for service. So thankful to be able to worship in person still! Praying this virus and the restrictions will soon end and can all worship together again.

Prayer Needs:

- Prayer Needs can be found in the emailed and mailed versions of the newsletter.

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” (St. Louis)

**O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight**

**For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep
The angels keep their watch of
wondering love
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And peace to men on earth**

**How silently how silently
The wondrous gift is given
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven
No ear may hear His coming
But in this world of sin
Where meek souls will receive Him still
The dear Christ enters in**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born in us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel**

**Lewis Henry Redner | Phillips Brooks
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UPCOMING SERVICES & EVENTS

Wednesday, December 16th – 6:30pm Prayer Meeting

Sunday, December 20th – 10:40am Special Christmas & Family Worship Service & Christmas Treats
(Children will be in service.)
– 3-5pm Teen Quizzing
– 5-7pm R!OT Youth

Wednesday, December 23rd – No Evening Prayer Meeting

Thursday, December 24th – 6:30pm Christmas Eve Communion & Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 27th – 10:40am Worship Service & Children's Church (Jesus' Birthday party for children)
– No Teen Quizzing
– No R!OT Youth Group

Wednesday, December 30th – No Evening Prayer Meeting

Friday, January 1st – 7pm R!OT Youth Lock-In (will stay from Friday at 7pm to Saturday at 7am)



"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

Matthew 1:23 NIV

**SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 20TH
SPECIAL CHRISTMAS
FAMILY SERVICE
& CHRISTMAS
TREATS!**

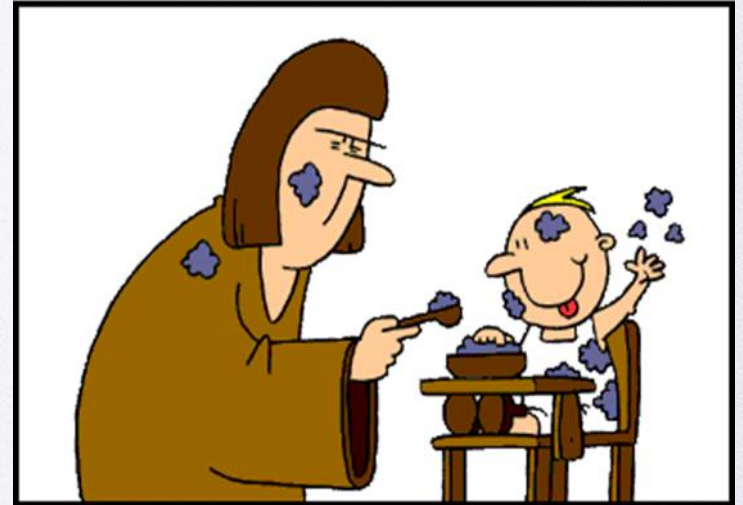
CHRISTMAS EVE
*Communion and
Candlelight*
6:30 PM SERVICE



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Scott and his family would like to thank the church for the Christmas Bonus! We appreciate all you do for us and are very thankful to be a part of the Southwest Church family. We wish you all God's best this Christmas and in 2021!

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Thanks to Ken Foster

05-13-1998

AT THE FIRST SUPPER

Also, the church staff, Katrina Hanavan and Brad Adkins, want to express their appreciation to the church for the Christmas bonus as well.



*R!OT
Youth
Lock-In
from 7pm
Friday,
January 1st
to 7am
Saturday,
January 2nd*

Teens: invite your friends for a fun night of unlimited pizza, games, skating, and fun! The cost is \$20 per person. Complete the form found on the Facebook page. See Dave or Dana Metcalf for details.

Thank you to everyone who gave to the Giving Tree! Our goal of \$3,000 was more than met with an amazing \$6,035 raised!! As a result, 16 families will be blessed this year. Also, a special thanks goes to the Giving Tree Committee for their help in assessing the requests and distributing the funds to those in need among our church family. Praise the Lord!