

Deaf Liberty Epistle

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Haven't You a Meaningful Christmas?

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Haven't you ever have a meaningful Christmas? We can in term of Christmas tree. You can use this tree in your home to share symbols with your children, grandchildren, and friends. I love to share with anyone about Jesus using a Christmas tree.

A Christmas tree is derived from a paradise tree used in German plays depicting the story of Adam and Eve. The use of the tree began in 17th century in Strasburg, France before it spread to Germany and the rest of the Europe. Christmas trees were brought to Pennsylvania during the colonial period by the German immigrants. Those trees were condemned saying they were pagan. We can turn that around to make it more meaningful.

Evergreen trees such as pine trees were chosen as Christmas trees rather than deciduous trees such as maple tree, because it symbolizes that God is eternal as in Psalm 90:2 - *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.* Tree symbolizes the cross. In I Peter 2:24 it says *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.* A tree has three corners representing Trinity.

A Christmas tree has all the trimmings: ornaments, beads or garland, Christmas lights, star or angels. Let's focus on each item.

Thanksgiving Celebration

On November 18 There was a drama presented by the teens. The story of the drama was that a family of four decided to go to a restaurant for Thanksgiving dinner. While waiting the family was ungrateful complaining of waiting and the odor. The homeless lady came into the restaurant asking for a table and water. She brought some bread to eat since she couldn't afford a dinner. After seeing the unthankful family whining she decided to share her bread with this family. They invited her to join them. After this incident they learned the lesson of being thankful. Afterwards, Rev. Hanson preached his sermon. Some members from North Overland Park Baptist church joined the worship service. After the Sunday School Thanksgiving dinner was served. The women who served dressed up as the Puritans.



The teens performed at the play concerning being thankful, not grumpy



The Puritan women served Thanksgiving dinner



As the history goes, Martin Luther saw the trees with snow shining from the moon. Then he went home and put candles on the branches. To-day we put lights around the tree. What does it mean to us? Jesus Christ is the Light of the world as mentioned in John 8:12 - *"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"*.



There are various kinds of beads such as popcorn and berries and garland hanging around the tree. What does it symbolize? It represents the unity of Christians through Holy Spirit. The Scriptures say in Ephesians 4:2-6: *With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* All the Christians can rejoice what Jesus had done for us.



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People love to put star or angel on the treetop. They symbolize the guidance of God and promise of the coming Savior. Angels guided Mary and Joseph concerning baby Jesus. The star guided the wise men to Jesus.



The gifts are placed under the tree. We received the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ (Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8, 9) at the cross.

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We do not return to gift of eternal life even if you do bad for in Revelation 21:27b it says "*...but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life*".

So let us rejoice having a Christmas tree with all the trimmings and gifts for Christmas becomes more meaningful.

Merry Christmas!

Nursing Home Ministry

On December 12 some members from Adult Sunday School class attended Evergreen Community Nursing Home where 10 Deaf residents stay. We gave out gifts bags consisting of goodies and novelties. Three small afghan were given to women to keep their laps warm. Charlene Hanson sang a Christmas song. Afterwards, Rev. David Hanson taught on Daniel 5. The lesson was that we should not allow pride to take over or the outcome will show as it occurred to King Nebuchadnezzar and his grandson, Belshazzar. Rev. Hanson teaches the Bible study for the Deaf at the nursing home every Wednesday morning.

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Empty tables were ready to be filled

People were waiting for yummys to fill their stomachs



Christmas Celebration

It's time to celebrate Christmas again to remind of the purpose of Christ's birth. We had Christmas potluck planned before the drama. 94 people were served. We were happy to see old and new friends eating with us. In the meantime the cast members were dressing up for their roles in the play. Afterwards, Christmas drama began. The title for the play was Joseph. Not much is said about Joseph comparing to the birth of Jesus, shepherds, wise men, and Mary. The story was that Mary was espoused to Joseph. After finding out she was pregnant with the Lord, he was ready to lose her, but in dream the angel asked to accept Mary for she was pregnant through the Holy Spirit and call him Jesus for He will save the people from sins. Afterwards, he accepted and went to Bethlehem for census where Jesus was born. In dream he had to take Mary and the child to Egypt to protect from Herod who will kill all children under 2 years old for the wise men who worshipped Jesus went other way instead of back to Jerusalem to inform Herod.

Rev. Hanson shared the lesson on Joseph. Joseph was godly desiring to live a righteous life. Joseph also learn to listen to God as in dreams and obey Him. We should be like Joseph to be godly and listen to God and obey Him.



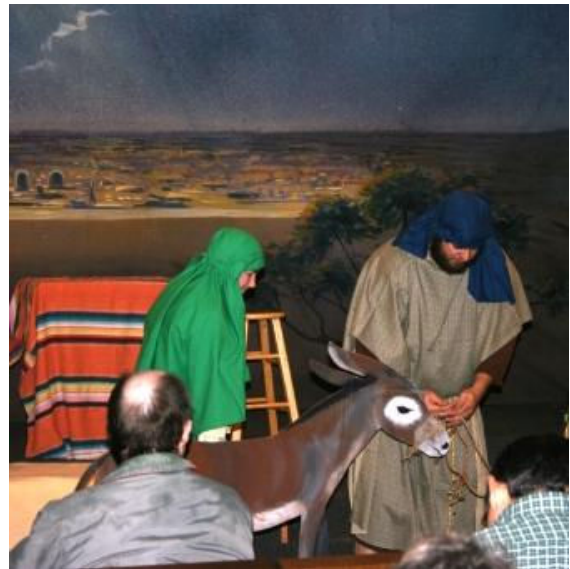
Those who sat enjoyed their meal while those in line waited for delicious Christmas meal

The cast and crew for the play "Joseph"





Donna Martens was showing what scene in the play



Joseph with Mary on the donkey traveled to Bethlehem



Baby Jesus laid on the hay in a manger with a help from the owner of the cave who helped with the birth

Joseph and Mary sought for Jesus and found him in the temple



Mary and young Jesus mourned over the death of

Christian Worker's Dinner

Everyone who is involved in serving Christ in the church such as deacons, Sunday School teachers, housekeeper, and nursery workers gathered at Mimi's Café which served French food and fellowshiped. We were here to celebrate Christmas and appreciate everyone of serving Jesus Christ in the church. Pastor David and his wife were not with us, since he has an emergency eye surgery. Assistant pastor Jerry Sanders led this program. The food was great as was the service. After chatting and eating Jerry shared a devotional on Romans 12:1, 4-5. We are to give ourselves to God for service. The emphasis is a living sacrifice unlike the dead sacrifice in Old Testament. Also he shared that not everyone shares the same office, but that everyone has his own part to serve Jesus Christ in the church. Everyone in the room was asked what he or she does in serving and what part of the body does it relate to help the body functions. For instance, one member shared that she vacuums the church and she is the leg for she moves. Jerry added that she is a big toe hidden in the shoe because she is not recognized as a servant who vacuums, but she plays important part in the church. Also she has a heart for she loves to clean. Without toes a person couldn't control walking. Everyone is looking forward for another year serving Christ.



All who served Jesus Christ in the church gathered together and enjoyed the meals before devotional

We want you to know that our pastor, David Hanson, had an emergency surgery on December 13 to save his eye due to retinal detachment. Currently, he is at home recuperating. Basically he can't do much such as pastoral duties 4-6 months. Assistant pastors will continue the works with the help of deacons and members. Please pray for the pastor and his wife as well as other pastors as they continue the works.

Events

December 21	Christmas Tour
December 31	New Year Eve Fellowship at Olathe Bible Church
February	Valentine's Day Banquet at Olathe Bible Church
March 15-17	NCAAD Basketball Tournament in Columbus, Ohio
March 22-24	Mission Conference with Job Ayuntola
April 19-21	33rd Antioch Conference with Larry White
April 26-28	Christian Senior Citizen Conference in Branson

*Merry Christmas to all
And
A Happy New Year!*