

Greetings from Ceresco Baptist Church!

Ceresco Messenger, December 2019

Christmas Stockings . . .

Many families will hang large brightly colored Christmas stockings over the fireplace or on the walls of their homes during Christmastime in the hopes that Santa Claus will fill them with toys, treats, and goodies. In fact, families have been hanging stockings for as long as there have been stockings!

For many hundreds of years, many people only had one or two suits of clothing to wear. When their clothes were dirty, they would be washed and then hung up (hopefully near a fire) to dry. Non-essential clothing, such as socks and gloves were especially valuable and a child was unlikely to have more than one pair and was expected to take good care of that one.

If a parent wanted to “hide” a treat (such as a small piece of candy), where they were sure it would be found, they would put it in a child’s stocking and it would be found the next morning.

When Clement Clarke Moore published his famous poem *‘Twas the Night Before Christmas* in 1822, the first paragraph talked about hanging stockings:

‘Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. The stockings were hung by the chimney with care in hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

Eventually, it became a general tradition that Christmas gifts were left in the stockings hung up on Christmas Eve. Even when the families celebrating Christmas grew wealthy enough that they exchange larger boxed presents, the tradition of hanging up stockings continued.

Candy Canes Add Color to the Christmas Season

Candy cane sweet treats made primarily from boiled sugar seem to have first appeared in Europe in the late 1600’s to early 1700’s. They were made in many different colors (most often white) and shapes (most often straight sticks), evolving to the familiar cane or upside down J shape with the red and white stripes in the early 1900’s.

The cane shape turned out to be a great way to hang the sugar treats on the Christmas tree that was also strongly associated with the Christmas season and the bright colors of red and white were a nice contrast with the green of the Christmas trees. This was during a time when many food items were hung on the Christmas trees from strings of popcorn to cookies and pastries.

The exact story of how and why the candy canes evolved into the red and white striped cane shapes we are so familiar with today is lost to history, but a reasonable explanation is that the cane shape was created to look like the staff of a shepherd (which fits in not only the story of shepherds attending Jesus’ birth, but also of the symbolism of Jesus as a Shepherd of His flock). These treats were then given to small children to encourage them to behave at long church services during the Christmas season.



I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men."

Christmas Acrostic

By Johnnie DesRochers

C is for the Child born that night to be our light. (John 8:12)

H is for Holy is His Name (Rev. 4:8)

R is for Rejoice with gladness & joy (Luke 1:14)

I is for Immanuel, God with us (Isaiah 7:14, John 1:14)

S is for the Star that led the Wise men to Him (Matt 2:2)

T is for the truth & grace that was sent our way (John 1:14)

M is for Mother Mary laying Him in swaddling clothes (Lu 2:7)

A is for the Angels singing songs of joy (Luke 2:14)

S is for Salvation



Matthew 1:21

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.

“For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” – Isaiah 9:6

Honoring the Service of God's Servants

"Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work." | Thessalonians 5:12-13

Beginning in the mid-1930's, American Baptist congregations received a Communion Fellowship Offering on the first Sunday of each month providing financial assistance to the denomination's elderly ministers, missionaries and their widowed spouses. In 1977, American Baptist Churches USA officially launched the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO) to continue this tradition.

We continue this annual tradition of the RMMO legacy for those who have devoted 15 years or more to ABCUSA. We can make retirement a little easier for those servants of God who in so many ways share God's love. In celebration of this 40-year legacy, we gratefully acknowledge the loving devotion of those who have so faithfully answered their call to serve God and others. Our theme this year is *"Honoring the Service of God's Servants."*

As Christians we are called to honor one another with the love of Christ. This personal offering is unique as it provides individual recognition to those who have served our ABCUSA family. Your church's participation and your sacrificial giving makes it possible to provide emergency assistance in times of crisis and to send an annual *"Thank You"* check to those who are eligible.

Through your generosity in 2018, RMMO provided *"Thank You"* checks to more than 3,497 recipients. Our goal for the 2019 campaign is to reach \$1.2 million. We hope that you will partner with us during the month of December to promote this special giving opportunity to those who have been the hands and feet of Christ!

We are collecting for the Retired Ministers & Missionaries Offering (RMMO) during the month of December.

S.A.F.E. Place

We are in need of the following items:

Bath towels	Hair Gel	Diapers & wipes
Pillows	Razors	Coconut Hair Oil
Twin-size flat sheets	Women's deodorant	Heavy duty combs
Hair brushes	Bath towels	Pacifiers/binkies
Small bottles of mouth wash	Baby bibs	Anti-bacterial wipes
Dryer sheets	Garbage bags	Paper towels
Toilet paper	Auto-drip coffee	Sugar
"Daylight" light bulbs		

Christmas Needs:

Unwrapped children's toys for all ages, small gift cards for teens, wrapping paper, gift bags, tissue paper, scotch tape, small gifts for the kids to give to parents (jewelry, mini flashlights, pocket planners, nail polish, lip balm, body lotion).

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Matthew 1:23

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

The Meaning Of Christmas

Far away in Bethlehem, a Baby Boy was born;
Born with neither riches nor with fame,
Yet Wise Men came from all around to bring to Him their gifts,
And peace was felt by all who heard His name.

Angels watched Him as He slept, and gently rocked His bed;
Their voices singing softly in His ear;
His Mother and His Father both gave thanks to God above
For the greatest gift of all, their Son, so dear

They knew His life upon this earth would not be filled with wealth,
They also knew He would encounter strife;
But most of all, they knew that He would be a loving Child,
And teach the love of God throughout His life.

At Christmas, as we celebrate this Birth of Jesus Christ,
Let's keep in mind the truth of Christmas Day;
For it's not the Christmas wrappings, nor the gifts that lie within,
But our gift of love to others in every way...

Fascinating Christmas Facts . . .

The first printed reference to Christmas trees appeared in Germany in 1531.

Christmas trees have been sold commercially in the United States since about 1850.

The first Christmas tree retail lot in the United States was started in 1851 in New York by Mark Carr.

In 1856 Franklin Pierce, the 14th President of the United States was the first President to place a Christmas tree in the White House.

Thomas Edison's assistant, Edward Johnson, came up with the idea of electric lights for Christmas trees in 1882.

Between 1887 and 1933 a fishing schooner called "The Christmas Ship" would sell spruce trees from Michigan to Chicago residents.

President Coolidge started the National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on the White House lawn in 1923.



Dec 5	Cindy Combs	Jan 1	Michael Meng
Dec 7	Mike Lutz	Jan 2	Alexandria Hamaker
Dec 11	Paige Holtz	Jan 4	Avery Goodman
Dec 13	Glennie Swann	Jan 4	Elise Kidder
Dec 14	Pat Yost	Jan 5	Kathryn Straub
Dec 18	Ryan Boysen	Jan 7	Olivia Gary
Dec 19	Bridger James Davis	Jan 11	Richard Schlee
Dec 19	Scott Wood	Jan 13	Bob Beltz
Dec 21	Rayna Sommers	Jan 13	Amelia Davis
Dec 25	Randy Cavinder	Jan 18	Christin Berry
Dec 26	David Smith	Jan 18	Brian Gary
Dec 27	Candace Ivey	Jan 19	Jean Clark
Dec 27	John Paschen	Jan 20	Gary Schooler
Dec 28	Donna Ruthruff	Jan 24	Chelsea Kilbourn
Dec 30	Viviana Anthony	Jan 25	Emily Ivey
		Jan 25	Bryan Davis
		Jan 28	Harlynn Casey
		Jan 28	Brad Kidder
		Jan 29	Ava Marni Bene
		Jan 31	Bailey Davis



Dec 20	Richard & Kathy Straub
Dec 23	Ken & Kay Davis
	DJ & Julie Holton
Jan 2	John & Ruth Paschen

Merry
Christmas

"Thank you, church family, for all the cards, gifts and well wishes at my birthday party November 24. Most especially, thank you for your presence and for everyone who helped make this a special 101st. You are God's gift to me."

~ Bessie Ivey

"O Holy Night"

by John Sullivan Dwight

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night Divine...



December 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Communion Sunday & First Sunday of Advent	Boy Scouts	Bible Study 10 am				
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Second Sunday of Advent	Boy Scouts	Bible Study 10 am	Martha Circle 6:00 pm	Pastoral Search Committee Meeting 6:30 pm		Church Breakfast 8:00 am Admin. Council 9:00 am
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Third Sunday of Advent Church in Use in afternoon Fairfax Christmas Service 4 pm	Boy Scouts	Bible Study 10 am	Family Night Potluck 6:30 pm		WMT Meeting 6:00 pm	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Fourth Sunday of Advent	Boy Scouts	Christmas Eve Service at 6:00 pm	Happy Birthday, Jesus! Merry Christmas! Church in use in afternoon		Information for the January Messenger is due by noon.	
29	30	31				
Fellowship Sunday, Bake Sale Church in use in afternoon	Boy Scouts	New Year's Eve	<p>Fairfax Baptist Church will have their annual Christmas Program at 4 pm on Sunday, Dec. 15th. Pastor Mary will be sharing a short message during the service. Please join us if you can.</p> <p>This will be their last service, as they are closing and selling the facility.</p>			

Ceresco Baptist Church

230 C Drive North, PO Box 35

Ceresco, MI 49033

(269) 964-9669

www.cerescobaptist.org

Pastor Mary Fair-Matthews, Transitional Pastor

Office Hours: Thursdays by appointment, Fridays
1:00-4:30 pm, Saturdays 8:300-11:00 am. Please
call for an appointment!

Church: 269.964.9669

Cell: 313-303-3301

