



The Grapevine

GOLDEN THREADS

She gave birth to her first born son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger. Luke 2:7

The season of Advent begins right after Thanksgiving this year. This is the 'new year' of the church, the time when we begin telling the story of the Messiah. And it begins, as everything does, with a birth.

We can get a little carried away with our Christmas celebrating. We can make a lot of time for things that are not so important, and forget the truly vital message of the season. It is a time of birth – even though the circumstances are not ideal. It is a time of faith – even though faith can be dangerous. It is a time of joy – which can be muted by too much busy-ness.

So keep it simple. Be sure to spend some time contemplating the miracle of birth – and the miracle of a God who would love us so much as to come to earth in human form to teach us how to live with each other.

Have a blessed, peace-filled, tender Christmas, and take plenty of time to remember the beginning of our faith.

CAROL'S COMMENTS

What makes Christmas special for you? For many, it is the remembrance of Christmases past. When I was a child, our family gathered at my grandparents' house to open gifts on Christmas Eve. After we had eaten supper and were sitting admiring the lights on the Christmas tree, the moment would arrive when my grandfather would turn his head to one side, listen intently, and say, "Why that sounds like Rowdy barking. I'd better go check the cattle." Pulling on his leather boots and heavy farm coat he would go out into the darkness to check the cows in the barn.

And lo and behold, each and every Christmas Eve, while Granddad was gone, the jingle of bells and a hearty 'ho-ho-ho' would ring out on the front porch. Beside ourselves with excitement, my brothers and I would rush to the front door to see who was there. Hiding behind my grandmother I would peep around to see Santa Claus standing in the doorway, waiting to come in and distribute our gifts. Sitting down in the old blue rocker he handed out gifts to my older brothers, my mother, my aunt and my grandmother. When all were distributed he would reach out his hand to me and say, "And what would you like for Christmas, little girl?"

My shyness disappearing, I would climb into Santa's lap and tell him my wish-list for Christmas.

"Well, little girl," he would say. "We'll see what we can do." And reaching into his pillow case filled with presents, he would pull out a special gift with my name on it. Then he would give me a hug and tell me that I was his favorite little girl in the whole world.

Imagine that! In all the world! I was his favorite. Now I must tell you, looking back over the years, I can't remember a single gift that Santa brought me, but I will never forget that I was his favorite. To be truthful, I knew I wasn't his only favorite because he always thanked my grandmother for the little plate of cookies she handed him, and leaning down, would give her a little kiss on the cheek.

Back to the porch he would go, and disappearing into the darkness, we would hear the jingling of bells fade into silence. Within a few minutes we would hear the stomping of boots on the back porch and Granddad and Rowdy would arrive back in the kitchen from their mission to check the cows. "Probably just a coyote," my Granddad would say. "It doesn't take much to spook the cows."

And I, wide-eyed with excitement, would scold him for having missed Santa's visit again. Just like last year. Scooping me up in his arms, he would lament the missed opportunity, and say, "Next year, I'll meet the old gent." I always hoped that Granddad would meet Santa. Afterall, I already knew they had one thing in common; they both wore Old Spice cologne.

We all have these sweet memories, made sweeter by the passing of time; the remembrance not of gifts, but of being loved. May the Christmas season give you such moments of joy, as together we thank God for the greatest gift of Love, the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Blessings to you, Pastor Carol

WORSHIP SERVICE TIMES

MCCABE - 9:30 AM, SUNDAY

SCHOOL 8:45AM

SHERIDAN - 9:30

AMITY - 11:15 AM

AA - AMITY UMC, TUESDAYS 7 PM

AMITY ACTIVITIES

- Dec. 5 - Amity Hanging of the Greens -10:00 am
- Dec. 10 - Amity Admin. Council - 7 pm
- Dec. 11 - Amity Men's Prayer Breakfast
- Dec. 13 - Amity Church's 163rd. Birthday Celebration - coffee hour
- Dec. 13 - Youth Group meets at Amity UMC - 3:00-5:00 pm
- Dec. 20 - Pianist John Nilsen plays in worship.
- Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Service - 4:00 pm
- Dec. 27 - Youth Group - Cosmic Bowling in Dallas

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- Nov. 1 - All Saints Day, with candles and communion
- Dec. 6: Communion Sunday
- Dec. 16: UMW Christmas Quieting, 1:30
- Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Service, 4pm
- Dec. 27: Circuit Choir at McCabe

DECEMBER NEWS FROM SHERIDAN

The United Methodist Women group is changing its meeting day and time to Sunday, December 6th at 1 pm. We will be meeting on Sunday afternoons during the winter, so we can do our work during the light hours. We will be packing boxes for soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. Julie has typed up a new list of things to put in them, so if you'd like to help, please pick up a list and donate a few things - that would be great.

We are also finishing up our birthing kit project for Haiti, having sent 10 of them in November; we plan to send out 20 more this month to meet our goal of 30.

We will be having an Advent Soup Supper/Study in Sheridan on Wednesdays at 5 pm til 6 pm, beginning December 2nd and continuing on the 9th and 16th. All are welcome. Study books are available; if you don't find them at your church, please talk with Pastor Carol.

Our Christmas Eve service will be held in Amity at 4 pm on Thursday, December 24th. The circuit choir will be singing, along with the Christmas story being told. This is a child-friendly service, so please join in this meaningful way to celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Savior.

The plans for the new church building are still at the city hall, though they should be approved very soon. If you haven't seen the plans yet, talk to Dick Schumann or Jerry Smith about seeing them.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Amity

Dec. 7 - Bobbie Walker
Dec. 8 - Allen Aschim
Dec. 9 - Floyd Schulz
Dec. 28 - Ray Hobson

McCabe

Dec. 9 – Bob Harris
Dec. 9 – Morgan Sierra
Dec. 15 – Mike Fanger
Dec. 23 – Will Cleek

PLEASE CALL THE PASTOR AT HOME TO LEAVE A MESSAGE:

PASTOR MARGARET: 503-474-1996
CELL PHONE: 971-241-1285
MAGOLDEN2@VERIZON.NET

PASTOR CAROL: 503-897-4509
CAROLSWANSON99@GMAIL.COM

PRAYER LIST:

- Families: children, parents, grandparents
- Kate Conolly, our District Superintendent
- Bishop Hoshibata
- Time to Grow Major Funds Campaign, benefiting our camping program
- Our pastors, Carol and Margaret
- Faye Smith, as she recovers from surgery

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.YRCUMC.ORG. THE PICTURES ARE BEAUTIFUL! IF YOU HAVE INFORMATION TO PUT ON THE SITE, SEND IT TO ANNE HARDIN BALLARD AT YRCUMC@YAHOO.COM.