

## Cornerstone Update Nov 30, 2017

### December and Christmas

Probably no parts of the Bible are more consistently airbrushed and sanitized than the accounts of Jesus' birth. Nativity scenes show a cozy setting where everyone appears happy and at peace. Reality was much different for the engaged couple who faced the scorn of townsfolk and relatives who "knew the truth" (they thought). I wonder if part of the reason Joseph couldn't find decent lodging was word of their "situation" arrived in Bethlehem before they did. The first Christmas was not about a "perfect family" but one that began awkwardly. I wonder how many relatives refused to even acknowledge Jesus' birth much less celebrate it? Family difficulties and dysfunction were very much a part of the first Christmas – just as they often diminish our celebrations today. But at least there was "peace on earth," right? Well, not really. The birth of the Prince of Peace led to the slaughter of infants in and around Bethlehem. While Jesus was still a baby Joseph and Mary were forced to become refugees to survive. Christmas should remind us of the need to care about and protect all vulnerable people from unborn babies, to homeless drug addicts, to people fleeing war and persecution, to elderly citizens stuck in poorly-run care facilities.

- **Community Christmas** -- Our Christmas month starts in a couple days with the Powell Valley PTC Community Christmas. Whether you're running an activity, passing out helium balloons, potting plants, or preparing free food, do it all in the name of Christ Jesus and for His glory.
- **Sunday School Sunday morning, 9:30 am** "Get to Know You" Sunday School -- For all ages! Instead of focusing on just one or two people as we normally do, this Sunday it will be a "free-for-all" with doughnuts, coffee, juice and lots of conversation. In the service following Sunday School Tim and Alyssa Roupp and their children will light our first Advent Candle. Erik will lead music, Walter Caudra will lead communion and Joel will preach from James chapter 4 – all Deo Volente of course!
- **Christmas Eve, Dec 24**, our service will be 4 – 5:15 PM instead of in the morning. Dress Rehearsal – the one and only full rehearsal -- for that Christmas Eve Service will take place Sunday December 17th at 9:00 am.

### Special Sunday Offerings

- **PEACE International** -- The final number on our November 19 Special Sunday offering for PEACE International was \$19,479. Thank you for your generosity. That amount of money will go a long way to help South Sudan refugees in Uganda.
- **Sanctuary Inn** -- A couple weeks ago we said we hoped to have a couple proposals to consider for our final Special Sunday offering of the year. At this time, only one proposal has made it through the vetting/review process (a couple are still in the works for future consideration). The attached description proposes giving our December 31 offering to Sanctuary Inn the ministry at Welches, OR that has hosted several of our youth retreats. Read the documentation and view the facilities in this [40 second video](#). We feel really good about giving to Sanctuary Inn but if you have questions or other input feel free to contact me, Joel, Ryan Jones or any of the elders.
- **SEED Company** – years ago we committed to helping the SEED Company pay for scripture translations in a cluster of West African languages called the "Kru Cluster." The project is now 100% funded and much of the translation work done. Check out the [latest update](#).

Don't forget to pray.

Barry



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