



*December
2011*



Merry Christmas



Did you know that at SeaWorld you can buy a “Shamu Claus” hat? Sometimes, going round the Parks and in the stores I wonder if they really know what Christmas is all about. But, the other day I went to see the new Christmas show at SeaWorld. It is in the Nautilus Theater. It is called “O Wondrous Night” and is described as the “greatest story never told.” It is absolutely fabulous: carols, puppets, live animals and more. If you can, do go and see it. The donkey, the dove and the sheep each try to take the credit for bringing Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem and Christ being born in the stable and laid in a manger. Then a camel explains to them ... but I must not spoil the story. Go and see it for yourself!



That is the trouble with Christmas. We spoil the story. We try to make it what we want it to be. We put in elements that were never there. We change the story. We even say it never happened. We add other stories and move Christ from center-stage.

So let's stick with the real, true story. It is told simply and directly in very few words.

Luke 2:1 - 7 ¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.



Luke has already told us of events leading up to this, such as the angel visiting Mary and explaining that the child she will bear is the Son of God. Luke goes on to tell of the birth announcement to the shepherds, the praises of the angels. Matthew, in his Gospel, tells of Joseph's dream that the baby is to be called Jesus and then tells us of the visit of the wise men. John's Gospel puts it all into one sentence:

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Let's focus on this. The essentials. It is the story of salvation and we must not lose sight of that by decorating it with so much that does not matter or has nothing to do with it.

Continued on Page 2



Continued from Page 1

Yes, Christmas is about giving gifts, but not because the wise men brought gifts, but because Jesus is God's gift to all who will receive Him. Jesus is God's gift of Himself. One day Jesus would say, "No-one comes to the Father except through me." That is why Jesus came, that is why there is Christmas; that is the essence of the Christmas story. No one can truly know God unless they come to Him through Jesus Christ. Christ came to deal with that which separates us from God – sin. Christmas is so that there could be Good Friday and Easter Sunday. By losing sight of Christmas we lose sight of the Cross and Resurrection. That means we lose sight of heaven and may miss it altogether. Yes Christmas is about love and loving, but not because of the love of Mary for her baby, but because God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son. What is important is the love of God. The love we have for God, for our families, for our friends is possible because God first loved us. He loved us enough to send Jesus, to give His only Son.

Love came down at Christmas,
 Love all lovely, love divine;
 Love was born at Christmas,
 Star and angels gave the sign. (Christina Rosetti)

I am not saying that we should not have Santa Claus and reindeer, decorations and presents, special food and parties. I am saying let us not lose sight of the essential fact and meaning of Christmas. God gave His Son to be our Savior. If the other things associated with Christmas help you to know that and celebrate it, fine. Just don't leave Christ out of Christmas.



From Back Page....

Geese

Rudolph

A visit from St Nicholas

Chestnuts

Carpenter

Black

Jacob Marley

1895

Christmas Day

Golden rings

Mexico

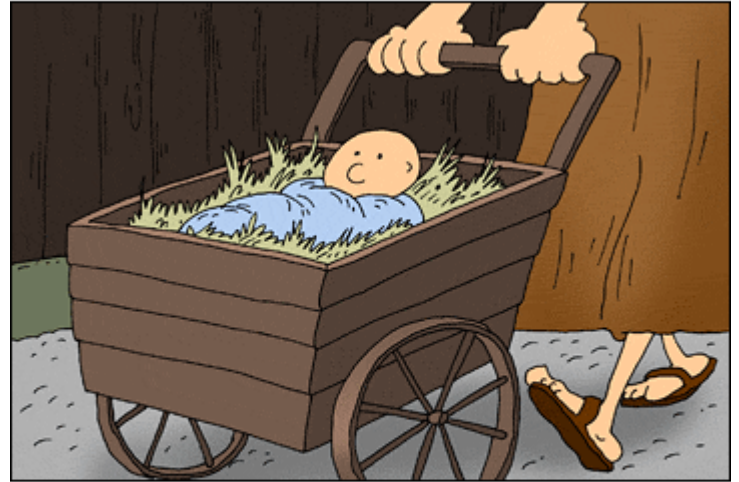
Feast of Stephen



**“Night of Miracles”
Candlelight/Communion
Service
Christmas Eve
6:30 p.m.**



REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



Thanks to Mikel Rice

12-19-2008

THE "MANGER-ON-THE-GO" WAS BY FAR THE
TOP SELLING STROLLER IN BETHLEHEM THAT
YEAR

COUNCIL NEWS & HAPPENINGS

The season of **Stewardship** was kicked off with our annual dinner and a concert in early November - many thanks to Debbie Pinto for arranging the wonderful entertainment, and to the Fellowship Committee for the delicious dinner and decorating. In addition, the Pledge Cards were mailed and are continuing to be accepted during Sunday worship. Extra cards are available if you did not receive one.

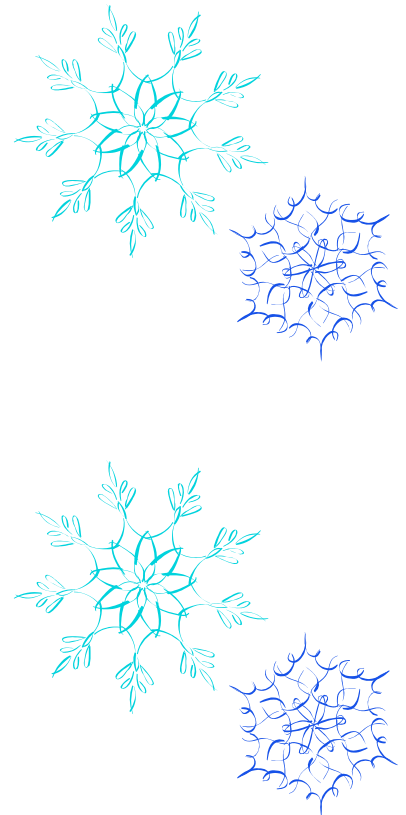
Many thanks to the Missions Committee and to everyone for contributing to the *Holiday Harvest Food Drive*. Our efforts went to select needy families and The West Orange Christian Service Center. The Missions Committee recently shared information about *Good News Jail & Prison Ministries*. If you would like to learn more about this worthy cause, please contact Nadine Pasquot via email at nadine.pasquot@ocps.net, or stop by the church office.

Christmas at CCC includes *Sabbath's Strings* on **December 4th** ~ a talented group of local musicians; *Christmas Family Service and Party* on **December 18th**; *“Night of Miracles” Candlelight Service* on **Christmas Eve**; and Christmas Morning Worship Service.

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, **December 5th** at 6:30pm. All are welcome to attend.

Many Blessings to you and your families this Christmas season.
Merry Christmas!

Janell Newton
Church Council Secretary



December 2011 Newsletter

Christ Community Church

5425 South Apopka Vineland Road
Orlando, FL 32819-3807
407-909-9495

Rev. Dr. John Tattersall, Minister
preacherjohnl@orlandoccc.org

Janell Newton, Church Administrator
ccorlando@yahoo.com

Debbie Pinto, Director of Music
deborahpinto@comcast.net

Charlie Steele, Church Treasurer
csteele1@cfl.rr.com



VISIT US ON THE WEB www.orlandoccc.org



Sundays

10:00 a.m. Sunday School, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service

Wednesdays

6:00 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner, 7:00 p.m. Bible Study (not on Dec 21)
Choir Rehearsal @8:00 p.m. on Dec 7 and 14 only



Christmas Quiz!



In the Christmas song, who 'are getting fat'?

Who was the red-nosed, lead, reindeer?

What was the poem commonly known as "The Night Before Christmas" originally called?

In the Christmas song, what was 'Roasting on an Open Fire'?

What was Joseph's job?

What color is Santa Claus's belt?

Who was Scrooge's dead business partner in "A Christmas Carol"?

Electric Christmas tree lights were first used in what year?

When does Santa deliver presents?

In the song, "The 12 Days of Christmas", what did my true love give on the fifth day?

What country did poinsettias originally come from?

In the Christmas carol, when did 'Good King Wenceslas' look out?

(Answers Inside)