

Reflections on Christmas. – Ralph Weinhold

Ready or not, Christmas AD 2018 is upon us! Where has the year gone? An even more relevant question relating to this season of the year is: what does Christmas really mean? Many chalk Christmas up as just another of several holidays toward the end of the year; no different than Thanksgiving or New Year — just another day off work. However, even to the most casual person, Christmas, as the song says, is “the most wonderful time of the year”. So, what makes Christmas so special, so wonderful?

In answer to our question, let me suggest that it is not just the gifts, the gatherings of family & friends, or even that special Christmas meal. As “special” & “wonderful” as these holiday highlights may be, the real meaning of Christmas goes much deeper than lighted & decorated trees, houses, stores or colorful, downtown lights. The real meaning of Christmas is captured in the simple words “Jesus is the Reason for the Season”. If Jesus had never been born, Christmas would have never been observed, so Christ’s birth into this world is what Christmas is really all about!

It is sad that His birth would ever be vainly celebrated by non-believers who treat Christmas as just the birthday of a great man who lived hundreds of years ago. Some believers say that since we do not know the actual date of His birth into this world that it is wrong for us to even celebrate Christmas. I do agree that since the Bible says nothing about Christmas, no church should bind the day on its members. Whether we choose to celebrate the day & how we choose to do so should always be a matter of personal choice & conscience. God said: **he who observes the day, to the Lord he observes it. He who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it (Rom. 14:6).**

The only day the Bible specifically speaks of Christians observing is “the Lord’s Day” or the first day of the week (cf. Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2). There was a time in my life when I reacted toward those who choose to celebrate Christmas. Today my attitude is one of joy & thanksgiving that Christmas serves to remind the world as a whole that we live on a visited planet. As time goes on, our nation is sadly being encouraged to forget God & all He represents. When a day like Christmas or Easter comes, we need to use it to remind ourselves and others of the importance of Jesus and His coming. In doing so, we observe the day to the Lord. So, let me close by wishing all of you a very Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!



That meets at 701 South Wilbur, Sayre, PA 18840
(570) 886-1838

Arthur Barry, Evangelist- (607) 280-1732
December 16, 2018

WELCOME!

Sunday

Bible Class- 9:30 a.m.

Worship- 10:30 a.m.

Tuesday

Ladies Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study-6:30 p.m.

All the churches of Christ greet you.

Romans 16:16

Today's Sermon: *The Virgin Birth*

Sermons are recorded and are available for listening on the church website.

Bulletins are archived on the website.

**valleycitieschurchofchrist.org
aicoc.org (Antioch Initiative)**

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Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS...

- **Ladies Class: This Tuesday, December 18th. Place TBA. Our lesson will be Day 3 of Lesson 7.**
- **Wednesday Evening Bible Class:** December 19th. Arthur will be teaching Ephesians.
- **Next Regional Singing-** December 30th here at Valley Cities.
- **Sojourners** here- July 8-18.

Next Potluck: January 20th. Try something new for the New Year!



- **Holiday Gathering: TODAY!** following worship with singing and games. We will enjoy our usual 3rd Sunday potluck at this time. Several of us have been cooking up a storm! There will be many **treats** of the season. Arthur has **games** (and prizes!) for us to play. Please join us for **caroling** on the porch afterwards!



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- **We will be starting a prayer ministry in the new year. We are preparing a mailbox-type receptacle for people to drop off their prayer requests as they have need. It will be placed in front of our building near the front steps.**



PRAYERS...

- Pray for the family and friends of **Nicole Baker**, the young woman who was taken off life support over a week ago and passed away early last Saturday morning. Also keep her two little daughters and her boyfriend Jeffrey in prayer.
- **Vicki Joice** has had cataract surgery on one eye, which went well, and had surgery on the other eye Tuesday.
- **Marilynn Patrick**, who many of us know from the Endwell and Horseheads churches, has been diagnosed with inoperable colon cancer, which has recurred from a previous bout. Please keep Marilynn and her family in prayer, as they have been hit very hard with cancer.
- Pray that **Jackie** will have a smooth move from her home in Endicott to her new place in Athens.
- **Pat Guthrie** is waiting for biopsy results on the lymph nodes they removed from between his lungs a couple weeks ago. He should hear on Tuesday. Pray for a negative result, which will show that his lung cancer hasn't spread to the other lung.
- Prayers for Tim's friend **Karolyn** from work, who was involved in a head on collision two weeks ago when a drunk driver hit the car she was in. Her boyfriend and one of their mothers were also badly hurt. Pray for their recoveries and pain management while that is happening.
- Pray for **Andrea Lentz** – lung cancer.
- Pray for **Lori Kashorek** – lung cancer.
- Pray for Sandy and Arthur's neighbor, **Erin Beiber who** has metastatic breast cancer.
- **Patty and Ruthie's cousin Cathy's husband Bruce** has been told there is no longer any sign of kidney cancer! They are continuing to monitor two small spots on his lungs, which have shown no change. He is suffering severe headaches in the temple area, which is a cause for some concern.
- Help us to all stay **encouraged** throughout the holiday season and into the new year.

If you have any prayers or news that you would like included in the bulletin, please contact Sandy at barncat7237@gmail.com or text or call (607) 261-0911.