

Joy Mennonite Church

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New Years Resolutions



January 1995



I like the Christmas season. There is an air of good will and generosity around. It is a time to think of others. There are many appeals to help the unfortunate and disadvantaged. There is a special concern that no child should be deprived of the joy of Christmas.

One does not want to be critical of the spirit of generosity and good will but we are aware that in all of this good spirit there is something missing. We are called to minister in the name of Jesus, the one whose birth we celebrate. To minister in the name of Jesus means something like ministry in the tradition of Jesus, to do ministry in the same way Jesus did. Let us reflect on this.

When you are able to help someone in need and they say they believe God sent you to them, what do we think? We can pat ourselves on the back like a good, generous, but seasonal giver, or we can reflect on what they said. They didn't just think of you and your kindness, but about God. Your ministry interpreted God as one who cares, cares enough to send someone.

When Jesus began his ministry, people marveled at his teaching and the miracles. The miracles alone did not bring people to believe. The gospel writers point out that they saw the miracles and plotted to kill him. It was the persons who were touched by the love and compassion of God that believed. Jesus communicated the reality of God that feels their pain and cares about them. Jesus entered the pain of the people. Another way to say it, Jesus focused on the person in need of ministry rather than on the minister. This is very different from the Christmas giver. The appeal to be generous and caring at Christmas works so well because we focus on the giver. The generous giver is a good person, but let's keep it seasonal. Ministry in the tradition of Jesus focuses on the person in need rather than the giver. Ministry to physical need is not separated from an interpretation of the love and compassion of God. It is not seasonal.

The next time someone says to you that they believe God sent you, reflect on it deeply. It is an awesome thing to be sent by God. You have interpreted God to them by your ministry. We are not Jesus, we are not able to accomplish what Jesus did. We may be like a little garden tractor compared to a large four-wheel drive but we can still plough. Christmas would be a good time to renew our commitment to minister in the tradition of Jesus.

Moses Mast Pastor

Dear Friends,

It is truly hard to believe that today is Christmas Day. Is this really what we have waited twelve months for? Well, yes, but in that first period we are glad that the rush, hustle, bustle, pressure is finally behind us and pick up to pieces where we can.

The day after Christmas we had to frequently answer the question, "Did you have a good Christmas?" To avoid any embarrassment we dutifully say "yes." No one is to know how late we got the Christmas spirit or how quickly it was gone again.

After a while it may soak in that we really did have a good Christmas; the caroling parties were more than a test of endurance in a late evening walk in the cold winter air; it was more than the sweets, goodies and gifts that were everywhere in the family, church and work parties. It was shared anticipation that turned into shared joy and then to the shared realization of what this seasonal celebration was all about, and shared love. Now we have started feeling good about it, and here is Christmas once again racing down on us with its pressures and our anxieties.

I am reminded of an old Christmas carol - "Why can't it be Christmas the whole year around?" It could be if we would only let it. When we convert our frustrations of injustice in the system and in the world and our lofty and moral ideals into positive and directed action we will create an atmosphere of Christmas.

In wishing you all a happy New Year, let us all look for opportunities to share and to love more in 1995.

Best wishes to all. *Bice Klassen*

*create
peace*



F·E·L·L·O·W·S·H·I·P



Our "deacons" prepared and served a meaningful communion service for us on 11 December 1994 - part of our Advent experience.

Our west neighborhood community caroling party brought out nearly a dozen young people from the neighborhood who helped steer us to elderly or shut-ins for whom we could sing, and a good time was had by all.

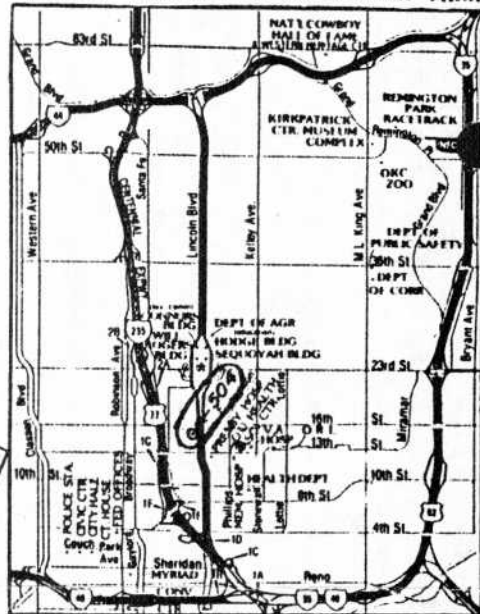
Many thanks to the Rick Hensley family - neighbors across the street from the church - who joined us, lead us in our singing at the church and accompanied us in caroling for residents in the Lincoln Terrace area, a very inspiring evening.

To free up Christmas day for family or other activities we had our regular service as our Christmas eve service. The neighborhood young people joined us for snacks and stayed to share with us all in the service.

Moses and Sadie will join MCC personnel in Mexico to co-lead a tour to and through Mennonite colonies in Mexico. Leaving on 3 Jan., they will be gone over two weeks. During their absence Peter Brueckner and Cheryl Crichley will have charge of the Sunday services.



WORSHIP SERVICE
EVERY SUNDAY AT 10 O'CLOCK A.M.



Church Address: 504 NE 16th St.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sun., 1 Jan. '95	New Year's Day
Mon., 16 Jan. '95	Martin Luther King Day
Sun., 22 Jan. '95	World Fellowship Day
Tue., 14 Feb. '95	Valentine's Day
Mon., 20 Feb. '95	Presidents' Day
Wed., 1 Mar. '95	Ash Wednesday
Fri., 17 Mar. '95	St. Patrick's Day

Happy New Year



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