



CHURCH OF GOD BANNER



www.onalaskachurchofgod.com

DECEMBER, 2009

FIRST CHURCH OF GOD: 3RD. AVE. & HWY. 508 ONALASKA, WASHINGTON 98570

BILLY GRAHAM'S PRAYER FOR OUR NATION

"Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask your forgiveness and to seek your direction and guidance. We know Your Word says, 'Woe to those who call evil good,' but that is exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values. We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery. We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare. We have killed our unborn and called it choice. We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable. We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self esteem. We have abused power and called it politics... We have coveted our neighbor's possessions and called it ambition. We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression. We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment. Search us, Oh God, and know our hearts today; cleanse us from every sin and Set us free. Amen!"



◆ Received from Lee Rosson

PATTERN OF LOVE

by: Jack Smith

I didn't question Timmy, age nine, or his seven-year-old brother Billy about the brown wrapping paper they passed back and forth between them as we visited each store.

Every year at Christmas time, our service club takes the needy children in our town on a personally conducted shopping tour. I was assigned Timmy and Billy, whose father was out of work. After giving them the allotted \$4 each, we began our trip. At different stores I made suggestions, but always their answer was a solemn shake of the head, no. Finally I asked, "Where would you suggest we look?"

"Could we go to a shoe store, sir?" answered Timmy, "we'd like a pair of shoes for our Daddy so he can go to work."

In the shoe store the clerk asked what the boys wanted. Out came the brown paper. "We want a pair of work shoes to fit this foot." Billy explained that it was a pattern of their Daddy's foot. They had drawn it while he was asleep in a chair.

The clerk held the paper against a measuring stick, then walked away. Soon he came with an open box. "Will these



do?" he asked. Timmy and Billy handled the shoes with great eagerness.

"How much do they cost?" asked Billy.

Then Timmy saw the price on the box. "They're \$16.95," he said in dismay. "We only have \$8."

I looked at the clerk and he cleared his throat. "That's the regular price," he said, "but they're on sale for \$3.98, today only." Then with shoes happily in hand the boys bought gifts for their mother and two little sisters. Not once did they think of themselves.

The day after Christmas the boys' father stopped me on the street. The new shoes were on his feet, gratitude was in his eyes. "I just thank Jesus for people who care," he said.

"And I thank Jesus for your two sons," I replied. "They taught me more about Christmas in one evening than I had learned in a lifetime."

A STUPID QUOTE

"Your food stamps will be stopped effective March 1992 because we received notice that you passed away. May God bless you. You may reapply if there is a change in your circumstances."

--Department of Social Services,
Greenville, South Carolina

A GOOD CHRISTMAS STORY

Author Unknown

I remember my first Christmas adventure with Grandma. I was just a kid. I remember tearing across town on my bike to visit her on the day my big sister dropped the bomb: "There is no baby Jesus," she jeered. "Even dummies know that!"

My Grandma was not the gushy kind, never had been. I fled to her that day because I knew she would be straight with me. I knew Grandma always told the truth, and I knew that the truth always went down a whole lot easier when swallowed with one of her "world-famous" cinnamon buns. I knew they were world-famous, because Grandma said so. It had to be true.

Grandma was home, and the buns were still warm. Between bites, I told her everything. She was ready for me. "No baby Jesus?" she snorted... "Ridiculous! Don't believe it. That rumor has been going around for years, and it makes me mad, plain mad!! Now, put on your coat, and let's go."

"Go? Go where, Grandma?" I asked. I hadn't even finished my second world-famous cinnamon bun. "Where" turned out to be Kerby's General Store, the one store in town that had a little bit of just about everything. As we walked through its doors, Grandma handed me ten dollars.

That was a bundle in those days. "Take this money," she said, "and buy something for someone who needs it. I'll wait for you in the car." Then she turned and walked out of Kerby's.

I was only eight years old. I'd often gone shopping with my mother, but never had I shopped for anything all by myself. The store seemed big and crowded, full of

people scrambling to finish their Christmas shopping. For a few moments I just stood there, confused, clutching that ten-dollar bill, wondering what to buy, and who on earth to buy it for.

I thought of everybody I knew: my family, my friends, my neighbors, the kids at school, the people who went to my church. I was just about thought out, when I suddenly thought of Bobby Decker. He was a kid with bad breath and messy hair, and he sat right behind me in Mrs. Pollock's grade-two class.

Bobby Decker didn't have a coat. I knew that because he never went out to recess during the winter. His mother always wrote a note, telling the teacher that he had a cough, but all we kids

knew that Bobby Decker didn't have a cough; he didn't have a good coat. I fingered the ten-dollar bill with growing excitement. I would buy Bobby Decker a coat!

I settled on a red corduroy one that had a hood to it. It looked real warm, and he would like that.

"Is this a Christmas present for someone?" the lady behind the counter asked kindly, as I laid my ten dollars down. "Yes, ma'am," I replied shyly. "It's for Bobby."

The nice lady smiled at me, as I told her about how Bobby really needed a good winter coat. I didn't get any change, but she put the coat in a bag, smiled again, and wished me a Merry Christmas.

That evening, Grandma helped me wrap the coat (a little tag fell out of the coat, and Grandma tucked it in her Bible) in Christmas paper and ribbons and wrote, "To Bobby, from a friend" on it.

Grandma said that

Christmas giving is always done in secrecy. Then she drove me over to Bobby Decker's house, explaining as we went that I was now and forever officially, one of Santa's helpers.

Grandma parked down the street from Bobby's house, and she and I crept noiselessly and hid in the bushes by his front walk. Then Grandma gave me a nudge. "All right," she whispered, "get going."

I took a deep breath, dashed for his front door, threw the present down on his step, pounded his door and flew back to the safety of the bushes and Grandma. Together we waited breathlessly in the darkness for the front door to open. Finally it did, and there stood Bobby.



Fifty years haven't dimmed the thrill of those moments spent shivering, beside my Grandma, in Bobby Decker's bushes. That night, I realized that those awful rumors about Christmas were just what Grandma said they were -- ridiculous. Jesus is alive and well, and we were on His team.

I still have the Bible, with the coat tag tucked inside: \$19.95.

May you always have LOVE to share, HEALTH to spare and FRIENDS that care...And may you always believe in the magic of Jesus in Christmas!

◆ Received from Carol Haur

FAITH CUP A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters

THAT SURE SMELLS GOOD! HOW CAN I GET SOME OF THAT?

YOU HAVE TO TURN YOUR CUP-UP!

Free Coffee All Credits Paid By Owner

GRACE COFFEE SHOP

M.W.

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through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

- ROMANS 5:2 NIV

ALASKA'S HAPPENINGS

SUNDAYS

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM
 MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 AM
 EVENING WORSHIP 5:00 PM
 YOUTH 7:00 PM

~
WEDNESDAYS

BIBLE STUDY
 7:00 PM

~
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5

CHURCH BREAKFAST
 8:00 AM

~
 CHRISTMAS TEA
 @
 ESTHER MASSEY'S
 11:00 AM

~
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
 9:00 AM

~
 LADIES LUNCHEON
 12:00 PM

~
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
 ~
 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS
 POTLUCK
 FOLLOWING MORNING SERVICE

~
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT
 & COMMUNION SERVICE
 6:00 PM

~
DECEMBER 25

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS

COMMUNITY EVENTS

TUESDAYS

AL-ANON MEETING
 7:00 PM

~
MONDAY, DECEMBER 14

TEA & PRAISE
 @
 SHOESTRING COMMUNITY
 CHURCH
 10:00 AM

~
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16

SENIORS ON THE GO
 12:00 NOON

~
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17

AMERICAN LEGION
 6:00 PM

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM & CHRISTMAS DINNER

On Sunday, December 13th we will be having our Christmas program followed by the Christmas dinner.

This year's Christmas program is called, "*Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Future.*" The

children have been working very hard and we are looking forward to a delightful



program. We would like to encourage you to invite your neighbors and friends to come and enjoy this program.

The ladies of the WCG will be providing the main course for our Christmas dinner the rest will be potluck. Bring you favorite Christmas dish or dessert and enjoy a wonderful meal with your church family.

NEW CHURCH

As you are aware we have been seeking ways to enlarge our church to accommodate more people. We had hoped to be able to enlarge our fellowship hall, but we are unable to do so because of the lack of parking. The church voted in October to begin the process of checking on the feasibility of building a new church on our Leonard Road property. This will involve a large amount of money and will take a long time unless God does a miracle.

We are looking for ways to raise the needed funds. Kathleen and I have created a calendar for 2010 with her pictures of the four seasons in Lewis County, and my poetry. We are offering them for a donation and all the money we receive will go towards the Building Fund. If you would like to order a calendar just let us know.



The 'W' in Christmas

Each December, I vowed to make Christmas a calm and peaceful experience. I had cut back on nonessential obligations - extensive card writing, endless baking, decorating, and even overspending. Yet still, I found myself exhausted, unable to appreciate the precious family moments, and of course, the true meaning of Christmas.



My son, Nicholas, was in kindergarten that year. It was an exciting season for a six-year-old. For weeks, he'd been memorizing songs for his school's 'Winter Pageant.'

I didn't have the heart to tell him I'd be working the night of the production. Unwilling to miss his shining moment, I spoke with his teacher. She assured me there'd be a dress rehearsal the morning of the presentation. All parents unable to attend that evening were welcome to come then. Fortunately, Nicholas seemed happy with the compromise.

So, the morning of the dress rehearsal, I filed in ten minutes early, found a spot on the cafeteria floor and sat down. Around the room, I saw several other parents quietly scampering to their seats. As I waited, the students were led into the room. Each class, accompanied by their teacher, sat cross-legged on the floor. Then, each group, one by one, rose to perform their song.

Because the public school system had long stopped referring to the holiday as Christmas, I didn't expect anything other than fun, commercial entertainment - songs of reindeer, Santa Claus, snow-

flakes and good cheer. So, when my son's class rose to sing, 'Christmas Love,' I was slightly taken aback by its bold title.

Nicholas was aglow, as were all of his classmates, adorned in fuzzy mittens, red sweaters, and bright snowcaps upon their heads. Those in the front row-center stage -- held up large letters, one by one, to spell out the title of the song. As the class would sing 'C is for Christmas,' a child would hold up the letter C. Then, 'H is for Happy,' and on and on, until each child holding up his portion had presented the complete message, 'Christmas Love.'

The performance was going smoothly, until suddenly, we noticed her; a small, quiet, girl in the front row holding the letter 'M' upside down totally unaware her letter 'M' appeared as a 'W.' The audience of 1st through 6th graders snickered at this little one's mistake. But she had no idea they were laughing at her, so she stood tall, proudly holding her 'W.' Although many teachers tried to shush the children, the laughter continued until the last letter was raised, and we all saw it together. A hush came over the audience and eyes began to widen. In that instant, we understood the reason we were there, why we celebrated the holiday in the first place, why even in the chaos, there was a purpose for our festivities.

For when the last letter was held high, the message read loud and clear:

CHRIST WAS LOVE

And, I believe, He still is. Amazed in His presence,

Humbled by His love.

◆ Received from Velma & Norm Chilson

PEACE

There once was a King who offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture of "Peace". Many artists tried. The King looked at all the pictures, but there were only two he really liked and he had to choose between them.

One picture was of a calm lake. The lake was a perfect mirror, four peaceful towering mountains were all around it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds. All who saw this picture thought that it was a perfect picture of peace.

The other picture had mountains too. But these were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky from which rain fell, in which lightning played. Down the side of the mountain tumbled a foaming waterfall. This did not look peaceful at all.



But when the King looked, he saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the rush of angry water, sat the mother bird on her nest ... Perfect Peace.

"I choose THIS one!" proclaimed the King. "Peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the REAL meaning of Peace."

◆ Received from Joe Downs

Q
U
I
Z



There were only two who were able to come up with the correct answer to last month's quiz, my sister Katie Jackson and Pastor Jeanne Hossler. The answer is found in the 13 chapter of Nehemiah. The names were Eliashib who allowed Tobiah to live in the temple and it was Nehemiah who threw him out.

Here is this month's quiz. This month's quiz candy bar prize is only available to teens and younger because it a real easy one.

*I lived with my brother on a very large estate
Our father was rich and oh so great.
But I wanted my money and I wanted it now
So give me my money I cried out loud.
He gave me my money and so away I went
It wasn't long and all of it I had spent
I sat in the mud all dirty and sad
And I thought of home and of my dad.
I realize how much of a fool I had been
So I got up and headed home once again
My father was there to meet me at the gate
His arms were open, his love for me was great
He gave me a robe and put shoes on my feet
He gave me a ring and kissed me so sweet.*

*Now my name I know you'll never find
But tell Pastor the story and a candy bar will be thine.*

TO BE 6 AGAIN

A man was sitting on the edge of the bed, watching his wife, who was looking at herself in the mirror. Since her birthday was not far off he asked what she'd like to have for her birthday.

'I'd like to be six again', she replied, still looking in the mirror.

On the morning of her Birthday, he arose early, made her a nice big bowl of Lucky Charms, and then took her to Six Flags theme park. What a day! He put her on every ride in the park; the Death Slide, the Wall of Fear, the Screaming Roller Coaster, everything there was.

Five hours later they staggered out of the theme park. Her head was reeling and her stomach felt upside down. He then took her to a McDonald's where he ordered her a Happy Meal with extra fries and a chocolate shake.

Then it was off to a movie, popcorn, a soda pop, and her favorite candy, M&M's. What a fabulous adventure!

Finally she wobbled home with her husband and collapsed into bed exhausted.

He leaned over his wife with a big smile and lovingly asked, 'Well Dear, what was it like to being six again?'

Her eyes slowly opened and her expression suddenly changed.

'I meant my dress size, you silly

head!!!!'

The moral of the story: Even when a man is listening, he is gonna get it wrong.

♦ Received from Mary Noland

BAD SNOW DAYS

On a bitterly cold winter's morning a husband and wife in Dublin were listening to the radio during breakfast.

They heard the announcer Say, "We are going to have 8 to 10 inches of snow today. You must park your car on the even-numbered side of the street, so the Snowplows can get through."

So the good wife went out and moved her car.

A week later while they are eating breakfast again, the radio announcer said, "We are expecting 10 to 12 inches of snow today.

You must park your car on the odd-numbered side of the street, so the snowplows can get through." The good wife went out and moved her car again.

The next week they are again having breakfast, when the radio announcer says, "We are expecting 12 to 14 inches of snow today. You must park..." Then the electric power went out ...

The good wife was very upset, and with a worried look on her face she said, "I don't know what to do. Which side of the street do I need to park on so the snowplows can get through?"

Then with the love and understanding in his voice that all men who are married exhibit, the husband replied, "Why don't you just leave the car in the garage this time."

