

The Goodnough



Gazette

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CHRISTMAS
EVE
CANDLELIGHT
SERVICE
5 P.M.

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP
at GRACE 10 A.M.

From the Pastor – *Larry*

**And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.
(Luke 2:8 RSV)**

It's just one guy's opinion, you understand. But I contend the **Christmas Eve sermon** is the hardest of all speaking assignments to pull off with any real accomplishment. Dr. Luke's scripture isn't just scripture but probably the most universally known, and loved, story in the *entire* Western World. You need a few extra rocks in your head to take on the task of bringing to life -- life itself. . For hundreds of years preachers have attempted the impossible -- to *repackage* "**Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men**...and all that follows. Even the once a year church-goer already knows the message far better than he knows *Goldilocks*. And for the reliable weekly Christian Soldier it's same song, 16th, 38th or 83rd verse.



No one has accused me of a shortage of head rocks. I'll be there with bells on December 24th at 5 P.M. And probably I will share a message not too much different in theme from the ones in 876 A.D. Paris, or 2006 A.D. Chattanooga. Every decent Christmas Eve message touches or lands on the generosity and amazing grace of God to do such an improbable thing as humble himself to become one of us. Dying on that brutal timber we call *a cross* gets all the attention, as well it should. But the **hardwood and hardwood** story starts three decades earlier in the simplicity of the manger. Until the shepherds and wise men show up, this is what they called in vaudeville an inauspicious debut.

I can't actually remember it very well, myself, but I suspect getting born isn't all that much fun after nine months of warmth and protection. What must it be like after an eternity outside of the cruelty of time and space? And those **swaddling cloths**? I wonder what Herod's and Tiberius' kids wore on their natal days? Or you, or me, for that matter. Luke 2:8(above) will form the basis for my annual tilting of the windmill called "Christmas Eve message". We Christians shouldn't talk about luck. It's an illusion at best. So...wish me pluck! And pray that music, scripture and spoken word may reach believers and non-believers alike in profound life-changing ways.



(from Goodnough Gazette December 17, 2006)

- Q. What did Adam say on the day before Christmas? A. It's Christmas, Eve!
Q. What did the big angel say to the little angel on Christmas Eve? A. Halo there!
Q. How do you know that Santa is a man? A. No woman wears the same outfit every year.

"For Christmas," a woman remarked to her friend, "I was visited by a jolly bearded fellow with a big bag over his shoulder. It was my son coming home from college with his laundry.



POETRY CORNER

On the December 4 worship service at Grace, Larry Thomas read the following poem penned by his sister, Joanne Thomas. All present were captivated. Here it is – “Lead me on to higher places.”

CHORUS

Lead me on to higher places
Set my feet on solid ground
Lead me on to greater victories
Than the victories I've found
Set my course and keep me singing
You have filled my soul with song
Lead me Lord, to higher places
Till I'm home where I belong

Verse 1

Lead me through the darkest valley
You are there within the night
Lead me still through joy or sunshine
When things go wrong, Lord make it right
Lord, I seek to know you fully
Let your Spirit live in me
There's no problem you can't handle
Lord, I give myself to thee.

Verse 2

Help me Lord to give to others
From the love you've given me
Let me feel when hearts are crying
Help me share my victory
Make each day a new beginning
As I seek to know you more
Lead me on to higher places
Than I've ever been before

By **IVY STOUT** (Grace 5th Grader)

Ivy's Prayer

I know I'm hurt

But I need you to be with me

To change the world

Thank you, God, for giving me your light

and letting me know that the world is not all about me

You are always there for me

Thank You. From Ivy



Christmas itself may be
Called into question
If carried so far it creates
Indigestion.
Ralph Bergengren
The Unwise Christmas

A Christmas candle
Is a lovely thing;

It makes no noise at all,
But softly gives itself
away;

While quite unselfish,
it grows small.
Eva Logue

Then let every heart
Keep Christmas within.
Christ's pity for sorrow,
Christ's hatred for sin,
Christ's care for the weakest
Christ's courage for the right.
Everywhere, everywhere,
Christmas tonight!
Phillip Brooks

PLEASE PRAY...

For pastor and elders (current and past) on retreat Sunday through Tuesday in Birch Bay, Washington. They will be seeking God's will regarding the offer to be gifted the building and land on which we currently worship.

Trust in the LORD with ALL
thine heart; and lean not unto
thine own understanding. In all
thy ways acknowledge him, and
he shall direct thy paths.
(Pro 3:5-6 KJV)

ILLUMINATION

*Jesus, the Everlasting
Light*

CHRISTMAS EVE
CANDLELIGHT

SERVICE:

Quiet. Reflection.

Adoration. Rest.

Scripture.

Carols. Candlelight.

Come and worship.

Come and worship.

*Worship Christ the
Newborn King!*

5:00PM CHRISTMAS EVE



*Christianity can be
condensed into four words*

ADMIT

SUBMIT

COMMIT

TRANSMIT

Samuel Wilberforce

*SELFISHNESS MAKES
CHRISTMAS A BURDEN
LOVE MAKES CHRISTMAS
A DELIGHT.*

Anonymous