

Another Word December 20, 2021

To our friends and family of First Christian Church

It is hard to believe that this is the last week before Christmas. Hopefully the tree is up, cookies are all baked, and the presents are wrapped and under the tree. And I hope our weekly journey through the season of Advent has lifted you to a greater understanding of the gift that has been handed down to us by our loving God.

Our Christmas Eve service (Friday at 7pm) is based on the beloved Christmas story as recorded in Luke 2:1-20. Readings and prayers will be presented by Jan Robinson and Linda Gardner, and Brian has chosen a wonderful array of music. We hope you can join us on this special evening. We will be live streaming the service for those unable to attend. If anyone needs a ride, please call the office.

The scriptures for this Sunday are Psalm 148, read by our Elder, Todd Whitmer, and Luke 2:21-40, "My eyes have seen Your Salvation."

The Lord's Pantry sends their love and thanks for your efforts in supplying meals and snacks for almost 200 children.

We are taking a special offering that will go to "Week of Compassion." It will be earmarked to aid our brothers and sisters of The First Christian Church DOC in Mayfield Kentucky, whose church building was

destroyed by the tornado outbreak 2 weeks ago. Our own Mike McCormic is in Mayfield with the Red Cross, helping others.

May we be in prayer.

Lord of life, to You and to You alone do we raise our hearts and voices in praise and adoration. We give You thanks for our abundant lives. With these gifts we are nourished in body and soul. Our hearts are light with joy as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth and also with the anticipation of His second glorious coming. Until then, as we await, we follow You in caring for our neighbor, and spreading the good news of Your love. We now hold up to You all those in our hearts who are in need of healing, peace, and comfort.....We offer ourselves as grateful servants in the name of the one who gave all for us; Jesus... Immanuel... God with us, Amen.

The fourth candle of Advent, is the candle of "love." Love is a word used for many things and feelings. "I love chocolate," or "don't you just love that new car smell," or even "they fell in love at first sight." In our English language, the word love has many meanings and usages which can become confusing, or can distort the meaning we are trying to convey.

In the setting of our candle, "Love" expresses a deep fondness, a tender feeling of affection, and a reverent devotion to our God, and for the wonderful gift of His Son, Jesus.

These feelings must have been in the heart of a priest near Salzburg, Austria on Christmas Eve in 1818. The church organ was broken with no

hope of repair until after the first of the year. All the plans that were made for a musical service that night were in ashes. Being someone who wrote poetry, he had the idea to quickly write a simple poem that could be sung without the organ.

When the organist, Franz Gruber came to practice, Father Joseph Mohr handed him the words, explained the circumstances, and asked if he could compose a simple tune to accompany the verses. That night, "Silent Night" was first sung as a duet, accompanied by a simple guitar.

Our story could have ended there, but the organ repairman saw the music, made copies and passed it around the area where it was quickly picked up and performed by local singing groups and other church choirs. It grew in popularity to become one of the most popular Christmas Carols of all time.

The words are based on Isaiah 7:14; "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." I look forward to seeing you this Friday, and together singing this most beloved carol.

“Silent Night”

Joseph Mohr, Franz Gruber

Silent Night, Holy night, all is calm, all is bright.

Round yon virgin mother and child; Holy infant so tender and mild,

Sleep in heavenly peace; sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, Holy night, shepherds quake at the sight.

Glories stream from heaven a-far, Heavenly hosts sing “Alleluia.

Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born!”

Silent night, Holy night, Wonderous star, lend thy light.

With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King.

Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, Holy night, Son of God, love’s pure light.

Radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace.

Jesus Lord, at Thy birth; Jesus Lord, at Thy birth.

In His Love,

Rich

