



Trinity Ministry News



511 N Commerce St Lewisburg, Ohio 45338 937-962-2741
email: trinitylewisburg@gmail.com www.trinitylewisburg.org

No. 22

December 2016

An Evil Knievel Christmas

When we were kids my brother and I fought a lot, especially around Christmas time. In an effort to curb the violence and protect the Christmas tree from destruction mom would tell us that Santa was watching through the window and we'd better behave if we want any presents under the tree. That comment would usually work...for five minutes or so. We would just take our wrestling match into the family room and pull down the shades. (Anyone see the irony in me now having four boys of my own?)

It's no wonder that my mom fell back on old tactics to give her a little moment of peace during the two week long Christmas break. In order to try and side step the jealousy that comes when one brother gets a cool G.I. command post and the other gets a box of clean underwear, my mom would sometimes get us both the same present.

This happened one Christmas when Brian and I both received an Evil Knievel stunt cycle. (Google it) It was that year's "gotta have it" toy. You would put Evil Knievel on his motorcycle, rev it up with this hand crank and let it go. The motorcycle would pop a wheelie and zoom off across the room. I think we played with those Evil Knievel stunt cycles all afternoon. Then the inevitable happened as it happens to so many young children on Christmas day. The coolest toy is the first one to break. This time it was mine. I decided to go all out and crank that thing as long and as hard as I could. I pictured that motorcycle flying so fast that it would go right through the wall. It turned out that the plastic crank was not made to go long and hard. It snapped off. It looked as if mom's clever attempt to slip by the envy monster that lurks around in every child's ego was about to go up in flames, but then my brother did something that was totally out of character. He just gave me his Evil Knievel gyro launcher. There was no "nana nana na-na." There was no sarcastic laughter. There was no bartering. There wasn't even a reasonable "Let's take turns." He just gave it to me and then began to push his motorcycle with his hand like it was no big deal.

It was a big deal. It was a bigger deal than either he or I ever knew. This Christmas will be the eighth Christmas without my brother Brian calling in to say hello. There are always a few tears on Christmas Day for my family. It is for all families who go through Christmas celebrations after a loved one has died. Knowing this God has sent me a good memory to hang on to. A reminder of a time when a little brother left his older brother envious, not because of any toy but because his kindness far exceeded his own. A reminder of a moment within a relationship filled with put downs and knock downs that a greater word was spoken; a word spoken so unexpectedly, so innocently and so profoundly that two little hard hearts were cracked open and a little love leaked out. A reminder that when any little kindness or any little love leaks out it is all it is because once in a simple stable manger a greater kindness was showed and a greater love leaked out across a very hard hearted world. A reminder of an old Sunday School song that Brian and I learned to sing that had the words "bind us together Lord, bind us together with a love that cannot be broken."

If for some reason this Christmas your coolest toy turns out to be a dud don't despair instead look again because I know that somewhere under the piles of wrapping paper or around your Christmas table or under uncle Ralph sleeping in the Lazy boy lies a good memory to hold on too.

Merry Christmas
Pastor Brent



Ministry Spotlight

"F.A.S.T.B.R.A.C."

F.A.S.T.B.R.A.C stands for "Future Athletes Sharing Together Basketball Respect and Christ." Every Saturday during the months of January and February the Koinonia Center is full to bursting with kids playing basketball. Parents and grandparents sitting in chairs line the walls watching these young boys and girls dribble and shoot.

FASTBRAC is in its seventh year and yet not many know anything about it. It started with a vision of a former member of Trinity, Brett Carlyle who wanted to create a place where little children could begin to build their basketball skills and get to know Christ at the same time. Still today each group of boys and girls begin with a devotion led by Pastor Brent. There were 13 boys in the first FASTBRAC class and in 2010 the number of participants grew to 65. Last year we had 40 boys and girls attending FASTBRAC.

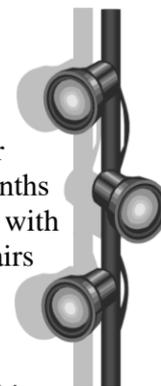
The FASTBRAC program has had many gifted directors over the years and all have contributed to its success: Brett Carlyle, Dan Blankenship, Dick Oldham, Pastor Laura and Monica Fabian. FASTBRAC is currently under the direction of Coach Jessica Cherry, Pastor Brent and Nathan Quesinberry

Pastor Brent was asked to share some thoughts about FASTBRAC and its impact on Trinity. "On a given FASTBRAC Saturday as many as 120 to 150 people come in and out our doors. A few of those families have church homes but for the majority FASTBRAC is probably the only time they come in contact with a church community during their week. Jesus said once, 'that the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.' I feel God gives us eight Saturdays each winter to reach a few families from our community with the gospel and we are not taking advantage of this rich opportunity to be disciples. I invite every member to stop by on a Saturday morning. We have a great church and people will only know about it if we tell them."



DID YOU KNOW...

- Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship will start at 10pm and will be located at the Lewisburg United Methodist Church on Rt. 40
- That Santa Claus is none other than St. Nicholas, bishop of Myra, which is modern day Turkey.
- Mele Kaliki Maka is the thing to say on a bright Hawaiian Christmas Day
- Trinity provided Christmas gifts for 30 kids for Christmas
- On Nov. 30th we had 16 persons in worship on Wed. night
- 2017 is a yearlong celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation
- The Junior Panthers basketball program has its practices here at Trinity. We support our school.





An Unhurried Holiday

"So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger." [Luke 2:16](#) (NIV)

"Hurry up! We're going to be late to the choir concert!"

"Come on kids. Help me unload these groceries right now. I've got to get these cookies baked before bedtime."

"Is it 6 a.m. already? I gotta get to that door buster sale as soon as it opens so I don't miss out on the deals!"

With the holiday season upon us, the music at the mall announces that folks are dreaming of a white Christmas. That may be true. But in reality, many women are dreaming of something else white: a little more white space on our December calendars!

Pageants. Parties. Shopping trips. Baking days. Wrapping nights. At every turn there are people to see, things to do, stuff to buy. The hustle and bustle of this supposed-to-be-happy season can knock the holly-jolly right out of our holidays and replace it with hurried-up headaches instead.

As a result, our calendars become overloaded, crowding out the spiritual significance of the season. I wonder if the participants in the original Christmas story ever dreamed that the celebration of Christ's birth would become so hassled and hurried. The shepherds? The angels? The wise men? Mary and Joseph too? Was hurriedness present the night Jesus was born? We might think that it was not. But actually, there was hurry present that night. However, it wasn't to the mall or grocery store that people were rushing.

The shepherds were working in the fields when suddenly an ensemble of angels told them the Christ Child had been born. [Luke 2:16](#) says they hurried off to find Him lying in a manger.

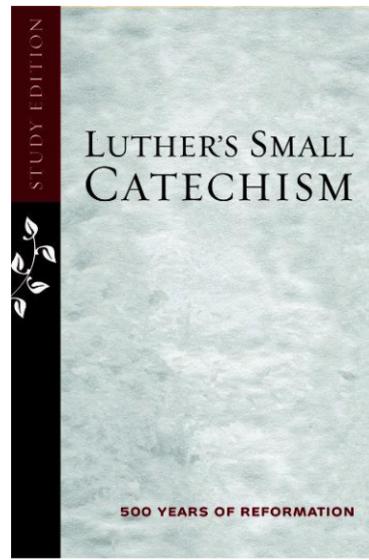
If I had been one of those shepherds, I would have been quiet and amazed once I got there. Being around a newborn baby makes me speak in a hushed tone and feel such awe as I see new life. In the presence of Jesus I wonder if those men too were settled and silent.

Maybe we could do the same today. In the midst of our holiday hustle and tasks, we could stop; leave our work. We could slow down long enough to hurry in another direction. We could put our activities on hold so we might quietly meet with our Lord. We could be settled and silent in the presence of Jesus.

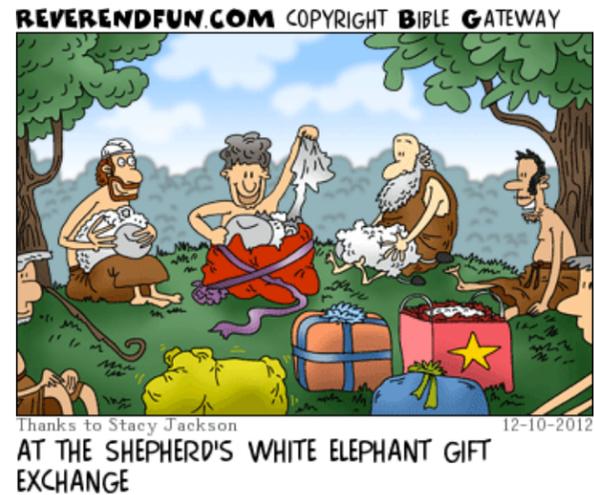
As a result we just might discover an unhurried holiday: a season that will strengthen us spiritually instead of sapping our energy and joy. How about it? Will we pause and purpose to hurry into His presence instead of rushing from task to task? Dare we linger long enough to be refreshed by the company of the One whom the holiday is really about? The tasks will wait while we do.

Here's to more "white space" this Christmas; space that creates more room in our days for meeting with Jesus!

Dear Lord, remind me daily that it's You I should rush to during the holiday hustle. Not things. Not activities. I want to seek and find only You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



In celebration of the 500th anniversary of the reformation Augsburg Fortress has published a new study addition of Luther's Small Catechism. The cost of the Small Catechism is \$6.99. There is also a pocket edition that is not a study edition for \$2.00. And the hardcover gift edition is \$14.99. If you do not have a Small Catechism this is a good opportunity to pick one up. We will be using the Small Catechism in worship throughout the year in 2017 as our way of celebrating the 500th anniversary. See Pastor Brent if you are interested in ordering a Small Catechism.



STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Everything we have been given is a gift. Everything. This includes the car you're driving, the house you live in, the job you have and the family you were born into. God was purposeful in placing you in this time and in these circumstances.

The dictionary tells us a steward is "a person who manages another's property or financial affairs." In the parable of the talents, a man asks three servants to steward his property. Each one responds to this call according to his character. Two servants increase their master's investment, bringing him greater wealth and honor, and the master rewards them for their faithfulness. But one servant acts foolishly and hides the master's money. He is rebuked and punished. The little he was entrusted with is taken back, and he is abandoned.

Stewardship takes the idea that everything we have is a gift to its logical conclusion. If all that I am and all that I have is from God, then how should I

care for and use it? [Psalm 24:1](#) says, "[t]he earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it." Therefore, I ought to consider why God gave me what I have and use it to those ends. We have been given body, knowledge, resources and relationships, not to squander as we wish, but to glorify God. "For in him we live and move and have our being" ([Acts 17:28](#)).

How do I spend wealth so it honors God? How do I steward friendships? How do I take care of the body He gave me to be His temple? How do I use knowledge and education in the best way possible? We do all of these things by seeking God's will in every decision, reading his Word and listening to the Holy Spirit. We do this by acting generously and obediently, ethically and morally.

Will: What's a good time for Santa to come down the chimney?

Bill: What?

Will: Anytime!

Will: Where do snowmen keep their money?

Bill: Beats me.

Will: In a snow bank

Zoey: What do you get if you cross an iPad with a Christmas tree?

Johnny: I don't know. What?

Zoev: A nineapple!



Trinity's Guiding Principles

Jesus is our Lord and Savior

We meet all people with compassion

We are God's hands and voice for the world

We grow disciples

God's grace is enough