



NEWSLETTER

OF THE

Estancia United Methodist Church

600 Williams, Estancia, New Mexico

<http://www.estanciamethodist.org>



DECEMBER, 2017



Estancia United Methodist Church

www.EstanciaMethodist.org

600 W. Williams, P.O. Box 126, Estancia, NM 87016

Rev. Keith Smith Ph 505-234-4959

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Church Council Chair	Melanie Chavez
Comptroller & Trustees Chair	Bill Simms
Finance & Worship Chair	Julie Griffio
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Lay Leader Ann. Conf. Delegate, Recording Sec.	Elaine Darnell
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Staff Parrish Relations Chair	Lee Widner
United Methodist Men Chair	Nick Griffio
United Methodist Youth Fellowship	Alexandra Chavez

FROM THE PASTOR'S KEYBOARD

Part of a pastor's job is to tell people things that they already know. After all, is it news to you that Christ died for our sins, and that through Him, and *only* through Him, we have the promise of eternal life? Would you be surprised if I told you that ALL have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God? This isn't news; it is a reminder. More to the point during this time of year- do you know what the real reason for the season is? Of course you do. And you know that the primary focus is *not to buy* a tree, *buy* lights, *buy* decorations, *buy* cards, *buy* presents, *buy* dozens of luminarias, or even to find that fruitcake you received last year and regift it to someone, hopefully not the person you got it from.

You know that we are celebrating the birth of our Savior. But the same sort of people that promote the commemoration of the death of Saint Patrick as a great time to drink cheap beer with green food coloring in it, would have you omit Christ from the Christmas season, or at least make Him play second fiddle to buying things. It truly is a black mark on the nation, and I don't just mean Friday. Of course, celebration of the birth of Christ has been illegal at various times in Christian history, due both to the pagan roots of some aspects (how do you feel about Druid tree worship?) and the use of alcohol. But when the Huffington Post proclaims that Christmas was illegal in the US until 1907, you have to read down to the next to last paragraph to learn that it was only Oklahoma that waited that long, well after it was a Federal holiday (sensationalism, anybody? Surely not the Huffington Post!).

And actually, although the birth of Christ is wonderful, and the angels and stars did make a big deal over it, everyone since Adam and Eve was born at some point. A much bigger deal is that Christ conquered death that through His sacrifice we may all have eternal life. That's something we will celebrate next April, and

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Staff Parrish Relations Chair	

hopefully NOT by buying chocolate bunnies, buying plastic eggs, buying marshmallows shaped like birds and covered with yellow food coloring...

So please have a blessed and safe CHRISTmas season, ever mindful that only one gift has supreme importance in our lives, and it wasn't purchased with money.

God bless you, Pastor Keith



Maturing Christians and Procrastination

Pastor Keith's sermon last Sunday was about maturing as a Christian. When we are baby Christians, our focus is on ourselves and what God can do for us. As we mature, our focus shifts to what we can do for others and what we can do for God. How can we serve? What can we contribute? Again, what we can do for God?

As I left church thinking about the message, I had great intentions to serve God by doing this or that (rake leaves, write an article, call church family we haven't seen in a while, visit those unable to come to church, make dinner to take to folks, etc.). I was excited to do exactly what Pastor Keith challenged us to do. Quickly my list of non-church to-dos began screaming in my ear and my good intentions evaporated. I still haven't done what I set out to do Sunday. Hmmmm.....

Then I began thinking...(yes, that is scary).....what if Jesus was a procrastinator? What if He left things for tomorrow? What if His to-do list was more important to Him than obeying His Father and His plan? I am very glad He listened and obeyed His Father!

If we are to become mature Christians, part of our task is to spring into action even when it is not convenient. What if our judgement day comes and we are in the midst of procrastinating? I do not want to imagine what that conversation would look like..... Anyway, I found an article about procrastinating that helped me. In his article, *What Happens When You Stop Procrastinating and Obey Jesus*, Trey Williams says,

I am a procrastinator. I've always put off — a least for a little while — what I know I need to be doing. I even learned how to procrastinate when I'm in the middle of procrastinating. I get my stuff done eventually, and I don't dilly-dally out of spite. I've simply never felt the drive to discipline myself into starting anything early.

Then I put my trust in Jesus. Jesus is a major roadblock to a dilly-dallier. Because what accompanies following Jesus is a thing called obedience — and not a when-I-want-to obedience, but an immediate one.

Our obedience to God is not optional. As our recognition of God's greatness increases, our response to His commands becomes more immediate. Over time, obedience becomes an involuntary reflex. Obedience becomes who we are, not what we do.

If obedience is something we have to continuously stay on top of, it becomes a burden. But obeying Jesus isn't about making sure we do one thing and don't do another. Jesus tells us obedience is the result of time spent with Him and flows naturally from our love for Him: "If you love Me, you will obey Me" ([John 14:15](#)). Obedience is a tough lesson for us to learn; and immediate obedience even more difficult. We all have our moments and seasons of rebellion. When this happens, remember: submit, listen, obey.

God is abundantly gracious. He is love and forgiveness. Through His grace, we experience the fruit of immediate obedience.

(<https://newspring.cc/articles/stop-procrastinating-and-read-this>)

The rest of the article is great! Perhaps I can learn from Mr. Williams. I need to listen to God, OBEY Him and stop procrastinating!! Have a blessed December!



-Melanie



Pastor Keith, Lee Widner and Butch McGee Taking down the cross for maintenance

In Case you hadn't noticed... The Methodist Men removed the cross from the side of the church for maintenance. Hopefully it will be back for Christmas!



What Do You Want for Christmas? *By Norman Vincent Peale*

How many times have people asked us, "What do you want for Christmas?" And each time we glibly recount the items on our lists that we have hinted to our families or friends that we desire. And that, of course, is all part of the season.

But what we really want, we never mention. The intangible things like happiness and health, peace of heart and joyous outlook on life; things like a zest for living each day as it comes with optimism and expectancy; like a strong faith in God which enables us to approach life with confidence and serenity. These gifts – and they are gifts - are the greatest treasures we can receive.

So the next time someone asks, "What do you want for Christmas?" maybe we might reflect a moment on how many of the real gifts we possess, on how often and abundantly we have been blessed by the hand of the Lord.

-Contributed by Julie Griffo



Text

Butch and Kings Kids. Always follow Jesus.



Tamma teaching kids that when God made us, He wanted everything to be perfect





Hanging of the greens 2017



Decorating the Christmas tree 2017



After the hanging of the green the congregation had a pot luck with lots of delicious food and desserts. Thanks to all who helped. The church looks beautiful.

The Spirit of Christmas

By Frank Johnson Pippin

Christmas is a spirit, and the spirit

of Christmas is peace.

Christmas is a gladness, and the gladness

of Christmas is hope.

Christmas is a heart, and the heart

of Christmas is love.

Christmas is an experience, and the experience

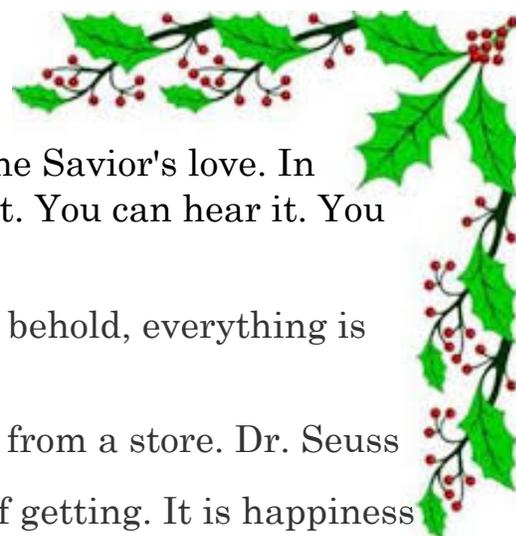
of Christmas is giving.

Christmas is a celebration, and the celebration

of Christmas is Christ confessed and adored...



-Contributed by Julie Griffo



The Spirit of Christmas:

My brothers and sisters, true love is a reflection of the Savior's love. In December of each year we call it the Christmas spirit. You can hear it. You can see it. You can feel it. Thomas S. Monson

Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful. Norman Vincent Peale

Maybe Christmas, the Grinch thought, doesn't come from a store. Dr. Seuss

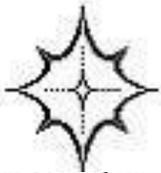
Christmas is the spirit of giving without a thought of getting. It is happiness because we see joy in people. It is forgetting self and finding time for others. It is discarding the meaningless and stressing the true values. Thomas S. Monson

The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of love and of generosity and of goodness. It illuminates the picture window of the soul, and we look out upon the world's busy life and become more interested in people than in things. Thomas S. Monson



Christmas Crossword

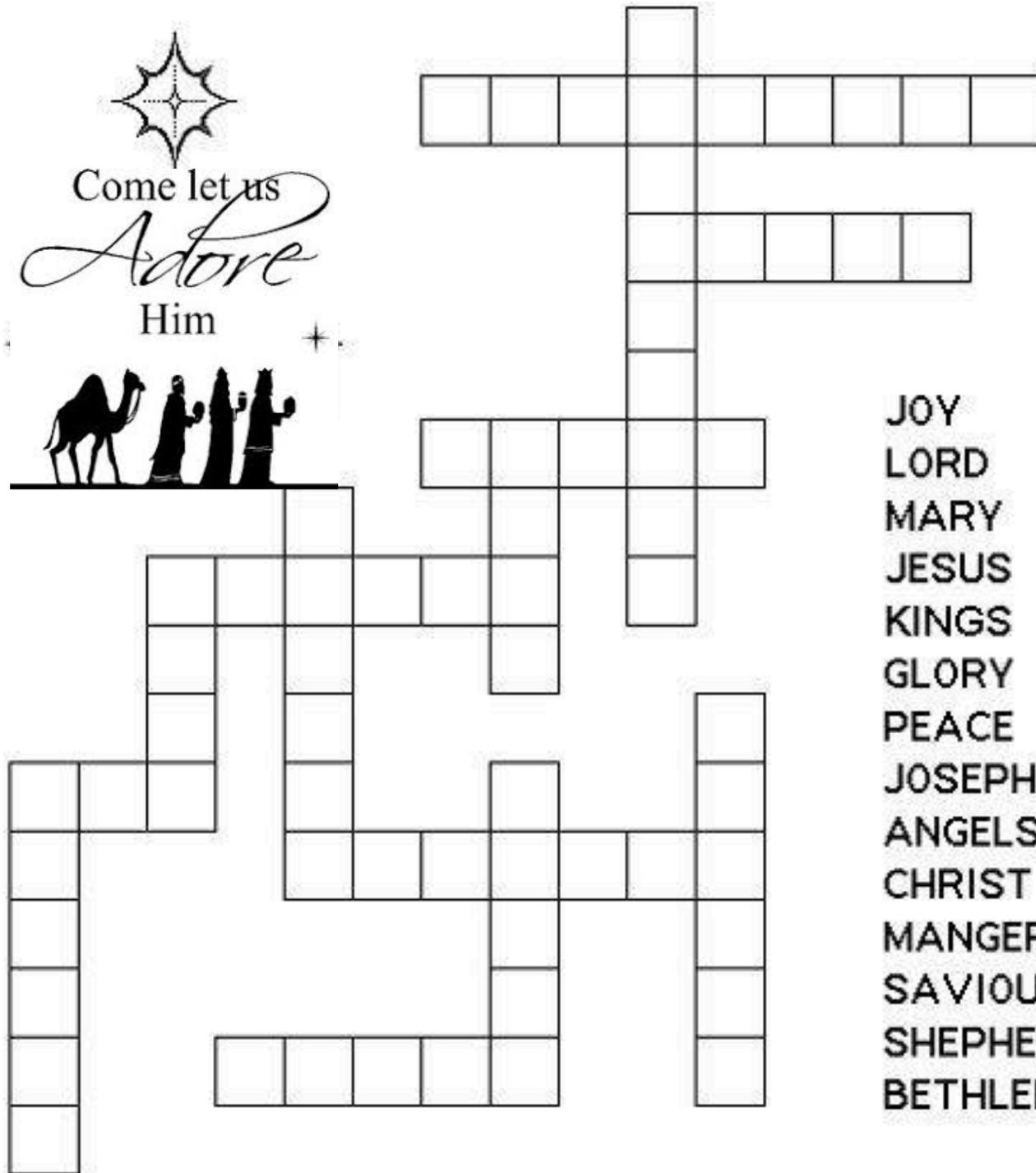
Make all the words fit into this crossword.
Each word is only used once.



Come let us

Adore

Him



- JOY
- LORD
- MARY
- JESUS
- KINGS
- GLORY
- PEACE
- JOSEPH
- ANGELS
- CHRIST
- MANGER
- SAVIOUR
- SHEPHERDS
- BETHLEHEM

DECEMBER 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 Worship 9:00 AM Mtair 11:00 AM Charge Conf. Mountainair 6:00 PM	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Worship 9:00 AM Mtair 11:00 AM	11	12	13	14	15	16 Men's Breakfast 8:00 AM
17 Worship 9:00 AM Mtair 11:00 AM CHRISTMAS Cantata 2:00 PM Mountainair	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Worship 9:00 AM Mtair 11:00 AM Combined CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 6:00 PM	25 CHRISTMAS DAY! 	26	27	28	29	30
31 Worship 9:00 AM Mtair 11:00 AM						



MERRY
CHRISTMAS



Sent with a prayer to:

Estancia United Methodist Church
P. O. Box 126
Estancia, NM 87016

Love is all you'll find

We know the love that God has for us, and we trust that love.

1 John 4:16

Water must be wet. Fire must be hot. You can't take the wet out of water and still have water. You can't take the heat out of fire and still have fire. In the same way you can't take the love out of (God)...and still have him exist. For he was....and is...Love.

Probe deep within him. Explore every corner. Search every angle. Love is all you will find. Go to the beginning of every decision he has made and you'll find it. Go to the end of every story he has told and you'll see it.

Love.

No bitterness. No evil. No cruelty. Just love. Flawless love. Passionate love. Vast and pure love. He is Love.

In the Eye of the Storm

by Max Lucado

-Contributed by Alma Wimsatt