

Jesus In a Used Box

Some people collect nativity sets; those little displays of baby Jesus in a manger arranged in a crude shelter with Joseph, Mary and the shepherds. I went to a church to see nativities from around the world. In regions with caves it was set in a cave. In snowbound Antarctica they were in a snow shelter. In Africa they were in a grass-roofed hut. In the northern Mediterranean they were under a red clay terracotta roof reflecting that region.

We wish we knew more about Christ's birth, but God in his wisdom has only given sparse details. This has allowed Jesus' birth to belong to everyone in every nation. The Lord was not born in a world-famous capital city surrounded by celebrities. He was born in a little town surrounded by nobodies.

What would my image of Christ's arrival evoke in South Jersey? Let's start with a down-and-out homeless family wandering our street late one cold night, desperately looking for shelter. If my house was full of people, the only remaining shelter would be an old un-insulated wood frame garage in our backyard. Cold weather causes the fluorescent lights inside to blink. Inside is my lawnmower, auto supplies, and the usual garage junk. There are used boxes piled up for the trash, and a roll of paper towels.

If my house were full of guests for the holidays, the unexpected arrival of this shabby couple would lead me to offer them my garage. Thinking of the needs of my guests in the house, I would hastily unlock the old shed and leave it to them to get settled. They would have grabbed an empty box and folding the flaps inside prepare for their baby's sudden arrival. Looking around they would grab the roll of paper towels in which to wrap the Son of God. The same paper towels I use to change the oil in my car. I might distractedly glance out my back window surprised to see in the flickering fluorescent light of the garage, the holy family now joined by a couple of night-watchmen who just got off duty.

Jesus' arrival belongs to everyone. It belongs to you. It could have been your street, it could have been your back yard. And it is indeed your home where Jesus arrives, if you truly welcome him. He deserves better than an old used box. This Christmas, step back and look at what is in the center of your family's celebration. Is Christ there?

Mark

Candlelight Christmas-Eve Service is

TONIGHT: 5:00—5:40PM. This brief and meaningful time of worship focuses on Christ who set aside his crown and laid down his life for you.

Youth Group: **Tonight** 5:00—5:40 PM, join in the "*Candlelight Christmas Eve Service*".

➤ **Friday, December 29**, meet here at the building for a festive fun night (games, Devo, etc.).

Are You out of high school but not 30 years old yet?

If so please join Tony Ceraso, Jr. for a 10-minute meeting after Worship in the Junior High Room! Intriguing isn't it? What could this be about?"

Cathedral Kitchen: We are serving Thursday, Dec. 28th. See Vivian if you can help.

"January Month of Prayer & Fasting" **Calendar is Posted!**

Just put your anonymous check-mark on the day you will fast & pray for the church. This is how we start the New Year!

The Nursery: is now in the Cradle Roll room across from the Ladies Room.

Next Year's Monthly Volunteer List is Up!

Please sign-up to help in some way for a month.

Haircuts for Missions: January 13th

Today's Worship Leaders

Worship Leader: Dave Williams

Welcome & Scripture: Carl Smith (Luke 2:1-7)

Opening Prayer: Gerry Hogan

Lord's Supper: Dave Cook, Jess, John Derricott, John Corbett

Scripture Before Message: Tony Ceraso Sr. (Luke 2:8-20)

Announcements & Closing Prayer: Rick Boyle

Greeters: Rich Fabi, Jonathan Cook, Sandie Fabi, Pat Connelly

Nursery Sandra M. & Layla Next Week: Brenda & Norma

Pink: Cleaning Team Dec. 27-30 Donna & Howard Coordinate

OUTREACH/MINISTRY

Mark Finn – Minister

Church Office- (856) 854-0197

ELDERS:

Rick Boyle (856) 986-4876

Tony Ceraso, Jr. (856) 278-6276

Bret Goen (856) 996-5267

Howard Mansdoerfer (609) 790-9969

Worship 110

Bible Class..... 73

Wednesday PM 33

Contribution \$3,148

Budget Goal \$4,260

Daily Bible Readers: 24



Thank You So Much: Howard, Donna, Dave & Bibi for decorating for our Christmas Party! It was a wonderland of fun. Thanks, also, to **Carl & Sarah** for joyfully hosting our Talent Show!

Collingswood Church of Christ

Church Website: www.ccc123.org

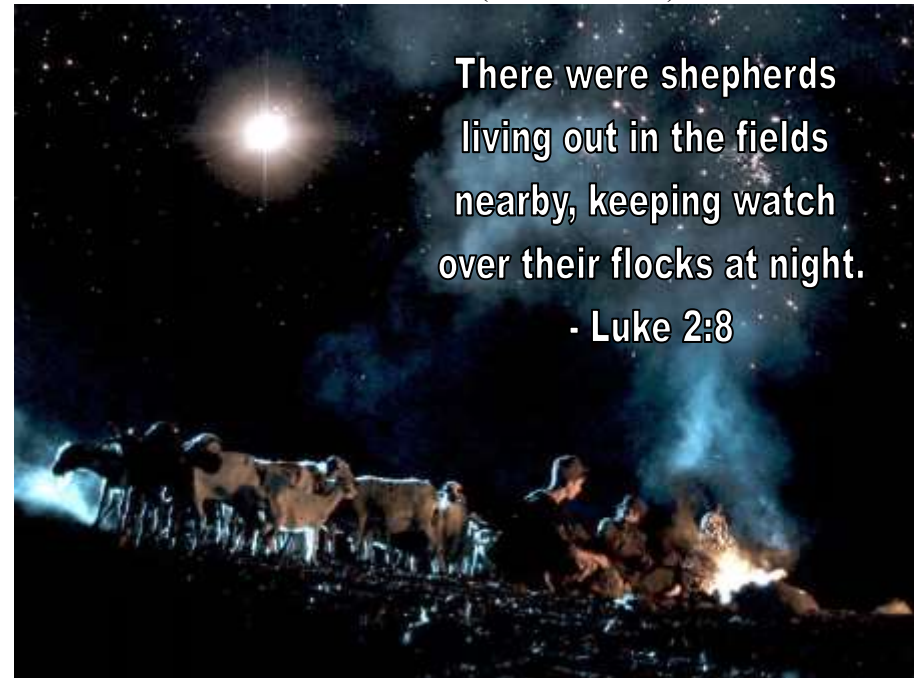
300 White Horse Pike

Collingswood, NJ 08107

December 24, 2017

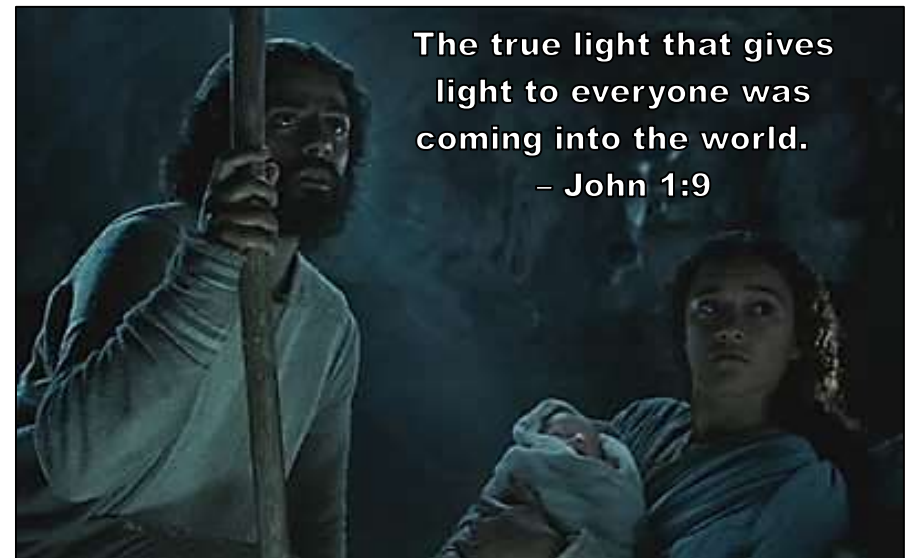
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“Now faith is being **sure** of what we hope for and **certain** of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)



There were shepherds
living out in the fields
nearby, keeping watch
over their flocks at night.

- Luke 2:8



The true light that gives
light to everyone was
coming into the world.

- John 1:9