

DATES AHEAD:

January

- 8th AWANA Resumes
- 9th Women's Outreach
- 25th Annual Church Business Meeting & Potluck (After Morning Service)

February

- 14th Valentines Day

March

- 24th-28th Spring Break

"The Sovereignty of God"

This 16-Part Video Series begins on

January 8, 2015

at 7:00 p.m.

At the Burkleo's house.

Come join us to watch a video each week & have some lively discussion!

Snacks, Coffee, Tea, Ice Water

See David & Kathy for more Info.

Services for our Dear

Eva Clement will be

held on

Saturday, December 27th at 2:00 p.m. here at ACC.

Cards may be sent to:

Bill & Mary Zimmerman
145 Norton Road
Williams, OR 97544

If you wish to send **Flowers** to the Church on the day of the service, the church address is:

January Birthdays

- 6 Josiah Whaley
- 9 Kelsie Leet
- 12 Beth Piete
- 18 Joe Neiderheiser
- 20 Chris Richardson
- 22 Alli Johnson
- 26 Stephan Vandervalk
- 28 Owen Tribbett

February Birthdays

- 9 Joe Clement
- 9 Wyatt Sosey
- 17 Teal Kimball Jr.
- 18 Shirley Jordan
- 22 Willard Marsh
- 23 Leonard Long
- 28 Peter Guy

March Birthdays

- 4 Pam Baize
- 14 Wendy Belanger
- 15 Barbara Long
- 16 Les Hill
- 18 Kathy Burkleo
- 18 Abby Kimball
- 20 Barbara Keosabian
- 23 Jim Armstrong
- 25 Susie Beams
- 26 Connie Quigley
- 27 Bonnie Jones

!Joseph's Storehouse is Empty!

We gave out food boxes to 11 families this season, so...we need to replenish our supply. See Vickie.



January Anniversaries

- 5 Josh & Anna Hoeft
- 12 CJ & Gwen Bernard

February Anniversaries

- 15 Connie & Mike Quigley
- 17 Dave & Kathy Burkleo
- 21 Les & Jackie Hill

March Anniversaries

None Yet...

Women's Outreach

Meets 1st Thursday of each Month at 9:00 a.m.

(Except January—we'll meet on 1/9/15 just this once)

**With Muffins, Coffee, Tea and a Project to work on or discuss
Followed by Potluck Lunch
Ends about 1pm**

Our first booth at the Annual Craft Fair at the JoCo Fairgrounds brought in over \$800! Over half of that we gave to our Church Maintenance Fund. Funds from our fundraisers are used to help with church needs, purchase additional food for the Annual Christmas Food Boxes, and other things that come up during the year. We host our Annual Ladies Spring Luncheon (inspirational speaker, special music, and luncheon). We also decorate and/or help for special occasions. We "break" during the months of July and August.

Ladies, Come Join Us!



NEWSBREAK

Applegate Community Church
P.O. Box 3140
Applegate, OR 97530
(541) 846-6100

Vol. XXXI

No. 299

January-February-March 2015

WHY I'VE CHANGED COURSE

I've known for years now that Christmas trees, lights, greenery, merry-making, exchanging of gifts, mistletoe, and the like are long-practiced pagan traditions that pre-date the first advent of Christ. I am aware of the drunken revelry originally associated with the December 25th date, the Roman feast of Saturnalia, the rituals designed to glorify Mithra, the ancient Persian god of light, the Natal Day of the Unconquerable Sun (*natalis solis invicti*) celebrated on December 25th, etc.

My knowledge of these things led me to ask, "Why would I engage in any of this pagan stuff?" Seeing Christmas trees in people's homes, I would think, "Oh, what a nice pagan fertility rights symbol you have there!" And I began to look with contempt on many of today's traditional Christmas celebrations, choosing not to participate in them.

But I've changed course. Let me tell you why. The Hebrew Roots movement has more recently adopted the tactic of slamming the modern celebration of Christmas (with its pagan roots), claiming that Christians are so naive as to celebrate a largely pagan holiday, all the while neglecting the truly biblical feasts (i.e. Passover, Tabernacles, Trumpets, Pentecost, etc). What they are insisting is that we ought to ditch Christmas, and be "Torah keepers" who observe the ancient feasts of Israel.

I couldn't disagree more vehemently! The feasts of Israel, being part of the Mosaic Law, as they were, served as blinking lights and flashing arrows pointing to Christ. These things, the apostle Paul said, together with the food laws and Sabbath observance (Col 2.16), "are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ" (v. 17). Too many folks in the Hebrew Roots movement are fixated on the "shadows" and are thereby obscuring the "substance," Christ Himself.

Now if the Law, with all of its respective parts (including the feasts), was but "a shadow of the good things to come" (Heb 10.1), and if Christ was and is the very embodiment of those good things, *then His arrival ought to be an occasion of tremendous celebration!* Indeed, "when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law" (Gal 4.4). And why was Jesus "born under the Law?" The answer follows: "So that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons" (v. 5).

The arrival of Jesus was *the* culminating event in history up until this very day. It was "the fullness of time" (Gal 4.4), "the consummation of the ages" (Heb 9.26). *Why on God's green earth, then, would we go dark on that day?* "I'm not celebrating! No lights, no festivities, no greenery, no gifts!" What!?! Millions of people around the world are celebrating, and Christians are supposed to be "The People who Don't." I don't think so!

(Continued on Next Page)

 * **Why I've Changed Course** (continued from front page): *
 * If anyone is throwing a party, if you will; if anyone is making merry and rejoicing and expressing generosity *
 * and love and kindness and dare I say, Christmas spirit, it ought to be Christians! Don't get me wrong. I'm not *
 * saying Santa Claus and Frosty the Snowman and Rudolf the Red-nosed Reindeer ought to capture our *
 * affections. Christ is to be squarely at the center of it all. But I don't want my kids to grow up thinking, "Wow, *
 * look at all the fun everybody else is having! They decorate their homes, they put up lights, they exchange gifts, *
 * they celebrate! And we ... we are the people who *do nothing* and 'think about Jesus,' because He's 'the reason *
 * for the season.'" *
 * Now, if you have come out of a pagan background wherein you actually celebrated the ancient Roman feast of *
 * Saturnalia, and if celebrating or exchanging gifts or putting up lights would offend your conscience and cause *
 * you to stumble, then by all means refrain! But I doubt that is the case. Ever since the days of Constantine, the so *
 * -called Persian god of light (Mithra, and you might as well throw in Saturn and the others) has taken a back seat *
 * to the true Light of the world (Jn 8.12). And when Christians put an evergreen tree in their homes, it is not *
 * because they believe it will bring fertility to their women and their fields. It's not a fertility rights tree to them, it *
 * is a *Christmas* tree. And like the other traditions they observe during this season, it is connected to the birth of *
 * *Christ*, the momentous occasion that has long been celebrated on the 25th of December. *
 * So here's to celebrating and making merry and turning on the lights and singing with joy-filled hearts! The *
 * "incarnate deity" has come--"pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel." *
 * *
 * Merry Christmas! *
 * Brian *
 * *
 * *****

NEW Email Address for
 Mike & Sandy Mikolavich:

 Mike_Mikolavich@
 globalpartners.asia

 Sandy_Mikolavich@
 globalpartners.asia

**Men's Bible Study
 & Fellowship!**
Saturdays at 8:00 a.m.
Serving Breakfast!
NEW STUDY!
 "Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands"
 Lesson # 1: "Do We Really Need Help?"
 Lesson #2: "The Heart is the Target"
 Focusing on What is Important in Our Christian Walk
 See Les Hill for Information.

LADIES BIBLE
 STUDY
 Tuesdays at 10am
 Fireside Room
 Studying the Book of
 James
 (a MacArthur Study)

 GOOD LESSONS!
 ROOM FOR MORE
 GALS!!

Worship

What is worship? Worship is an attitude of the heart that is so filled with wonder and praise at the person and work of God that it is abandoned to praise and adoration. On Wednesday night, worship was the theme of our counsel time at AWANA, as worship is the true spirit of Christmas. The opposite spirit, greed, focuses on ME ME ME ME ME! Oh, how naturally that comes to every one of us! But worship, a God focus that forgets self and delights in who He is and what He has done - that is the right response to what God has done and what we remember at Christmas. So we looked at the wise men in Matt. 2- they worshipped. Mary, Elizabeth, the shepherds, Simeon and Anna in Luke 1 and 2 worshipped, blessed, and loudly praised God. So, when you think about whether or not you are ready for Christmas, perhaps a heart that is prepared to worship should be on the list!

In other AWANA news, the Sparks won the canned food drive and enjoyed an ice cream party Wednesday night. Store night was a huge success, thanks to the generosity and service of Kendon and Jessie Leet. It is a treat to watch some of the kids thoughtfully shop for others in their family, even returning what they wanted for themselves to buy what Mom would like best.

We are done with AWANA until Jan. 7, 2014. Please continue to pray for the gospel to go forth and do its powerful work in the lives of these children!

For His glory,
 Kelly

