

THE CROSS AND CROWN

December 2017

STAND UP FOR THE KING OF KINGS!

As we enter the seasons of Advent and Christmas, we begin to hear holiday performances of Handel's "Messiah." The performance of this magnificent oratorio over the centuries has become a wonderful Christmas tradition. For many people the familiar "Hallelujah Chorus" in particular expresses the joy that the coming of Christ, the King of Kings, brings.

George Frederick Handel wrote this musical masterpiece in just 24 days, working almost nonstop with little sleep or food. This was because he was so passionately moved by the Scriptures describing Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and heavenly coronation. One day his servant opened the door to find Handel at his work, with tears streaming down his face. The awe-struck musician looked up and cried out, "I did think I did see all heaven before me, and the great God Himself!"

When Handel's "Messiah" was performed before King George II of England in 1743, the king rose to his feet when the triumphal notes of the "Hallelujah Chorus" were first played. Of course, everyone else had to rise when the king did, and the tradition of rising for the "Hallelujah Chorus" began – a tradition that continues to this day.

What wondrous appreciation musicians like Handel, J.S. Bach and others had for our Lord and His Gospel, that they would devote their whole lives to making such beautiful, sacred music. I've long felt that the great plethora of beautiful Christian music and hymnody is affirming evidence of the heavenly origin of our Christian faith. Can anyone tell me – is there such a degree and amount of beautiful music to be found also within Hinduism, Islam or other religions of the world? If so, you never hear about it.

The same praise could be spoken about the thousands of Christian artists down through the centuries who have poured out their love for the Lord in depicting scenes from the Bible and the life of Christ. One walk through the galleries of any large metropolitan art museum will make our own works for the Savior and His Gospel seem comparatively small and insignificant.

Have we really adequately poured out our love for the Lord Jesus and His precious, saving Gospel? Have we sufficiently shown forth our appreciation for all that He's done for us? I know that I haven't. No, as I reflect on God's providence, protection, direction and salvation for me and my family over the years – as I admire the devotion of saints who have served before me – I must confess that I really haven't adequately shown forth my love for the Lord and His Gospel as much as I should.

With the help of God's Holy Spirit, I hope to increase my devotion to the Savior and His ministry with this coming Advent, Christmas and New Year. And I hope many of you will join me in this God-given resolve. Pray about it, but give out of love for the Lord – NOT out of duress. May your response flow out of God's great love for you in the gift of His Son Jesus Christ. That Gospel moved the great King George II to get off his throne and take to his feet. What will it move you to do this December and in the New Year?

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Pastor Smith

The Days and Feasts of Christmas

by Kathryn Crumrine

Ever wonder about where some of the Christmas music you listen to comes from or what it means? I could write an almost endless blog on this topic; there are more than a thousand years of Christmas songs, both sacred and secular! However, in the interest of your time and my sanity, I chose to focus on a very popular and somewhat cryptic song: The Twelve Days of Christmas. (But I threw in a little trivia quiz over two popular secular Christmas songs at the end of this article, just for fun.)



While no one knows for sure, it is most commonly believed that the Twelve Days of Christmas were written to help teach the Catechism of the Christian faith. Each day had a meaning that would help new believers learn and remember key components of Christian doctrine.

- 1st Day** *partridge in a pear tree*—Jesus Christ Himself; the use of a partridge is probably not accidental, as a partridge will sacrifice itself for its young
- 2nd Day** *two turtledoves*—the Old and New Testaments
- 3rd Day** *three French hens*—the Holy Trinity (also faith, hope, and love)
- 4th Day** *four calling (or colly, some editions say) birds*—the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
- 5th Day** *five golden rings*—the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Old Testament attributed to Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)
- 6th Day** *six geese a-laying*—the six days of creation
- 7th Day** *seven swans a-swimming*—the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophecy, service, exhortation, teaching, contribution, leadership, and mercy
- 8th Day** *eight maids a-milking*—the eight beatitudes
- 9th Day** *nine ladies dancing*—the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
- 10th Day** *ten lords a-leaping*—the Ten Commandments
- 11th Day** *eleven pipers piping* – the eleven faithful apostles
- 12th Day** *twelve drummers drumming*—the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed

Each of the 12 days is also tied to a “feast day” or honorary remembrance of an important Christian saint (notice the small “s”).

The feast/celebration days start on **Christmas Day** itself, with the Feast of the Nativity (or birth of Christ), and continue to the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6.

- 2nd Day** December 26—the Feast of St. Stephen, as heard in the carol Good King Wenceslas.
- 3rd Day**, December 27—the Feast of St. John the Apostle
- 4th Day**, December 28—the Feast of the Holy Innocents, the boys killed by King Herod in an effort to get rid of the baby Jesus.
- 5th Day**, December 29—Thomas Becket, 12th century martyr
- 6th Day**, December 30—Egwin of Evesham (Bishop of Worcester)
- 7th Day**, December 31—New Year’s Eve, or Hogmanay (Scotland), Pope Sylvester I
- 8th Day**, January 1—New Year’s Day, Mary, the Mother of Jesus
- 9th Day**, January 2—Basil (the Great) and Gregory Nazianzen, important 4th century Christians
- 10th Day**, January 3—the Feast of the Name of Jesus
- 11th Day**, January 4—Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American canonized by the Catholic Church
- 12th Day**, January 5—John Neumann, the first Catholic bishop in America, also Epiphany Eve
- Epiphany**, January 6

Christmas Music Quiz

Just for fun, here are some trivia questions I asked my junior high music appreciation students!

1. What decade were both Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree and Jingle Bell Rock released in?
 - a. 1940's
 - b. 1950's
 - c. 1960's
 - d. 1970's
2. How old was Brenda Lee when she recorded RAAtCT?
 - a. 13
 - b. 17
 - c. 23
 - d. 27
3. What direction did Brenda Lee say was the correct direction to rock around the Christmas Tree?
 - a. East
 - b. West
 - c. North
 - d. South
4. What style of music did Bobby Helms play before hitting the pop charts with Jingle Bell Rock?
 - a. Jazz
 - b. Rock 'n' Roll
 - c. Country
 - d. Folk
5. Name another group who covered Jingle Bell Rock:

(Answers are on page 4)

2017 Garden Update by David Witbrodt



The bountiful blessings from the Prince of Peace Garden exceeded expectations for the 2017 harvest. We surpassed last year's harvest of produce by over 50%! Our final produce delivery to the Food Pantry at St. Trinity Lutheran Church was made on Monday, November 20. As of November 19, the final total harvest for 2017 is 783 pounds, versus last year's total of 522 pounds.

The beautiful flower beds frame the vegetable beds and attract many pollinating insects, helping the yield from the vegetable garden. Plus, the beautiful flowers attract the attention of people in the area, generating interest in what's going on at Prince of Peace. That being said, it is very rewarding to know that with this increase of 261 pounds of produce, so many more people received fresh food for their families in 2017.

The largest increases in production were seen in tomatoes (up 80 pounds, or 38%) and squash (up 58 pounds, or 65%). We made several changes in the vegetables that we planted in 2017, based upon previous results and a desire to try something different. New vegetables that we tried were sweet potatoes, broccoli, and cauliflower. The sweet potato harvest was spectacular, to say the least, at a whopping 150 pounds. The broccoli harvest was good, but we had no yield on the fall cauliflower, due to unknown reasons.





For 2017, we also removed the three raised barrel beds and replaced them with a 4 x 12 foot raised bed.

In 2017, we attempted to give more people the ability to get involved an hour or so each week, working in the garden. We scheduled weekly Harvesting Work Sessions (Tuesday, Friday and Sunday) one day prior to the three days that the St. Trinity Food Pantry was open. 2017 Work

Sessions included building the new 4x12 foot raised bed, soil preparation, planting, harvesting, produce delivery, and closing down the garden for the winter.

Many thanks to the more than 15 Garden Teammates who supported the many Work Sessions in 2017. We hope to get more people involved on a regular basis in 2018, and thereby enable the enlargement of the Prince of Peace Garden. We are also grateful for the many prayers, and for those who supported the garden financially with monetary donations, as well as donations of materials and plants. The garden receives no funding from the church budget, and relies upon donations to support its yearly operations.



Everyone's help has been tremendous and greatly appreciated. Planning for 2018 will take place after the first of the year, so give some thought to what you would like to see next year. All suggestions and participation are welcomed.

All the glory and thanks to the Lord for the blessings bestowed on the Prince of Peace Garden.

Greetings from Social Ministry by Gloria DeCuir

On Wednesday, December 13th the Prince of Peace youth will have a "Best Soup" competition. Funds raised will support our mission for the quarter. This should be fun. First responders are invited to the supper that evening, and also on the 20th. Be sure to greet them.

The youth will also make cookies for the Shut-ins' baskets, and will be distributing those baskets on Sunday the 17th. This is a little earlier than usual. Boxes will be set out to collect your donations starting December 2nd. Let us know if you can help deliver these sweets to our Shut-in members. Another date to keep in mind is the next 5th Sunday Fellowship, December 31st. Watch the bulletin board for sign-up sheets for all of these events.

Quiz Answers (from page 3)

1. a (1958 and 1957, respectively)
2. a
3. d
4. c
5. You could give almost any answer here and be correct! Over 38 artists have covered this song. Some of the more popular include Chubby Checker, The Platters, Hall & Oates, Neil Diamond, Billy Idol, 38 Special, and the Beach Boys.

I found all this information on songfacts.com!

Keep them in your prayers

1. Pastor James - He is a native Karanko from Sierra Leone who was reached for Christ in his home country, despite the fact that the Karanko are virtually 100% Muslim, his father rejected him and he was ostracized by most of the rest of his family. He is now a missionary to his own people in perhaps the poorest and most remote area of the Forest Region of Guinea northwest of Kissidougou. After a discouraging start, his ministry has begun to bear much fruit in several villages.

2. Bibi runs an orphanage in Bamako, Mali - "I am facing a very difficult situation. For some time now, my life and

Dapaong, Togo. In a published

The Wind of a Closing Door

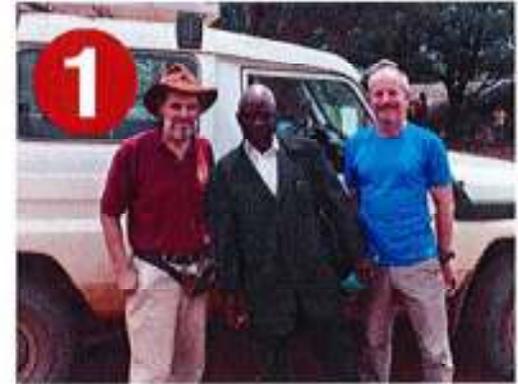
Dear Christian friends and faithful mission supporters,

What a year! What a time of year! I hope your celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation was a blessed one! And that your celebrations of Thanksgiving and Christmas will be just as blessed for you and yours!

Unfortunately, in the midst of this incredibly blessed and joyous time, we have some sad news to share. God appears to be in the midst of closing the door on our time in our beloved Burkina Faso. Even before our arrival in Ouagadougou in August of 2016 to establish the area office for West and Central Africa, we began monitoring the activities and movements of Al Qaeda of the Magrheb Muslim militants based in Mali and Niger. Until recently they have made only limited incursions into the north of Burkina Faso; destroying police stations, burning schools, and kidnapping Western missionaries along the northern border. They have also attacked a hotel café and a Turkish restaurant in the capital. However, the Burkinabe security forces, aided by French and U.S. military personnel, have basically managed to keep them in check and keep their cancer from spreading into the capital and further into the interior.

That all changed about month ago with word from the Office of International Mission's security consulting firm that, because these militants have now succeeded in recruiting a number of Burkinabe Imams, they have now established a presence in eastern Burkina Faso very near our first Lutheran Churches in Fada N'Gourma and very near the route we take all the time from Ouagadougou to

statement, these militants pledged to kill Christians and to kidnap Western missionaries.



Thankfully, none of what they have pledged to do has happened yet because the security forces have now also engaged these Fada-based militants. However, because of the increased risk, the Office of International Mission has ordered us to re-locate the area office to Brazzaville, Congo, in Central Africa. This means that Area Facilitator Rev. Fred Reinhardt, Steph and I will be moving to the Congo by

Keep them in your prayers:

my children's lives have been endangered. We are daily threatened by the Muslims in our community. This started the day they found out I was converted to Christianity... This has greatly escalated recently. While I was gone, the police came and arrested my daughter. They threatened that, unless she agreed with what our accusers were saying, she would spend the rest of her life in jail."

3. Mariama, the Gambia - Escaped her Muslim husband. Now trying to get her daughter out



You can also send your support of our ministry to:

MISSION CENTRAL

40718 Highway E-16

Mapleton, IA 51034

February. And Rev. Stuart and Deb Freese, slated to deploy to Ouagadougou, will now accompany us to the Congo as well.

This breaks our hearts! We love Burkina Faso and its people! This is not them destroying their own country! They also are victims! Our thoughts and prayers are especially with the Christians there that we feel we are leaving behind. The good news, though, is that, in God's economy, the wind of a closing door always blows another door of opportunity wide open. This tactical move toward safety is also an incredibly important strategic one that we had already been considering making anyway.

There exists clear and present opportunity for explosive growth of the true gospel in Central Africa! In fact, we just helped the Lutheran Church in Congo-Brazzaville, open the doors to the very first regional theological training center. The first classes for 10 Central African students started on October 7th! This (for the time being) level one only seminary will greatly reduce the expense of sending their pastoral students all the way to Togo for training. The goal, of course, is to evolve this new training center into a full-fledged regional seminary as soon as possible.

Everything happens according to God's will! His ways are so much higher than our ways! In fact, it occurs to me, as I reflect on all this, that the reverse holds true as well. As joyous as it is that God blew wide open the door to the gospel at the time of Luther, the Holy Spirit caused wind that blew that door open also blew shut the door to Christian unity. What soon ensued were decades of sectarian warfare and later the many regrettable divisions of the North American church. Indeed, the wind of one opening door can also blow shut another already open one. To God alone be the glory! Sola Christus! Sola Fide! Sola Gratia! Sola Scriptura!

Let me close with mention of the people in the accompanying pictures. These are just a few examples of the many African Lutheran Christians we have met who are enduring persecution at the hands of their Muslim neighbors. Their names and a brief description of their circumstances appear in our prayer request sidebar. Indeed, your prayers are of the utmost importance! And so is your financial support! Thank you so much for both! Their stories tell the tale of why we are here. They understand very well, as Luther did, how the wind of an opening door - an amazing life-giving gospel door to Jesus Christ - can also sadly blow shut many others. And, like him, they wouldn't have it any other way! Here I stand! I can do no other! Amen!

To support our work financially, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:



THE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks "Support of the Schultes." Or give securely online through the LCMS website on our online giving page at lcms.org/schulte.

888-THE LCMS • lcms.org • infocenter@lcms.org



Please plan to attend the
**1st Annual Prince of Peace Soup Supper
Youth Cook-off Challenge**

Wednesday, December 13th
5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

There's no cost to attend, but you can vote for your favorite soup entry with a donation to the Schultes!

All proceeds from the Cook-off Challenge will go to support the missionary work of Rev. Gary and Stephanie Schulte in West Africa.