

A Merry Christmas

Silent Light, Holy Light

Amid the chaos and clutter of Christmas as we've come to know it---that season rich with tradition and singing and chocolate and impossible expectations and half-lit strings of light---in the midst of all that we've made of it, our celebration of the birth of Jesus is best known and understood in

silence, in that place where God speaks to us in a still small voice.

Silence may be hard to find at a time when carols sing out from speakers everywhere (even on Main Street!), and Christmas programs, parties, desserts, guests, and presents fill all the spare time we didn't have in the first

place. There's no room for silence.

Silence may be unwelcome. For some, a quiet place quickly becomes a screaming void that, just last Christmas, was still filled with the familiar voice of a husband, or grandmother, or friend who was suddenly plucked out of this life before we were ready to let them go. For others, a quiet place only invites the committee of critics lodged inside the brain to take up its agenda yet again. There's danger in silence.

It may even be a stretch to link silence with the first Christmas. Birth tends to be a noisy event, for both mother and child. The skyburst of angels outside Bethlehem was loud enough to bring sleepy shepherds to their feet. And then there were those cows in the stable and crowds in the street...plenty of reasons to suspect that the birth of Jesus wasn't quite as still and antiseptic as our nativity scenes imply.

But there is, indeed, silence at the center of the Christmas story: the silence of a star noiselessly shining the Light of God upon the infant Jesus, Son of God. That silent light illumines a gift of love from One who so loved this world that he gave his only Son so that we can live with him forever.

The light and love that filled the manger still fills silent nights, bringing a peace that surpasses all human understanding. The love that sent Jesus into the world still has the power to shove aside the noise inside us and replace it with the silence of God's deep and lasting peace---the kind of inner stillness that survives no matter how chaotic the world becomes.

Be still and know the silent light, holy light of this God who loves you.
Rev. Katy Anderson
 Hope Lutheran Church
 All Saints Episcopal Church

At-One-Ment

A friend and I recently had a misunderstanding that resulted in tension and mutual hurt feelings. Through honest communication, we got to the root of the problem, figured out what to do from that point on, and agreed we were good again.

That's what Christmas is all about. Jesus, Christ, the incarnation of all that is divine, is God's honest, direct, unmistakable communication with a world broken from Him and from each other through our own sinful choice. In his life, teachings, death, and resurrection, and through

the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus reconciles believers with God, leading the way from that point on, making us good again.

When my friend and I got to a solution, we hugged on it. When believers get to God, the same thing happens, only the embrace is eternal and unbreakable.

Living in Christ is, profoundly and forever, living in at-one-ment with God. Rejoice and be glad!
Rev. Lea Mathieu
 Valby Lutheran Church,
 Ione

More Christmas messages are located on page 5

Thank You;

To All the folks of the Willow Creek Valley and beyond who we have crossed paths with us this past year, in our efforts to bring to information of candidates and issues facing us from the state and the national scene.

We have been very fortunate in bringing to you quality folks who have presented very pertinent candidates and issues. Morrow county responded in very positive ways in the voters' ballot in support of our efforts.

To all that took advantage of the forums and town hall meetings we thank you for your support and input, which resulted an informed citizenry who spoke at a level of increased knowledge and candor.

As we continue to look forward to 2011 - the challenges that lay ahead are daunting, but will have to be met and molded into a sustainable government. A Limited Government, that practices Fiscal Responsibility in its endeavors, that promotes Freedom of Opportunity, and Free Enterprise in its portfolio.

All the Patriots wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Happy New Year.

Willow Creek Tea Party Patriots



Merry Christmas
 From all of us at
Howe's About Pizza
 541-676-5210

Happy Holidays
 & Thanks!
 FROM ALL OF US AT DEVIN OIL
 & HEPPNER MINI MART

Tires LES SCHWAB
 DON'T FORGET TO DROP OFF
 YOUR TOY DONATIONS AT OUR
 HEPPNER LOCATION!
 MERRY CHRISTMAS

Happy Holidays &
 Thank You for your Business!
 -Hollomon's
 -Talk-N-Tops
 -Jerry's Barbershop
 -Willow Creek Realty

Merry Christmas &
 Happy New Year
 Thank you for
 your business!
**D & L Auto
 Parts**

"I want to extend
 my wishes for
 a wonderful
 Christmas Season!
 May joy, peace and prosperity
 be yours this season and
 throughout the new year."
 -David Sykes

**SYKES
 REAL
 ESTATE**

YOUR FRIENDSHIP
 & SUPPORT
 ARE GREATLY
 APPRECIATED
 THE EMPLOYEES AND
 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 OF MORROW COUNTY
 GRAIN GROWERS, INC.
 WISH YOU A SAFE AND
 HAPPY HOLIDAY
 AND A PROSPEROUS
 NEW YEAR!

In fond hopes of a warm
 and wonderful noel.
 Thank you for
 your support.
PETERSON'S JEWELERS
 Gayle, Bonnie, Marlene
 & Randall

Thank you for
 your support
 this year!
Heritage Land Co.
 Realtor

Happy Holidays
 From the crew at Pellyjohn's
 Thank you for your patronage
 throughout the year!

MERRY CHRISTMAS!
 We appreciate your business
 Sincerely, John & Ann Murray
 We will be closing at 5 pm
 on Friday, December 24th
 Open regular hours Monday,
 December 27, 7:30am- 6pm

Merry Christmas
 WE ARE HAPPY TO SERVE YOU!
 Columbia Basin Electric Co-op

**Bank of
 Eastern Oregon**
 Member FDIC
 One of the real joys
 of the
 Holiday Season
 is the opportunity to say
 Thank You
 for your Business
 and to wish you the very
 best for the New Year!
 From the staff of BEO's
 Ione & Heppner Branches
 & BEO Mortgage Division
 www.beobank.com

We join you in celebrating
 the birth of our savior,
 and thank you for your
 local support.
 Merry Christmas!
 Quilter's Round-Up