

# ...from area churches

## The Carols of Christmas:

How the Songs of the Season Leave People without Excuse

Everywhere you go this time of year you hear the songs of the season. Sure, you have your Christmas songs about Santa, Frosty, Jingle Bells, and Deck the Halls, but you also have the great carols of Christmas, many of which we just sing. A few years ago while shopping for groceries between Thanksgiving and Christmas, I made it a point to pay attention to what songs were being played as well as how people seemed to be reacting to the songs.

The first things I noticed was that many knew at least half of the songs played were Christmas carols with religious themes. I also noticed that many of the people either consciously or subconsciously were singing along or humming the tunes as they did their shopping. I would like to consider a couple of lines from only a few songs to determine my point. We want to look at two things 1) the Advent, the birth or identity of the Child in the manger, 2) the atoning work of Christ on the cross for our sins.

### Advent

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing." Please consider verse two: "Christ by highest heav'n adored: Christ, the everlasting Lord! Late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the God-head see: hail the incarnate Deity, Pleased as man us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel."

"O Come, All Ye Faithful," also clearly identifies who Jesus Christ was. Please consider verse six: "Yea, Lord, we great thee, born this happy morning, Jesus to Thee be all glory given; Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!" The words found in these two songs summarize much about who Jesus Christ is and why we celebrate Christmas. "Late in time behold him come, off-spring of the Virgin's womb."

In the book of Galatians 4:4 - "when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman..." Jesus Christ was born at precisely the correct time in the correct manner (virgin born) according to prophecy.

"Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the incarnate Deity," "Word of the father, now in flesh appearing!"

Philippines 2:5-7 tells that Jesus Christ the eternal son of God left his position in glory and made himself of no reputation by taking upon himself the likeness of men. Hebrews 2:14 tells us that Jesus Christ was the incarnate Deity. As it says in the song "Mary Did You Know" to look into the face of a baby is the closest anyone has ever come to beholding the face of God. "Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel."

We read in Matthew 1:21-23 - Emmanuel means God with us. Anyone who sings these lines gives mental assent to who Jesus Christ was.

### Atonement

Consider the third verse of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing": "Hail the heaven born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness! Light and Life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings. Mild He lays his glory by, born that we no more may die, Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth."

Pay close attention to words of verse two of "What Child is This?" "Why lies He in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding? Good Christian fear, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading. Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, the cross be borne for me, for you, Joy, Joy, the Word made flesh, the Babe, the Son of Mary!"

These lyrics penetrate right to the heart of the

true meaning of Christmas. Yes, Jesus Christ was born as a baby. Yes that was a monumental event in world history, but He came so that he could:

-Bear the cross for me and you

-Be raised from the earth to give us second birth

-Purchase mankind by shedding His blood upon the cross for our sins.

We read in Galatians 4:4-5 that the reason He came into the world was so that He could redeem us by paying the price. Philippians 2:8 also reminds us that Jesus became our substitute. He took the punishment and suffered the wrath of almighty God for us so that we would not have to. And further, Colossians 1:14 shows us that the "First Noel" states we have redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Finally, as the world continues to spiral out of control, have you ever given any thought to the meaning of Christmas? The Son of God became one of the sons of men, so that the sons of men might become the Sons of God! Won't you please receive the truth at this time of the year, a true Christmas gift eternal life? If you have never trusted Jesus Christ, won't you please today before its everlasting too late? The Carols of Christmas contain enough truth about who Jesus Christ was and why He came to hold those who sing them accountable.

If you have already received the free gift of eternal life I challenge you to appreciate afresh or in a new way the carols of our Christ this Christmas season and, if you have not, today is the day of Salvation—call upon Emmanuel—Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!

Pastor Dean Antonucci  
Amazing Grace Fellowship

## Good News of Great Joy

"Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy...; for to you is born this day... a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord" (Lk 2:10-11).

This "today" which resounds in the Bible does not refer only to the event which took place two thousand years ago and which changed the history of the world. It also refers to the Holy Night for which we are preparing. The celebration of the solemnity of Christmas, even in the farthest reaches of the five continents, there resound these angelic words heard by the shepherds of Bethlehem: "Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy...; for to you is born this day... a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord" (Lk 2:10-11).

Jesus was born in a stable, as the Gospel of Luke recounts, "because there was no room for them in the inn" (Lk 2:7). Mary, his Mother, and Joseph had not found a welcome in any house in Bethlehem. Mary had to lay the Saviour of the world in a manger, the only cradle available for the Son of God made

man. This is the reality of the Lord's Nativity. Every year we return to it: thus we rediscover it, thus we experience it every time with unchanged wonder. The birth of the Messiah! It is the central event in the history of humanity. The whole human race was awaiting it with a vague presentiment; the Chosen People awaited with explicit awareness.

Saint Paul speaks of this New Covenant in the Letter to Titus, "The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men" (Tit 2:11). Precisely this grace enables humanity to live "awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ," who "gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds" (Tit 2:14).

The mystery of Christmas is fully reflected the truth of his plan of salvation for man and for the world. It is not only man who is to be saved, but all creation is invited to sing

to the Lord a new song, to rejoice and to exult together with all the nations of the earth.

Christmas is forever, not for just one day. For loving, sharing, giving, are the continuity of the spirit of Christmas; it is not to put away like bells and lights and tinsel, in some box upon a shelf.

The good you do for others is good you do yourself. Christ should be in the centre of your entire life. Merry Christmas.

God Bless,  
Fr. Kumar Udagandla  
St. Patrick's and St. William's Catholic parishes

**St. Patrick's Schedule:**  
Tuesday, December 24  
Christmas Vigil  
8:30 p.m. - Christmas Carols  
9 p.m. - Candlelight Procession, Blessing of the Nativity Scene, Vigil Mass  
Wednesday, December 25  
11 a.m. - Christmas Mass  
**St. William's Schedule**  
Wednesday, December 25  
8:45 a.m. - Blessing of Nativity Scene, Christmas Carols, Christmas Mass

## Mustang girls fail to take Hoop Classic in overtime

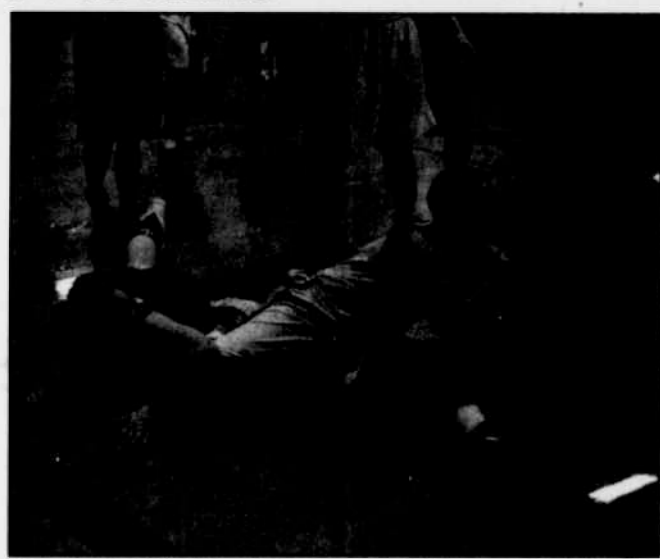
After travelling to Warrenton last weekend and winning the tournament there, the Mustang girls' basketball team stayed closer to home for games and had a win and two very close losses for the week.

On Tuesday the team went to Imbler and lost by a score of 36-34. The Mustangs never led in the game but made it very close and had a chance to win it at the end. Heppner trailed 19-14 at half and 28-21 after three quarters. They outscored Imbler 13-8 in the fourth quarter to tie the score near the end of the game. Imbler made two free throws late to make the final score 36-34.

Kelly Wilson led the team in scoring with 18. Blake Greenup had nine points, Maddie Lindsay five and Kayla Kindle two. Kindle led the team in rebounds with seven, Lindsay had six and Greenup four. Micha Hintz had five assists for the Mustangs.

This past weekend the team hosted the Heppner Hoop Classic tournament. They won their first game with Arlington 57-20 but lost in the championship game to Crane 44-43 in overtime.

Against Arlington the Mustangs raced out to a 20-6 lead after one quarter and led 35-12 at halftime. Maddie Lindsay led the team in scoring with 13 points. Jessica Kempkin had 12, Wilson and Greenup both scored



Mustang Micha Hintz shuts out an Arlington player during the Hoop Classic in Heppner last weekend. -Contributed photo


10. Hintz had eight points, Kindle four and Paige Grieb two. Kempkin hauled in 12 rebounds, Lindsay 10 and Wilson five. Hintz and Wilson had five steals each for the game. It was a strong showing for the Mustangs against a young Honker team that has a bright future ahead of them.

In the championship game, it was very close throughout as Crane led 12-11 after one quarter and Heppner led 19-18 at halftime. Heppner led 27-24 after three quarters and the game ended 39-39 to force the overtime period. It was an exciting overtime and the game could have gone either way at the end.

Wilson led the team in scoring with 17. Greenup and Lindsay both had eight points. Kempkin finished with seven and Grieb had three. Lindsay led the team in rebounds with 12 and Kempkin had 10. Wilson

grabbed six and Greenup five. Hintz had five assists for the game.

This weekend the Mustangs have two league games. They host the Stanfield Tigers on Friday and then travel to Pilot Rock to take on the Rockets on Saturday.



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### WASHINGTON DC YOUTH TOUR APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE NOW

At CBEC, we take great pride in highlighting the value of cooperative membership to children. After all, they are our members-in-training. We provide a variety of programs that benefit young people, from safety demonstrations to sponsoring youth activities across our five-county service territory.

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The next trip is June 12-19, 2014. Applications are available from CBEC's website ([www.cbec.cc](http://www.cbec.cc)). Applications are due January 17, 2014.



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- 2014 Washington Youth Tour is June 12-19

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