

## Washington church of Christ

27 Grand Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882

Phone: 201-546-1284

[washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com](http://washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com)

# The Washington Messenger

Volume 2 – Number 40

**December 8, 2013**

## Order of Services Sunday December 8, 2013

Song Leader	Cameron Wydro
Prayer	Arnold Thompson
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Bill Duryea
Prayer for the Cup	Pete Ferencze
Prayer for the Collection	Tom Dolan
Assisting at the Table	Brian Jeffries
Scripture Reading	Bob James
Morning Closing Prayer	Ralph Ruggiero
Evening Opening Prayer	David Osinski
Announcements	Stan Thompson

## Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

## CHRISTMAS

*By Arnold Thompson*

As a child, back home in Indiana, Christmas was not celebrated by my father. But my mother did. We had peanut brittle, oranges and other good things to eat. I got Christmas presents but I suspected that Christmas should not be celebrated because of my father. He was a Jehovah's Witness and I tended to follow his lead. When he died, I was a junior in High School and I began to rethink my opposition to Christmas and the good things it represented.

However, I understood the pagan origin of the Holiday. I knew that Christmas was not the Lord's birthday and that there should be no religious connotation to the event. It was a national holiday, though, and a special day to be shared with friends and family.

The apostle Paul told the Galatians "You observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain" (Gal. 4:10-11). Doubtless, Paul refers to unauthorized religious observances with special mandatory religious significance. We would certainly desire to avoid following the Galatians' example. Therefore, we should examine our motives and avoid practicing something condemned by Paul. Then, can we in good conscience observe Christmas? Christmas is a religious observance of the birth of Christ as viewed by most religious denominations. Christmas is also a national secular holiday just as Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Christmas provides a time for family activities the same as Labor Day, for example.

Should Christmas be celebrated as the birth of Christ? I don't think so for there are no scriptures to support that. The practice did not originate with God's word.

Do we have authority to engage in the non-religious traditions surrounding Christmas? There are many non-religious traditions that are approved by God. We can give gifts, spend time with family, eat and take time off from work.

If you cannot celebrate Christmas with a clear conscience then do not do it (Rom. 14: 22, 23).

But do not condemn those who celebrate it non-religiously and in good conscience. We need to distinguish between religious practices and sharing a holiday with family. The former is condemned while the latter is approved.

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## EVENTS AND NOTES

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT WE ARE AWARE OF ARE ...

- ⤴ OUR NEXT THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY WILL BE ON DECEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup> AT 11:00AM.
- ⤴ NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, RALPH RUGGIERO WILL GIVE THE MORNING LESSON.
- ⤴ STAN THOMPSON IS SCHEDULED TO PRESENT THE MORNING LESSON ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>.
- ⤴ THE NEXT MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>, STARTING AT 4PM.
- ⤴ ADDITIONALLY, THE LADIES BIBLE STUDY IS SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup> AS WELL ... STARTING AT 4PM.

**DO YOU INCLUDE THE EVANGELISTS THAT WE SUPPORT IN YOUR PRAYERS?**

### **Our Prayer List...**

**For Spiritual Responsiveness** – All of our wayward members ...  
Georgia DeLorenzo ... Sondra DeLorenzo

**For Physical Healing** – John Baxter ... Larry Smith (Sharon Ferencze's brother) ... Frank and Antoinette Salerno (Annie's parents) ... Mary Celentano's father

**For Wisdom and Good Judgment** – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

**For God's Care and Good Providence** – Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation.

### **Sheep, Not a Lamb**

*'Twas a sheep, not a lamb that strayed away in the parable Jesus told.*

*A grown-up sheep that had gone astray from the ninety and nine in the fold.*

*Out on the hillside, out in the cold, 'twas a sheep the Good Shepherd sought;*

*And back to the flock, safe into the fold, 'twas a sheep the Good Shepherd brought.*

*And why for the sheep should we earnestly long and as earnestly hope and pray?*

*Because there is danger, if they go wrong, they will lead the lambs astray.*

*For the lambs will follow the sheep, you know, wherever the sheep may stray;*

*When the sheep go wrong, it will not be long till the lambs are as wrong as they.*

*And so with the sheep we earnestly plead, for the sake of the lambs today;*

*If the sheep are lost, what terrible cost some of the lambs will have to pay!*