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Daily Devotion



No Room

This past Christmas my husband had a unique opportunity to serve his Lord by playing the part of an innkeeper at Immanuel Lutheran's Living Nativity. Since I was a guide at the same event, I had the opportunity to see him in action as he repeatedly did what he had been told to do. He told people there was no room for them in his inn and then sent them on their way to possibly find shelter in the stable where his animals were kept. When the event was over, I asked him if that was a hard part for him to play. He confessed it was. There was no complaint about the cold, learning the lines, wearing a costume or the time spent. He just said it was tough because every time he did it, he wished he could have said yes to having the people stay at his inn. I knew that would be tough because he has always found joy in giving to and sharing with others. In some ways he reminds me of a young man who was given the part of innkeeper in the children's Christmas service. The young man had been chosen for that part because he was not the most able learner but he wanted to have a speaking part. Everyone was certain that, with some practice, he would do well with this part.

After all it only involved saying two words, "NO ROOM" and then pointing Mary and Joseph into a different direction. While there were some minor challenges at the practices, overall things went well. On Christmas Eve, they went over his part and assured him he would do well. Everything would be just like they did it at practice except there would be more people there to watch. As Mary and Joseph approached the innkeeper, he clearly spoke those much practiced words. He did well.

Everyone clearly heard those two words and everyone also heard and saw what followed. Right after he said, "No Room" and pointed Mary and Joseph in the direction of the stable, he loudly yelled, "Hey Joseph, come on back! You can have my room." The congregation was quiet. Joseph didn't know quite what to say or do and finally decided he would just continue to walk toward the stable. The organist quickly played some "cover up" music while a teacher motioned for the young innkeeper to come out of the staging area. The rest of the evening proceeded as practiced. I sincerely hope the congregation received the Godly message the young man beautifully delivered.

You see, God could have told all of us there was "NO ROOM" in heaven for any of us because of our sins. There is no room in heaven for sinners without Jesus. God did what that young man did. God forever changed the script when He triumphantly declared to His children, "Hey. I will have my Son die to make a room for you in heaven." God the Father didn't give us His Son's room, He gave us His Son. Jesus did not go through an uncomfortable night without a bed, He was painfully mocked and crucified to provide us with a room in heaven. Now all of us who believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior have this beautiful promise from the very lips of Christ Himself, "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." John 14:2-3. Perhaps the most beautiful part of all of this is that we will not just be put in a room somewhere for all eternity, but we will be with

Jesus and all believers for all eternity.

By Elaine Bickel