



The Courier

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2020

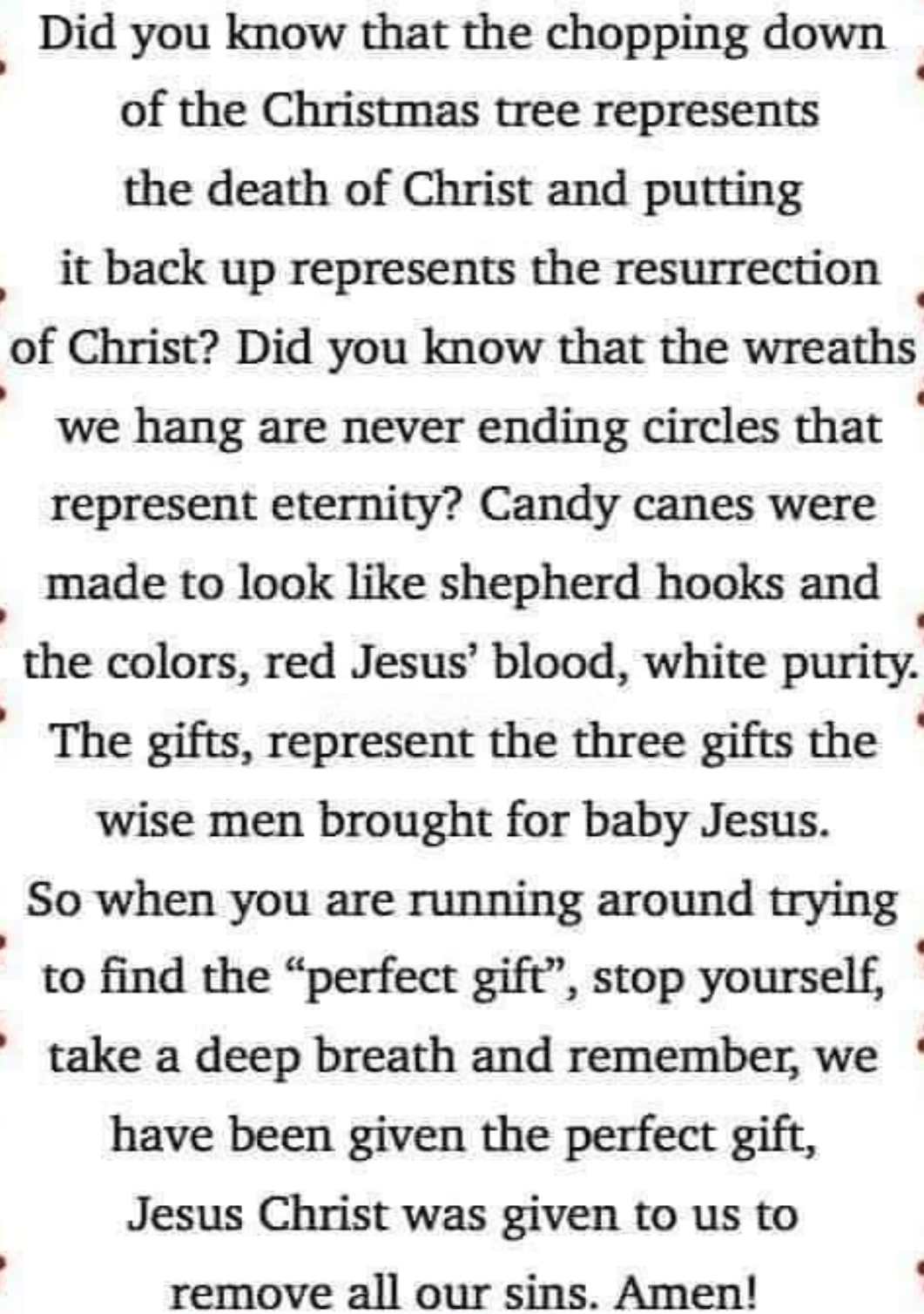
Court Street United Methodist

Keeping Christ in Christmas

Christmas is truly the most wonderful time of the year. The Christmas music sending joyful memories throughout the home, the smells of wonderful foods, the sight of the tree and the warmth of the crackling fire bring back the best of childhood memories and a promise of new, wonderful memories to be made. I love everything about Christmas. I love finding a home for each ornament on the tree and if I am lucky, watching the snow fall from my living room window. Christmas is a time of year when we are swept up in a tinsel-filled whirlwind of decorations, special traditions, yule tide joy and baking and more baking. While Christmas transports us back to our childhood and reminds us of happy memories, there is a greater reason we celebrate this amazing holiday. No, it is not just because of the decorations and the presents and the food and the music, though all of those are amazing, but it is because the reason this holiday exists in the first place. Christmas, as all Christians know, is a celebration of the birth of Jesus, God's son, who came to earth to redeem the fallen human race. Christmas is a joyful holiday because it is a reminder to Christians that the creator of the universe loved them so much he sent his son as a ransom to all who would accept his gift. Giving presents on Christmas day is a beautiful symbol of what God did for us. We give because he gave us hope and light and love when he sent his son to us. There is not a more beautiful gift than that! The Christmas holiday loses its significance if we remove Christ from the center of it. Christmas is also a picture of grace. It was by God's grace he sent his son to earth to live and to die in order to ransom the human race, who God loves so much. Grace gives us a beautiful hope that when we leave this earth we will be reunited in heaven if we accept Jesus into our hearts. Let us not get so swept up in the traditions and the holiday pomp and circumstance that we forget why we celebrate Christmas. Why we have the hope of heaven and the sacrifice God made for us when he sent his son to be born in a manger for you and for me. There are many intentional ways we can keep Christ in Christmas this holiday season. Reading the Christmas story is one that I always do on Christmas Eve. Taking a moment to just sit, read and reflect on the beautiful gift of Jesus is one of the best ways to keep a Christmas perspective before the craziness and fun of Christmas day. Another way is to give a gift to God by doing something to grow our relationship with him. This could be something as simple as forgiving someone we haven't forgiven, telling a relative about Jesus or rededicating our lives to following God's plan for our life. We can also use this as an opportunity to serve others as Christ served us when we were so in need. So enjoy your Christmas music, decorating, gift buying and baking, but don't forget to take a few moments during this season to reflect on what Christmas is really about. Keeping Jesus in our Christmas celebrations is a great way to show our thankfulness to God for his gift to us thousands of years ago that continues to radically change lives today.

~ *Pastor Bill Burleigh*

PUT JESUS ON YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST



Did you know that the chopping down of the Christmas tree represents the death of Christ and putting it back up represents the resurrection of Christ? Did you know that the wreaths we hang are never ending circles that represent eternity? Candy canes were made to look like shepherd hooks and the colors, red Jesus' blood, white purity. The gifts, represent the three gifts the wise men brought for baby Jesus. So when you are running around trying to find the "perfect gift", stop yourself, take a deep breath and remember, we have been given the perfect gift, Jesus Christ was given to us to remove all our sins. Amen!

Merry Christmas



Musical Musings **QUARANTINE EDITION**

All we want for Christmas is... these songs. Here's why.

Enjoy this edited article written by By Bonnie Berkowitz, Chris Alcantara and Shelly Tan in the Dec. 20, 2019 edition of The Washington Post. The full article can be read [HERE](#)

For a few weeks every winter, popular music tumbles into a time warp.

Old-school trumps cutting edge. Greatest Generation artists rule millennial playlists.

A 25-year-old song leads the pop charts — and it's considered a “new” entry into the Christmas canon.

What is going on here? The answer is nostalgia, said literally every person contacted for this story.

“Generally, popular music is about putting yourself out there, new relationships, new beginnings, being young and single and dancing,” said Joe Bennett, professor of musicology at Berklee College of Music. “Christmas music is almost the reverse of that, conceptually and lyrically. It is about homecoming, nostalgia, looking back to a more innocent time in one’s life or cultural history.”

We could argue nonstop about what constitutes the holiday canon, but the top of the top is pretty clear — and pretty old. Most were written in the 1950s and earlier, and many of the most popular versions of those songs were released that long ago as well.

Holiday music burrows into a sweet spot in our brains’ wiring, said Brian Rabinovitz, a lecturer at the College of William & Mary whose expertise is the neuroscience of music.

All music can stimulate the brain’s pleasure centers, he said, but holiday music can evoke treasured memories on top of that, courtesy of the brain’s filing system. Tonal patterns and autobiographical events are processed in overlapping regions of the medial prefrontal cortex.

That means that even though you might be into avant-garde jazz, death metal or emo, the rest of the year, you may involuntarily turn to mush when you hear “White Christmas” because your brain associates that song with baking cookies in grandma’s kitchen when you were 6.

The deal with covers (a.k.a. your brain on Michael Bublé)

Because we are enamored with the old stuff, it’s not surprising that the canon is littered with newer versions of classics. The most recent is by the current king of holiday covers, Canadian crooner Michael Bublé’s 2011 album “Christmas”. Of the 23 songs that dominate Billboard’s list, 10 are covers, including three different recordings of Meredith Wilson’s 1951 song, “It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas.” Also, the original “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas” was recorded by Judy Garland in 1944. That version appears in the Holiday 100 along with eight different covers.

Hippos, donkeys, menorahs and death by reindeer

Just like there is a canon for traditional holiday songs, there’s a canon of sorts for novelty songs, which are too goofball-niche to enter the Serious Traditional Canon but are also too much fun to not play every year.

Rather than aiming for universality, novelty songs address a specific theme or appeal to a certain slice of people.

The genre is not new — it developed right alongside the canon during the creative exploration of songwriters in the 1950s, Simos said. For example, “I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas,” recorded in a startlingly Ethel-Merman-like voice by 10-year-old Gayla Peevey in 1953, has a clever conceit: a child making an unreasonable demand. “It gives you that charming feeling of what a nice idea,” said Bennett, “but it’s not a universal sentiment.”

New York-area earworm “Dominick the Donkey,” recorded by Lou Monte in 1960, is sprinkled with Italian vocabulary and tells the story of a donkey that delivers Brooklyn-made presents to kids in Italian hills too steep for reindeer. It’s a hoot, but a little of the chorus’s “ee-HAW, ee-HAW” goes a long way.

Ah, but once in a while, a supposed “novelty song” turns out to be universal after all.

José Feliciano feared his 1970 cultural mashup “Feliz Navidad” would never get U.S. airplay, but the ridiculously simple song — six words in Spanish and 14 in English, set to a Latin beat — is now among the most popular holiday songs of all time. Its entire message: I want to wish you a Merry Christmas.



This year more than any year before; We want to wish you Merry Christmas! Be Safe and we will see you in the New Year! ~ *The Staff at Court Street*

**DECEMBER'S ADULT BIBLE STUDY CLASS
CONTINUE TO READ LESSONS WEEKLY**

December 6: **“God and Human Beings”**

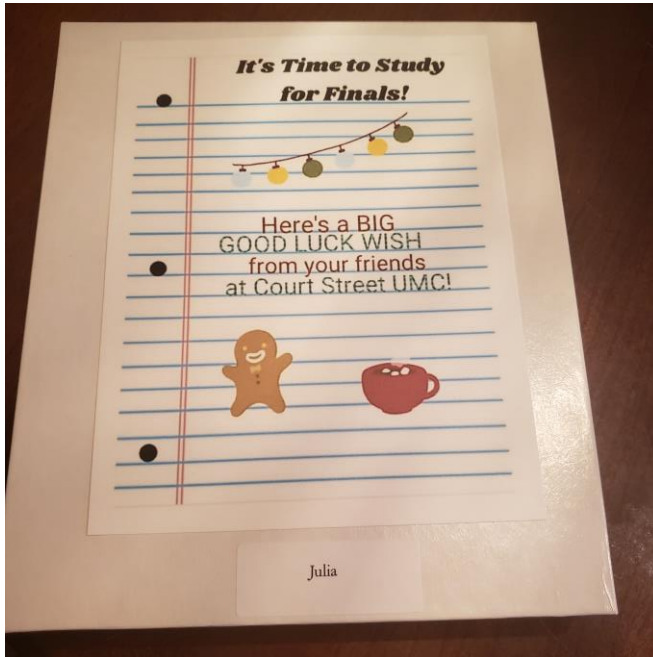
December 13: **“Imitate Christ”**

December 20: **“Becoming God’s Children”**

December 27: **“The Father Dwells in Jesus”**

“VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL” is now available on our [WEBSITE](#)

THANK YOU from our students in college to the members for making “Finals Care Boxes”. Our college students can always count on Court Street to send them a treat to let them know we are thinking of them and hoping for great success in their studies.



Care packages were sent to: Julia McConnell ~ attending Virginia Tech; Drew Leazer who is finishing his Masters online with Georgia Tech; William Sweeney ~ attending ODU; Chaz Sweeney ~ attending CVCC; Jenny Burleigh Lloyd ~ attending Grad school for her Doctorate at Shenandoah University and Stephanie Burleigh Pugh ~ graduating this December from Centra Nursing. She has accepted a job with Lynchburg Baptist in the critical care unit.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS ABBY SMITH? As you know; Abby traveled to Jerusalem in February to study at Hebrew University for her spring semester. Since LU did not require students to return at the start of the pandemic; Abby decided to stay and finish her studies. She then traveled to Bethlehem and was working at a youth center. She has traveled east and is in Beit Sahour! She is continuing her studies with LU and is working on her senior Thesis while taking piano and learning Arabic at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. She continues to work with the youth center she wrote about back in July and has both beginner and intermediate ESL classes for middle and high schoolers! She wrote:

Marhaba (Hello) Everyone! Kayfku? (How are you all?) The past few months have been such a blur- lots of fun and lots of work. Please continue to pray for dreams and visions for our close Muslim friends to open their eyes to the truth of who Jesus is and make them hunger for a real relationship with God.

Abby will return to the states on December 16th. Please pray for her safe flight and health as she transitions back to the US and her studies back in-person at LU. As always, your support is greatly appreciated. You can PayPal (<https://www.paypal.me/abbych4n>), Venmo (@abbych4n), and CashApp (\$abbych4n) or you can send a check to her parents (Mark and Julie Smith) at: PO Box 1222, 205 S. Main St., Culpepper, VA 22701.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

December Birthdays	December Anniversaries	January Birthdays
Hunter Alan Tyree December 02	Shelley & Bill Burleigh Dec. 16	Eddie Letchford January 01
Milton West December 03	Bobbi & Randy Hurst Dec. 23	David Hudnall January 03
Brennalynn Diuguid December 05		Doris Lee Spriggs January 06
Phil Ripley December 05		Bobby Brown January 08
Nancy Russell December 06		Patsy Wilkinson January 13
Elizabeth Larkin December 07		William Eric Sweeney January 17
Adam Bryant December 09		Eric Johnson January 19
Jeff Thaxton December 11		Patti Montgomery January 19
Suzanne Baker December 12		Shelley Burleigh January 20
Susan Cobbs December 12		
Lisa Thaxton December 14		
Randy Hurst December 20		
Ray Pulliam December 30		
Anne Langley December 31		
	January Anniversaries Brenda & Andy Whitehead Jan 04 Cheryl & Milton West Jan 25	
		

PRAYER CONCERNS

All Men and Women serving in the Military

Travis Dean Burleigh – 7425 Snowy Owl St., N. Las Vegas, NV 89084
son of Shelley and Rev. Bill Burleigh

SICK (Church members*)

- *Noel Draper - 501 VES Road Drinkard 619, Lynchburg, VA 24503
- Susan Dwyer – sister of Rev. Bill Burleigh
- *Christopher Lilly – 1705 Rivermont Ave. Apt 8, Lynchburg, VA 24503
- *Chis Logan - 5325 Hickory Hill Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24503
- *Phil Ripley – 60 Jill Alison Circle, Ormond Beach, FL 32176
- *Alicia Speer – 1815 Rivermont Ave #68, Lynchburg, VA 24503
- *Flo Traywick – The Laurels (hospice care) phone # (804) 482-8631
- *Robert Tyree – 1404 Brookville Lane, Lynchburg, VA 24502
son of *Mary Tyree, brother of *Debbie Chaffin
- * *Church members*

★
 GOD
 ROCK
 SAVIOR
 MESSIAH
 IMMANUEL
 HOLY • CHILD
 MIGHTY • GOD
 LORD • OF • ALL
 LAMB • OF • GOD
 CHRIST • OF • GOD
 KING • OF • KINGS
 THE • WORD • OF • GOD
 ALPHA • AND • OMEGA
 PRINCE • OF • PEACE
 LIGHT • OF • THE • WORLD
 HEAD • OF • THE • CHURCH
 SON • OF • THE • HIGHEST
 EVERLASTING • FATHER
 RESURRECTION • AND • LIFE
 JESUS

ADDRESS CHANGES:

Flo Traywick

**The Laurels at University Park
2420 Pemberton Rd Room 122**

Richmond, VA 23233

Phone # (804) 482-8631

Best time to call is in the middle of the afternoon

Update on Capital Campaign:

Campaign Goal	\$300,000
Promised as of 11/29/20	\$248,981
Balance needed to reach goal	\$51,019
Received to Date	\$211,016
Received since last update	\$450.00
Elevator fund	\$10,328

Court Street UMC
621 Court Street
Lynchburg Va. 24504



In worship, praise and ministry, we respond to God's call by reaching out to all people with light, hope, and a vision of God's love.

COURT STREET UMC WEBSITE: www.courtstreetmethodist.com

EMAIL: 621courtstumc@gmail.com

PHONE: 434-845-3427

Please contact the church office at:

621courtstumc@gmail.com or (434) 845-3427 on or before Wednesdays to have events and notices posted on the church website.

