

Shepherd's Staff

January 2021

We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.

"You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth!"

Parkersburg Christian Reformed Church

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. ~ Church School 10:45 a.m. ~ Life Plus Wed., 6:30 p.m.

Tinsel and Glitz

For many of us we have chosen to take down the tinsel and glitz of the Christmas holiday until after the beginning of the new year. We are ready to make a fresh start into the year without the vestiges of the last year hanging around. We carefully pack away the lights and the delicate bulbs from the Christmas tree, taking care to remove all the shimmering tinsel so we can start again next year. We wrap up the figures of the manger scene so the pieces will not break. But when we take all this time to wrap thing up, are we careful to leave the feeling of Christmas out?

What I mean is do we put the joy, the hope, the peace, and the love of Christmas away with the things of the season? Do we try to put Christ away in a box marked Christmas thinking we can continue to survive without interference until the season of winter again? This should be where we long for the marks of the Christmas story to fill our hearts all through the year. Who could not use a little more joy, hope, peace and love in their lives throughout the year?

With a year where joy was diminished, we can use a little more joy that comes from knowing that the Savior came to bring us the joy of life in him. This joy comes without the restrictions of the world we live in. This joy comes to those who put their faith in Jesus as the giver of life and the basis of our joy because he lives in us today and every day.

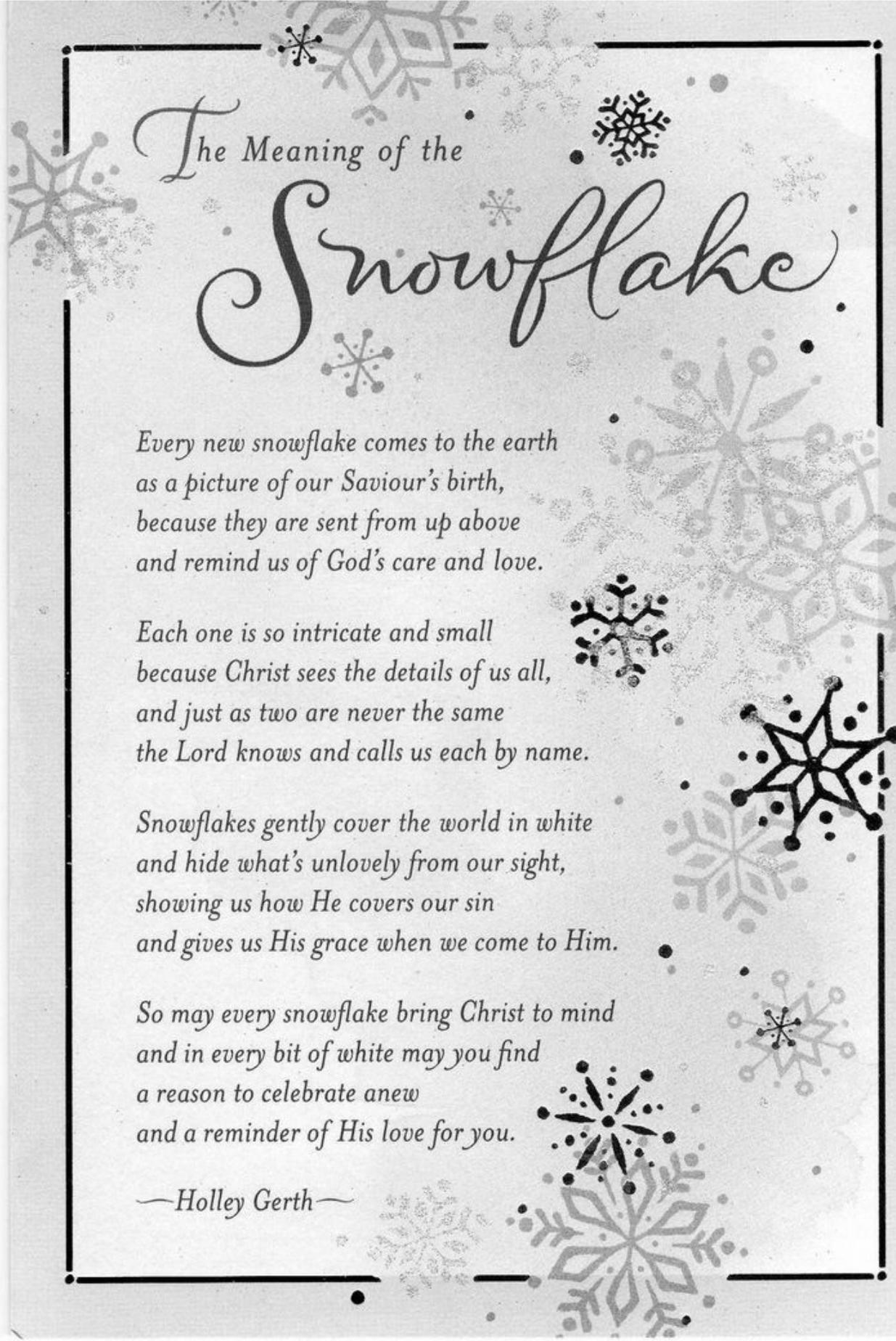
We are filled with hope because we know that this Jesus who came to us is the same who will come again to take us home to be with him. The trials of life will all pass away. The hope that is ours is that we are only travelers in this barren land. Our hope comes from knowing that in Christ we have hope for today and tomorrow. In life and in death we have the same hope for a better tomorrow with Jesus. Packing him away robs us of this hope.

In the depths of our trials we can still have the peace that passes understanding when we keep Jesus in our hearts. This peace is not just a phase of life that comes and goes with the passing of our moods. It does not depend upon our circumstances but on the peace that is ours in Jesus. This peace does not belong in a box until next year.

The need for the love of Christ is also evident in the hurt that is so prevalent in the world around us today. We all long for the love of someone. We also know the hurts that worldly friendships can bring. Why would we want to pack away the source of love in the first place? After all, packing away the tinsel and glitz may be a good thing to get order back in our lives, but we must be careful not to pack away the reason we had these things out in the first place.

In this new year, let's place our hearts and lives in the hands that will be able to fill us all year long with the things we need not only at Christmas time. After all, Christ did not come to us only for Christmas time but all the time. He brings us his joy, hope, peace, and love every day. We need only to open our hearts and receive from him the elements of his gift to us. Besides, no box would be able to contain the love of Christ anyway, so why try in the first place to box him away.

Pastor Rus



The Meaning of the

Snowflake

*Every new snowflake comes to the earth
as a picture of our Saviour's birth,
because they are sent from up above
and remind us of God's care and love.*

*Each one is so intricate and small
because Christ sees the details of us all,
and just as two are never the same
the Lord knows and calls us each by name.*

*Snowflakes gently cover the world in white
and hide what's unlovely from our sight,
showing us how He covers our sin
and gives us His grace when we come to Him.*

*So may every snowflake bring Christ to mind
and in every bit of white may you find
a reason to celebrate anew
and a reminder of His love for you.*

—Holley Gerth—



January Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

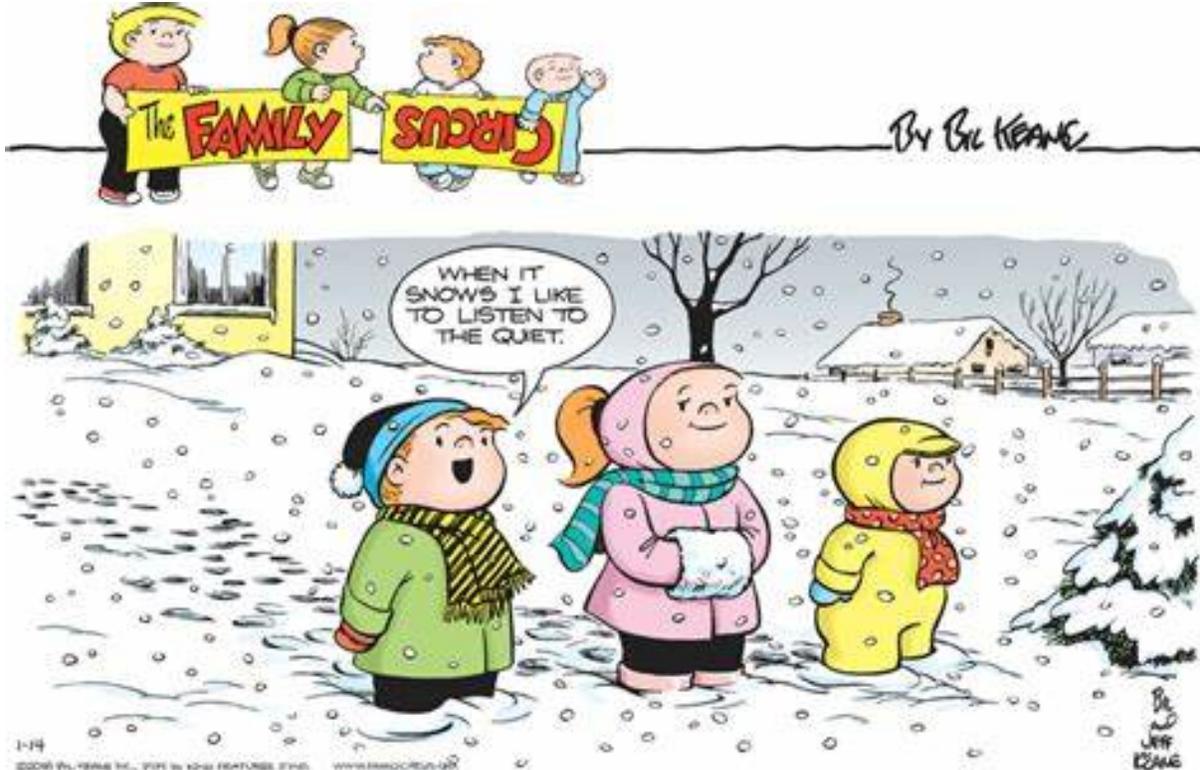
- 1/2 Mel Riebkes
- 1/6 Lila Reints
- 1/11 Dennis Mennen
- 1/16 Gerald Haan
- 1/17 Lauren Husz
- 1/18 Hermina Everts
- 1/24 Arnie Swanson
- 1/28 Mary Boersma
- 1/30 Harold Coplen

Happy Anniversary

- 1/13 Larry & Mary Johnson



Reminder: If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Armstrong by the 20th of the month.



Snowy Feast

By R. Michael Palan



03455

In the big picture, find these objects.



sock



fish



bell



fishhook



tack



mitten



needle



baseball bat



apple



ladle



mushroom



spoon



ice-cream bar



candle



pencil



mallet