

Ho! Ho! Ho! THAT was fun! Christmas in July!!

As our Sunday morning crowd strengthens, and our online congregation does as well, we had a great Sunday together to celebrate the God's coming "dwelling among us".

Here's some helps for **Living the Word** in the week to come:

1. Please pray and read the Gospel lesson for this past Sunday, which was the preaching text as well: John 1: 9-14

2. Through verses 13 we hear the the Good News of light coming into our darkness and the blessedness of coming to KNOW Him and therefore become the children of God. This is amazing Good News when we think about the darkness we are in now as a nation but also individually as we not only struggle with Covid but, still, all the usual personal "darkness" that we have to live with -- ill health, heartbreak, depression, damaged relationships etc. BUT the LIGHT has come --if only we will accept Him, **Jesus the light of the world**, into our hearts.

3. Verse 14 then "brings it home" as we hear how God, far beyond our ability to comperhend, who created all that we see (even that new "space structure" they discovered last week that is 14 BILLION light years WIDE!). YET the REALLY Good News is that the unfathomable immensity of HIs creation is not only matched by, but is surpassed by His amazing grace and love for US.

4. So how did God bridge that huge gap of His immensity and awesomeness to be in our hearts and at "our level" so we could know Him personally?? JESUS -- the one born in Bethlehem!. HE"S the way God comes to us PERSONALLY and comes to "dwell within/among us"!

5. WOW!! That means we can "see His glory" GET TO KNOW HIM!! And He will live in us as we turn our very lives and hearts over to Him in Jesus --the one "full of grace and truth".

6. THAT'S why we must celebrate Christmas in July -- and August and Sept and October and and.....EVERY DAY! **Because we so very desperately need Him to dwell in us personally, to bring light to our darkness every moment of every day -- not just Dec 25th!**

9. Your assignment this week is to write a Christmas Story --**YOUR Christmas Story....**how did God come to "dwell" in YOU! Write it down. Think about it. Then be ready to share it for all those around you who also need light to come into THEIR darkness -- **GIVE 'EM A CHRISTMAS PRESENT THAT WILL LASTS FOREVER --JESUS IN THEM!!**

Reminders:

--Men, sign up for the Sept Fall Retreat (see attached).

--Pray for whomever we do the Special Blessing for every Sunday -- those who can't attend right now. Last Sunday it was Donna Pedersen. WHO will it be THIS week??!

--Pray for our nation -- God knows (literally) we need it.

--Mens' Bible Study Fellowship Wednesdays at 8 am at church.

--Professional Women's Study Fellowship Aug. 6 Contact Bev. Valentine

May the God who became human so He could dwell in you, bless, keep, and protect you everyday this week...

Pastor

Rev. Michael W. Birnbaum