

County-Wide Chaplaincy

Thanks you!

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Janet LaPore has been serving alongside of Sam for many years in County-Wide Chaplaincy. She is a valuable gift and much appreciated. - The Chaplain Team

When I was a youngster, the local newspaper printed letters sent by children that answered the question, "What Christmas means to me." (My older sister Karen was one of the winners whose response and picture were printed!)

My guess is that most children anticipate Christmas as a close second only to their birthdays, in hope that they will receive that longed for present on which they have set their hearts (and impending happiness!) I recall the smiles that my parents wore as my siblings and I literally tore into the mound of gifts beneath our tree on Christmas morning! Hearts were light; delight and excitement filled our living room with fulfilled dreams from our "Sears Catalog" wish lists! In the simplicity of childhood in the 60's, my needs—and most of my wants—were more than met. And that was enough, for then.

If we sat down together and were honest, our consensus regarding Christmas as adults would take on a very different shape. Granted, gifts most likely would remain near the top of our "What Christmas means to me" list, as well as shopping, family gatherings (some good, some complicated), shopping, baking (the gift of an added 5 pounds to friends and family), shopping, decorating, tree hunting, school concerts, shopping (are we in debt yet?), parties, and a long list of complexities and traditions that "adorn" Christmas like Snoopy's doghouse! "Tis the season to be jolly," but in reality, "not so jolly" is often the norm; and have I mentioned stress yet? Even as I write this (in November!!!), I sense my blood pressure rising and anxiety mounting! Oh, to be transported back to my care-free 8 year old world!

But with the thought of the rapidly approaching Christmas holidays, my heart still sings and rejoices in the idea of gifts! For one thing, giving has been simplified in volume, expense and ease. Our family now draws names, sets limits, and tends toward practicality rather than being elaborate.



And although the external, tangible gifts are to open and exclaimed over, they don't compare to the internal gift of a heart and mind at rest in the middle of the craziness and chaos often defining the Christmas season.

Good gifts come from good parents, but not every gift is viewed as the same in the eyes of a child! The needed pajamas don't hold a candle to the Jurassic Lego set or Polly Pockets! But both gifts are selected and given with equal amounts of love.

Our giving is limited by our resources—or should be! But the Creator and Father of mankind knows no such limitations! Not only that, but His very posture towards us is saturated with a “Never Stopping, Never Giving Up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love!” And that Love is the gift He has purchased to give every person who has ever lived on planet Earth!

Most of us know John 3:16, a verse that unwraps the gift that is extended patiently for our outstretched heart to embrace. And with “Emmanuel”—God with us—comes a stocking full of priceless treasures impossible to purchase (even on Amazon!)—Peace, Joy, Hope, Forgiveness, Love, Contentment, Fulfillment and a heart reshaped, satisfied, and thankful. With only ONE GIFT we discover more than enough in this lifetime—as well as the gift of life beyond this life! What a thought out, life-giving, generous, and perfectly suited gift from the Father who knows you thoroughly, and loves you absolutely!

May you discover the Perfect Christmas Gift to be more than enough for you!
Merry Christmas!

Janet LaPore

“Joy to the world—the LORD is come!
Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare Him room...”

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