



## God came as one of us.

Elder Charles Moore

Paul Harvey told this story, "This is about a modern man, one of us, he was not a Scrooge, he was a kind, decent, mostly good man, generous to his family, upright in his dealings with others. But he did not believe in all that incarnation stuff that the Churches proclaim at Christmas time. It just didn't make sense to him and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just could not swallow the Jesus story about God coming to earth as man. I'm truly sorry to distress you, he told his wife, but I'm not going with you to church this Christmas Eve. He said he'd feel like a hypocrite. That he would much rather stay home, but that he would wait up for them. He stayed, they went.

Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier, then went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound, then another and another. At first he thought

someone must be throwing snowballs against his living room window. Well, when he went to the front door, he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They had been caught in the storm and in a desperate search for shelter they had tried to fly through his large landscape window.

Well, he couldn't let the poor creatures lie there and freeze. He remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter -- if he could direct the birds to it. He quickly put on his coat and galoshes, trampled through the deepening snow to the barn, opened the door wide, and turned on a light. But the birds did not come in. He figured food would entice them in and he hurried back to the house, fetched bread crumbs, sprinkled them on the snow making a trail to the yellow lighted wide open doorway of the stable, but to his dismay the birds ignored

the bread crumbs, and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow. He tried catching them, he tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them waving his arms -- instead they scattered in every direction except into the warm lighted barn.

Then he realized they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature, if only I could think of some way to let them know they can trust me. That I'm not trying to hurt them, but to help them. How? Any move he made tended to frighten them, confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him. If only I could be a bird myself he thought. If only I could be a bird and mingle with them and speak their language, and tell them not to be afraid, and show them the way to the safe, warm barn. But I'd have to be one of them, so they could see and hear and understand.

At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sound of the wind. He stood there listening to the bells. *Adeste Fideles*. Listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. And he

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sank to his knees in the snow. "THE CHRISTMAS STORM: A Modern Parable" by Paul Harvey.

This man came to understand the absolute necessity of God coming in the flesh. **"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."** (John 1: 14) It is impossible to overemphasize how important God's arrival on earth was. The world, and life itself, is forever changed.

God's coming in human form reveals to us the heart of God and speaks volumes about God's love for us. You are probably familiar with the words, **"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him"** (John 3:16-17). Here is the best news in the world — God deeply cares for us. He has made a plan to save us from our sin and ourselves. He wants to change our lives and give us a life worth living that will ultimately result in eternal life. This is the kind of God we serve. He loves us more than we will ever know and He has not come to take the fun out of life, but to make life enjoyable in ways that we never imagined.

God came, even though He knew the consequences. He was willing to come even if it meant that the Almighty had to experience pain and death — so great was His love for us. He came so that He might share the human condition and take our burdens upon Himself. What other religion do you know whose God comes in person to die for His people? Buddha did not claim to be God, nor did He claim to have come from God. He was in search of the divine principle — the word become word. And neither did Mohammed claim to be God, only a prophet of God and author of the Koran. In all other world religions we have the word become word — a verbal revelation: writings, injunctions and moral codes.

Only in Christianity does the Word become flesh. In Jesus Christ, God did not just reveal His will or His laws, He revealed Himself. Nothing less would do. If the Word only became word then our contact with God would only be intellectual. But the Word has become flesh, and now He is personal. The Word is standing in front of us and He is calling our name. As we read the Bible we are not just acquiring knowledge, Jesus Himself begins to emerge from the Scripture. Suddenly, we are reading more than words, we are experiencing a person. Something real is happening. More than our thinking is being affected; we are being touched and changed at the deepest place of our beings. It is not an idea (the Word) coming into our heads, it is one person communicating with another person (flesh).

The Scriptures come alive, because the Word has become flesh. Jesus steps out of the pages and into our lives and into our lives He must come so that we can have life now and everlasting life in the age to come.

## Cyberspace News

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November finally brought some cold to Michigan but we have had wonderful weather compared to many other places across the United States. Many are having snowstorms right now.

Dorothy Layton has been keeping me informed of folks in the east and I greatly appreciate her input. She is feeling pretty good these days and is trying to wait patiently for her home to sell. She loves playing with Walter's twin grandchildren, 13 months now and also Karen's grandchildren when they come over and ride bikes outside. She enjoys the family gatherings and especially all the children! She talked to Mary Padillo, Norma Ripley's sister, who is healing from shoulder surgery. Get well soon, Mary.

Rip Ripley is still recovering from his hip surgery last month and is struggling to get past all the therapy. Norma is weak and cannot keep going on her own, so she is temporarily in an assisted living facility. Hope you are both well and back to normal again very soon. This is your opportunity to send cards, folks!

Elder Moore and wife Aurine enjoyed having Thanksgiving dinner with daughter Rox-Ann and David Brugman and their family in Hillsdale. There was good news about David and his heart tests, they have found a medication that should take care of the problem instead of surgery. We were so excited this month to have Leslie Miller walk in on Sabbath with her daughter and son. We had a wonderful visit. She and Tom had traveled here from Kansas for Tom to go deer hunting and for her to visit family and friends. Leslie is always a joy to visit with!

David and Ruth Charles flew north to spend Thanksgiving with over 30 members of their family. They met at Lynn and Rob Vaughn's and enjoyed this wonderful reunion. We were happy to have them at church on Sabbath. At the end of their visit Ruth has come down with an infection so we need to pray for her complete recovery.

Ellen Momberger had a great Thanksgiving holiday as her daughter Karen came from Maryland to visit for a couple weeks. She is so thankful for the wonderful weather in Phoenix.

Jennie and Kane Begeman are able to enjoy nice weather in Phoenix also as they await their baby due this month. You are in our prayers, Jennie. I wish you all a blessed Christmas. Write and send pictures.

## Michigan Report

Aurine Moore



November was the month of the Beaver, frost or snow moon. The Farmer's Almanac says, "This was the time to set beaver traps before the swamps froze, to ensure a supply of warm winter furs. Another interpretation suggests that the name Full Beaver Moon comes from the fact that the beavers are now actively preparing for winter". For us in America, the big distinctive of November has nothing to do with the moon, however. This is the month that culminates with Thanksgiving, our annual time to remember the gratitude that the Pilgrims showed even after the hardships they had endured and to remember all that we ourselves are thankful for. Pastor Moore was honored with an invitation to speak to the combined churches of the Monroe Ministerial Alliance fellowship for their annual Thanksgiving service. It was good to see Terrie and Dave Fedor in the congregation and to join with Christians from a variety of churches to give thanks to God. Everything we have to give to God comes from God Himself - except for the sincere thanks we can offer Him from our hearts.

We began the month by joining with our friends from the Petersburg Church of God Seventh Day for their fall Thanksgiving service. It was a real treat to see everyone. We really enjoyed the talk by Dr. Gordon Guild who has visited Kenya on a medical mission and brought videos, pictures, and souvenirs from his past trips. He inspired more than one person in the audience to consider going on a future trip. We also greatly appreciated seeing Andy and Deb Hassen, visiting from Oklahoma, and hearing Andy's message on the supreme and overarching gift of God's grace and the impact it has had on Andy himself. They look wonderful and we're happy to hear he's contemplating returning to full time ministry via offers at one or two churches in Oklahoma. Later in the month, we saw David and Ruth Charles, who came up for a visit with their family in Michigan. As of this writing, however,

their return trip to Florida is being delayed because Ruth came down with bronchitis that hit her really hard and landed her in the hospital. They will stay a bit longer in Michigan until she fully recovers. Some great news came our way this month, Joel and Carrie DeHaan are expecting a child early this spring. She came to church recently looking definitely with child and glowing.

We were also thrilled by a surprise visit this month from Leslie (Arquette) Miller from Kansas with her two children, Rebecca and Alexander. Leslie's husband Tom came to the area for a hunting trip up north while Leslie and children saw family and friends. The children are darling and well-behaved and it was good to have them drop in for our breakfast hosted by Tim and Diane. We also enjoyed our visit with Cheryl Moore Lymond who came early this month for a visit. Cheryl's neighbor Dorothy is facing another round of cancer and would appreciate our prayers. Pat Conley is looking wonderful and fit after losing a lot of weight on a diet she's been on. We had recently been praying for many in Pat's family, including her husband Steve who recently had surgery on his arm. All are well in her family now and she's content.

MY sister-in-law, wife of my brother Chris Lohmann, died this month of cancer after an illness of five months. Please pray for my brother Tom and his children, Dawn and John. I had a small skin cancer removed this month from my forehead and insisted on showing people the fine stitch work done by my doctor. All stitches are out and things are healing nicely.

We were sorry to hear of the death of Helen Belcher's granddaughter following surgery. Helen has graced us at retreats and visits to her good friend Nate Valentine. Please pray for her family upon the loss of this precious infant. Also take some time to pray and thank God for your many good friends, near and far. Until next month.



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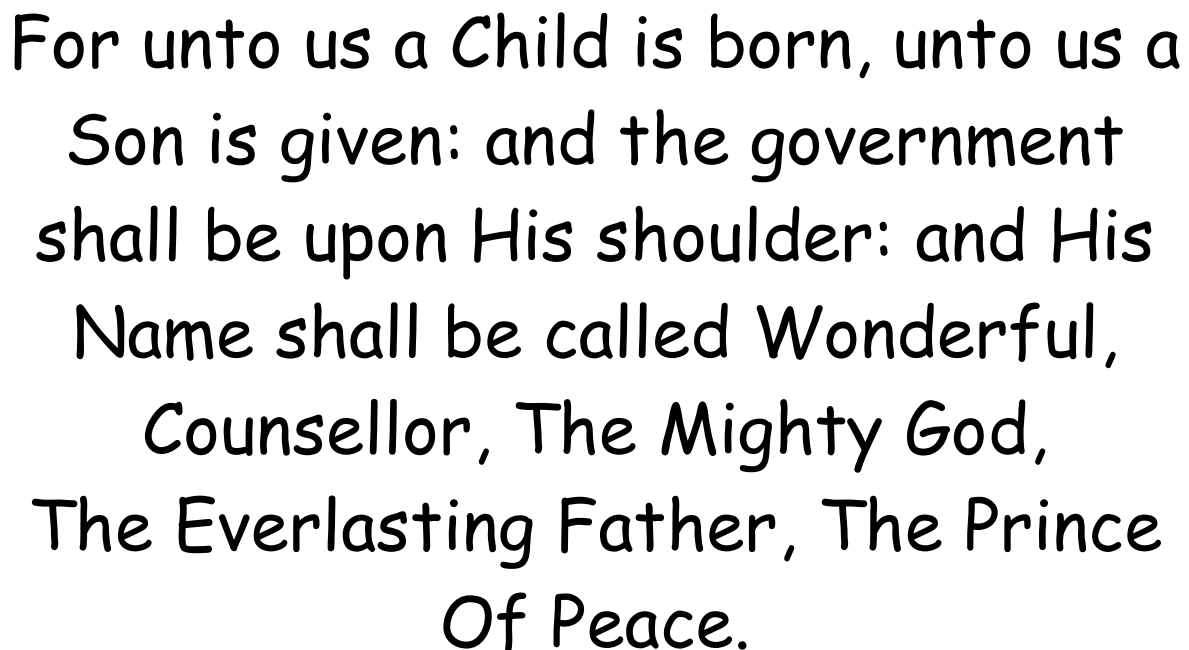
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For unto us a Child is born, unto us a  
Son is given: and the government  
shall be upon His shoulder: and His  
Name shall be called Wonderful,  
Counsellor, The Mighty God,  
The Everlasting Father, The Prince  
Of Peace.