

November 2014

Operation Christmas Child

October 12 – November 16

Shoeboxes Full of Christmas Gifts for Children Around the World

Shoeboxes Due Back to Church on Sunday, November 16

The Church Has Empty Boxes from Operation Christmas Child Available for
Anyone to Use

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions

November 23 – January 4

Week of Prayer – November 30 – December 7

National Goal: \$175 Million

Church Goal: \$3600

100% of this Offering Goes to Overseas Mission Work

Volunteers are needed to drive senior adults to medical appointments in
surrounding cities. CASA will pay for gasoline. If you would like to help, call
256-845-2049

Halloween

Friday, October 31

Trunk or Treat Downtown

5:00

Let Us Know if You Can Help With This

We Could Use Some Candy to Give to Children, If You Would Like to Donate
Any

All Saints Day

Sunday, November 2

International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

Sunday, November 2

Daylight Savings Time Ends

Sunday, November 2

Set Your Clocks Back One Hour

Chili Cookoff

Saturday, November 1

At Marty and Marilyn's House

Hay Ride Hopefully Part of This Event

Election Day

Tuesday, November 4

7:00 – 7:00

Collinsville Turkey Trot

Saturday, November 8

9-2

Sponsored by Collinsville Historical Association

Our Men Will Be Cooking – Our Proceeds Go to Local

Missions Projects

Come and Help

Veterans' Day

Tuesday, November 11

Community Thanksgiving Service

Sunday, November 23

Liberty Hill Baptist Church

6:00

Bring Food Items for Food Boxes to Be Distributed in the
Collinsville Area.

The offering at the service will be used to Purchase a turkey (or
ham) for each box. Liberty Hill will put the boxes together.

They have said that they would love to have some help
delivering the baskets, probably on Tuesday afternoon,

November 25

Let Us Know if You Know Someone Who Would Appreciate a
Box.

Community Christmas Tree Lighting

Thanksgiving Day

At the Stop Light

5:00

The Churches Are Responsible for Drinks Such as Hot
Chocolate, a Devotion and Christmas Carols. Let the Church
Office Know If You Would Like to Help.

Advent

Sunday November 30 – Wednesday, December 24

Community Christmas Service

Hosted by First Methodist

Sunday, December 6 at 6:00

Rehearsals Begin Sunday, November 2

4:00 Weekly

Singers Wanted and Needed

Community Christmas Parade

Saturday, December 13

3:00

Dekalb and Fort Payne Schools Thanksgiving Break –
November 26-30; Christmas Break – December 20- January 4

Gideon's Sunday
November 16
Speaker – Tony Dawkins

Welcome to Our Newest Member
Luke Laney

October Baptisms
Lydia Crane
Lona Perkins

November Volunteers
Lord's Supper – Bo and Jan Newsome
Flowers –

*Add to Christmas Tree Lighting – We Need 3 or 4 Volunteers to Make and Serve
Hot Chocolate*

World Hunger Relief Total Given

It was a dinner. After a tornado. April 3, 1974. 148 tornadoes confirmed in the U.S.

And one of those 148 went right through our neighborhood in Louisville, Kentucky. I was completing my first year of seminary. Gloria and I had rented the bottom of a house about ½ mile from the seminary campus. Our best friends from Birmingham, Ron and Pat, had moved to Louisville for seminary, also. They rented the upstairs of the house we were renting.

It was a very special, almost ideal time. A month after we got there, we welcomed John into the world. I was studying Greek and fatherhood. Gloria was making a home. I was able to work as a Youth Minister in the area. We made friends with other seminary families. Picnics and play grounds. Christian friends and fellowship.

On that April 3, John was sitting on the floor with me while I was watching an old movie on TV. Gloria was cooking supper. The movie kept being interrupted by

storm warnings, really irritating me. I knew tornadoes never really come. And then Ron was beating on our door screaming to get to the basement.

Down the stairs we ran. Quick - get to the area that goes underground. I was the last in the group. I could see bricks fly by the basement window. Pray, pray, pray. And then it was over. And we were safe.

We went upstairs to see how much damage there was. Our house would need new roofing, but all our things were okay. The house across the street had its metal roof rolled up like it was aluminum foil. We had a friend a block down who spent the storm holding on to the outside stair rail to his apartment that he was trying to reach before the storm hit. When the storm passed, he looked up to see the apartment was gone. The tornado's path was just between our house and the seminary.

The next week was a blur. No electricity. No water for the first couple of days. No classes at seminary. Neighbors who had not spoken to each other were out helping each other dig out. We would go out and move limbs and debris, then go back home before dark to light candles. Eat what food we saved from the refrigerator and whatever cans were there.

I had a Coleman stove, so we were able to cook simple meals. The water came back on. We took cold baths. We found enough ice to save some of the refrigerator food.

And we would get together with seminary friends. One night, we had Ron and Pat from upstairs and another seminary couple over for supper. There were three babies (including John) and one toddler. Our little table that sat four at best was supplemented with whatever we could find so we could gather around it.

Gloria had done amazing things with the Coleman stove. The steam rising from the dishes filling the air with the smells of hot green beans, potatoes and whatever mystery meat she was cooking. Our friends brought some dessert. The candle light flickered and cast moving shadows on the wall as it dimly revealed the table. And we leaned forward to see each other's faces. Outside there was only darkness. No street lights, no lights in houses. Our dining room/nursery the only place with light.

We sat and talked. Bonded by our common experiences of the week. Muscles sore from moving tree limbs. The only sound from outside an occasional passing

car. Babies passed from person to person to quiet their crying. One story after another. The warmth of the room coming from much more than the heat of flames. The Holy Spirit there among us.

We all knew that someday the guys would go back to Church History and Systematic Theology. That the gals would go back to raising babies and doing everyday chores or part time jobs. Our churches would call us back to ministry in church buildings.

But for now, life had stopped. It seemed like there was nothing more than our little group in the whole world. We seemed insulated from everything else. Just our little pool of warmth. We told stories. We laughed. We shared. We all knew that this was a special time. Dare I say a holy time?

And then the lights came on. We oohed. Hot baths tonight for the first time in a week. We looked at each other. I saw only disappointed looks.

So I stood up and turned off the lights. And we smiled and settled back in our seats. Back in our cocoon for just a while longer. The world could wait.

I think that night tells us a lot about what “Rejoice in the Lord always” and “All things work together for good for those who love the Lord” mean. We do not rejoice in tornadoes. Or other terrible things. We give them to God. And when we do, He makes good things come from them. A tornado destroyed houses and killed people. I do not rejoice in that. But I rejoice in coming to know neighbors, in sharing love and Gospel with them after a bad thing. And I rejoice in that night of fellowship, gathered around a makeshift dinner table, surrounded by the love of Christ. Thank you Lord. Lord, did you feel that way a little in that Upper Room?

May your Thanksgiving meal leave you as thankful as our last tornado meal left us.

Left the Scripture reference out. Can you substitute this for the part in italics at the end?

If not, que sera sera.

John

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