

GOD'S MISSIONARY  
**STANDARD**



*Christmas*  
around the world

December 2009



# The Year Everything Changed

ROBERT BOOTH




**F**red Kaplan, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, author and columnist recently wrote a book titled *1959: The Year Everything Changed*. In his book he argues that 1959 was the pivotal year that changed the course of the United States forever. Kaplan bases his premise on several “key” events that took place in the year of 1959. He highlights the toppling of the obscenity laws; the introduction of Lenny Bruce who redesigned comedy by loosening the language and skewering religion; the unleashing of the sexual revolution from ideas espoused by Margaret Sanger. Many of the events that Kaplan suggests that have shaped our society have had a severely negative impact on our world.

Two thousand years ago, there was much sorrow and grief in the world, much like our day. Judea was controlled by Herod the Great. As a child, Herod learned from his family how to gain power and how to dominate

with power. He had people killed that he didn’t like, including his wife’s grandmother and her brother. He even had three of his own sons killed. Everyone walked on pins and needles around Herod. The Jews were living under this oppression, living under the fear of death.

Into this fear-filled world, a little baby was born—that was the year everything was changed. Yes, His name was Jesus, and He brought hope to the oppressed. The Bible clearly states, “for He shall save His people from their sins.”

Two millennia later, you and I live in the midst of despair. As we look over our society, there are times that we are tempted to lose hope, and wring our hands in anguish. But don’t lose hope. The birth of the Jesus changed everything! We have the joyous privilege of sharing this message with our communities. Darkness can be turned to light. Despair can be replaced with hope. The birth of Jesus changed everything. 

*The members of the editorial staff of the Standard wish you a Merry Christmas.*

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# Christmas

around the world



## Christmas in Haiti—"Fête Noël" by DONALD MOBLEY

The Christmas holiday begins the week before Christmas and lasts until January 6, the day of the kings. There is much excitement in the air. Families will be reunited again. The teenage children that must go to the city to attend school and adults that are working outside of the country return home to partake in the festivities. It is a special time for them, but there is quite a contrast in their tradition of celebrating Christmas and ours.

In the cities, the merchants decorate for the occasion and a taxi driver may also decorate the inside of his windshield with garland and ornaments but it is rare to see decorations in the homes. The music of the season is typical of Haiti. Most lyrics include messages to Père Noël or Tonton Noël who is an equal to our Santa Claus. It's a rarity to hear a Christmas carol on the radio. There is no need to wait for the mailman to bring you your Christmas greetings since it is not their custom to send cards. You may relax knowing that other Christmas shoppers won't trample you while shopping because you will be among the minority. Mothers may be at ease because those countless Christmas cookies are not a part of the tradition. You don't have to be concerned about the table being big

enough or the plates and silverware matching because your guests will be seated in a chair in your one or two room home and they will be served individually. You may be at rest knowing the seemingly endless numbers of gifts are not waiting to be wrapped. Few are able to buy gifts and usually a very practical gift is given such as an article of clothing, which is handed to them in a black plastic bag. Snow is not in the forecast and

there is no need for that sweater. It will probably be around 80°. As a stranger, you wouldn't think it was Christmas.

While Christmas may seem dull to the stranger's eyes, it is not so for the Haitians. The Christmas holiday begins as the children finish the last day of school the week before Christmas. Many private schools plan a party with refreshments and perhaps a small gift before dismissing the students. The hour finally arrives. The children are joyful because they will have several weeks of vacation. They are now able to leave the city and return home to be with their families. There is a rush to get home. Busses are full and overloaded. Moms and dads, and brothers and sisters that are working out of the country are lined up at the border waiting to get their passports stamped. The city becomes quiet and the country is bursting with activity.

Families are being reunited after months of separation. Everyone is excited to be back at home. There are friends to visit and you will be sure to see everyone because they are all at home for the holidays. The school children must visit their godparents. The godparents play a special role in the children's lives. Since most families are large, the godparents carry much of the financial burden for the children's education. Upon visiting the godparents, the children are expecting to be rewarded for their academic achievement. Usually a monetary gift is given or an article of clothing.

Meanwhile back at the house, preparations are being made for a special meal. The mother goes to the public market to buy rice, cooking oil and spices, and she looks for a tomato and some lettuce to garnish her meal. She sends one of the children to the garden to see if there are any avocados. She needs some grapefruit or oranges to make some juice. She must make extra effort at this time because her children are all at home.

Those who are not Christians consider this a time to party. They plan to get generators to run amplifiers to blast their



music all over the community. There will be drinking, dancing, and making noise that continues during the night. They will sleep through the day and then begin again at night.

The Christians plan activities at this time too. They hold revivals and have special services during the holiday season. There may be a Christmas program at the church including a play of the birth of Christ. They will sing Christmas carols, hear Christmas messages, and perhaps even have a treat for everyone. They are refreshed as they worship with their home church family.

As a missionary, you will be faced with differences in culture. Not everyone does things our way and our way is not always the best way. I have learned to appreciate many customs of the countries in which I have lived and visited. Due to the economic situation in Haiti Christmas has not been commercialized and it is a more family event. There is little glitter and glamour, hustle and bustle of the season; but there is the beauty of the close-knit family. I have spent most of my Christmases on the mission field and I am content whether at home or abroad.

## Christmas in Romania by SALLY SEBO

Christmas in Romania falls on December 25 and for Christians it is a time set aside to celebrate the birth of our Messiah. It's not first about presents, extravagant meals and visiting with family, then as an afterthought the Saviour's birth. It's a time when God's people are focused on the real reason for Christmas. It's a time to rejoice together in God's house and thank Him for the gift of His Son.

Church services are held on Christmas Eve, twice on Christmas day and twice the day after Christmas. These special services are full of singing, reciting of poems and Bible verses, plays put on by the children and youth and also the preaching of God's word.

The news of Jesus' birth can also be heard through the singing of carols. On December 24th, 25th and 26th starting around 9p.m. and continuing until the wee hours of the morning, carolers walk from house to house lifting their voices together. Romanian Christmas carols are not just merely songs with a religious undertone; these songs are filled with the message of the birth of Christ, the Light of the World.

This will be my eighth Christmas in Romania and I count it a blessing to be part of this celebration. It's such a privilege for me to help the children and young people prepare for these special services and it's a delight to be involved in all the activities.

It's also a wonderful thing to be able to give a gift, in the name of Jesus, to those

who have so little. Over the past seven years, due to the generosity of so many, thousands of Christmas packs

have been prepared and handed out to gypsy children, underprivileged families, church children, teens and orphans. According to our standards, the gifts are not extravagant; soap, shampoo, lotion, additional health and beauty aid items, flour, sugar, oil, other various food items, some sweets, chocolate, gum, bananas, oranges, a small toy and a few other things. But as each one took their gifts it was easy to see that these things were precious to them. The majority of these people have never received anything for Christmas. Their economic situation wouldn't permit it. Many of the children had never received a Christmas gift. So to get a bag full of "goodies" at Christmastime is so special.

I will not soon forget the look of excitement and anticipation on the faces of the recipients as they reached out to accept their gifts and then the pure joy in their smiles when they saw what they received. Often I have been moved to tears when I realize how much these gifts mean to the people.

This Christmas, will you be standing with your hands out-reached in excitement and anticipation, waiting for what God has for you? Or will your hands already be too full? Will you spend hours baking, attending parties and shopping for the "perfect" gifts? Or will you take that time to read God's word and pray and prepare your heart to celebrate the birth of our Saviour? Will you be found Christmas morning in front of your tree opening gifts that will soon be forgotten? Or will you be in God's house thanking Him for the greatest gift ever given? How much does God's gift to you mean? For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.



## Christmas at Fort Myers Rescue Mission by GEORGE SCHAEFER

Christmas at the Fort Myers Rescue Mission is a wonderful opportunity to help the homeless feel they are a part of society. It is all about sharing the love of Jesus to hearts that are more tender at this time of year. We try to take advantage of that fact and are more aware of the hurts and home lives of individuals that come through our doors. For many of our folks, they have nothing but memories. They are not wanted back home. Parents, children or wives have all given up on them. Many have valid reason for this rejection, but many have no reason at all. We recognize that without the Lord intervening in lives all of our endeavors are meaningless, but we serve the Living God. He adds meaning to all we do.

One Christmas Eve at about 11:00pm a van quickly drove up to our driveway. Someone inside pushed a woman and her luggage out, dumping them both on the pavement. Then the van sped away. We opened our doors to her, of course, but she was a hurting woman. When she woke Christmas morning, there beside her bed she saw a small Christmas tree with presents addressed to her and the other ladies in the room. Such simple small tokens of Christ's love brought joy to a scared, lonely girl, more than words can describe.

Yes, Christmas at the Fort Myers Rescue Mission is interesting. We have a Christmas cantata and a month long hymn sing that has lasting impact on the people here as well. With the help of sponsors who donate financial gifts to the mission, we try to present gifts

to our clients. And although they may have cut off prior contacts with their families, all is not lost! We let them know that we at the mission care and others who sponsor us with donations care as well! You may ask, "Do you see it have an effect upon them?" Our reply would be an emphatic yes! For hope is once again given to them. Christmas is so important, as it makes the people here feel more human, as well as receptive to the Gospel message. While people's hearts are tender, we have a wonderful message to present. Please pray for us as this is a very important time of year for our ministry.



## Christmas in South Africa by PHIL GEISE

Due to the fact that South Africa lies in the southern hemisphere, Christmas is celebrated in the middle of summer. As a result, instead of sitting around drinking hot chocolate beside the fireplace as in nostalgic settings, a viable alternative is to enjoy a lovely swim in the river. The traditional delicious Christmas dinner of hot foods such as turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, dressing, corn and green beans are replaced by picnic-style cold food. Ice cream is then eaten to help cool off. Of

course, a nice South African twist to the picnic food would be the addition of cold, pickled cow's tongue!

Among some Afrikaans people of South Africa, Christmas day is actually upheld as a Sabbath—doing or not doing what you normally would or would not do on a Sunday. I actually came to the realization of this fact by mistake. It was a Christmas Day and we ran out of ice cream (one of my favorite desserts). So, I suggested that I would go to town to get some. My suggestion was met with surprise, and no doubt they might have thought, "This dumb American!" Thankfully, they later explained things to me, and I have not repeated the offense!

For the Basotho Christian people, Christmas is a time to have an evangelistic outreach. In the past, Christmas Conferences were held in a large tent for about four days prior to Christmas, with the last day of services being held on the 25th of December. The Christmas Holiday Season is not secular, but sacred. As right and commend-



able as this is, it does present a few challenges to the new missionary arriving on the field...a different culture, different language, hundred degree weather, four days sitting in a tent, and all on backless benches!

Being without the trappings, however, of traditional Christmases in America is actually a blessing in disguise for the missionaries working in South

Africa. It is a time to slow down and focus on what Christmas is really all about. The Birthday we celebrate on Christmas was not filled with warm and fuzzy feelings. Yes, it was an expression of the magnitude of God's love; but, at the same time, it came at an enormous price! It was an expression of to what extent God was willing to go to redeem sinful man, and is a model after which all Christians should pattern their lives. It was the beginning of the greatest Missionary Story ever told. It was the story of a Majestic King lowering Himself to live "on the other side of the tracks," so that He could understand and empathize with those who were actually despicable and offensive to His Nature. While we many times get caught up with giving material gifts, Christ's sole purpose in coming was to give of HIMSELF! What an example for Christians to follow!

In reality, as missionaries in South Africa focus on this, the minor discomforts mentioned above don't seem that bad after all! In fact, as Christmas time rolls around again - whether hot or cold, eating traditional food or picnic food or sitting on padded pews or backless benches - the heart of the Christmas season has not changed! Christ gave Himself completely for others; and as missionaries in South Africa, we purpose to do the same!



## Christmas in Taiwan by BRADLEY HALTER

There is Christmas and there is "Krissmas." Many years ago, Taiwan had little of either—not much celebration of Christ's birth and no Kriss Krinkle side of Christmas. Fortunately for us foreigners, December 25 was Constitution Day, a national holiday. Schools and offices were closed, so it lent a bit of Christmas atmosphere to a day which had little else to remind one of its special significance.

Times have changed. The proliferation of department stores has raised the national consciousness of people concerning imported goods and foreign customs. Christmas has come to Taiwan. Department stores put up Christmas trees and go all out for decorations. Of course, there are Christmas sales and a big push to get people to buy Christmas gifts. Smaller stores have followed suit. Secular Christmas is alive and thriving here.

In the past, Christmas celebrations in many churches were joyful occasions for the church family. Now they have become a major opportunity for evangelism. Society as a whole accepts Christmas as a special time of year. This makes it easier for unbelievers to attend a church Christmas activity without embarrassment. Chinese people like celebrations and are willing to join with Christians to help them celebrate Christmas. We take advantage of this opportunity to preach the Gospel to those who would not consider attending a church any other time.

The churches I have served use different methods to celebrate Christmas. One church always goes caroling, walking through the lanes and alleys in the vicinity of the church giving out tracts and Christmas greetings. After



doing this in the area of the church for several years, imagine our surprise when we came to a high rise apartment building and found snacks waiting for us! We were so glad we had kept up the tradition. Some churches make caroling an all-night affair.

Usually we have a carry-in meal before the Christmas program. This gives us a chance to meet visitors and allows them to get comfortable before the service. At least that's the ideal. I remember one time a new convert invited his parents to attend the Christmas activity. His father was a distinguished looking gentleman in a long, black overcoat. In my zeal to make him feel welcome, I accidentally spilled a bowl of hot, oily soup on his overcoat. He took it in the spirit of Christmas and we remain friends today.

A Christmas program in our church may consist of lots of singing, special music, both vocal and instrumental, a skit with a Gospel message, testimonies, and preaching.

The preaching is a basic Gospel sermon so that unsaved visitors will have a chance to hear the Gospel at least one time in their life. One of my greatest thrills is the chance to preach the Gospel to someone who has never heard it, and this opportunity often happens at the Christmas program.

Christmas evangelism also happens outside the church. Christian teachers in universities and other schools find ways to share the Gospel through the Christmas story. One time an American English teacher at a university arranged for her students to sing carols in one of the school auditoriums. Since it was a class activity, she had access to school facilities. She invited me to speak about Christmas. That night several hundred college students heard about the true meaning of Christmas.

This year, when the strains of "Joy to the World" ring out from department stores and churches in Taiwan, join us in praying that many people in Taiwan will come to know the joy that only the Christ of Christmas gives.

## Christmas in Miami by JOSE R. CANCIO

For a northerner, Christmas in this tropical climate can be quite a contrast. There is no sliding down a snow-covered hill on a sled; no frozen ponds for skating; no Christmas tree farm for a fresh-cut tree; and no need to drink hot chocolate to warm your belly. However, you will see many beautiful decorations of sparkling and twinkling lights around the city, especially those spiraled around Coconut trees.

Hispanics in Miami take Noche Buena (The Good Night) very seriously. Noche Buena occurs the twenty-fourth of December. It is a time of celebration and felicity. Even though cultures in Latin American countries differ, the Christmas celebration is basically similar. There will be several Hispanic families in Miami this Christmas who will buy a fattened live pig, have it butchered and splayed with head and feet attached. At home they will dig a pit in their back yard deep enough so there will be enough distance between the hot charcoal and the pig. The



pig will be placed sandwiched between aluminum rods and wire mesh and placed on the surface of the ground over the pit and covered with bananas leaves to hold in the moisture. Most families will just purchase a piece of pork at the local supermarket and roast it in their oven. Late in the evening the meal will be served. The menu will also include rice and black beans, boiled Yuca (cassava root) with an Olive oil and Garlic topping, platanos frito (fried bananas), and a bunch of other goodies.

Presents are certainly a big attraction for the children at Christmas time. In Latin America, instead of Santa Claus coming down the chimney early on Christmas morning,



it is the three Wise Men who come on the sixth of January, loaded with presents, riding their camels. The thought is that this would have given enough time for baby Jesus to have been moved into a home in Bethlehem after His birth. A lot of children in Miami benefit from the fact that their parents have adopted the new custom, that is, presents on December twenty-fifth, and still hold on to the old.

At our Mission in Miami, Christmas is both a busy and enjoyable time. First of all, we focus on celebrating the

birth of our Savior Jesus Christ and thank God for all His blessings. We also have a Christmas program with the participation of our children and young people. This is a challenging task, for most of these children have not been taught discipline and they can be quite unruly. The program is performed the Sunday night before Christmas day. That same Sunday, after the morning worship service, we get together as a congregation and have our Christmas meal. For us in Miami, Christmas is always a time of blessing

## The Christmas Spirit, Honduran Style by ERIC KUHN

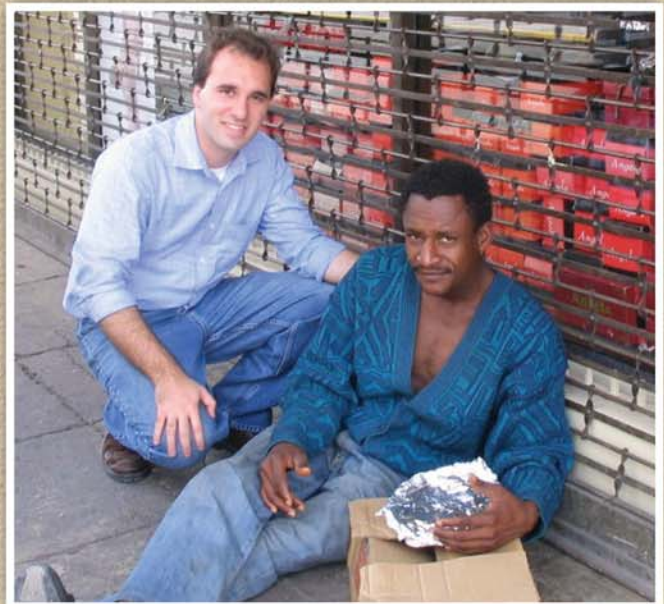


“Silent Night” and “Away in a Manger” wafted through the air from an online radio station; excitement was in the air. It was our first Christmas in Honduras and we felt like we were trying to celebrate Christmas in July. It just didn’t feel like Christmas. Traditions in Honduras seemed so different from the United States. We tried our best to adapt to their way of celebrating, but it wasn’t easy. We put up a Christmas tree like we had done on previous years although we soon discovered that Christmas trees are a hotly debated issue among many evangelical churches. Some preach that it is an idol and when you put gifts beneath the tree, you are bowing down to worship it. We went ahead with our tradition and nobody seemed to mind. We did compromise on another piece of our tradition and that was the manger scene. Honduras is heavily Catholic and manger scenes are strictly Catholic property. We might be able to get by with a Christmas tree; but we would definitely offend our Christian brothers with a manger scene, so we decided to skip it.

Pastor Roger Ortiz and his family came to visit us on that first Christmas in Honduras. On Christmas Eve, we found ourselves sitting around the kitchen table at about 10:30 at night to eat supper. The main dish was pig leg. The side

dishes consisted of chicken-filled tamales and rice and beans. It was very good but very different. At midnight, war broke out on our street as children lit firecrackers and we could hear guns being shot down the hill. They were “ringing” in Christmas day. Explosions went on and on into the early hours. Finally people headed off to their beds and slept in late into Christmas day. Many Honduran families are poor and cannot afford gifts for Christmas, so they pass the time eating tamales and having fellowship with their families.

That first Christmas Day on the mission field, we decided that we would make about 30 plates of food and feed the homeless. We loaded up the car and headed out to the city looking for people who had no family and no food for Christmas. It didn’t take us long to hand out our plates of food and we came home with a little better understanding of what Christmas is all about. Yeah, it might have been 75 degrees outside, we were far from family, we ate food that traditionally we don’t eat during Christmas, but to be able to feed the hungry and share God’s love with the lost, well, isn’t that what Christmas is all about? **S**

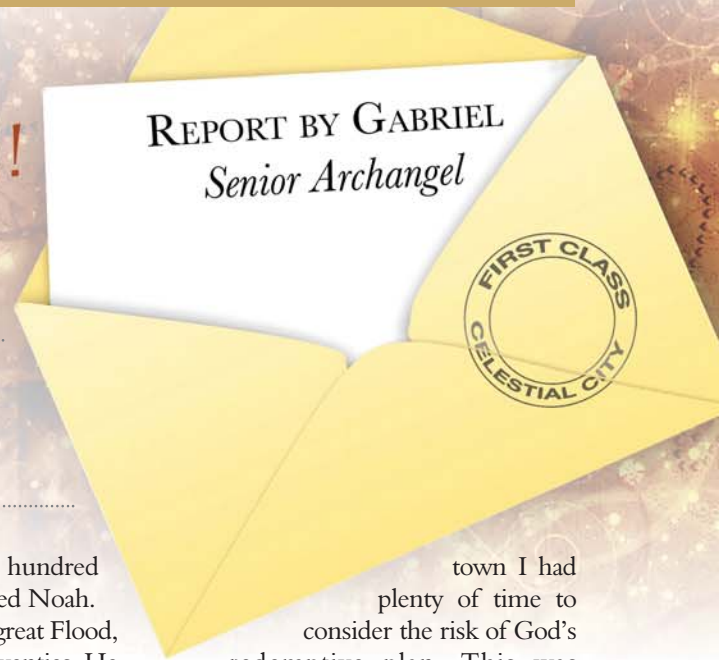






## THE MARY CHOICE!

BY JEREMY FULLER



*“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary.” —Luke 1:26-27*

I confess I was speechless. My “Nazareth Orders” were wildly beyond comprehension, even for an angel. On several occasions before, I had been privileged to hand-deliver important messages for the Almighty, but never one like this. It was wing-tingling!

Since none of you were there, I decided to write and explain my surprise. The main reason for my shock was rooted in God’s past preferences. He was always so predictable before, but this was different. This was dangerous.

You see, I was serving guard at the Trinitarian Palace when the unanimous decision was made to create the first human being. Wow! What a “wing sweat” that caused among us angelic creatures. Wing sweat is like an adrenaline rush. It happens every time we get excited, especially when a soul is born-again. Anyway the vote went public, and all Heaven was animated with anticipation.

Then it happened. On the sixth day of Creation, God formed him from the dust of the Earth. I was there. Adam was a fully mature, adult male—a perfect specimen of humanity. He was commanded to tend the beautiful garden named Eden.

I remember the heartrending moment when God vowed to destroy Planet Earth. Once again the Trinity met to discuss the specific details. When that momentous conference ended, they had a sketch of a huge water vessel now famous. What’s more the blueprint was

to be delivered to a four hundred eighty year old preacher named Noah.

Many earth years after the great Flood, God spoke to a man in his seventies. He left his homeland and for the next one hundred years lived in tents. Abraham became extremely wealthy and was known as the Friend of God. We went and visited him once with the King. What a saint and a great host too! I liked the grilled veal most of all.

Abraham’s grandson fathered twelve boys. They all ended up in Egypt because of a devastating famine. Things didn’t turn out too well for the children of Israel. In time, they all became slaves.

In actuality, Egypt became a womb of protection for the Hebrew nation. They were there sovereignly preserved until a savior could be raised up to birth their deliverance. It took a long time to find the right person for the job—an eighty year old shepherd named Moses. I was there hiding behind one of the cactus plants the day God commissioned him from the midst of a burning bush. I wish you could have heard him stutter.

In retrospect, I’m sure you can see the unmistakable pattern. When God has a significant task to delegate to a member of the human family, He wisely chooses a mature adult male. Furthermore, He picks someone with tons of know-how.

That’s why I was blown away with His “Mary Choice”. Mary was not only a female, she was a teenager. She had zero experience.

Well, I carried out my orders and delivered the message. As I flew out of

REPORT BY GABRIEL  
*Senior Archangel*



town I had plenty of time to consider the risk of God’s redemptive plan. This was unprecedented. God’s Son, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, was preparing to live in the womb of this poor teenage girl from Nazareth. Selah!

A chill raced up my spine as I considered the magnitude of the mission. I mean, this was immensely important—way more important than tending gardens and building boats. Centuries later someone down there captured the essence of my thought that night, “the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.” So much was now resting on shoulders so young!

It wasn’t until I checked in for the night at the lovely Seraph Inn on Main Street (Second Heaven) that I reflected on my moments with Mary. A strange thing happened as I did. Instantly, I understood the genius of the Heavenly Father’s selection.

In Mary’s heart, God found a passion for adventure. He found an unshakeable trust and an invincible faith. Best of all He found the rare gem of humility—a willingness to cooperate at incredible personal cost.

Many times God’s doesn’t need experience. He needs innocence. In Mary’s case, inexperience was the very thing that qualified her for the job.

This Christmas make the “Mary Choice”! Renew your vow with purity. The mission of a lifetime may depend on this one thing. ■

**REV. L. WAYNE STATES**, 87, of Shirley, Indiana, went home to be with the Lord on Saturday, September 19. He was born April 13, 1922 in Hartman, Colorado. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corp. during World War II. On April 5, 1942, he married Juanita Ellen Quinn in Colorado Springs, Colorado and began a ministry that would span many decades. He and Juanita pastored congregations in Otis, Colorado; Nampa, Idaho; Pauls Valley, Oklahoma; Pasadena, California; Phoenix, Arizona; Penns Creek, PA; Fort Wayne, Indiana; and Jupiter, Florida. He was the first pastor of the Penns Creek God's Missionary Church.

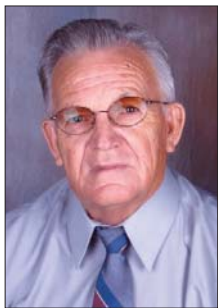


**ORPHA E. "OKEY" KNOUSE**, 60, of Milton, went to be with her Lord Sunday, Sept. 20, 2009. She was born Dec. 29, 1948, in Lewisburg, a daughter of Mabel (Ettinger) Knouse of Milton and the late George M. Knouse. Orpha had been employed at the Selinsgrove State School as a nurse's aide for many years and also at many local nursing homes.



She was a member of the Mountain Road God's Missionary Church, Penns Creek.

**REV. JAMES BATES** was born November 27, 1938 in Winchester, Kentucky. It was in Winchester in the early 1960's that an old fashioned tent meeting came through the area and James Bates along with thirteen of his family members found the Lord as their personal Savior. Rev. Bates was a devoted and loving husband, father, grandfather and brother. To many others he was the world's greatest pastor. His devotion to his family and to the church was evident in his consistent godly life and example. His wife and children counted Him to be the godliest man they knew.



In his last years of pastoring, he faced many physical difficulties; but in spite of losing a leg in an accident, and battling cancer, he continued to pastor to the very end. He was a man of incredible dedication. His God's Missionary Church congregation in Lakeland, Florida said he was one who was always there for them; he instilled confidence in them; he recognized their accomplishments; and he loved them unconditionally. He was a pastor who not only told you of God's Love, but he displayed the love of God for you.

While I was standing by his bed side, as he prepared to leave this world, in his weakened condition, he requested that we sing "Amazing Grace." He then quoted the words to the first verse. When we were finished singing the song, he was shouting and praising the Lord for that Amazing Grace in his own life. Truly he left behind a glowing, glorious testimony of the Grace of God. In his own words he said, "I know where I am, I know where I am going, and I know how to get there."

Rev. James Bates will be remembered as a man with a love for God and a burning passion to see others come to know the God he loved. —Dwight Rine



Kent Engle  
Student Recruiter

Come join us for an extraordinary Christmas celebration!

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- Tour of "Hershey Chocolate World"
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- Snow-tubing at Tussey Mountain
- VIP Seating at our annual Christmas Musical "A Celebration Of Joy!"

Registration Thursday, December 10 (1:30-3:00 PM)

Cost: **Free!**  
Meals and lodging provided.

RSVP by Friday, December 4.

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By phone - (570) 837-1855 ext. 1121

"A Celebration Of Joy!"  
written & produced by  
Music Director Lucas Shroat

UPCOMING EVENTS

**January 21-31**  
Florida District  
Camp Meeting  
Sun City Center, Florida  
Preaching Evangelists:  
Donald Myers &  
James Plank  
Song Evangelists/ Children's  
Workers:  
The Victory Trio

**February 15-17**  
Ministerial Convention  
Camp Hebron, Halifax

TO HAVE YOUR EVENT LISTED HERE,  
PLEASE EMAIL MARVIN MOSLEY,  
[PASTORMOSLEY07@GMAIL.COM](mailto:PASTORMOSLEY07@GMAIL.COM)



# Travel Notes

HARRY F. PLANK

**Aug. 27:** Today was the celebration of the life and sad farewell to Florida District's Vice President, Rev. James Bates. Our prayers and sympathy to the Bates family. Thank you, to each of the Florida District churches and ministers for your expressions of love during this time.

**Sept. 2:** I attended the IHC at Penn View in the morning and at the Milmont church in the evening.

**Sept. 3:** This morning was a board meeting for the God's Missionary Youth Camp. In the evening was the closing service for the Central Pennsylvania IHC held at the Richfield Evangelical Methodist Church.

**Sept. 4:** This evening found us at the Conference-Wide Youth Rally where we enjoyed wonderful music and singing by the Stetler trio.

**Sept. 6:** We appreciated the ministry in song by Penn View Bible Institute's Praise Singers and preaching by Rev. John Manley for the sixtieth anniversary celebration of the Lebanon Church.

**Sept. 8:** It was good to visit with Rev. & Mrs. John White for a short while today. Sis. Joyce White is not well and would appreciate your prayers.

**Sept. 10:** I conducted a General board Meeting this morning which lasted into the afternoon.

**Sept. 12:** Rachel and I traveled by air from Harrisburg, PA to West Palm Beach, FL.

**Sept. 13:** Pastor and Mrs. Cancio and congregation always make us feel welcome when we come to the beautiful Miami Hispanic Mission. I preached in the morning service and we enjoyed a lovely Sunday dinner with them before traveling back to the Hobe Sound area for the evening revival service at the Hobe Sound Bible Church.

**Sept. 15:** Rachel and I traveled from the eastern shore to the west coast of Florida, spending nearly the entire distance in phone conversation with various church situations. We arrived at Fort Myers Rescue Mission in the afternoon. After a nice visit, we traveled on up to the Florida District Camp Grounds near Sun City. It was good to see the Gandeeds again.

**Sept. 16:** We took care of some business for the Lakeland church and was with the good people at the Kissimmee church in the evening. Thank you, to Pastor Sweitzer and family for the wonderful meals and lovely place to stay.

**Sept. 17:** We traveled on to Orlando where Pastor & Mrs. Bickert treated us to a Golden Corral before the evening service. We appreciated that the Orlando congregation moved their mid-week prayer service to Thursday evening to accommodate our schedule.

**Sept. 18:** We traveled back to the camp grounds near Sun City, stopping on the way at the Italian Wagon, Smalley's newly restarted mobile restaurant, where the food is hard to beat!

**Sept. 19:** This was the day of the Thirty-Third Annual God's Missionary, Florida District Conference. We appreciate each one in attendance, some of whom traveled many miles. Election results were: Jose Cancio, Vice President; Michael Smalley, Secretary; Barry Sweitzer, Treasurer; Thomas Bickert, Camp Treasurer; George Schaefer, John Gandee and Paul Gagnon, Advisory Members.

**Sept. 20:** In the morning we visited the Lakeland Church. We appreciate Rev. John Higgins holding things together until a pastor can be secured. It was a nice surprise for us to have in attendance, Rev. & Mrs. Gregg Hobelman, who were on vacation. The Hobelmans joined us for a lovely meal and evening service with Pastor Smalley at the Seffner church.

**Sept. 24:** Was saddened to hear of the death of Gordon Alexander Jr and was able to be with the family at the Lewistown hospital briefly. We extend to the family our sympathy and prayers.

**Sept. 25:** We enjoyed Lancaster County with our Alabama friend, Joe Hollingsworth.

**Sept. 27:** I preached in the morning service at the Alexandria church. We enjoyed the noon meal with Pastor and Mrs. Alvin Shaffer and Pastor and Mrs. Solomon Shaffer and Reagan. The Alexandria congregation seem to appreciate the grandfather /grandson combination. We were with Pastor Bunch at the Sunbury church in the evening. It was good to see a mostly full sanctuary and enjoy a special song by Pastor Martin's family.

**Sept. 30:** I traveled to Bloserveille and met with the congregation there.

**Oct. 3:** We attended the annual Penn View Harvest Home Service. We enjoyed hearing the music and singing by the school and the life story of Rev. Jonathan Fall.

**Oct. 4:** I was honored to participate in the dedication service of our youngest grandchild, Sadie Hazel, along with Pastor Matthew Ellison at the New Columbia church

**Oct. 6-8:** We attended Penn View revival services several times, and appreciated the ministry of Rev. Leonard Sankey, evangelist.

**Oct. 11:** We started the day at the Gospel Center in Lebanon with Pastor and Mrs. Booth and daughter Kalena. The people brought a generous display of Harvest Home things for this Pastor Appreciation Sunday. We enjoyed being with them before needing to hurry off to arrive in time for the morning service at the Lebanon God's Missionary church, where the congregation likewise honored Pastor and Mrs. Arnold and Pastor and Mrs. Rine and family with a beautiful Harvest Home. Leonard Raub chaired this service and I preached.

Rachel and I enjoyed a delicious meal and fellowship with Leonard and Sharon Raub. Then back for the evening service conducted by Pastor Arnold in which I preached.

**Oct. 12:** I attended a Penn View Bible Institute board meeting from 9:00 to 2:00 before spending and hour or two at the dentist.

**Oct. 13:** We attended chapel at Penn View in the morning, held a Penns Creek Camp board meeting at 1:00, and then attended Beavertown revival with Paul Peirpoint as evangelist and the Harker's Island Trio as singers in the evening.

**Oct. 14:** Rachel and I traveled to Mahaffey for the evening service in which I preached and met with the local board for a short time. Also enjoyed a delicious meal with the Dorman's. Traveled back home to Middleburg arriving shortly after midnight. 📌

# Celebration of Joy

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Produced and Directed  
by Lucas Shrout

Director of Music  
Penn View Bible Institute