

# On Earth Peace

UNITED EVANGELICAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
East Avenue and Dillon Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21224

December, 1989

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

By now the malls and shopping centers are decorated for the holidays, lights and trees are going up, and it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. Some of us have completed our Christmas shopping, some have started, while others have yet to begin. All of us are in one stage or another of preparation.

This is a busy time of the year. Between shopping, parties and family celebrations, we have our days all but filled. It is now in the midst of the hustle and bustle that we need to take some quiet time to reflect on what this season is all about. Surrounded by secular celebration, we need to remember that Christmas is all about the birth of the Savior of the world. Jesus Christ, our Lord.

There are several ways to keep Christ in Christmas. First, we can take time throughout Advent to pray and study God's word, the Bible. Secondly, we can include our families in our daily devotions. Thirdly, we can include worship in our Advent schedules. Church attendance is a meaningful aspect of our Advent preparations.

I encourage you to continue with your worship attendance now and in 1990. If you haven't been to church for a while, please come out and worship with us again, if you are able. I assure you, Advent will become much more meaningful.

Now on a different but related topic, please note our Christmas Eve schedule. There will be three services on Christmas Eve this year. They will be at 9 a.m., 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. Both evening services will include the celebration of Holy Communion. The 7 p.m. worship will be geared more toward families with small children, while the 11 p.m. worship will be a more adult oriented liturgy. This is also the fourth Sunday in Advent. Please plan to attend at least one of these services.

May God richly bless you and your families this Christmas Season. From my family and me to you and your family, Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

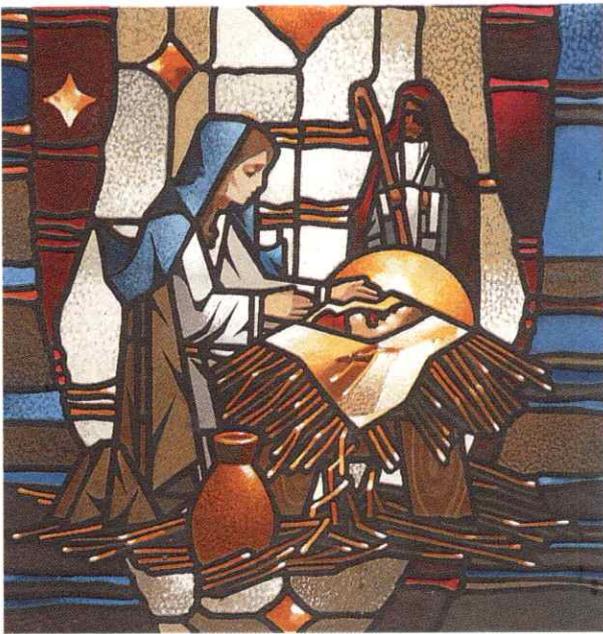
Soli Deo Gloria,

*Rev. J. Stephen Fair, O.C.C.*  
Rev. J. Stephen Fair, O.C.C.

Pastor

Photo: Ron Benedict  
Scripture Text: Luke 2:14 RSV  
ICN 042801 Copyright © 1989 by Abingdon Press Made in U.S.A.

Hand-carved Swiss Nativity Scene  
Courtesy of The Upper Room Chapel/Museum  
1908 Grand Avenue, P.O. Box 189, Nashville, TN 37202



# UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH

(UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)

CHURCH OFFICE  
3200 DILLON STREET  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21224  
PHONE: 276.0393

ROBERT M. ARMSTRONG, PASTOR  
PARSONAGE: 945 S. EAST AVENUE  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21224  
PHONE: 276.0621

December, 1990

Dear Friends:

"Christmas is coming and the geese are getting fat,  
Won't you please put a penny in the old man's hat!"

The songs of Christmas are songs of humor and songs of joy. United Church is a very special place, our "household of faith", in which we experience the full range of human feelings. Christmas is a time of remembrance of friends and family and of luxuriating in the wonderful expressions of love which we find all around us. It is a time when we also remember all of God's children, especially those who are without even the basic necessities of food and shelter in many corners of the globe including our own neighborhood. Jesus understood such remembering because on that clear night some two thousand years ago our God was born in a stable because there was "no room for them in the inn". He also understood celebrations. The shepherds were surrounded by a multitude of the heavenly host saying "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."

So as we come to Christmas, we celebrate with whatever the Lord has blessed us and we give gifts to family, friends, and those in need and we rejoice in the greatest gift of all - our Christ child. In our household of faith, it is His birth we celebrate.

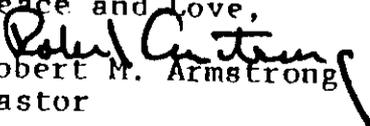
We invite all members, friends, and families, to come to Christmas with us and celebrate our annual "Tinsel Sunday" on December 16, 1990. It begins with the 10:30 AM Worship Service and closes with a special celebration at 3:45 PM for the children. That morning our Church School will hold their annual Christmas program as part of the morning worship.

(Over)

Our Christmas Eve celebrations will include a family oriented worship service at 7:30 PM. Later, at 11:00 PM a special service which includes the Sacrament of Holy Communion. You are invited to both these worship service in celebration of the birth of Christ the Lord.

Priscilla, Marty, and I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

Peace and Love,

  
Robert M. Armstrong  
Pastor



*You shall find the babe wrapped in  
swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

*Luke 2:12*

12-15-91

Dear Friends:

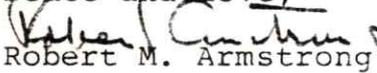
The story of the Wise Men is the story of those who came late to the cradle in Bethlehem. Yet in most manger scenes there they are. It is as if they arrived at the same time as the Shepherds and the Inn Keeper, the Angels and those close at hand. They were the ones who came by a long circuitous route from Persia. By the time they saw the star and understood its significance, by the time they rustled up the camels or hooked onto a caravan across the desert, said good-bye to their families and obtained their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, time flew by. Remember how they searched, finally found Jesus, and laid their gifts at his feet; gold for a king, frankincense for a deity, and myrrh for the suffering that was to be this baby's lot. I guess I have a soft spot in my heart for those who come late to things. Wise Men sometimes come late. We know that those who are wise and who know truth will come even this year and worship him. **WISE MEN STILL ADORE HIM!**

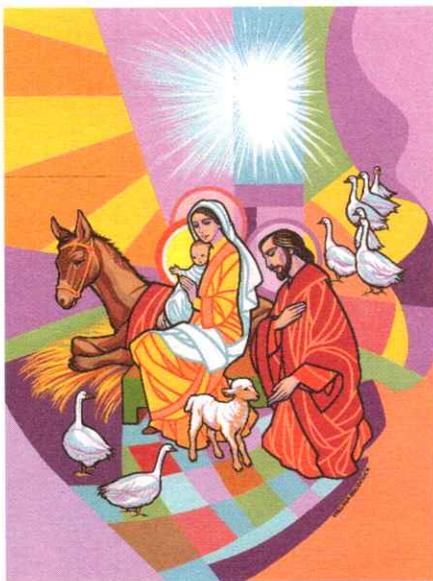
All members, friends, and families are invited to celebrate our annual "**Tinsel Sunday**" on **December 15th**. It begins with the 10:30 AM Worship Service and closes with a special celebration for the children at 3:45 PM. At this worship service the Church School will hold their annual Christmas program as part of morning worship. Our 8:00 AM Worship Service will be in our usual format.

**Christmas Eve celebrations** include a family oriented worship service at 7:30 PM. Later, at 11:00 PM a special service will be held which includes **Holy Communion**. Come, if you like, to both these worship services.

Priscilla, Marty, Cathy, and I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

Peace and Love,

  
Robert M. Armstrong  
Pastor



# Glory to the New-born King

December, 1992

UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
East Ave. & Dillon St., Baltimore, Md. 21224

Dear Friends,

The story of the Wise Men is the story of those who came late to the cradle in Bethlehem. Yet in most manger scenes there they are. It is as if they arrived at the same time as the Shepherds and the Inn Keeper, the Angels and those close at hand. They were the ones who came by a long circuitous route from Persia. By the time they saw the star and understood its significance, by the time they rustled up the camels or hooked onto a caravan across the desert, said goodbye to their families and obtained their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, time flew by. Remember how they searched, finally found Jesus, and laid their gifts at His feet; gold for a king, frankincense for a deity and myrrh for the suffering that was to be this baby's lot. I guess I have a soft spot in my heart for those who come late to things. Wise Men sometimes come late. We know that those who are wise and who know truth will come even this year and worship Him. WISE MEN STILL ADORE HIM!

All members, friends and families are invited to celebrate our annual "Tinsel Sunday" on December 13th. It begins with the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service and closes with a special celebration for the children at 3:45 p.m. At this worship service the Church School will hold their annual Christmas program as part of the morning worship. Our 8:00 a.m. Worship Service will be in our usual format.

Christmas Eve celebrations include a family oriented worship service at 7:30 p.m. Later at 11:00 p.m., a special service will be held which includes Holy Communion. Come, if you like, to both these worship services.

Priscilla, Marty, Cathy, the Church Council, Staff and I wish you and your family a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a BLESSED NEW YEAR!

Peace and Love,

*Robert M. Armstrong*  
Robert M. Armstrong  
Pastor

RAM:mss



# Worship Christ, the newborn king

December, 1993

UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
East Avenue and Dillon Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21224



Dear Friends,

The story of the Wise Men is the story of those who came late to the cradle in Bethlehem. Yet in most manger scenes there they are. It is as if they arrived at the same time as the Shepherds and the Inn Keeper, the Angels and those close at hand. They were the ones who came by along circuitous route from Persia. By the time they saw the star and understood its significance, by the time they rustled up the camels or hooked onto a caravan across the desert, said goodbye to their families and obtained their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, time flew by. Remember how they searched, finally found Jesus, and laid their gifts at His feet; gold for a king, frankincense for a deity and myrrh for the suffering that was to be this baby's lot. I guess I have a soft spot in my heart for those who come late to things. Wise men sometimes come late. We know that those who are wise and who know truth will come even this year and worship Him. WISE MEN STILL ADORE HIM!

All members, friends and families are invited to celebrate our annual "Tinsel Sunday" on December 12th. It begins with the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service and closes with a special celebration for the children at 3:45 p.m. At this worship service the Church School will hold their annual Christmas program as part of the morning worship. Our 8:00 a.m. Worship Service will be in our usual format.

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Priscilla, Marty, the Church Council, Staff and I wish you and your family a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a BLESSED NEW YEAR!

Peace and Love,

*Robert M. Armstrong*  
Robert M. Armstrong  
Pastor

# Worship Christ, the newborn king

December 1994



UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
EAST AVE. AND DILLON STREET  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21224

Dear Friends,

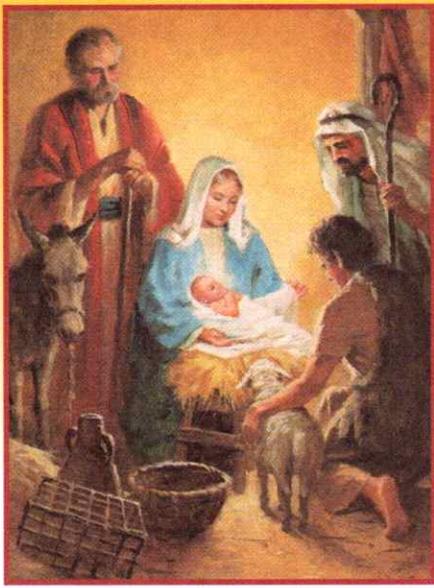
The story of the Wise Men is the story of those who came late to the cradle in Bethlehem. Yet in most manger scenes there they are. It is as if they arrived at the same time as the Shepherds and the Inn Keeper, the Angels and those close at hand. They were the ones who came by along circuitous route from Persia. By the time they saw the star and understood its significance, by the time they rustled up the camels or hooked onto a caravan across the desert, said good-bye to their families and obtained their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, time flew by. Remember how they searched, finally found Jesus, and laid their gifts at His feet; gold for a king, frankincense for a deity and myrrh for the suffering that was to be this baby's lot. I guess I have a soft spot in my heart for those who come late to things. Wise men sometimes come late. We know that those who are wise and who know truth will come even this year and worship Him. WISE MEN STILL ADORE HIM!

On Christmas Eve, December 24, 1994 we will celebrate the evening with a family oriented worship service at 7:30 p.m. On Christmas Day we will have a special service at 10:00 a.m. which will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We invite you, your family and friends to come to one or the other, or both of these Worship Service.

Priscilla, Marty, the Church Council, Staff and I wish you and you family a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a BLESSED NEW YEAR!

Peace and Love,

*Robert M. Armstrong*  
Robert M. Armstrong  
Pastor



# This Day is Born a Savior

UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
United Church Of Christ  
East Avenue and Dillon Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21224

CHRISTMAS, 1995

Dear Friends:

As we come to Christmas this year we remember again that the story is an amazing one; amazing in that God came to live among us in the form of a baby, full of grace and truth. He took on our humanity and became the light of the world. Then too, it is awesome; awesome because we know in our heart of hearts who we are. We know we do not deserve such a great gift.

Each Sunday however, we are bold to declare in the words of St. Paul that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself; not counting their sins against them". Our Lord reaches out to us even those who reject him. We remember too how Jesus said "I, if I be lifted up will draw all people to myself."

This awesome and amazing gift at Christmas fascinates all God's children. Thirty three years later, this beautiful baby was ultimately to give the supreme sacrifice of himself on the cross that we might receive another gift beyond price; more precious even than diamonds or fine gold. And that was the gift of eternal life. On the cross he welcomes us as the "narrow door", for as he himself said "I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except by me."

Yes, it is an amazing, awesome, and fascinating story - the greatest story ever told. Come to church this Christmas. Hear the story, bathe in the warmth of God's love and share it with friends and family.

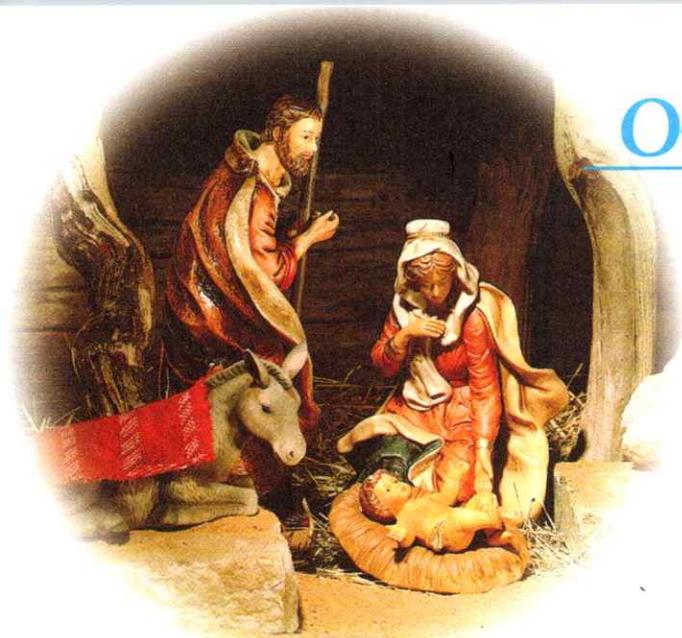
This year on Sunday, Christmas Eve, December 24, 1995, we will celebrate the day of Christ's coming with a morning worship service at 10:30 AM. We will celebrate with the Lord's Supper complete with a brass ensemble. In the evening, we will have a family oriented worship service at 7:30 PM which will feature the telling of the old old story of the wondrous gift with special emphasis on the children. Then all of us, his children, will partake of the Sacrament of the Holy Communion.

Priscilla, Marty, the Church Council, Staff and I extend to you our invitation to join the church family in worship this Christmas Eve. We wish you and your family a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a BLESSED NEW YEAR!

Peace and Love,

Robert M. Armstrong,  
Pastor

# Our Savior and King!



UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
3200 DILLON STREET,  
BALTIMORE, MD, 21224

DECEMBER, 1996

DEAR FRIENDS:

AS WE THINK ABOUT CHRISTMAS WE GET SO CAUGHT UP IN GIFT GIVING AND GOOD TIMES WITH THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS THAT WE FORGET WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT AND WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT AS A CHURCH. THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS IS AN AMAZING ONE; AMAZING IN THAT CHRIST CAME TO US AS A BABY, FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH. HE TOOK ON OUR HUMANITY AND BECAME THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD AND TO SAVE US, TO GIVE US HOPE IN THE MIDST OF THE STORMS OF LIFE.

WHEN I WAS IN IRELAND, NEAR IRISH BALTIMORE, I RAN ACROSS A SONG CALLED "HOME FROM THE SEA". AS I STOOD BY THE HARBOR WALL THERE I RECALLED THE WORDS WHILE LOOKING OUT AT THE BIG OCEAN AND THOUGHT ABOUT HOW FRIGHTENING IT MUST BE IN A STORM. "ANGELS OF MERCY" THEY SANG, "ANSWER OUR PLEA, AND CARRY US HOME, HOME HOME FROM THE SEA, CARRY US SAFELY HOME FROM THE SEA." THE SONG GOES ON TO SAY "ON A COLD WINTER NIGHT WITH THE STORM AT ITS HEIGHT, THE LIFEBOAT ANSWERED THE CALL. THEY PITCHED AND THEY TOSSED TILL WE THOUGHT THEY WERE LOST AS WE WATCHED FROM THE HARBOR WALL. THOUGH THE NIGHT WAS PITCH BLACK, THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK FOR SOMEONE WAS WAITING OUT THERE. BUT EACH VOLUNTEER HAD TO LIVE WITH HIS FEAR AS THEY JOINED IN A SILENT PRAYER. AS THEY BATTLED THEIR WAY TO THE MOUTH OF THE BAY, IT WAS BLOWING LIKE NEVER BEFORE. AS THEY GALLANTLY FOUGHT, EVERY ONE OF THEM THOUGHT OF LOVED ONES BACK ON THE SHORE. THEN A FLICKER OF LIGHT AND THEY KNEW THEY WERE RIGHT, THERE SHE WAS, ON THE CREST OF A WAVE. SHE'S AN OLD FISHING BOAT AND SHE'S BARELY AFLOAT, PLEASE GOD THERE ARE SOULS WE CAN SAVE." IF WE TAKE OUR MINISTRY SERIOUSLY WE CAN SEE A SIMILARITY EVEN AT CHRISTMAS TIME TO THOSE IN THAT LIFE BOAT GOING TO SAVE THOSE ON THAT OLD FISHING BOAT - FOR WITH US TOO OUT THERE IN THE PITCH BLACKNESS THERE ARE SOULS TO SAVE. OUR MINISTRY IS SERIOUS BUSINESS. SOME OF THOSE NEEDING SAVING MAY BE OURSELVES.

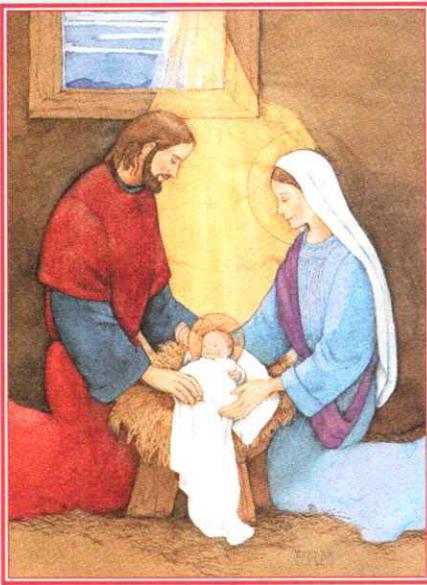
**"AND BACK IN THE TOWN, IS A STREET THAT RUNS DOWN, TO THE SEA AND THE HARBOR WALL. THEY'D GATHERED IN PAIRS AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS TO WAIT FOR THE RADIO CALL. AND JUST BEFORE DAWN, WHEN ALL HOPE HAD GONE, CAME A HUSH AND A FARAWAY SOUND. "T'WAS THE COXSWAIN HE ROARED, "ALL SURVIVORS ON BOARD, THANK GOD, AND WE'RE HOMEWARD BOUND." AND THAT IS WHAT OUR CHURCH IS ALL ABOUT. IT'S AT ONCE A LIFEBOAT AND AT THE SAME TIME A HOME FOR SO MANY OF US. WE WILL FIND SAFETY HERE. BUT IT IS ALSO A LIFEBOAT FOR OTHERS WHO ARE ON THAT OLD FISHING BOAT THAT IS BARELY AFLOAT. WE MUST REMEMBER THIS CHRISTMAS, THAT WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE BOAT AND THE LIFELINES TO SAVE SOULS ON THE TOSSING AND PITCHING SEA OF LIFE AND TO BRING THEM SAFELY HOME. WE ARE ALWAYS ALERT FOR THAT FLICKER OF LIGHT AND SOULS OUT THERE TO SAVE.**

**THIS YEAR ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1996, CHRISTMAS EVE, WE WILL COME HOME AT 7:30 PM FOR A SERVICE OF WORSHIP WHICH WILL FEATURE THE TELLING OF THE OLD OLD STORY OF THE WONDROUS GIFT WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE CHILDREN. THEN AT 11:00 PM. ALL THOSE WHO ARE HUNGRY AND THIRSTY FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS ARE INVITED TO JOIN US IN THE SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY COMMUNION AS WE WELCOME INTO OUR HEARTS, JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.**

**PRISCILLA, MARTY, THE CHURCH COUNCIL, CHURCH STAFF AND I EXTEND TO YOU OUR INVITATION TO JOIN US IN WORSHIP THIS CHRISTMAS EVE. WE WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A BLESSED NEW YEAR!**

**PEACE AND LOVE,**

**ROBERT M. ARMSTRONG,  
PASTOR**



# To You is Born a Savior

UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
3200 DILLON STREET,  
BALTIMORE, MD, 21224

DECEMBER, 1997

**DEAR FRIENDS:**

**WHEN WE THINK ABOUT OUR FATHER'S CREATION OF THE WORLD AS A HOME FOR US; WHEN WE LOOK AROUND AT THE BEAUTY OF IT, WE SOMETIMES ASK OURSELVES "WHY DID HE DO IT?" A SHACK WOULD BEEN AN O.K. HOME FOR US, BUT HE MADE US A MANSION.**

**DID HE HAVE TO GIVE THE BIRDS A SONG AND THE MOUNTAINS A PEAK? DID HE HAVE TO PUT STRIPES ON THE ZEBRA OR THE HUMP ON THE CAMEL, OR THE MAGNIFICENT STARS IN THE SKY? (GOD DOES GOOD WORK) WHY WRAP CREATION IN SUCH SPLENDOR? WHY GO TO SUCH TROUBLE TO GIVE SUCH GIFTS? AND WHY DO YOU GIVE GIFTS? YOU DO THE SAME. I'VE SEEN YOU SEARCHING FOR A GIFT. I'VE SEEN YOU STALKING THE MALLS AND WALKING THE AISLES. I'M NOT DESCRIBING THE LAST-MINUTE PURCHASE OF DRUGSTORE PERFUME. I'M TALKING ABOUT THAT EXTRA-SPECIAL PERSON AND THAT EXTRA-SPECIAL GIFT. I'M TALKING ABOUT STASHING AWAY A FEW DOLLARS A MONTH OUT OF GROCERY MONEY TO BUY HIM THOSE SPECIAL BOOTS HE WANTED OR STARING AT A THOUSAND RINGS TO FIND HER THE BEST ONE, OR STAYING UP ALL NIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE, ASSEMBLING THE NEW BICYCLE. WHY DO YOU DO IT? YOU DO IT SO THE EYES WILL POP. YOU DO IT SO THE HEART WILL STOP. YOU DO IT SO THE JAW WILL DROP. YOU DO IT TO HEAR THOSE WORD OF DISBELIEF, "YOU DID THIS FOR ME?"**

**THAT'S WHY YOU DO IT. AND THAT IS WHY GOD DID IT. NEXT TIME A SUNRISE STEALS YOUR BREATH AWAY OR A MEADOW OF FLOWERS LEAVES YOU SPEECHLESS, REMAIN THAT WAY. AND WHEN YOU ARE IN CHURCH AND**

HEAR THE CHRISTMAS BELLS AND THE STORY OF HOW GOD LOVED YOU SO MUCH HE CAME IN PERSON IN THE FORM OF A BABY TO SHARE HIS LIFE WITH YOU INCLUDING YOUR SORROWS AND YOUR JOYS. SAY NOTHING AND LISTEN AS HEAVEN WHISPERS, "DO YOU LIKE IT? I DID IT JUST FOR YOU."

YES, IF YOU WERE THE ONLY PERSON ON EARTH, THE LORD WOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU THAT GIFT OF HIMSELF. HE DID IT ALL FOR YOU...AND HE'S WAITING FOR YOU TO DISCOVER HIS GIFT. HE'S WAITING FOR YOUR EYES TO POP AND YOUR HEART TO STOP. HE'S WAITING FOR THE MOMENT BETWEEN THE DROPPING OF THE JAW AND LEAP OF THE HEART. FOR IN THAT SILENCE HE LEANS FORWARD AND WHISPERS. I DID IT JUST FOR YOU. YOU SEE, SOMETIMES OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN GIVES US A PIECE OF HEAVEN JUST TO SHOW HE CARES.

COME THEN AND JOIN US ON CHRISTMAS IN SINGING "JOY TO THE WORLD" TO OUR LOVING FATHER.

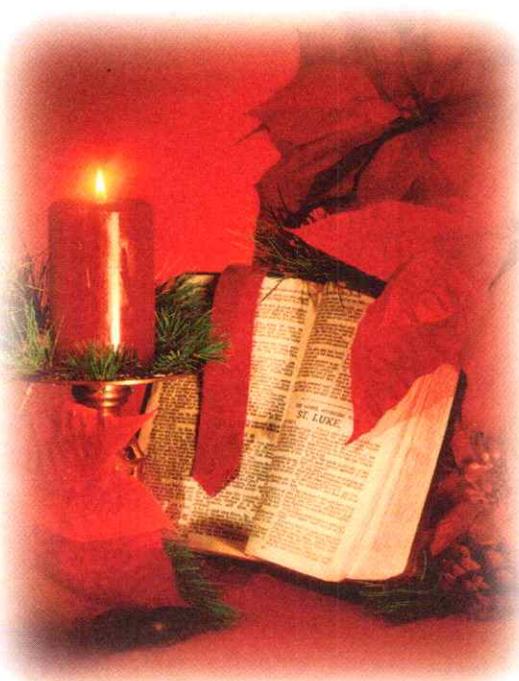
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TO JOIN US IN THE SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY COMMUNION AS WE WELCOME INTO OUR HEARTS, JESUS, THE GREATEST GIFT THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN.

PRISCILLA, MARTY, THE CHURCH COUNCIL, CHURCH STAFF AND I EXTEND TO YOU OUR INVITATION TO JOIN US IN WORSHIP THIS CHRISTMAS EVE. WE WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A BLESSED NEW YEAR!

PEACE AND LOVE,

ROBERT M. ARMSTRONG,  
PASTOR



# Rejoice!

UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
3200 DILLON STREET  
BALTIMORE, MD. 21224

DECEMBER, 1998

DEAR FRIENDS:

WHEN WE THINK ABOUT OUR FATHER'S CREATION OF THE WORLD AS A HOME FOR US; WHEN WE LOOK AROUND AT THE BEAUTY OF IT, WE SOMETIMES ASK OURSELVES "WHY DID HE DO IT?" A SHACK WOULD BEEN AN O.K. HOME FOR US, BUT HE MADE US A MANSION.

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**COME THEN AND JOIN US ON CHRISTMAS IN SINGING "JOY TO THE WORLD" TO OUR LOVING FATHER.**

**THIS YEAR ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1998, CHRISTMAS EVE, WE WILL "COME HOME" AT 7:30 PM FOR A SERVICE OF WORSHIP WHICH WILL FEATURE THE TELLING OF THE OLD, OLD STORY OF THE WONDROUS GIFT WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE CHILDREN. THEN AT 11:00 PM. ALL THOSE WHO ARE HUNGRY AND THIRSTY FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS ARE INVITED**

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PASTOR**