

# FH

# Talk



a newsletter for the Forest Hill Church of Christ since 1974

Vol. 48 Issue 10

December 2023



The *Talk*, since 1974, has been a monthly newsletter for the Forest Hill Church of Christ and is dedicated to Christian unity. The usual deadline for submission of articles is the last Sunday of every month with the exception of December.



#### *Talk Staff*

Pam Thornton. . . . . Editor  
Joe Mason. . . . . Roving Reporter  
Joe & Portia Mason. . . . Prison Ministry



There is no better gift  
There is no higher calling  
There is no richer life

Jesus interrupted history  
Jesus asks us for our devotion  
Jesus is the happiest way to live

His love was for us always  
His love calls to our souls  
His love gives us peace

*May God bless  
you this Holiday  
season!*

The legacy is real  
The legacy has our names written  
The legacy will tell all generations.

Thank you one and all for your generous donations to the 'sock drive' and the 'Angel Tree' program. *Because of you* someone will feel the warmth of your love this holiday, and some child will open exactly the gift they wanted. Just imagine the smiles.



#### Inside the December Talk:

- \*remember those who need prayers. ....p.2
- \*Christmas Happines. ....p.3
- \*history of elves. ....p.4
- \*it is not true, FYI. ....p.5
- \*who was Nahum, FKO. ....p.5
- \*you're not going to believe how delish, Recipe. ....p.6

Our dear Clyde Caver passed on to Paradise on Sunday, November 26th. He battled cancer for many years and suffered a great deal. Our most heartfelt condolences go out to Debbie and the boys as well as Elizabeth. No words can adequately help but know that we love you.



Make sure you and your family are here to share in the birthday celebration of our Savior Jesus Christ on Sunday, December 24th. We will be praising God with songs, prayers, and wonderfully happy faces and hearts. Please join us!

The Masons will be leaving at the beginning of the year for a couple of months in Florida. They have not been able to go in recent years; so they are very much looking forward to their trip. We will miss you, but we know how you love to go to Florida. Come back safely.



Please keep these people in your prayers: Debbie Caver & family at the loss of Clyde; Rasa, Pat & Herb Aaron's daughter, who was taken to the hospital Sunday; all the people receiving socks and gifts through our program this month; the elders' effort to find a new minister for us; and for our church family to grow

and prosper.

Remember today right after morning services the ladies will meet for prayer. We will be in the ladies classroom straight beyond the left door out of the auditorium.



*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!*

# Of interest...



## CHRISTMAS HAPPINESS

© by pam thornton

**T**his is supposed to be the “happiest time of the year.” We do everything we can to promote that phrase. We wish each other a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hear songs about sleigh rides in the snow. We sing about firesides and Christmas bells. We decorate our houses so that every place you look it is festive and bright with twinkling lights and candles and greenery. Our Christmas trees are amazing. They shine through front windows and seem to add a wonderful holiday feel to all who pass by and notice.

But what if you are not. What if it isn't.

Granted, most of my Christmases have been great, and I am not complaining. But I could recount for you several times when it was not the happiest season of the year.

I am not complaining because I am discovering that God was there with me during those “sad” Christmases trying to reach me with a message. I am old enough now to legitimately look back on my life, and it has become so clear to me the different times I was so dull that I did not hear or see God moving in my life.

But *he did anyway*; even though I was unaware. Do we think he doesn't know that

our hearts are broken or that we are lonely or that we are afraid or ill? I believe he is more acutely aware of our situations than we could ever know.

Christmas time happiness is a fleeting thing that floats in on a smile and then is gone the minute we shut the door and turn off the twinkling lights. *So much of that happiness is within our control.* First of all, get out of your own head. Don't linger with depressing thoughts. If you have to, actually get up and go out for a walk! Snow on the ground—shouldn't stop you. Our winters are breathtakingly beautiful, and if you bundle up a winter walk can be exhilarating. Second, stop and be quiet. Remember the Bible says, “be still and know that I am God.” Be still! Just listen for God. Maybe a little prayer of praise might escape and make its way upward. That's good too. Thirdly, help someone else. Volunteer somewhere. Put yourself out there for others who may be even more unfortunate than you feel.

Let me relate to you a wonderful experience I had one ‘sad’ Christmas. My kids were little. I was up after everyone had gone to sleep ‘fixing things up’ for Christmas morning. I was feeling low because it had been quite a financial strain that year. It is hard to be happy opening gifts when you know your bank account is suffering. It was late

and the lights were out.

Once in a while we actually have snow on Christmas Eve and God knows that since I grew up in a snowless place I love snow falls. I finished my tasks around the tree and glanced outside. The snow fall was so lovely! Really picture perfect. Then I noticed that the whole world outside had a 'blue' hue to it precisely like you see in a snow scene by Currier & Ives or a Disney movie. It really looked just like that, and I was knocked breathless. I could not believe it was real. I knew immediately that God had given me that extraordinary moment to calm me down and cheer me.

Here's a hug, he said. Here's something truly beautiful you won't see too often in your life, he said. I love you, he said. Stop overthinking. It's going to be all right I've got you, he said.

None of us has a right to feel unhappy at this time of year when we are remembering that we celebrate the one gift above all others that has changed our lives forever and always. Jesus! That is how much God loves and cares about us. Truly, how can we be anything but happy realizing God did that for you and for me.



HOW DID ELVES GET TO BE A 'THING' AT CHRISTMAS?

Ancient Norse mythology has long had a tradition of

'hidden folk' or as we might call them—elves. Germany, Ireland, Iceland, and many other Celtic cultures had myths of fairies who demanded respect of the natural world but were sometimes evil and full of tricks. In 1823 the poem *The Night Before Christmas* was published and referred

to Santa as "a jolly old elf." By 1857 the idea had caught on and Harpers Weekly published *The Wonders of Santa Claus* which tells how Santa "keeps a great many elves at work/working with all their might/to make a million of pretty things." In 1922, Norman Rockwell released a painting of an exhausted Santa surrounded by tiny, industrious elves trying to finish making toys by Christmas. In the most recent iteration the 'Elf on the Shelf' who serves as Santa's 'informant' seems to have resurrected the slightly creepy nature of the elf tradition.

As recent as 2007 approximately 37% of Icelanders said it was 'possible' that elves still roamed the countryside. 17% said elves were 'probable' and 8% are certain elves are still afoot,

Whether real or fanciful elves make up another fun tradition around the story of Santa Claus.

**Prisoners currently in our Ministry:** Jose Agosto, Michael Bell, Terrance R. Boyd, Larry Duncan, Glen T. Evans Sr., Michaellyn Hutchins, Christopher Konkel, Albert Lacy, Derrick Lartdale, Latrina Lewis, Chris Love, Scott Markel, Ralphonzo Martin, Bradley Mason, Thomas McCarthy Sr., Leon Napier, Lakiesha Phillips, Melvin Reardon Jr., Antonio Spates, Thomas E. Stephens, George Weaver, and Timothy Wilson.

**Also, for those released—**Kenneth Anderson, Nicholas Bowers, Greg Breville, Tony Campbell, Alfred Cleveland, Dean Dupont, Leonardo Frazier, Emmanuel Gonzales, Willard Hall, Tyrell Havergne, Keith Hume, Israel D. King, Juan Rentas, Mark Slayton, Jewell Trischler



Please always remember the folks on our Prison

Ministry list in your prayers. There is, perhaps, no harder time for incarcerated people than the holidays.



# F.Y.S. Healthspot...

## IT'S ALL A MYTH

If you had to say when are the most suicides during the year perhaps, like me, you would say the Christmas holidays. You would be wrong. According to a survey done in 2021 by the Annenberg Public Policy Center (APPC) the highest rate of suicides was the month of August.

The APPC's analysis from the 2021-22 holiday season newspaper stories discussing the holiday season found that little more than half of the stories supported the false myth while the remainder debunked it.

However, closer study proved the undying holiday-suicide a myth.

Average daily suicides per month, 2021

Month	Average number of suicide deaths per day	2021 rank
January	125.03	10
February	126.86	9
March	127.90	8
April	123.27	11
May	131.03	6
June	135.43	4
July	131.29	5
August	139.61	1
September	139.23	2
October	135.84	3
November	128.93	7
December	121.81	12
2021 AVG	130.52	

ote: Provisional 2021 data  
ato: CDC; Table: Annenberg Public Policy Center

It is important for news organizations to dispel the myth because allowing people to think that suicide is more likely during the holiday season can have contagious effects on people who are contemplating suicide. Journalists help-

ing to dispel the holiday suicide myth can provide resources for readers who are in or know of someone who is in a potential crisis.

—The Undying Holiday-Suicide Myth  
by Annenberg Public Policy Center

# For Kids Only...

## Nahum 1

Every word below is contained within the group of letters. Words can be found in a straight line horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. They may be read either forward or backward.

ANGER	LORD
COMMANDMENT	NINEVEH
COUNSELLOR	PEACE
EARTH	STORM
ENEMIES	TRUST
FEASTS	VENGEANCE
FIRE	VOWS
FLOOD	WORLD
FURY	WRATH
IMAGINE	



R O R Y E N I G A M I Z C I  
A F E V V M S Y S W F A C C  
T M G Z T S F E A S  
H E N F H A P J C A S  
V F A E I C V  
E C I I V O V  
N B V R R Y C  
G L L B E B W L T R F  
E U O V D S D N S U L  
A C T R M J M A U F C  
N K G B D C C Y R C C  
C C O M M A N D M E N T F I  
E C O U N S E L L O R B S C  
N H C K I H E V E N I N L E



Learn about Nahum, minor prophet, who told the Israelites how God would avenge them against Assyria & Nineveh.

# Recipe...

## Hershey's Cocoa Fudge

\*Note: This is not the fudge you buy in a store. I have never seen this fudge sold anywhere. This is an old recipe. My grandmother made it and my mom made it, and I'm telling you it was gone in a twinkling! Saying it is 'good' isn't doing it justice.

3 cups sugar  
2/3 cup Hershey cocoa  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
1 1/2 cups whole milk  
1/4 cups butter  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract



Butter an 8 or 9 inch square pan, set aside. In heavy 4-quart saucepan pour sugar, cocoa, salt. Stir in milk, cook over medium heat until mixture comes to a full rolling boil. Then boil without stirring until mixture comes to 234°F (soft ball stage) or until syrup dropped into very cold water forms a soft ball that flattens when removed. *Be sure candy thermometer does not rest on bottom of pan.* Remove from heat, add butter and vanilla. **DO NOT STIR.** Cool at room temperature to 110°F (lukewarm). Beat fudge with wooden spoon until fudge thickens and loses some of its gloss. Quickly spread into prepared pan and cool. Cut into squares. Makes about 3 dozen candies.

The *Talk* will take a break in January. We wish for you a full heart and cozy place to rest. Make your Christmas holiday a happy one! Our next Talk deadline will be January 28, 2024. You may your item to me at church, put it in my box outside the church office, snail mail it to me at home email me at [pthorn50@roadrunner.com](mailto:pthorn50@roadrunner.com). Thanks!

# Birthdays...

## January & February

3-John Kessler  
9-Terry Mills  
10-Pete Chapman

1-Linda Campbell  
4-Marc Stewart  
5-Pam Thornton  
8-Pat Aaron  
11-Ayanna Brown

I predict that your birthday in the new year will be your best ever. May God bless you all year long!



We do not want merely to see beauty... we want something else which can hardly be



put into words- to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it. That is why we have peopled air and earth and water with gods and goddesses, and nymphs and elves.

— C.S. Lewis

# Good News...

And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased'!

Luke 2:12-

☞Our mission: to love like Jesus, to serve like Jesus and to teach others to do the same☞