



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week

God's Doing – a tapestry

The Christmas season always gets me to thinking about what has been – I re-read all the wonderful letters I received last year and re-read the ones I get this year. There are those who don't like Christmas letters, but I really love them. They keep me up on friendships that aren't always kept up because of distance, time and the like. One of the things they remind me of is that I have three cousins in Florida and I don't get together with them often enough!

But I also wonder why I have such wonderful memories of Christmas. I remember snow up to my nose, skiing on snow, shoveling and one Christmas Eve when we walked $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile home in knee high snow. This year I was invited to Minneapolis for the Christmas season. I remember the snow and the memories are wonderful—but they're enough! You see, I also love the Osborne lights, the walks through neighborhoods to check out people's art work with lights. I love the great Epiphany bonfire and I love the fact that I will rarely have to get out anything heavier than a light jacket! Somehow I don't miss the January 1st tradition in our northern Minnesota town of having a New Years' outdoor (venison) steak barbeque. A wonderful memory, something to share with the grands, but not something I really need to repeat each year.

Now I'm in the process of creating a new tapestry. We have had winters when the children and grands have crowded around our Christmas table – and the air conditioner has been running full blast. We have had quiet Christmases and time with wonderful services and good times with good friends. We have enjoyed singing in the choir and listening to wonderful music by soloists and not having much responsibility for programming – thank you Pastor Jon.

Bound tightly in this tapestry is the work and the Word of God. This is the time of the Christ Mass. This is the time when we remember we do all this giving and celebrating because

God gave us so much. We help others enjoy the season to the fullest as we can and we enjoy giving. God sent his Son and with that sending he let us know just how much we should be giving with the things and gifts he has given us.

We give year round, but we find that at this season the needs seem to be greater – this year in particular as more and more people are finding it harder to keep food on the table and transportation available for the family – even enough to get to work.

God doesn't stop giving. We are still in the Christmas Season so we still have a wonderful time to celebrate. It's unfortunate that we do all our parties and "celebrations" so early in December when there are 12 wonderful days with which to celebrate. Let's keep Christ not only in Christmas but in our lives all through the year. We practice hard at that for these 12 days and that helps us continue on during the year, speaking to the world of God's love through Christ with our love. We know all good things come from God, but we also know that we are fighting the devil every day as evil tries to take over. But God is in our tapestry of remembering and of living. Give thanks.

TAK

-- Week of December 30, 2007