

Madison Heights Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
149 Main Street
Madison Heights, VA 24572

Merry Christmas

MADISON HEIGHTS MESSENGER

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Open doors-----Open hearts

Brenda Harris
Secretary

The following is one of my Christmas favorites, hope you enjoy it.

The Christmas Guest

It happened on a day near December's end. Two neighbors call on an old friend, and they found his shop so meager and lame, made gay with a thousand bows of green.

Conrad was sitting with face ashine, when he suddenly stopped as he stitched a twine, and he said "Oh friends at dawn today, when the cock was crowing the night away. The Lord appeared in a dream to me, and said I'm coming your guest to be". So, I've been busy with feet astir strewing my shop with branches of fir.

The table is spread and the kettle is shined, and over the rafters the holly is twined. Now I'll wait for my Lord to appear, and listen closely so I will hear His step. As He nears my humble place I'll open the door, and look on His face. So his friends went home and left Conrad alone. For this was the happiest day he'd known.

Long since his family had passed away, and Conrad had spent many a sad Christmas day. But, he knew with the Lord as his Christmas guest this Christmas would be the best. So, he listened with only joy in his heart, and with every sound he would rise with a start, and look for the Lord to be at his door. Like the vision he'd had a few hours before.

He ran to the window after hearing a sound. But, all he could see on the snow-covered ground was a shabby beggar who's shoes were torn, and all of his clothes were ragged and worn. But, Conrad was touched and he went to the door, and he said "You know, your feet must be frozen. I have some shoes in my shop for you, and a coat that'll keep you warm too." So, with a grateful heart, the man went away.

But, Conrad noticed the time of day, and wondered what made the Lord so late, and how much longer he'd have to wait. When he heard a knock, he ran to the door. But, it was only a stranger once more. A bent old lady with a shawl of black, with a bundle of kindling piled on her back.

She asked for only a place to rest, but, that was reserved for Conrad's great guest. Her voice seemed to plead "Don't send me away, let me rest awhile on Christmas day." Conrad brewed her a steaming cup, and told her to sit at the table and sup. But, after she left he was filled with dismay, for he saw that the hours were slipping away.

The Lord hadn't come as He said He would, and Conrad felt sure he'd misunderstood. When out of the stillness he heard a cry, "Please help me, and tell me where am I!" So, again he opened his friendly door, and stood disappointed as twice before. It was only a child who'd wandered away, and was lost from her family on Christmas day.

Again, Conrad's heart was heavy and sad, but he knew he should make the little girl glad. So, he called her in and wiped her tears, and quieted all her childish fears. Then he led her back to her home once more. But, as he entered his own darkened door he knew the Lord was not coming today. For the hours of Christmas had passed away.

So he went to his room and he knelt down to pray, and he said "Dear Lord, why did you delay? What kept you from coming to call on me? For I wanted so much your face to see." When soft in the silence, a voice he heard. "Lift up your head, for I kept my word. Three times my shadow crossed your floor, and three times I came to your lonely door. I was the beggar with bruised cold feet, and I was the woman who you gave something to eat. I was the child on the homeless street. Three times I knocked and three times I came in. Each time I found the warmth of a friend. Of all the gifts love is the best, and I was honored to be your Christmas guest."