



# Hillside Monthly Dispatch

Hillside Baptist Church, Pembroke, NH

Volume 16 No. 12

Modeling the Truth of God's Word

December 2017

## Experience the True Christmas Season

### From the Pastor's Desk

#### Having Childlike Excitement for the Things of God

Matthew 18:3

For the first several years I was here at Hillside, my office was located on the bottom floor of the parsonage. Having it located there was a true test in patience, for I could hear just about everything going on upstairs, and because the kids were smaller then, it was never really that quiet above my head.

I remember years ago on one particular November day it had begun to snow about mid-morning. Now that might not sound too exciting to those of us who are adults, but to a few young children, I knew the words "It's snowing" evoked unbridled excitement.

I was in the middle of my Bible study and prayer time when I was startled by the loud celebrations of children jumping up and down which was followed by a loud hustle and shuffling of feet on the floor above my head. This in itself was not too bad but accompanied by the barking of a dog and the screaming joyous sounds outside it became a moment of complete chaos in which very little was going to be accomplished.

Recognizing the futility of the moment, I resigned to the fact that I was not going to get much done. So I got up and looked outside the window to see the children running around in the first sustained snow fall, with no accumulation, we had that year. I smiled as they were chasing after each other and enjoying a game of tag followed by screeches of "You're it!"

Looking back, even though I was not really a participant in the game of exhaustion, I could not help but get caught up in the excitement that they exuded. As I think about, their excitement was brought about by a natural order set up by God, but was still exciting nonetheless for little children because after all it was snow.

Let me ask you a question. How often do you get excited about the little and big things of God? Are you too old and mature to allow ourselves to get caught up a true moment of wonder either natural or divine? May it never be! The things of the Lord should always evoke in us the same kind of excitement that children get when they experience the first snow fall of the year, or when they see a beautiful sunset, or

### Upcoming Events and Meetings

#### Dec. 2, 8:00 a.m. – Men's Breakfast

The men share a meal, then engage in a Bible discussion.

#### Dec. 3, 10:45 a.m. – Lord's Supper

#### Dec. 10, midday – Christmas Potluck Dinner

#### Dec. 24, 10:45 a.m. – Christmas Eve Day Service

#### Dec. 31, Midnight – Happy New Year!

Thank the Lord for the new year!

#### Weekly:

#### Sundays at 9:30 a.m. – Sunday School

#### Sundays at 10:45 a.m. – Worship Service

#### Wednesdays Through Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m. – Discipleship Class

when they make play in a puddle after rain, and ooh at a rainbow. We should get excited for the things of God even if they are just found within the natural order of earth's cycles of seasons.

God continuously pours out his grace upon us and upon this earth. He is constantly showing us his wonder and mysteries. He is always sending us signs of his activity in this earth and those things should invoke in us excitement and awe. The best part of this excitement is that it is not without knowledge and understanding of Him, for this excitement comes because we do know that these things are from Him.

In Matthew 18:3, Jesus tells us "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven" (NASB). Jesus does not tell us that we must become a child to enter into heaven for that is impossible, but what he does tell us is that we must become *like* children. That is, we must have the wonder, excitement, and enthusiasm of that of a child.

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On the web at <http://www.hillside-sbc.org>

## Pastor's Desk (from p. 1)

As we age, often we get too sophisticated to remember what it was like to be childlike in our ways, that is, until we have children and see how they play and how they get excited over the small stuff towards the things of God. We are embarking on another new Christmas season and I have to ask, are you excited about it? I know that it is hard for some to be excited because of all the commercialization of the season, but let's not get bogged down by such less-than-holy things in our lives.

Instead find the excitement and awe of what it means in being a child of God. Let the Lord bring about an excitement in your hearts and minds this year that permeates every part of your soul so that you may pass that excitement on to others. I hope that you will let yourself become excited for the things of God this season, for it is truly a miraculous time of the year. It is a time we celebrate the Lord's birth and a time in which we see pure displays of love from the human heart towards one another. This is the kind of love in which we know that only God can cause to well up within others. That is truly exciting is it not?

I hope and pray that this message touches your heart in such a way that you will allow yourself to become childlike and experience the excitement that the Lord wants for you to experience this Christmas season. May God bless you and may you have a Merry Christmas as you celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus.

✠ Pastor Jim

## Men's Breakfast

On December 2nd at 8 a.m., it's time for Men's Breakfast. There will be a group effort to prepare a home-cooked breakfast followed by discussion of the next section of the Book of Romans.

It's a fine time to share a meal and then share our thoughts on God's Word. Hope to see you there.

## Christmas Potluck Dinner

On Sunday December 10th at midday, you are invited to a Christmas Potluck Dinner. It will be held right after the worship service.

The church will supply a turkey and a ham, so you can plan on bringing a vegetable dish, salad, cranberry sauce, rolls, or a dessert.

This will be simply a time of fellowship. The business meeting was last month, so stay and enjoy a leisurely time. If you are visiting, you need not bring anything. We always have plenty to share.

## Property and Space Patrol

There has been no need to mow the lawns recently and the prevailing wind has once again blessed us by blowing the leaves farther down the road.

Upcoming chores include stocking up on about 1,000 lb. of salt for spreading after a snowstorm and filling the sand barrels along the driveway.

✠ Pastor Al

## Thoughts on Being Born Again

I have always thought of myself as having been born again on the day at Hillside when I answered the invitation and came forward to Pastor Al.

I do not remember anything prior to my birth in the flesh. I do not remember my months in the womb, I do not remember taking my first breath, but I do remember my childhood and all things before my rebirth in the Spirit.

If I do not remember things before my birth, why would I remember things before my rebirth? Jesus said, except you be reborn you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. He did not say when or how that happens. He said the rebirth is of water and of the Spirit. He said, like the wind, you cannot tell "from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth".

He also said the Old Testament tells of rebirth in the Spirit when he said to Nicodemus, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?". How would a master of Israel know of rebirth but through the Old Testament? (John 3:4-8) Peter said to "love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again", indicating that being born again is a choice of thought and act not a single point in time. That is, it is a way of daily life, not the single moment of decision and accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior. (1 Peter 1:22,23)

Paul says "...if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor 5:17 KJV) In 2 Cor 5 Paul says while "we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." He says "we labor, that...we may be accepted of him", and that we must "all appear before the judgment seat of Christ". He says we are not to live for ourselves but for Christ. "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

So this sounds like rebirth, but in the context of 2 Cor 5, it is a choice of the will to think and act in the Spirit rather than the flesh. So rather than being something that happened at a particular moment and cannot be lost, isn't rebirth the moment we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and by that faith become aware of the life in the Spirit? Isn't being reborn becoming aware there is a choice to make and then making that choice continuously each day, choosing to forgive the driver who cuts us off rather than curse him, speaking softly to the spouse or child that angered us, not laughing at a hurtful jest toward someone else?

So if being born again is becoming aware there is a choice between flesh and spirit and seeing and feeling the difference between those choices, then it makes sense that I would think of myself as born again that morning at Hillside because, having decided for Christ, I would then forward see the choice and know which was Spirit and which was flesh, and I would know that I should choose the Spirit which is to live to Christ.

But I still remember my life before believing and I still am capable of making wrong choices. I wonder, when we die, will we be completely reborn in Christ and, as when we entered the world, will we forget what came before and, as

See *Born Again* on p. 3

## Born Again (from p. 2)

we forget our time in the womb, will we forget our time in the world such that our time in the womb is to the flesh as our time in the world to our spirit?

Suffice to say, we are aware and we should act accordingly.

✠ John French

## The Good Earth from Apollo 8

The following article written by Robert Grant comes from the Our Daily Bread Devotional for Nov. 11, 2017 and it's out of this world. The photo was taken 49 years ago.



Photo by Apollo 8 Astronaut William Anders, Dec. 24, 1968

While orbiting the moon in 1968, Apollo 8 astronaut Bill Anders described the crew's close-up view of the moonscape. He called it "a foreboding horizon ... a stark and unappetizing-looking place."

Then the crew took turns reading to a watching world from Genesis 1:1–10. After Commander Frank Borman finished verse 10, "And God saw that it was good," he signed off with, "God bless all of you, all of you on the good Earth."

The opening chapter of the Bible insists on two facts:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.  
Genesis 1:1

**Creation is God's work.** The phrase "and God said...." beats in cadence all the way through the chapter. The entire magnificent world we live in is the product of His creative work. All that follows in the Bible reinforces the message of Genesis 1: Behind all of history, there is God.

**Creation is good.** Another sentence tolls softly like a bell throughout this chapter. "And God saw that it was good." Much has changed since that first moment of creation. Genesis 1 describes the world as God wanted it, before any spoiling. Whatever beauty we sense in nature today is a faint echo of the pristine state God created.

The Apollo 8 astronauts saw Earth as a brightly colored ball hanging alone in space. It looked at once awesomely beautiful and fragile. It looked like the view from Genesis 1.

## Poetry to Ponder

Pastor Al sent the following poem for you to ponder. In his October 29 sermon, he expounded upon King Saul's last days, as recorded in 1 Samuel 28.

Saul feared an imminent attack by the Philistines. The Lord would not answer his prayers, so he secretly visited a spirit medium living in Endor, hoping that the medium could summon up the spirit of the recently deceased prophet, Samuel.

Things did not work out well for Saul.

In 1919, the last year of The Great War, Kipling wrote the following poem as a grave and deeply felt warning against the practice of spiritualism, which claimed to allow you to communicate with the dead. In this case, it was communication with soldiers who died in the war.

The poem cautions that, for a sorrowing mother or wife, this can only lead to greater sorrow.

### En-Dor

by Rudyard Kipling (shortened version)

The road to En-Dor is easy to tread  
For Mother or yearning Wife.  
There, it is sure, we shall meet our Dead,  
As they were even in life.  
Earth has not dreamed of the blessing in store  
For desolate hearts on the road to En-Dor.

Whispers shall comfort us out of the dark--  
Hands--Ah, God!-- that we knew!  
Visions and voices--look and hark!--  
Shall prove that our tale is true,  
And that those who have passed to the further shore  
May be hailed--at a price--on the Road to En-Dor.

Oh, The Road to En-Dor is the oldest road  
And the craziest road of all!  
Straight it runs to the Witches abode,  
As it did in the days of Saul,  
And nothing is changed of the sorrow in store  
For such as go down the Road to En-Dor!

## Birthdays and Anniversaries



Hillside wishes a happy, happy, happy birthday to the following people who are celebrating another orbit around the Sun:

12/16 Connor Robertson

12/21 Juliette Robertson



Hillside also wishes God's blessing on anyone who celebrates a wedding anniversary this month.

If that's you, please let the Editor know so we can properly acknowledge your happy day.

## Prayer Requests

If you need us to pray for a physical, spiritual, financial, marital, or other need, contact Pastor Jim, Pastor Al, or Michael Frascinella and they will get the word out to the membership.

It is our duty and privilege to lift you up in prayer to Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Hillside on the Web**

Go to the Hillside web site <http://www.hillside-sbc.org/> for more information about our fellowship, including this newsletter in PDF format.

**Submissions for Next Issue**

Deadline is Dec. 26. Send news items to News Wrangler and Editor, Michael Frascinella, mfrascinella at comcast dot net.



Hillside Baptist Church is a member of the New Hampshire Baptist Association, part of the Southern Baptist Convention.



**Merry Christmas to you**



**and a Happy New Year!**

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