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JOLLY AND JOYOUS!

I know the Muppets are a divisive bunch. Some people get them, and others don't. Some people are too young to appreciate them. To be fair, I understand almost all of these perspectives! I don't get into the Muppets as a whole, I never really watched the show, and I don't really like the majority of the movies. But ONE of the movies is different. Not only do I like one of these movies, but it sits at the top of my Favorite Christmas Movie list (with Elf, of course!)—A Muppet Christmas Carol!

The movie is the perfect mix of nostalgia, playfulness, sincerity, and joy, and it is my favorite iteration of the Dickens' classic Christmas story. Perhaps for no reason more than the fact that it is absolutely riddled with Christmas JOY. If you don't know the story of "A Christmas Carol," Dickens wrote it to foster a particular kind of celebration for the season of Christmas that did not exist during his day. The Industrial Revolution had done a number on the poor (of which he was one as a child), and he hoped to rekindle a spirit of charity for our fellow man among the people of England. And in large part, IT WORKED!

"A Christmas Carol" has been beloved since that point by many, and has been remade in a variety of ways. But none speak to my heart the way that Gonzo (Charles Dickens), Rizzo the Rat, and Kermit (Bob Cratchit) do. And it's because of what I said before—the movie exudes joy at every turn! The Ghost of Christmas Present is massive and jolly—living in the very moment of Christmas. The Cratchit family shows unshakable gratitude—even on their meager earnings from the miser Scrooge! And of course, even Scrooge himself—after his conversion experience, is eventually overcome with the joy that comes at Christmas time.

There is something magical about Christmas joy, isn't there? At the darkest and coldest point of our year...after the calendar has made away with almost all of its days...joy somehow finds its way into our hearts again against the odds. Like a solitary star in a night sky, a forgotten couple in a busy empire, or like an innocent baby born among livestock. Joy is a resilient thing—stronger than the odds and situations stacked against it, and capable of outlasting the long cold nights. I pray that Christmas joy will present itself this way in your life this year.

To lift up that joy, I leave you with lyrics from Bob Cratchit/Kermit the Frog:

"Tis the season to be jolly and joyous

With a burst of pleasure, we feel it all right.

It's the season when the saints can employ us

To spread the news about peace and to keep love alive!"

SUNDAY MORNING

9:15 AM - SECOND SUNDAY

FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

9:45 AM - SUNDAY SCHOOL

11:00 AM - MORNING WORSHIP

SPECIAL ELEMENTS

Rev. Josh Beeler's sermon: "Joy"

Isaiah 12:2-6

Chancel Choir - Have You Heard? Pt. 1

Sanctuary Bells

DEACON OF THE WEEK

Dec. 15 Harold Massie & Justin Owen

DEACONS SERVING DECEMBER 15

Benny Brooks Tracey Garrett
Les Irvin Harold Massie
Michael McPhatter Justin Owen

DECEMBER 8, 2024 OFFERINGS

Budget Envelopes.....\$ 13,073.00

(Weekly Budget Needs \$9199.06)

Plate Offering.....\$ 122.00

Designated Offering.....\$ 4,337.02

TOTAL DEPOSIT..... \$17,532.02

Find Us Faithful.....\$ 840.00

DECEMBER USHERS

Brad Burchette & R.J. Pugh

IN THE HOSPITAL

Mary Ellen Bryant - Lynchburg General
Kay Layne - Lynchburg General

THANK YOU

I want to thank everyone that prayed for Dennis and I. Thank you for all of the calls, cards and prayers. I am doing fantastic since my surgery.
Love, Dennis & Mary Ann Sitton

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL UPDATE

The Helping Hands Ministry has reason to celebrate! Over \$5,500 has been received from the Christmas Festival to use in ministry to our Amherst County neighbors.

ACTEENS MISSIONS MAILBOXES

The Acteens Missions Post Office is open! Mail Christmas cards to active church members and shut-ins. A donation box is beside the mailboxes on the table in the main hallway.

JERICHO TOY BARREL

If you plan to purchase new toys/games/books, etc. for the kids, please remember that the toy barrel will be picked up **Dec. 19.**

KOINANIAS

Dec. 17- 9:45 a.m. Depart for Westminster Canterbury

MEALS ON WHEELS

December 16 - 20
Thank you to those who deliver hot meals to our neighbors!

POINSETTIAS

Special envelopes are available if you wish to place a poinsettia in the sanctuary or give the cost of a poinsettia to the CBF Global Missions Offering in memory or in honor of a loved one.
The cost is \$10.

 FELLOWSHIP

WEDNESDAY EVENING FAMILY MINISTRIES

All programs will resume on Jan. 15

OFFICE CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

The office will be closed from December 24-27 and there will not be a Communicator that week.

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