

Pastor Glenn T. Dryden: 703-573-3444; Cell: 703-343-3496
glenn.dryden@gmail.com

Associate Pastor Gary D. Williams, Sr.: 703-392-8496
Pastor Emeritus Jennings B. Wood: 540-933-6747

Sunday Morning Prayer Service...8:20AM
Sunday School...9:45 AM...Sunday Morning Service... 11:00 AM

Wednesday Evening Bible Study & Prayer...7:00 PM
Choir Practice Following

December 6, 2020



Welcome to our visitors! Our deepest desire is to bring glory to God through lives changed by the powerful Gospel of Jesus Christ. We pray that our church will be a place where you can experience the love of God.

THROUGH DECEMBER - WORSHIP SERVICE ONLY

Our congregation will continue only meeting for Sunday Morning Worship service (11:00 AM) through December. Our ministry leaders encourage distancing 6 feet apart and wearing of masks.

REMEMBER THOSE WHO ARE LESS FORTUNATE

There are families around us who are in need. You may help them by donating either non-perishable food items or personal care items (e.g. soap, toothpaste, deodorant, cleaning supplies, etc.). A box will be in the foyer through the end of December for collection of such items. You also may arrange with the Drydens to drop off items at the parsonage. Contributions will be delivered to needy church members and/or to area food banks. Thanks for giving!

THIS YEAR'S CHRISTMAS DINNER HAS BEEN CANCELED

It is with regret this announcement is made that due to the COVID-19 threat our Christmas Dinner will be canceled.

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS AT 7:00 PM

A reminder that Pastor Gary is leading a Bible Study Wednesday Evenings at 7:00 on **Zoom**. Contact either Pastor Gary or Pastor Glenn with your email address and you will receive the Zoom meeting link in advance each week. Those some distance away are welcome to take part.

COMMUNION DURING WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 20

Communion will be observed during the morning worship service Sunday, December 20. Plan and prepare to take part in this special time. Take the opportunity to examine yourself as the Apostle Paul admonished in I Corinthians 11:23-34.

PLEASE BE PRAYING REGARDING THOSE TO SERVE IN ELECTIVE AND APPOINTED OFFICES

In the foyer you will find forms to indicate your interest in one or more of the elective or appointed offices of the church. Two trustee positions are included. These offices are to be filled at our Annual Business Meeting in February. Please return the form to Pastor Dryden by next Sunday, December 13th.

MISSIONS-MINDED -- HAITI

November 24 Message from Pastor Nathan Dieudonne:

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I want to take this opportunity to express a word of gratitude and appreciation from the Bethel Church of God Mission to the Dunn Loring Community Church of God family for the generous supports sent to Haiti regularly as we give a brief report of the work.

We've been able to get back to the regular church activities following the COVID-19 lockdown. We now hold the monthly ministers meetings with around 40 ministers usually present.

The security of the mission property was compromised a month ago, and some of the cows we raise there were taken away overnight. The intruders cut a big hole on the chain-link fence to enter into the mission compound. To better secure the mission compound and prevent future invasions, we're undertaking a huge project to build 2,500 feet-long block wall around the residential area of the property. The wall will be 8 ft high and will cost approximately \$60,000. By faith we started the work but need your prayers that the needed funds will come in to complete the job in a reasonable time as safety is a great concern all over Haiti right now. We've been hit by a big surge in the exchange rate that unexpectedly reduce the value of the US\$ by half in regard to the Haitian gourde, the Haitian national currency. What that means for us is that it doubles the amount of US dollars needed to pay the general monthly pay checks and bills to run the administration. We don't know how long that change will last, whether it is a lasting issue or a short political move. The loss of the dollar value to the Haitian gourde would be a good thing for the country's economy only if the prices would go down on what we buy with the gourde. Love and Peace in Christ, Pastor Nathan Dieudonne

(Please turn to the back of the bulletin....)

SAVE THE DATE – ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Sunday afternoon, February 7, 2020, 2:00 PM.

Your participation in the business of our congregation is important and a part of your stewardship. Take advantage of this opportunity.

SCRIPTURE:

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Micah 5:2 KJV

THOUGHT:

Let's approach Christmas with an expectant hush,
rather than a last-minute rush.

Just Drop the Blanket: The Moment You Never Noticed in *A Charlie Brown Christmas*

Jason Soroski (Crosswalk.com 2015)

<https://www.crosswalk.com/special-coverage/christmas-and-advent/just-drop-the-blanket-the-moment-you-never-noticed-in-a-charlie-brown-christmas.html>

<https://www.crosswalk.com/special-coverage/christmas-and-advent/drop-the-blanket-the-rest-of-linus-s-story-from-a-charlie-brown-christmas.html>

This week A Charlie Brown Christmas aired on national prime time television for the 50th time. In a world where the latest greatest technology is outdated in a matter of months, and social media trends come and go in a matter of days, 50 years of anything becomes quite meaningful.

I am a fan of all things nostalgic and all things Christmas, and so when the two are combined I am hooked, and the Charlie Brown Christmas special falls squarely into that category.

Continued below

 **The Community Church of God** 
2500 Gallows Road, Dunn Loring, Virginia 22027-1312
Church Office: 703-573-2527 Fax: 703-573-4090
www.DunnLoringCCOG.org

I was in the first grade back when they still performed Christmas pageants in schools (less than 50 years, but still a very long time ago), and our class performed a version of the Charlie Brown Christmas. Since I was kind of a bookworm and already had a blue blanket, I was chosen to play the part of Linus. As Linus, I memorized Luke 2:8-14, and that Scripture has been hidden in my heart ever since.

But while working so diligently to learn those lines, there is one important thing I didn't notice then, and didn't notice until now.

Right in the middle of speaking, Linus drops the blanket.

Charlie Brown is best known for his uniquely striped shirt, and Linus is most associated with his ever-present security blanket. Throughout the story of Peanuts, Lucy, Snoopy, Sally and others all work to no avail to separate Linus from his blanket. And even though his security blanket remains a major source of ridicule for the otherwise mature and thoughtful Linus, he simply refuses to give it up.

Until this moment. When he simply drops it. In that climactic scene when Linus shares "what Christmas is all about," he drops his security blanket, and I am now convinced that this is intentional. **Most telling is the specific moment he drops it: when he utters the words, "fear not"** (at :39 seconds).

Looking at it now, it is pretty clear what Charles Schultz was saying, and it's so simple it's brilliant. The birth of Jesus separates us from our fears. The birth of Jesus frees us from the habits we are unable (or unwilling) to break ourselves. The birth of Jesus allows us to simply drop the false security we have been grasping so tightly, and learn to trust and cling to Him instead.

This world can be a scary place, and most of us find ourselves grasping to something temporal for security, whatever that thing may be. Essentially, ours is a world in which it is very difficult for us to "fear not."

But in the midst of fear and insecurity, this simple cartoon image from 1965 continues to live on as an inspiration for us to seek true peace and true security in the one place it has always been and can always still be found.

A few days ago, I wrote down some thoughts about a beautiful moment that has been hidden in plain sight for 50 years in A Charlie Brown Christmas.

As a pastor, I am thrilled at the encouragement it has given, and as a former literature teacher, I am thrilled that it has started a firestorm of film analysis! Many of you have pointed out that at the end of the scene, Linus picks the blanket back up, and have openly wondered why.

After the epic, blanket-dropping recitation of Scripture given by Linus in response to Charlie Brown's quest for meaning, he picks the blanket back up.

Isn't that anti-climactic?

Why would Linus pick that old security blanket up after so boldly proclaiming an end to fear? Why does he leave the stage with that security blanket still in his hand?

We first must realize that we all carry that same blanket.

Just like Linus, we may stand tall in a moment of faith and conviction, a moment when Scripture hidden in our heart comes to life, and all else is flung aside as we experience and proclaim the true freedom and security that only Jesus can give.

But at some point, out of habit, we reach down and pick that thing right back up. Faith, while powerful, is also delicate.

Linus clearly knows the truth, and clearly proclaims the truth. The knowledge is there and the wisdom is there and the passion is there. So why does he pick it back up?

I think the answer is strikingly clear. It is because we all do the same thing.

We know. We feel. We proclaim.

Yet we gaze in the mirror one morning to find that tattered old blanket draped over our shoulder yet again. And we realize that we have become so used to it being there that we hardly even noticed it.

But that is not where this blanket story ends.

The show ends with the Peanuts gang not just singing, but clearly and unquestionably singing in worship. Even the musical style at this point is different from anything else heard previously.

The obvious song choice here could have been "O Christmas Tree," the notes of which have already been playing gently in the background.

But the focus is no longer the tree. The focus has become bigger than the tree. The focus is Jesus.

With this new focus, the kids instead slide effortlessly into "Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the Newborn King," and what we are now witnessing is essentially an impromptu worship service.

But before any of this happens, Linus parts with that blanket yet again, and lays it down for good at the base of that beautiful Christmas tree, just as we should strive to not just lay our blanket down just anywhere, but leave it forever behind us at the foot of that cross, for our own good and the good of others.

Linus and friends have moved from *speaking* truth and *hearing* truth into a deeper place of worship, where they finally *respond to* that truth, much like those shepherds who were instructed to "fear not" so very long ago.

It is here at the end of the show that Linus lays that blanket down yet again, and this time? He doesn't look back.