

December 7, 2014
Many Hands

As the saying goes, many hands made the load lighter last week. I would like to thank all of you who helped get the church ready for Advent and Christmas. It looks beautiful.

That was a great example of how the body of Christ is supposed to work. It doesn't just have to be an internal event either. What we did together here at *Tree* is what all Christians should strive to do in and for the world. We came together with a common goal to complete a task last week. And, we had such a variety of skills and talents that the work went quickly.

As members of the body of Christ, we are more than just a bunch of hands to make the work easier. No, we are much more varied than that. Sure, we're Christ's hands reaching out into the world, but we're also Christ's feet carrying his message to others. We are Christ's lips speaking comfort to the needy, and we are Christ's back bearing justice to the widows and orphans. As Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 12, we are different members of one body, and as such we have various talents and gifts to share in order to make the work of the Church easier.

During this time of the church year, there is a lot of work to be done, especially in our day and age. Our preparations from last week do not stop with decorating the church. Instead, as Christ's hands and feet, we need to continue to prepare for his advent out in the

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world. As members of his body, we are called to prepare the hearts and minds of this critical, suspicious and stubborn world.

They don't just need us to prepare them to hear us complain about them switching "Christmas" to "Xmas" or "the Holidays." They need to hear the love of Christ, whether they know it or not. And whether they know it or not, they need us to prepare them for more than just the remembrance of our Savior's birth 2000 plus years ago. They need us to bear the message and live the lifestyle that Jesus is coming again. They need us to tell them about Christ's Second Advent, the one that is to come at the end of the age.

Dear friends, we have a big job ahead of us. But, that is one reason why God has composed the body of Christ the way he has. In order that our burdens might be light, he made us members of one body through the death and resurrection of his Son. He has now sanctified us together to share one another's loads, burdens, pains and joys. We are many members but one body, and as one body we can accomplish much. By God's grace in the mutual support and prayers of one another, we can do anything through Christ who is our strength and head.

Dear Lord, help us to use our gifts to bear your life giving name and message to the world. Give us confidence in you, that through one another we might accomplish much for you. Amen.

Pastor Carl O. Johnson

