

# Epiphany Has Jesse Tree For Advent

By MARGARET MILLER

A Jesse Tree blooms this Christmas season in the sanctuary of Epiphany Lutheran Church, 41390 Five Mile, Plymouth.

It is the most recent and most ambitious example of a banner - creating art that also has flowered at Epiphany. For several years people in the congregation have been turning out felt banners with a message, both in groups and individually.

Now the Epiphany sanctuary, architecturally simple almost to the point of starkness, is at any church season appropriately and colorfully decorated.

The Jesse Tree came into being this fall in time for the first Sunday of Advent, Dec. 2. Sky-blue in color, with a green tree and symbols in red and white, it hangs in the place of honor at the front of the sanctuary.

Six members of the congregation, Marilyn Pierce, Elizabeth Hatley, Gerry Coleman, Carolyn Lytle, Karen Miller and Sue Prezioso, worked on the banner that depicts Jesus' "family tree" and shows how the Messiah

came out of Hebrew tradition.

Marilyn Pierce brought the idea from Florida where she vacationed last Christmas. "I saw a picture in a Tampa paper of a banner some women had made there," she said, "and we adapted it for our own use."

As fashioned by the women of Epiphany, the tree has the garden of Eden, Noah's ark and a rainbow, Joseph's coat of many colors, Jacob's ladder and Moses in the bulrushes on its lowest branches.

At the top is the symbol of Christ surrounded by doves of peace.

In between can be found symbols for the Ten Commandments, the burning bush, David's harp, the temple of Solomon, a Christmas rose and a sparkly angel, included "because we liked it on the tree we saw in the picture, though we didn't quite know why it was there."

Work on the banner was done largely in one session in the Pierce home, and Mrs. Pierce finished it up by dry-greasing.

# ECUMENICAL REFLECTIONS

By THE REV. JAMES W. SCHAEFER  
Pilgrim United Church of Christ

Do you know the difference between sentiment and sentimentalism? The difference between these two words contrasts the various kinds of celebrations at Christmas.

The American College Dictionary defines them this way:

**SENTIMENT** - 1. Mental attitude with regard to something; opinion. 2. A mental feeling, emotion. 3. Refined or tender emotion; manifestation of the higher or more refined feelings. 4. Exhibition or manifestation of feeling or sensibility, or appeal to the tender emotions.

**SENTIMENTALISM** - 1. Sentimental tendency or character; predominance of sentiment over reason. 2. Weak emotionalism; excessive indulgence in sentiment. 3. Weakly emotional; manifestly - susceptible or tender.

Get the difference? Sentiment is an honest mental feeling expressing emotion and more refined feelings. Sentimentalism is to overdo it - weak, excessive indulgence.

The celebration of Christmas (the Christ Mass) probably was the last of the four great holy days to be observed.

Easter, Epiphany and Pentecost go back further in history. Easter celebrates the resurrection; Pentecost is the birthday of the church; Epiphany on Jan. 6 has been variously a celebration of nativity, the visit of the Kings (Magi, Astrologers), or the baptism of Jesus. Christmas celebrates Incarnation. Incarnation is a fancy theo-

Two Observerland clergymen, in Christmas letters to their congregations, found different ways to express the same basic idea underlying the Christmas season. We share their thoughts with our readers.

logical word with various shades of meaning, but primarily signifies two things: First, that Jesus was born a person, a human being; and second that he became the Messiah (christ) of God.

Because of him, we do not perceive God as some far-off, fearsome being. To the contrary, God is known to us as many generations ago, ever-forgiving and ever-faithful. All this meaning became personified: "In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he comes to us and shares our common lot."

Christmas is more: it celebrates

By THE REV. PAUL D. BERSCHKE  
Northwest Christian and Missionary Alliance

Christmas belongs to US - it is OUR season. What we possess in Jesus and what we feel as a result of him is far more valuable than anything that can be peddled in a department store. Let's not forget and become engulfed in the trivia.

However, we cannot expect the commercial world to understand this. In fact, a sticker evoked this response from a passer-by - "Can you beat that! The church is trying to horn in on Christmas too!" There are some who feel that one can have a perfectly wonderful Christmas without Christ.

You see signs in the store windows: "Make this the best Christmas ever." I won-

der how anyone feels it can be possible to top the first one!

Just think, the Lord of all glory came down to earth without fanfare, without a welcome, and without the common necessities.

So if we expect a special gift to "make Christmas" for how disappointed we will be.

The point is this: we do not have to withdraw from all the lesser things, or even retreat against them - but we must not let them take too much from these things.

Only Jesus gives reality, peace and joy, and he does that all year long.

Let Christmas time sharpen your sensitivity toward Jesus - his love, his grace and his faithfulness. Let Christmas be a great time for you and your family, a golden worship time, a love and joy time.

# Jews Celebrate Chanukah

By JACKIE KLEIN

Jews throughout the world will be celebrating the festival of Hanukkah Dec. 18 through Dec. 25.

It has been stated that the Jewish people exist today because of the resistance of the Maccabees beginning in 168 B.C.E. This was the first fight for freedom of worship in the world.

In 175 B.C.E. Antiochus IV became king of Syria, the land to which Palestine had been annexed. He tried to force the Jews to renounce their faith and to worship Greek idols. Heathen altars were erected in every Jewish community.

Jewish places of worship were desecrated and Greek culture was imposed on the Jewish people. Antiochus decreed that any Jew caught observing the Sabbath or having in his possession the Torah scroll would be killed.

The flag of rebellion was raised by Mattathias and his five sons. Their battle cry: "Whichever is for God, follow me," rallied Jews from the entire country to join their guerrilla forces.

After the death of Mattathias, the fight for freedom continued under the leadership of Judah Maccabee which means "hammer." Maccabee and his small group of followers won a series of victories against the well equipped Syrian legions in 168 B.C.E.

Maccabee and his men gained possession of Jerusalem and cleaned and rededicated the Holy Temple which had been polluted by the Syrians.

The observance of Hanukkah was instituted by the early rabbis to strengthen the Jewish historic consciousness.



MRS. ELIZABETH HATLEY (left) and Mrs. Marilyn Pierce show the Jesse Tree banner made by women of Epiphany Lutheran Church in Plymouth for the Christmas season. (Observer photo by Harry Mauthe)

# Jesus' Birthday Is Celebrated

The Christmas season at Orchard United Methodist Church of Farmington Hills will begin with a Christmas Birthday celebration during the 9:30 a.m. worship service Sunday, Dec. 23.

Each member of the congregation will receive a

crepe paper stole as he enters the sanctuary, and following the worship service there will be birthday cake served in the church parlor. A second service at 11 a.m. will follow the fellowship hour.

Three Christmas Eve services are planned by Orchard church.

A family worship service at 5 p.m. will feature music by two children's choirs, and there will be communion served during festive worship at 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. The public is invited to all services.

A birthday cake will be presented by a member of

the congregation. The cake will bear 20 candles, each representing a century of the Christian faith and an aspect of the influence of Jesus Christ in the history of the world.

Each member of the congregation will receive a

crepe paper stole as he enters the sanctuary, and following the worship service there will be birthday cake served in the church parlor. A second service at 11 a.m. will follow the fellowship hour.

**GARDEN CITY FREE METHODIST CHURCH**  
24715 Maplewood at Inkster Rd. 425-1453  
Rev. Nelson A. Brandywine 422-1075

**SATURDAY, DEC. 22**  
Neighborhood Christmas Party for children grades 1 thru 6 2:00-4:00 P.M.  
Games-Food-Films-Magic-Prizes  
ALL CHILDREN WELCOME

**SUNDAY, DEC. 23**  
Sunday School 9:45 A.M.  
Morning Worship 11:00 A.M.  
Christmas Message by the Pastor  
Candlelight Service  
"Candles & Carols" 6:00 P.M.

**NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE DEC. 31**  
Fellowship, films, refreshments & meditation & Communion Service  
9:00 P.M.-12:30 A.M.  
PUBLIC CORDIALLY INVITED

**Grace Lutheran Church**  
25630 Grand River  
V. F. Halboth Sr., (EMERITUS)  
V. F. Halboth Jr.  
Rodney A. Hilpert

*cordially invite you to attend Christmas services:*

**MONDAY**  
DECEMBER 24 (CHRISTMAS EVE)  
4:00 & 11:00 P.M.

**CHRISTMAS DAY**  
11:00 A.M.

**Farmington First United Methodist Church**  
33112 Grand River Ave. 474-6573

Ministers:  
JOHN N. HOWELL  
HOWARD F. SNELL

**Christmas Sunday**  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23  
MORNING WORSHIP - 10 A.M.

**"GOD WITH US"**  
**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
Candlelight services  
7:30 p.m. & 11:00 p.m.

Nursery Care Available

**Prince of Peace Lutheran Church**  
28000 New Market Rd.  
Farmington 474-0210  
Rev. Victor H. Messenbring

**Christmas Eve**  
Candlelight Service 7:30 p.m.  
**Christmas Day**  
Festival Service with Communion 10 a.m.

**SPECIAL MUSIC**  
BY THE THREE CHOIRS

**Faith Lutheran Church**  
30000 Five Mile Rd.  
Livonia 421-7249

**Christmas Eve**  
Family Service 7 p.m.  
Festival Communion 11:30 p.m.

**New Year's Eve**  
Holy Communion 7:30 p.m.

The Rev. Roger H. Schlee  
and  
The Rev. Joel R. Benbow  
Pastors

Maria Schmitz, Director of Music

**First United Methodist Church**  
6443 Merriman Rd.  
Garden City

**Christmas Eve**  
7:30 p.m. Candlelight Service for the whole family  
10:45 a.m.  
Sunday Morning Worship  
Rev. Glenn E. L. Kjellberg  
9:30 a.m. Sunday School

**AUGSBURG LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
24801 W. Chicago  
Redford 534-5389 (522-1458)

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES**  
DEC. 23 9:30 & 11:00 A.M.  
Worship Service

DEC. 24 7 P.M. Communion with Blessing of the Children 11:00 P.M.

Christmas Candlelight Service  
DEC. 30 9:30 & 11:00 A.M.  
Service of Lessons & Carols

**COME - JOIN US FOR A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION**

"For, Unto Us a King Is Born This Day..."  
CHRISTMAS EVE  
CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION SERVICES:  
7:00 P.M. and 11:00 P.M.

Handbell Choir and Organ Recital at 6:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

Regular Sunday Morning Services at 9 & 11 a.m.

A Festival of Christmas Music with Choirs, Handbells, Instruments & Organ

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School**  
(Mecum School)  
Middlebelt at 8 Mile 474-0875  
W. F. Rutkowski, Pastor  
Thomas Schirger, Assistant Pastor

**Christmas Eve**  
7:30 p.m.  
**Christmas Day**  
10 a.m.  
Sunday  
Worship Services 9:30 and 11 a.m. (Nursery Provided)  
Sunday School and Bible Class 9:45 a.m.

**NATIVITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
9435 Henry Rd. at W. Chicago  
Livonia 421-5406

Rev. R. Paul Koons, Pastor

Sun., Dec. 23 - 10 a.m. Church School and Worship Service with Choir Cantata

4 p.m. Children's Christmas Program

Tues., Dec. 24 - 11 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

ALL ARE WELCOME

**Orchard United Methodist Church**  
30450 Farmington Rd. 626-6820  
(between 13 and 14 Mile Roads)

**THREE SERVICES**  
DECEMBER 24  
Christmas Eve Candlelighting Services 5, 9, and 11 P.M.

DECEMBER 30  
Student Recognition Service 9:30 and 11 am

**St. Timothy United Presbyterian Church**  
16700 Newburgh Rd.  
Dr. Paul McGee, Minister

Worship and Church School 10 a.m.

**Christmas Eve**  
Family Candlelighting 7:00 p.m.  
Jim Anderson, Music & Choir Director

**OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
1160 Pensilman Ave., Plymouth

Christmas Schedule of Services  
Communal Celebration of Peace Thursday, Dec. 20, 7:30 p.m.  
Private Confessions Saturday, Dec. 22, 3:00-5:00 p.m. and after 7:30 Mass Monday, Dec. 24, 3:00-5:30 p.m. No evening confessions

Masses  
Christmas Eve 11:30 p.m. Festival of Carols 12:00 Midnight-Solemn Commemorative Mass of the Nativity Christmas Day 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 (Adult Choir), 11:00 (Children's Choir), 12:30  
New Year's Eve 5:30 and 10:00 p.m.  
New Year's Day 9:00, 11:00, 1:00 p.m.

**Apostolic Lutheran Congregation**  
26325 Halstead Rd.  
Farmington  
Raymond H. Tulku, pastor 474-6554

**SUN. DEC. 23 and CHRISTMAS DAY**  
11:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M.  
**WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY**  
7:30 P.M.

**SUNDAY DEC. 30**  
**NEW YEAR'S DAY**  
7:00 P.M.

Rev. Aaron Storm  
Guest Speaker  
ALL WELCOME!

**ROSEDALE GARDENS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
HUBBARD AT WEST CHICAGO BLVD. - LIVONIA  
Rev. Arthur Beumler  
Rev. Donald Ely  
Shirley Harden-Director of Music  
Steven Egler-Organist

**NEWBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
36500 Ann Arbor Trail  
LIVONIA  
William A. Ritter, Minister Donna Lindberg, Assoc. Minister

**CHRISTMAS SUNDAY DEC. 23**

Duplicate Services of Worship & Church School 9:15 A.M. 11:00 A.M.

Special Choral Music & Harp at both services  
SERMON: "WAIT"

**Christmas Eve Candlelighting Service**  
7:00 P.M. 11:00 P.M.

Special Music-Meditation  
"THE STAR THROWER"