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## The Christmas Exchange

By Ruthela Welty, originally published December 1969.

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word, "Christmas?" Frequently it is the matter of gifts, for Christmas is a time for giving — to our families, to our friends, to our business associates, to those

who are less fortunate. Because this is true, no gathering in December is complete without the customary gift exchange. We shop around for just the right gift (within the price limit, of course) and hope that whoever receives it will like it as much as we do. And we know we will receive something of comparable value. This Christmas custom adds merriment to the class meeting, or the club meeting, or the special holiday party. Everyone has the fun of getting a gift, and of giving a gift, and each one gets as much as he gives. It's an even exchange.

The first Christmas exchange was anything but an even ex-

change. It took place in Bethlehem when "the Word was made flesh" — when the Son of God exchanged His place in the heavens for a bed of straw in a stable. The Eternal Word, by whom the worlds were framed, and by whose hand they are sustained, laid aside His glory and became a



helpless baby. Had the Baby Jesus been cradled in a priceless bed in the most luxurious place, His surroundings still would not have been worthy of

Him. But His first home was a cave fit only to shelter animals, and His first bed was a manger where the animals fed. We have only the faintest glimmer of understanding of the glory that the Son of God exchanged for that manger bed, but it is enough to make us marvel at such great condescension.

Why should the holy Son of God choose to enter a sin-ridden world, and in such a humiliating manner? There is no other

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## Banquet summary

We recently celebrated our 111th anniversary with a banquet on Friday, October 27th. We were blessed by the music and testimony of Greg Buchanan, and encouraged by stories of hope from men who have turned to the Mission in a time of need. This year, we had around 480 friends in attendance. In addition to a time of fellowship with supporters, the banquet is also an opportunity to raise funds in support of our daily ministry. We were blessed with an offering of just over \$20,500. Thank you to everyone for giving generously!

We're thankful for this year's Major Sponsors: Tom Ahl Family of Dealerships, Northwest Oil, Thermal Gard Window & Door, and Randall Bearings. We also thank the supporting, contributing, and table sponsors who helped make the event possible.

## Current needs

Donating items from our needs list is a great way to make a difference in the lives of the poor and homeless.

Individuals, families, churches and workplaces can collect these items. The best time to bring donations to the Mission is on weekdays from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. or weekends from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Here are some of our current needs:

- Facial tissues
- Cold & flu medicine
- Laundry detergent (for high efficiency machines)
- Bleach
- Cereal
- Marinara sauce
- Hot sauce, barbecue sauce
- Granulated sugar
- Instant coffee
- Paper towels
- Grocery bags

You can check our website at [www.limamission.org](http://www.limamission.org) for updates to this list. Thank you for giving!

## Pizza served with love

On October 24th, Little Caesars Love Kitchen provided over 40 pizzas for our evening meal. A representative from the Cable Road store helped prepare the pizzas. Everyone enjoyed the meal and we are all thankful for Little Caesars' generosity!



## Memorials

The Lima Rescue Mission would like to thank everyone who recently contributed in memory of the following individuals:

Gus Brown  
Jeanette Spenser  
Leola Stemen  
Milo Wellington

## Legacy giving

We're thankful for friends who have made arrangements for a gift after their passing. These gifts help provide financial stability and allow for ministry expansion and special projects.

There are several options for making a legacy gift, including a fixed amount or percentage listed in your will, a payable on death account, an IRA, life insurance policy, or other options. Your attorney will be able to help arrange the best option for you.

Thank you for considering a gift that will leave a legacy!

## Journey of Faith

We recently published a booklet called "Journey of Faith", which tells the history of Lima Rescue Mission. A written history of the Mission was first published in 1992 and has been out of print for many years; the current publication is revised and redesigned. We are happy to make the booklet available to anyone who is interested in learning more about our 111-year history.



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## The Christmas Exchange

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reason than love to explain such a mystery. The Creator loves His creatures and wants us to love Him in return, and so He chose to reveal Himself in this way. To His friends, Jesus said "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." But He came into the world not only to reveal God to man, but to redeem man and restore him to fellowship with God. His love led Him from the manger to the cross where He died to make possible an exchange for us.

What can we exchange because of Christ's atoning death? We can

exchange the bondage of sin for freedom; we can exchange our weight of guilt for a conscience void of offense; we can exchange our fear of condemnation for the hope of eternal bliss. And the best part — it is free! Jesus has already paid the price for our salvation and made it possible for us to exchange a life of unrest for one of peace and joy.

Have you made this exchange? If you haven't, why not make it a Christmas Exchange? It will make your Christmas merrier, and your New Year brighter.

## News and notes

- We recently received a letter from someone who used to stay at the Mission, part of which said: "I wanted to take a moment and again thank you for the time I've spent here, and helping to feed me. I cannot honestly express in words my gratitude for being permitted to stay here, and the aid you've offered while getting back on my feet."

It's encouraging when people take the time to let us know how they have been impacted by this ministry. Thank you for making stories like this possible!

- If you are interested in seeing the ministry of Lima Rescue Mission in person, we offer tours of our facility to groups or individuals. Our staff is also available to make a presentation at your event. Please contact us to make arrangements.

- Thank you to all volunteers who are involved in ministry at Lima Rescue Mission! We are blessed to have many dedicated individuals, families, church groups, and others join us regularly. Some are involved in our sharing at our nightly chapel services, others serve meals and help with cleanup, and still others prepare entire meals. We know that our volunteers are giving from the heart and genuinely care about everyone they serve. Thank you again!

- Welcome our newest board member, Tom Honegger. The Mission is governed by a Board of Trustees made up of dedicated Christian leaders who are committed to furthering ministry to the homeless and less fortunate in our community. The board is responsible for policy setting, fiscal management, spiritual direction and general oversight.

In addition, the board provides valuable guidance. They review reports, financial information and budgets and help determine the direction of programs and services. Their dedicated service allows us to carry on a Christian ministry that addresses important needs in the community.

