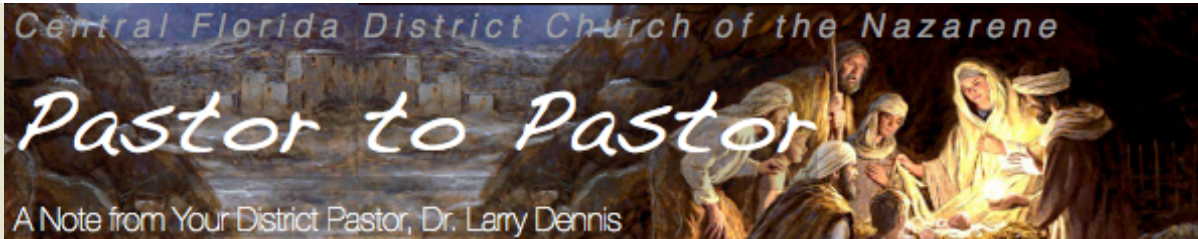


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Friday, December 21, 2012

What I Learned from Ovid Young . . .

Ovid Young, an outstanding keyboard artist who has preformed for Kings and presidents, mentored me on the art of designing Christmas Eve services. Our church in Richardson, Texas was blessed to have Ovid and Laura as members during our 10 years there. The Christmas Eve Candlelight was my favorite of all services during my pastoring days.

5 Things Ovid Taught Me:

1. **Real Christmas Eve services begin at 11:00pm** and Dismiss at Midnight. In the harried, hurried sometimes meaninglessness of modern Christmases, people are desperate for lasting, ongoing Christmas Traditions. Our children deserve to grow up with unaltered, "*Mom, remember when . . .*" Christmas memories.
2. **Set the Table. Remind your people.** "Take a deep breath, Sit back, relax. The Malls are closed, the packages are wrapped, Santa is on his way. Everything is out of our hands. It's time to bask in the presence of the Holy Christ Child."
3. **Don't spare the Candles.** Turn the lights down and lightthe candles. Make the lighting of the Christ Candle in the Advent Wreath the pinnacle moment of the service. Next, everyone's individual candle is lighted from the Christ Candle. Powerful imagery and symbolism!
4. **Keep it Sacred and keep it simple.** Take a rest from contemporary. Embrace the timeless carols of Christmas. Incorporate responsive readings, Scripture, instrumentals, special music and prayers. Include folks of all ages, everyone loves to participate.
5. **Close with a short Scripture centered devotional thought.** Dismiss your flock with a meaningful *Blessing*. And send them off into the night celebrating the birth of their infant king!

When we see or hear from former parishioners, midnight Christmas Eve services are still a topic of conversation. All seem to be grateful for warm family memories that time cannot erase.

Trusting that "All is calm, all is bright" for you and all those you hold dear,

Larry and Debbie

New Year Reminders:

Mission Area Blitz, January 2013

<u>Date</u>	<u>Mission Area</u>	<u>Location</u>
Tuesday, Jan. 8 @ 7pm-9pm	Tampa & Northwest	Tampa Cross Pointe
Thursday, Jan. 10 @ 7pm-9pm	Lakeland	Lakeland Eastside
Tuesday, Jan. 15 @ 7pm-9pm	Orlando North & Northwest	Metro West
Thursday, Jan. 17 @ 7pm-9pm	Space Coast	Rockledge
Tuesday, Jan. 22 @ 7pm-9pm	West Coast	Clearwater
Thursday, Jan. 24 @ 7pm-9pm	Orlando South	St. Cloud

2013 Team Training Day- Saturday, February 2 at Winter Haven First

2013 Pastor's Soul Retreat - March 5, 6 & 7 with Dr. Tim Green.



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