



Perseverance Press

Crossroads Emmaus

December 2022

Special points of interest:

- CRE Board Meeting
January TBA, 7:00 pm
JEC, 8925 Hwy 111,
Ganado
- January Gathering—
Ganado FUMC, 6:30,
January 19, 2023



December Called Meeting

The CRE Board met by Zoom on December 1st for a brief meeting. The meeting was called to order with prayer at 7:00 p.m. Usual reports were deferred. Board nominees for the class of 2025 were discussed. Nominations closed the night before. John Behrens and Mike Myers graciously agreed to their board service nominations. The Rev. Paul Beard will serve as the Community Spiritual Director. No further nomi-

nations were made. The CRE Bylaws required a ballot to be distributed for absentee use. Four absentee ballots were received by the board secretary by the cut-off date, the day prior to the December gathering.

The board briefly discussed the updated community website.

In new business, the board ratified an appointment made by the Board Chair to the 'Class of 2024'

pursuant to CRE Bylaws. A motion was made to ratify the Chair's appointment of Retha Hahn to fill the currently open position, to take effect immediately after her current service to the board. After the motion and second, the question was called with a unanimous vote.

The January meeting was not scheduled.

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New Board Members Elected

During the CRE Christmas Gathering held at the Danevang Lutheran Church on December 15, the slate consisting of John

Behrens and Mike Myers was unanimously elected. The Rev. Dr. Paul Beard will serve as the Community Spiritual Director.





Kids and Grandkids Coloring Page



December 2022

The Birth of Christmas

We see the Christmas story from multiple perspectives. The beginning of the greatest gift given to mankind. The significance of the humble arrival of our Lord. The prophetic nuances of the circumstances: our Savior as a lamb born in a small community whose name is a Hebrew inference for 'bread'. The city of David, itself referring to Jesus' lineage. The precarious trip to Bethlehem, then the need for this young family to flee, to protect the Christ Child from Herod.

After considerable study and research of the Bible and other exegetical documents relating to life of the Israelites during this time, I will try to illustrate another aspect of the birth of the Christ child. My goal is not to take the focus from Jesus, but to elucidate the obedience and service of Mary and Joseph.

Mary and Joseph had already faced fearful social issues during the earthly gestation of our Lord and Savior yet followed God's commands to accomplish the assignment given to them.

The Birth. No attending angels wearing masks and surgical gowns, no 'delivery suite'...just Mary and Joseph until the task reached its amazing fruition. Having delivered about two dozen babies over the last few decades, I can vouch for the intensity of becoming a mother under less-than-ideal conditions. After having dealt with breech deliveries, shoulder dystocia, limb presentations, nuchal umbilical cords, and a myriad of other more serious peri-birth issues, my heart goes out to a very young mother and father that accomplished this miraculous birth alone in a stable. Luke's account of Christ's birth was ostensibly related to him by Mary. The Bible does not record any supernatural assistance here.

A little exegetical study of the daily routines and trials of living in the late B.C. era shows us that childbirth in the best of circumstances was not a walk in the park.

Mothers in biblical times usually delivered while standing, kneeling, or squatting. If too tired from the process, sometimes the mother would sit on the legs of another women. As time progressed through the biblical era the use of Roman birthing chairs was accepted and used by many Israelite women.

Normally Mary would have had the benefit of being present at other births. Given her young age this may not have been the case. Often numerous women consisting of family and trusted friends would take shifts comforting and helping the expectant mother. Midwives are noted in the Bible as early as the book of Exodus (1:15), and multiple references to childbirth occur throughout the old and new testaments. There is no recorded account of Mary having any assistance with the birth of Jesus beyond that provided by Joseph.

Preparation for childbirth would normally have included items needed to assist a woman in labor. Those items would often include olive oil, warm water, warm fomentations, soft sea sponges, woolen material to cover the mother, a pillow, and something good to smell, such as a flower, dirt clod, or barley groats. An apple or quince would usually be available for needed sustenance. There is no record of which, if any of these things, Mary had available to her.

It was common during this period for newborns to be washed immediately after birth, using a mixture of olive oil, salt, warm water, and occasionally diluted wine. These ingredients had antiseptic benefits and soothed the newborn skin. Babies were also wrapped in loosely woven linen strips. Luke 2 tells us that Mary wrapped the baby Jesus in these swaddling bands.

We know the rest of this story. Our joy at Christmas should only be shadowed by our repentance and thanks at Easter. These Christian holidays and what they mean to us should be in our grace filled hearts year-round.

DeColores,

Vernon

