

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

The Christmas Story

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them; Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning the child. All they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Holy Bible

❖ FARM CALENDAR ❖

Monday, December 25
Merry Christmas!
Lancaster Farming office closed.

Monday, January 1
Happy New Year!
Lancaster Farming office closed.

Tuesday, January 2
Solanco Young Farmer Meeting,
Accelerated Calf Grower, So-
lanco High School, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, January 3
Lancaster County Tobacco
Show, Farm and Home
Center.

Farm Financial Management
Using Computers, Cumber-
land County extension office,
thru Jan. 4.

Thursday, January 4
Dairy Feeding Employee Train-
ing, Mason-Dixon Farm,
Adams County.

Friday, January 5
Dairy Feeding Employee Train-
ing, Mason-Dixon Farm,
Adams County.

Franklin County Dairy Day,
Kauffman Community
Center.

Fresh Cow and Transitional
Period Protocol, Robert and
Linda Fenchak Farm, Knox, 1
p.m.

Saturday, January 6
Pennsylvania State Farm Show,
Farm Show Complex, Harris-
burg, 9 a.m.-9 p.m., thru Jan.
11.

Pennsylvania Hereford Associa-
tion Meeting and Banquet,
Harrisburg Marriott.

Sunday, January 7
Pennsylvania Angus Association
Membership Banquet, Holi-
day Inn, Grantville, 5:30 p.m.

Monday, January 8
Ice Cream Short Course, Nit-
tany Lion Inn, University
Park, thru Jan. 18.

Pa. State FFA Convention,
Farm Show Complex, 4:30
p.m.

Tuesday, January 9
Keystone Farm Show, York
Fairgrounds, thru Jan. 11.

Eastern Pa. Turf Conference
and Trade Show, Valley
Forge Convention Center,
King of Prussia, thru Jan. 1..

Ephrata Area Young Farmers
Introduction To Ephrata
School District Demo Farm,
Ephrata High School, 7:30
p.m.

**Now Is
The Time**
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Look At Odor Control

Leon Ressler, Lancaster Coun-
ty extension environmental
agent, reports that in the sum-
mer of 1999 Penn State Cooper-
ative Extension conducted an
odor abatement study on eight
swine farms across Pennsylvania.

Three technologies were evalu-
ated for their odor control poten-
tial. These technologies were bio-
filters on exhaust fans, dust
control on exhaust fans, and
floating straw covers on manure
lagoons.

One unique aspect of the study
was that the neighbors to the
swine farms were asked to evalu-
ate the effectiveness of the treat-
ments and keep odor diaries for
six weeks during the study. Each
neighbor received a survey con-
cerning his or her perceptions of
animal agriculture and odor
evaluation cards. The cards were
to be filled out each day between

6 p.m. and midnight. Odor was
evaluated on a scale of 0 (no
odor) to 5 (intense odor). The
odor control technologies were
installed approximately midway
through the evaluation period,
allowing comparison of scores
before and after installation.

On two of the three farms
where biofilters were installed,
the average score declined after
their installation. On the farms
where floating biocovers were
used, the overall average showed
a decline in odor levels. The dust
filtration treatment appeared to
be ineffective in reducing odors.

To Look At Factors Affecting Odor

The evaluation of responses
from the farm neighbors partici-
pating in the 1999 Odor Abate-
ment Study conducted by Penn
State Cooperative Extension
has yielded some interesting
results.

Dr. Ken Kephart, Penn State
professor of animal science, sum-
marized five factors that influ-
enced odor scores:

1. Whether the neighbor knew
the swine producer. The more
the neighbor was acquainted
with the swine producer, the
lower the odor score.

2. Attractiveness of the farm in
question. If the farm was per-
ceived as more attractive, lower
odor scores were recorded.

3. The respondent's overall
health. Very healthy people re-
corded lower scores.

4. Whether the neighbor had
refrained from inviting friends
from visiting because of the odor.
The more often they chose not to
invite friends, the higher the odor
score.

5. Whether the neighbor
wished he or she did not live in
this location because of the swine
facility. The more they wished
not to live here, the higher the
score.

There were also a number of
personal factors that had little or
no impact on scores. These in-
cluded income, gender, ages, ed-
ucation, whether the neighbor
had been raised on a farm, length
of time the neighbor had lived
there, and the neighbors' report-
ed knowledge of swine produc-
tion.

To Report Manure Spills

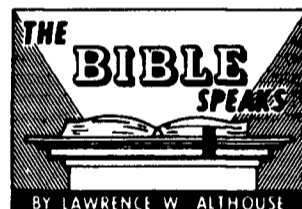
Occasionally things do not
work out as planned. Sometimes
manure spills occur because of
mechanical breakdowns, opera-
tor mistakes, or natural disasters
such as floods.

Jeffery Stoltzfus, Eastern Lan-
caster County School District
Adult Farmer Program instruc-
tor, reminds us that you are re-
quired to call Pennsylvania De-
partment of Environmental
Protection (DEP) immediately
when manure reaches any body
of water such as a stream, lake,
or pond. The phone number for
DEP is (800) 541-2050. In addi-
tion, you should also contact
your county conservation dis-
trict.

Remember, if a manure spill
occurs, immediately stop the
flow, contain the spill, and con-
tact DEP and the conservation
district. These steps will work in
your favor during the DEP inves-
tigation.

If you do not have an emer-
gency plan in place, you should
develop one. The plan should in-
clude ways you can stop and
contain the spill, and names,
phone numbers, and agreements
with contractors who will im-
mediately be available to assist
you in stopping and containing the
spill.

Feather Prof's Footnote:
"The only way to discover the
limits of the possible is to go
beyond them into the impossi-
ble."



DO YOU HEAR THE ANGELS?

Background Scripture:
Luke 2:1-20.
Devotional Reading:
Matthew 16:13-16.

On a summer afternoon in
1933, in a band of traveling evan-
gelists in Murphy, N.C., one
Annie Morgan sang a striking
folk melody that captured the
heart of John Jacob Niles. As-
king Ms. Morgan to repeat the
words so that he could copy
them, Niles wrote out the text to
a carol that today is sung and
heard by millions every Christ-
mas:

*"I wonder as I wander, out
under the sky,*

*How Jesus the Savior did come
for to die*

*For poor on'y people like you
and like I,*

*I wonder as I wander, out
under the sky."*

Poor On'y People

Niles later tried to locate
Annie Morgan, but without suc-
cess. She had slipped back into
the humble obscurity so typical
of the mood of this plaintive
Christmas song. Sometimes,
great contributions are made to
humanity in the same anony-
mous manner.

That's what the song suggests:
the Savior came to earth "for
poor on'y people like you and
like I." And that is why this song
so beautifully captures the mean-
ing and mood of the Christmas

story — it is a story about the
humble of the earth, for the
humble of the earth.

The first news of the Christ-
mas story came to two humble
but receptive women: Elizabeth,
mother of John the Baptist, and
Mary, mother of Jesus of Naza-
reth. Although Mary's betrothed,
Joseph, was of the lineage of
King David, he was an obscure
tradesman from a hill town of
Galilee that was often the target
of derision.

Reaching Bethlehem, Joseph
and Mary did not have the clout
to get a room in the inn, and so
their child was born in a lowly
animal's feeding trough. The
only people that night who were
aware of a great cosmic event
taking place in Bethlehem were
lowly shepherds tending their
flocks in the fields surrounding
Bethlehem.

There was hardly a job on the
social scale lower than that of
shepherd. The central characters
in this story were "poor on'y
people, like you and like I," and
the supporting cast was com-
posed of even more "poor and
on'y people." As Howard Thur-
man wrote, "the birth of Jesus
remains the symbol of the digni-
ty and inherent worthfulness of
the common man."

Christmas Eve is a time of
special meaning for the poor and
lowly.

There is a legend about a
church in Mexico where pari-
shoners brought great quantities
of flowers to the altar on Christ-
mas Eve. While the priest ob-
served hundreds of parishoners
entering the church with their
arms laden with flowers, he
heard a little girl weeping be-
cause she had no flowers to
bring. The priest smiled and told
her to go to the roadside and
pick any weed she saw.

The little girl was puzzled, but
she did as she was told. As she

placed it on the altar, the soft
green leaves glowed with a soft
red light. The little girl's offering
turned out to be the most beauti-
ful flower placed at the altar!
According to the legend, since
that time, the poinsettia plant
has been the special flower of
Christmas.

'Be Not Afraid...'

There is also dimension to the
Nativity scene. In addition to the
babe in the manger and his hu-
mble parents on either side, in
addition to the shepherds kneeling
close by, there are the heavenly
hosts, angelic messengers with
Good News: "Be not afraid; for
behold, I bring you good news of
a great joy which will come to all
the people; for to you is born this
day in the city of David a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord; and this
will be a sign for you: you will
find a babe wrapped in swad-
dling cloths and lying in a man-
ger."

Then, the angelic messenger
becomes a heavenly host, and,
unheard by the rich and mighty,
they sing the Christmas news to
humble shepherds: "Glory to
God in the highest, and on earth
peace among men with whom he
is well pleased." The heavenly
host still sings that magnificent
message, but only those with
humble heart will hear it.

What about you? Do you hear
the angels?

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