

WestRock Family News

Andrew Compton
December 22, 2013

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2013

Motto of the year:

Era of the Victory, Liberation, and Completion of the True Parents of Heaven, Earth, and Humankind

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Weekly Greeting

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

We are just one week from the end of the year. As you know – we are encouraging members to participate in the national prayer condition (21 minutes) that will end Dec 31. Let's give our very best heart in these last 7 days.

Also, please take time to reflect on your life – and on the relationships that are most important to you - with our Heavenly Parent, with True Parents, with your family members, your spiritual family, your time for prayer and reflection, your offering to the public in both time and tithe, your work situation, your time for recreation, your care for your personal health, etc..

Thank you all – for your participation in this past Sunday service. Everyone I spoke to had a wonderful experience. Special thanks to all those who worked so hard to make it happen (If I try to name everyone – I am sure to miss someone).

If you had a good experience – please consider becoming involved on a regular basis with our Sunday program. If more brothers and sisters invest – whether you have special talent to perform or maybe just to smile and say good morning as members arrive, your investment is going to make a difference. I am convinced – that the best thing we have going as a community, at least at this time, is our Sunday service. With your help it can become even better – and I am sure more and more guests will begin coming.

Several members asked me about the reading I gave – you will find it below.

God Bless You

And let's make this last week of 2013 a victorious one!

Andrew Compton

CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE MORNING

By Pearl S. Buck

He woke suddenly and completely. It was four o'clock, the hour at which his father had always called him to get up and help with the milking. Strange how the habits of his youth clung to him still! Fifty years ago, and his father had been dead for thirty years, and yet he waked at four o'clock in the morning. He had trained himself to turn over and go to sleep, but this morning it was Christmas, he did not try to sleep.

Why did he feel so awake tonight? He slipped back in time, as he did so easily nowadays. He was fifteen years old and still on his father's farm. He loved his father. He had not known it until one day a few days before Christmas, when he had overheard what his father was saying to his mother.

"Mary, I hate to call Rob in the mornings. He's growing so fast and he needs his sleep. If you

could see how he sleeps when I go in to wake him up! I wish I could manage alone."

"Well, you can't, Adam." His mother's voice was brisk. "Besides, he isn't a child anymore. It's time he took his turn."

"Yes," his father said slowly. "But I sure do hate to wake him."

When he heard these words, something in him spoke: his father loved him! He had never thought of that before, taking for granted the tie of their blood. Neither his father nor his mother talked about loving their children--they had no time for such things. There was always so much to do on the farm.

Now that he knew his father loved him, there would be no loitering in the mornings and having to be called again. He got up after that, stumbling blindly in his sleep, and pulled on his clothes, his eyes shut, but he got up.

And then on the night before Christmas, that year when he was fifteen, he lay for a few minutes thinking about the next day. They were poor, and most of the excitement was in the turkey they had raised themselves and mince pies his mother made. His sisters sewed presents and his mother and father always bought him something he needed, not only a warm jacket, maybe, but something more, such as a book. And he saved and bought them each something, too.

He wished, that Christmas when he was fifteen, he had a better present for his father. As usual he had gone to the ten-cent store and bought a tie. It had seemed nice enough until he lay thinking the night before Christmas. He looked out of his attic window, the stars were bright.

"Dad," he had once asked when he was a little boy, "What is a stable?"

"It's just a barn," his father had replied, "like ours."

Then Jesus had been born in a barn, and to a barn the shepherds had come...

The thought struck him like a silver dagger. Why should he not give his father a special gift too, out there in the barn? He could get up early, earlier than four o'clock, and he could creep into the barn and get all the milking done. He'd do it alone, milk and clean up, and then when his father went in to start the milking he'd see it all done. And he would know who had done it. He laughed to himself as he gazed at the stars. It was what he would do, and he musn't sleep too sound.

He must have waked twenty times, scratching a match to look each time to look at his old watch -- midnight, and half past one, and then two o'clock.

At a quarter to three he got up and put on his clothes. He crept downstairs, careful of the creaky boards, and let himself out. The cows looked at him, sleepy and surprised. It was early for them, too.

He had never milked all alone before, but it seemed almost easy. He kept thinking about his father's surprise. His father would come in and get him, saying that he would get things started while Rob was getting dressed. He'd go to the barn, open the door, and then he'd go get the two big empty milk cans. But they wouldn't be waiting or empty, they'd be standing in the milk-house, filled.

"What the--," he could hear his father exclaiming.

He smiled and milked steadily, two strong streams rushing into the pail, frothing and fragrant.

The task went more easily than he had ever known it to go before. Milking for once was not a chore. It was something else, a gift to his father who loved him. He finished, the two milk cans were full, and he covered them and closed the milk-house door carefully, making sure

of the latch.

Back in his room he had only a minute to pull off his clothes in the darkness and jump into bed, for he heard his father up. He put the covers over his head to silence his quick breathing. The door opened.

"Rob!" His father called. "We have to get up, son, even if it is Christmas."

"Aw-right," he said sleepily.

The door closed and he lay still, laughing to himself. In just a few minutes his father would know. His dancing heart was ready to jump from his body.

The minutes were endless -- ten, fifteen, he did not know how many -- and he heard his father's footsteps again. The door opened and he lay still.

"Rob!"

"Yes, Dad--"

His father was laughing, a queer sobbing sort of laugh.

"Thought you'd fool me, did you?" His father was standing by his bed, feeling for him, pulling away the cover.

"It's for Christmas, Dad!"

He found his father and clutched him in a great hug. He felt his father's arms go around him. It was dark and they could not see each other's faces.

"Son, I thank you. Nobody ever did a nicer thing--"

"Oh, Dad, I want you to know -- I do want to be good!" The words broke from him of their own will. He did not know what to say. His heart was bursting with love.

He got up and pulled on his clothes again and they went down to the Christmas tree. Oh what a Christmas, and how his heart had nearly burst again with shyness and pride as his father told his mother and made the younger children listen about how he, Rob, had got up all by himself.

"The best Christmas gift I ever had, and I'll remember it, son every year on Christmas morning, so long as I live."

They had both remembered it, and now that his father was dead, he remembered it alone: that blessed Christmas dawn when, alone with the cows in the barn, he had made his first gift of true love.

This Christmas he wanted to write a card to his wife and tell her how much he loved her, it had been a long time since he had really told her, although he loved her in a very special way, much more than he ever had when they were young. He had been fortunate that she had loved him. Ah, that was the true joy of life, the ability to love. Love was still alive in him, it still was.

It occurred to him suddenly that it was alive because long ago it had been born in him when he knew his father loved him. That was it: Love alone could awaken love. And he could give the gift again and again. This morning, this blessed Christmas morning, he would give it to his beloved wife. He could write it down in a letter for her to read and keep forever. He went to his desk and began his love letter to his wife: My dearest love...

Such a happy, happy Christmas!

Sermon

Sorry, no sermon this week

Light Thought for the Day:

Running Away From Home

A man scolded his son for being so unruly and the child rebelled against his father. He got some of his clothes, his teddy bear and his piggy bank and proudly announced, "I'm running away from home!"

The father calmly decided to look at the matter logically. "What if you get hungry?" he asked.

"Then I'll come home and eat!" bravely declared the child.

"And what if you run out of money?"

"I will come home and get some!" readily replied the child.

The man then made a final attempt, "What if your clothes get dirty?"

"Then I'll come home and let mommy wash them," was the reply.

The man shook his head and exclaimed, "This kid is not running away from home, he's going off to college!!"

Testimonies/reports

After Sunday service at Belvedere I went to visit our brothers and sisters at the Queens Center. They had a delicious Christmas lunch and some incredible entertainment. The Queens house was literally overflowing with kids of all ages. I was especially impressed by the music performances, a dance routine prepared by 3 of the girls, a military drill by a young ROTC cadet, and a magic trick. Thank you to the Kung family for their investment in the Queens community – (I think Pastor John prepared as many raffle prizes as there were people – that is his heart).

Andrew Compton

If you have a testimony or report to share please send it to me.

Providential News

The 20-20 Providence has begun! WestRock and Upstate have been paired with the Solomon Islands and Italy. Metro NY and Long Is have been paired with Nepal and Israel.

Quote for the Week:

Here is a poem by Lloyd Howell – a member in Long Island.

I've managed to channel my recent sentiments about these men (True Father and Mandella) into a poem. It's effectiveness lies in how one cries out "Madiba" and "Aboji" – and therein is the core essence of the poem. The poem demands that it be read aloud. The cries are meant to be spine chilling, primal ones from the marrow of the bone. Reading it aloud in public or even in the privacy of

one's room or from a mountaintop is highly recommended and will be a challenge, especially with respect to "Aboji", for one must connect to the un-validated grief to be able to (shamanistically) cry out, bringing appropriate honor and respect to Father's passing. I recommend the reader give it a try. There is great blessing in doing it right.

Lloyd

Cham Aboji

Mandella is dead –
the father of a nation gone.

His praises sung far and wide.
His life recognized;
a parade of dignitaries
rushes to attend the rites,
a chorus of eulogies
and cries, cries of
 Madiba! Madiba!!
reach the skies.

Yet I can't help
but be saddened
for Moon has passed –
the True Father of Mankind gone –
his children not even knowing
who he was
and what he did for them.

I gnash my teeth,
pound the floor in regret,
wear sackcloth and ashes,
crying out
 Aboji, Aboji!, Cham Aboji!!

Announcements

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Outreach

Ice skating January 1: Everyone is invited to come ice skating at the Westchester Skating Academy, 91 Fairview Park Drive, Elmsford (just north of Sam's club off of 9A) from 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm. Bring \$2 for skate rental

DP Study & Discussion at the White House: Monday Dec 23, 7 PM, Nov 25.
Topic: The Fall

Bible Study for the 21st Century: at the White House, Friday 7PM, Dec. 20 Topic:
"Understanding the Responsibility God Placed in Our Hands"

Community

Farewell to Robert & Hee Hun Standard & family! They are moving to Rhinebeck, NY. We are grateful for all that they invested in our community – including a piano at the White House! We pray for their success and happiness in their new home.

Looking for one more home to Welcome Students for Overnight Stay, Dec 25 and 26. Can you volunteer to welcome 2 students into your home (can be male or female) for Christmas Eve and part of Christmas Day. If you can be such a family, please contact Rev Compton. THANK YOU!

Scholarships for UPA: True Mother is offering scholarships for graduate students, under the age of 30 – to attend the Universal Peace Academy: 1 year Korean Study, 2 years graduate school study, and 2 years of ministry. Please contact Rev Compton

Share Your Testimony: If you would like to share your testimony at Sunday service please visit our website at www.westrockfamily.com/sermons to find out more. If you are interested contact Rev Compton.

Prayer

	<p>Angela Shimizaki was in a work accident and is now at home recovering. Please pray for her recovery (and if you can – give her a visit!)</p>
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	<p>Laura Nabetani – she continues to fight pneumonia and other health challenges. Jiau-Lan Weinstein – she continues her fight with lung cancer</p>
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	<p>Next Ahn Shi II: Wednesday, January 1, 2014</p>
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	<p>MAKE IT A GREAT WEEK!</p>
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