



Nola's Musings

December is a very special month of the church year. We start with "Hanging of the Greens" then we have four weeks of "Advent", then Christmas day, which this year is a Sunday. What special fun we are planning. But before Christmas day Bethel has a very important meeting to take care of. It is December 12th council meeting and we need people to come forward to join the council. Many hands make work easier. When Gary told us he would be leaving the area (and the council) God spoke to my heart and I offered to take his place as "Financial Secretary". I find it hard to argue with God. Believe me I've tried and failed. We need about 10 people joining us and then we can have a good group to do the work of the church. If God has spoken to your heart or whispered in your ear, "Join the council", come to the Dec. meeting at 6:00. We have a great group and we have a lot of camaraderie with each other. Lance tries to keep us on track but we spend a lot of time laughing. It would be a shame to have Bethel close just because we can't get enough people to work with the council.

Grandma's Christmas Secret Susan Sharp

I remember my first Christmas adventure with Grandma. I was just a kid. I remember tearing across town on my bike to visit her on the day my big sister dropped the bomb: "There is no Santa Claus," she jeered. "Even dummies know that!" I fled to her that day because I knew she would be straight with me. Grandma always told the truth.

Grandma was home, and I told her everything. She was ready for me. "No Santa Claus!" she snorted. "Ridiculous! Don't believe it. That rumor has been going around for years, and it makes me mad. Now, put on your coat, and let's go."

We arrived at a store in town that had a little bit of just about everything. Grandma handed me ten dollars. "Take this money," she said, "and buy something someone else really needs. I'll wait for you in the car." Then she turned and walked out.

For a few moments I just stood there, confused, wondering what to buy, and who on earth to buy it for. I thought of everybody I knew: my family, my friends, my neighbors and the kids at school. I suddenly thought of Wayne Lieninger. He was a kid with bad breath and messy hair and he sat right behind me in Mrs. Pollock's grade-two class. Wayne didn't have a coat. I knew that because he never went out for recess during the winter. His step-mother always wrote a note telling the teacher that he had a cough, but all we kids knew that Wayne Lieninger didn't have a cough, and he didn't have a coat. I fingered the ten-dollar bill with growing excitement. I would buy Wayne a coat!

I settled on a blue corduroy with a hood to it. It looked warm, and he would like that. "Is this a Christmas present for someone?" the lady behind the counter asked kindly, as I laid my ten dollars down. "Yes," I answered. "It'sfor Wayne." The nice lady smiled at me. I didn't get any change, but she put the coat in a bag and wished me a Merry Christmas.

That evening, Grandma helped me gift-wrap the coat (a little tag fell out of the coat, and Grandma tucked it in her Bible) and write, "To Wayne, From Santa Claus" on it— Grandma said that Santa insisted on secrecy. Then she drove me over to Wayne's house, explaining as we went that I was now and forever officially one of Santa's helpers.

Grandma parked down from Wayne's house. We crept noiselessly and hid in the bushes by his front walk. Then Grandma gave me a nudge. "All right, Santa Claus," she whispered, "get going." I took a deep breath, dashed for his front door, threw the present down on his step, pounded his doorbell and flew back to the safety of the bushes and Grandma. We waited breathlessly for the front door to open. Finally it did, and there stood Wayne.

Fifty years haven't dimmed the thrill of those moments. That night, I realized that those awful rumors about Santa Claus were just what Grandma said they were: ridiculous. I still have the Bible, with the tag tucked inside: \$19.95.

Nola (The apple of God's eye)

Points to ponder: He who cannot forgive destroys the bridge over which he himself must pass. Where are we going? And what's with this hand basket??