

Family

Let's keep Christ out of commerce

It is that time of year when I get e-mails from various groups urging me to boycott those retailers who refuse to use "Christmas" in their holiday advertising and promotions.

Every year this bothers me, and this year I finally figured out why. This feels like a violation of the Third Commandment - "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain."

I agree that "Christ" must be kept in Christmas, but I cannot understand why Jesus' title as Messiah (Hebrew) or Christ (Greek) - both meaning God's Anointed - should be used by companies whose sole purpose is to take my money so they can have a bigger profit margin.

I cannot see why it is appropriate to use the name of the Savior of the World as a ploy to bring more customers into particular stores, convince people to spend more money there rather than with other retailers and increase certain companies' profits more than others.

We ask, "What would Jesus do?" I don't think he would allow his holy name to be attached to the commercialization and the secularization of his birthday.

Advocating that stores and commercials be pressured to use the word "Christmas" is to commercialize and demean one of the holiest of days. Insisting that our Savior's name be



Carol Rahn

• From the Pulpit

part of a commercial enterprise is, to me, the antithesis of everything that Jesus Christ stood for - simplicity, caring for the poor, the ill, the outcast, and ultimately, bringing salvation, not through wealth and power, but through love, grace and sacrifice.

I would rather commend the businesses that do not use the Lord's name in vain commercialism, but instead allow the secular gift giving (which symbolizes our need for "stuff" rather than our need for Christ) to be separate from a time of worship and celebration of Jesus' birth.

"God With Us" is not honored with commerce and profit, but with joyful reverence and living lives that show Christ's love and grace in all we do, especially for the least of God's children. A better list to circulate would be of those companies who use their resources to make life better for the "have-nots" of the world. That is, it seems to me, more what it

really means to keep the spirit of Christ in the Christmas season.

The real complaint, it seems to me, is that Christmas has become too secular, that we have lost the true meaning of Christ's birth by the takeover of Christmas by large retailers and commercial enterprises. I will not deny that. Christmas has become a commercial endeavor rather than a celebration of Jesus' birth.

Jesus did not come to be among God's people so we could buy more stuff in his name, but to bring God's love, grace, and salvation into the world. Perhaps, rather than making Christ more visible by expecting Walmart, Best Buy or Old Navy to be doing our work for us, we should be busy making him more visible in our own lives.

By all means, keep Christ in Christmas. Live lives that reflect his peace, healing, forgiveness, joy and love - and share who he is and how he lived with one another. Be for others the person Christ has been for you.

And may the wonder and joy of that First Christmas be with you. May the blessings of Christ's peace, his hope, his healing, and his love be with you and with those whom you love this Christmas, and always.

Merry Christmas to all.
Carol Rahn is pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Colby.

Deaths

Dorothy Lee Charles

Dorothy Lee Charles, 75, Colby, died Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009, in Winfield.

She was born May 17, 1934, in Halford, the daughter of John H. and Maude (Spriggs) Charles,

who preceded her in death.

A private graveside service will be held at a later date.

Harrison Chapel is handling arrangements.

Prepare for winter drive

With winter coming on, Kansas Highway Patrol officers have already had enough traffic crashes caused by the weather to last all year.

The patrol is encouraging motorists to slow down and be prepared for winter conditions.

Driving too fast for conditions ranked in the top five contributing circumstances of all traffic crashes last year, the patrol says. In 2008, a traffic crash involving snow and ice occurred every 1.15 hours. There were 7,643 crashes during ice and snow conditions, and 22 people died, 1,851 were hurt. December had the most crashes, and 11.6 percent of all crashes in the state occurred during snow and ice conditions.

Here are some tips from troopers as you prepare for bad weather and bad roads:

- Prepare your vehicle for winter travel by replacing wiper blades and be sure tires have good tread and air pressure. Check fluid levels, the exhaust system and mechanical equipment. You also may consider stashing a shovel to your trunk, and weight such as sand bags in the bed of a pickup to help with traction and control, and carrying a sand/salt mixture to help melt the snow and gain traction.
- Stock your vehicle with items you might need if you are involved in a crash or become stuck. These might include bottled water, blankets, nonperishable food, a first-aid kit, and a flashlight with extra batteries.

- Keep your gas tank full, as this adds weight for traction and lessens the possibility of running out of fuel if you became stuck.
- Clean frost and snow off all windows, mirrors and lights, and use your headlights so people can see your car. Make sure the entire window is clear; having only a small area cleared might make you miss seeing another vehicle.
- Accelerate and brake gently, and increase following distance between you and other cars. Be particularly cautious on bridges, and in curves, as they are often the slickest parts of the road.
- If your vehicle loses traction and begins to slide, steer in the direction you want to go.
- Allow for more time traveling to and from work, home, school and other activities.
- Always wear your seat belt, and secure children in the proper safety seats.
- Have a plan for your kids should they be sent home from school early.
- For tips on preparing homes and vehicles for winter weather, go to www.emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/.
- If you are involved in a traffic crash, or need help, call the patrol at *47 from your cell phone, or dial 911.
- To get road conditions, call 511 from a land line or cellular phone, or go to www.ksdot.org/office/TransInfo/511Info/511traffictravel.asp.

Exhibit opening Sunday

The Deines Cultural Center will have "Men at Work," a multimedia exhibit of two working artists, from Sunday through the end of December. The show includes paintings by Dennis Schiel, Hays, and sculpture by Chet Cale, Great Bend. The opening reception is from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday.

Dennis Schiel, who visited Colby near the end of October, is a life-long artist who started his career in Colorado doing sports illustrations and portraits. He maintains a studio and gallery in Hays where he is currently working on a ten-panel history of Kansas with hopes that it will be in the state's visitor's center. He will be bringing twenty acrylic and pastel paintings in a variety of subject matter including portraits, transportation and landscapes to the exhibit.

Chet Cale has been sculpting for seventeen years. He has completed works in stone, bronze, clay, wood, cast stone, and plaster, including commission portraits of

children, women and men, judges, heads of business, religious leaders, and pioneers of science. He has also completed a "spirit animal" series of sculptures and several other spiritually inspired one-of-a-kind sculptures that range in size from desk top to larger than life. He will be bringing twenty-five pieces to the exhibit.

Cale says, "For some of us the desire to create art is reflected in our life's work, and the world calls us an artist. To be a part of this communication is a privilege."

The Deines Cultural Center is located at 820 N. Main in Russell, admission is free and the Center is open from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The center is accessible to those with disabilities.

We want your local news: e-mail to colby.editor@nwkanas.com

Senior Progress Center

Celebrate December birthdays at the center on Wednesday.

Activities for the week: **Monday:** show your Christmas spirit; wear your Christmas attire. **Tuesday:** 10 a.m., exercise; 11 a.m., bingo. **Wednesday:** 11 a.m., December birthday party. **Thursday:** 10 a.m., exercise; 10:30 a.m., shuffle board. **Friday:** 10 a.m., exercise; 10:30 a.m., pool game.

Menus for the week: **Monday:** sloppy joes, water triangles, California blend vegetables, bun, pears. **Tuesday:** oven fried chicken, mashed potatoes/gravy, mixed vegetables, bread, apricots. **Wednesday:** ham and beans, citrus

slices, cornbread, cook's choice complement. **Thursday:** meat loaf, au gratin potatoes, carrots, bread, cook's choice fruit. **Friday:** pork patty, creamed peas, orange pineapple salad, bread cookie.

The Thomas County Nutrition Center invites anyone 60 and older and guests to lunch Monday through Friday at the senior center. Home delivery is available, as is pick-up service. A contribution of \$2.75 per meal is suggested for seniors, \$5 for others. For anyone under 60, home delivery is \$5.75. Make reservations at (784) 460-2901 by noon the day before.

Corrections

The Colby Free Press wants to maintain an accurate record of our town. Please report any error or lack of clarity in a news story to us at 462-3963.

Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day
Hi-Plains Co-op
Wheat (bushel) \$4.50
Corn (bushel) \$3.38
Milo (hundredweight) \$5.35
Soybeans (bushel) \$9.37

TCCF SANTA'S WORKSHOP
(Pre-school to 4th Grade)
Organized by the Thomas County Community Foundation
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5TH
Thomas County Office Complex
350 South Range Avenue
Colby, Kansas
9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Suggested Donation- \$4 per gift! 4 Gift Limit!
ALL PROCEEDS GO TO CHARITY!
Elves help kids shop for Mom & Dad Gifts with a "homemade touch"
Questions: Call Melinda or Sally at 460-9152

Come on Out and Enjoy the 12th Annual Colby Christmas Light Parade!
Sunday, December 6, 2009 @ 5:45 pm
Downtown Colby

Stock Realty & Auction in Downtown Colby will open its doors at 5:00 and invites you to stop in before or during the parade to register for a holiday gift certificate and enjoy:

- Comfortable Surroundings
- Warm Office
- Hot Coffee
- Holiday Cookies

STOCK AUCTION COMPANY
Quality Equipment Auctioneers
1-800-WE SELL 8 www.stockra.com

350 S. Range Suite 14 Colby, KS
(785) 460-9152
tccf@st-tel.net
www.thomascountycommunityfoundation.com

2009 Third Quarter Grants Awarded

Colby Police SLEF Fund		
Colby Grade School	Bal-A-Vis-X Program	\$ 1,000.00
CCC & Lindsay Frahm	Criminal Justice Scholarship	750.00
CCC & Jake Cox	Criminal Justice Scholarship	375.00
CCC & Rebecca Theimer	Criminal Justice Scholarship	750.00
Corv R. Wang Memorial Scholarship Fund		
CCC & Jay Wessel	Criminal Justice Scholarship	1,020.00
TCCF Endowed Youth Fund		
Boy Scouts of America	High Plains Pow-Wow	200.00
Director's Fund		
KS AARP Tax-Aide	Thomas County computer	200.00
USD #316	Reading program equipment	500.00
Total		\$4,795.00

"Forever Betterment" for Thomas County Citizens

Pride of the Prairie Orchestra
Presents...

Poinsettia Pops Concert
Sunday, December 6
3:30 p.m. CST
Colby Community College Auditorium
Andre Salvador Conductor
Admission is by Friends of the Orchestra
Membership or tickets available at the door:
\$3 Children/Senior Citizens
\$7 Adults
Join us for an afternoon of Classical Pieces, Traditional Holiday Music and even an audience Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long!
Enjoy an assortment of cookies with the orchestra members during intermission.

Logan County Manor
Has
Openings For Your Loved Ones
Payment Sources accepted:

- Medicaid
- Private Pay
- LTC Insurance

24 Hour Nursing Care
Clean Environment
PT/OT/STP
Restorative Care
Activities/Social Services
Beauty/Barber Shop
Laundry Services
Transportation Services

Come in for a visit or contact us for more information at 785-672-8109