

Firewood and a Car Tree

Christ Redeemer Church
December 20, 2009
4th Sunday of Advent

Luke 1:39-45
Rev Gary L. Smith
www.christredeemerchurch.com

Grandma and Grandpa always gave me socks and a candy cane for Christmas. Always kind of disappointing. Not toys. One pair of socks and a candy cane.

Now we know it really is that simple. Christmas is as simple as a pair of socks and a candy cane. Now I know how special those socks and candy cane were as gifts.

Daniel flew to Germany this past Monday to spend Christmas with Nora and her family. It is a long 12-hour flight. He sat beside a little boy who was airsick. The little boy could not sleep because he was curled up in the little seat in the plane. Daniel told one flight attendant he would move to another seat and let the little sick boy have two seats to lie down in so he could feel better and sleep. One attendant said there was no room but the other attendant overheard the conversation and arranged to move Daniel.

She moved Daniel to Business Class. It is a \$5,000 seat. Daniel said the seat laid down into a bed. I asked him if he got to sleep. He said, "No, there were too many things to play with all night long. My seat had six motors and a switch for each motor. I had my own TV and movies overhead but I could not reach the screen without sitting up in my bed. I had orange juice in my champagne glass charged to the rim all night, just like Will Smith did in a movie once when he flew first-class. I never slept."

I asked him how the food was. He said they brought him Pigs in a Blanket not long before they landed. He was sleepy and hungry and he bit into the Pig in a Blanket quickly in the dark cabin. It was not a Pig in a Blanket, as he found out when he bit into it.

It was a hot, rolled up wash cloth. He did not know what to do with it. He had never flown in first class before. He watched the guy beside him to see what the washcloth was for. He then dabbed his face with the warm cloth.

Amity, Will and the dogs Cosmo and Charlie arrived last night at 6 pm. I had jokingly told Will and Amity that I wanted for Christmas three things from them...firewood from Alabama, a live Christmas tree from Will's parent's farm near Auburn, and apple jelly made with apples picked on the farm by Amity and made by Paula, Will's mother.

Amity and Will unloaded things from the car, which was packed. They unloaded this live Christmas tree, roots and all, and placed the little live tree by our 9-foot tree. Will calls this little tree a "recession tree." They unloaded this wooden box filled with oak and pine firewood pieces including kindling. Pine cones are mixed in with the wood, plastic wrapping protects the wood, and this bow graces the package. It is beautiful, isn't it? I am so proud of it. And apple jelly from the farm was handed to me. Will said his mom had so

much fun making up the box of firewood for me. I was stunned.

When Daniel was three-years-old he would see Christmas trees strapped to tops of cars and would call them Car Trees. Once I asked him when he was nine-years-old, after I served him waffles one winter morning, if I was the best dad in the world. He said, "Yeah, but we still don't fly first class when we travel."

He flew first-class this week, getting rewarded for his kindness. I got my jelly, firewood, and live Christmas tree, all the way from Alabama. Christmas is a time to make memories and to laugh and to eat and to celebrate. It all makes life good. Christmas has begun. Here is your Candy Cane. Let's watch the video from last week's wonderful What if Jesus Had Been Borned in Texas pageant...a great memory for all of us! No socks for you today but the kids do get candy canes to enjoy during the video! Amen.