

Northwest FOCUS

God at Work Through Northwest Independent Church Extension

DECEMBER 2023



The Wonder Of It All!

Gypsy Smith (1860-1947) was one of the most loved evangelists of all time. When he would tell his life story, crowds packed churches and auditoriums around the world. Rodney Smith was born in a Gypsy tent in Epping Forest, six miles outside of London, England. He received no education and could not read or write. His family made a living selling baskets, tin ware, and clothes pins. At age 16 he trusted Christ, and began to teach himself to read, and soon began preaching. One Sunday afternoon, he even went into a turnip field and began to preach to the turnips!

Gypsy often stated, *"I didn't go to college or seminary, but I've learned at the feet of Jesus. The only way to God is through Jesus, God's gift to the world that first Christmas!"* In 1914 Gypsy came to Denver, Colorado to conduct tent meetings. One night he was asked, *"Gypsy, you travel all over the world, telling people about Jesus. How can you keep going? What's your secret?"* With tears filling his eyes, he answered, *"Sir, I've never lost the wonder of it all!"* That night he titled his message "The Wonder Of It All." And Roy Sprague recalled, *"It was that same night, in that meeting, that my Mother trusted Christ as her Savior!"*

It's this same wonder that keeps the NICE Missionaries ever proclaiming *"that the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."* (John 1:14)

Over the years, these missionaries and their churches have used every opportunity, especially at Christmastime, to declare the wonder of "God with us". **Mark and Rachael Organ** at Vernonia, OR go Christmas caroling throughout the community. **Steve and Celeste DeFord** have helped with a Live Nativity at a local farm just outside of Ekalaka, MT. **Jesús and Maria Cordova** plan special Christmas gatherings at Iglesia Baptista Cristo Vive in Salem, OR. **Rob Morris** at Hobart, WA will conduct a Community Carol Sing, bonfire, cider, and baked treats. **Beau and Kimberly Floyd** have taken part in their community Festival of Trees in Idaho Falls, ID to make known the "wonder of His birth." NICE Board member, **Charlie Olson** has an annual Wreath-Making event for their community in Kendrick, ID. **Larry and Joann Thayer** at Carson, WA, made up over 100 Christmas Shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. In Cambridge, ID, **Roger and Emily Hayden** hold an annual Christmas Open House.



Wishing you a blessed Christmas as you share the wonder of it all!



Pictured: DeFords, Morris, Cordovas, Haydens, Thayers, Floyds, Olson, and Organs

Using every opportunity to declare "the wonder of it all" is true for all the NICE missionaries! Each one is praying that the special occasions their churches have planned during the Christmas season will bring men and women, boys and girls to Jesus, "God's wonderful Gift!"

The Board of NICE, its Leadership, Staff and Missionaries THANK YOU for your role in the on-going ministry of NICE through your prayers, gifts, and letters of encouragement -- all so vital in the planting and establishing of churches. May you, as well, never lose the wonder of it all!

So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. I Corinthians 3:7