

12-25-20

Here's Hope

By Rev. Jerry Rea

### Christmas Lights Still Blinking

Not too many years ago in Hamburg, Germany the story broke of a man found dead in his apartment. As the news reported he'd been dead for five years. His skeletal remains were found sitting in front of the television with Christmas lights blinking nearby. Think of it. He was dead for five years and nobody had missed him.

He was divorced and disabled, and had become obsessively reclusive. So, the neighbors just went about their business. The landlord investigated when he failed to pay the rent. The bank had been automatically paying rent and utility bills. The irony is thick. In the season when we have love and value communicated so largely that someone would just vanish seems impossible.

How easy it is to *not* notice others. How tragic to be close to one another yet not know one another. Could this happen in your community? Would you miss them? Would we notice? We are often very, very disconnected. The virus, our new technologies, and busy life-styles really lend themselves to this type of thing happening. We've learned to communicate with words almost furnished by our cell phones. We've withdrawn because we're afraid to get sick. We've made ourselves self-sufficient to the point of having no friends. At Christmas time, we're harassed and obsessed with the season and all the events so much that we miss what's most important.

In the midst of enjoying *your* Christmas don't forget to help others enjoy theirs. Christmas is about God's love for us. Christmas is about love. It is His love given to us in the form of His Son, Jesus that makes Christmas what it is.

His love was intended to be received, but not just received. It was always intended to be passed on. There is joy in receiving God's love, and there is the same joy in passing it on. Rudolf and his message pale in significance to this love. Frosty doesn't mean a thing without the reality of Jesus. Santa is just a grizzled old man in a red suit by comparison. This is the real Christmas, not the blinking lights.

Merry Christmas

Bro Jerry