



November/December Newsletter

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Traditions Change and Christ is Born

A friend of mine recently shared his sadness that his physical condition would not permit him to decorate the house for Christmas the way he and his wife usually do. It was social media so what followed were a number of people weighing in on what they could do to keep business as usual.

I wrote to him and told him about our Christmases here. I live between two places-- Totota where I teach and Monrovia where my husband lives and works. Because of that, we have not had a regular practice of decorating for Christmas the way we used to do it. Some Christmases we have traveled some we have spent in a hotel room; some we have spent delivering rice and oil to people who had a great need; often I was rushing from Totota to get to be at my congregation in Monrovia. I told my friend, despite all those changes, Christ still comes every year! JOY TO THE WORLD!

This year we are in one place for Christmas. Tradition overtook my mind and I went to the store to check on fake pine trees (yes, you can get those in Monrovia.) I checked the prices, gasped a bit, and quickly came to the realization that we have small palm trees all around our house. We dug one up, put it in sand in bucket, wrapped Liberian cloth around it, and decorated it with Hardanger embroidered snowflakes, Scandinavian straw ornaments, and red bell garland bought long ago in Chicago. Our Christmas ornaments? Hung on braided cords looped across our book cases.

And we sang, "Joy to the World!" and the Christ Child came.

May the blessings of the birth of Jesus Christ fill your hearts and lives in this New Year--2023!