

From this Corner  
**CHRISTMAS CONNECTION**  
Larry Baird

Christmas cards seem to be holding their own among seasonal traditions. This is surprising with the ever-increasing cost of postage. They flood in from friends of Christmas past and present. The ones I especially appreciate are from friends of Christmas past. These would be high school and college friends, and former parishioners. Ironically, they are frequently from those with whom I took an oath proclaiming that this would never happen. Like it or not, however, it has come to this ... a card in the mail. The better ones have a handwritten line, some two. I could go on about the sins of these friends and how they broke the intimate bonds of authentic friendship. Doing so, however, would make me a hypocrite because in most cases I have done nothing myself to maintain the closeness. Somehow, over the years it just happened. New friends were made. Distances both in miles and experience grew.

Still we send the cards. I sense the reason is that we know some things from which we have been separated are worth reconnecting if even is a small way. These people remain a part of us, even if they are not part of our present. The card becomes an acknowledgement that though time has brought separation, the time when we were closer was very important.

I cannot help but wonder if this desire to reconnect has something to do with our yearning for reconnecting with God. Christmas, of course, is an occasion when Christians remember an important theological truth. That truth is that we have been separated from God and the fullness of life by the consequences of sin. The price of this sin is the death of the relationship between God and humanity. God, however, in grace reaches out to restore the relationship. "...I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a

manger.” (Luke 2: 10-12) That Christmas message is a message of God’s desire to reconnect.

It is the time of the year for gathering near to those who are important to us. It is a time to connect and reconnect. A party. A phone call. A card. Perhaps they are at some deeper level symbols of that greater need to connect with God. Therefore, we will send cards, and we will gather again for Christmas services to receive the message God still wants to connect. Praise the Lord! Merry Christmas.