

My Dancing Day

Luke 2:1-20

by the Rev. Dr. E. Scott Jones
First Central Congregational UCC
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Last week we watched *A Charlie Brown Christmas* with Sebastian for the first time. He most enjoyed the parts where the kids are dancing awkwardly during the pageant rehearsal.

I resonated with the opening scene. Charlie and Linus are decked out in their winter garb, standing amidst the snow and holiday decorations when Charlie says,

I think there must be something wrong with me. I just don't understand Christmas, I guess. I might be getting presents and sending Christmas cards and decorating trees and all that, but I'm still not happy. I don't feel the way I'm supposed to feel.

Then Linus, truly one of the most genuinely good people ever to appear on television, responds:

Charlie Brown, you are the only person I know who can take a wonderful season like Christmas and turn it into a problem. Maybe Lucy is right. Of all of the Charlie Browns in the world, you are the Charlie Brownest.

The script then reads, "Charlie walks through the snow, thoughtfully. Goes to his mailbox, pokes head inside. Looks disappointed because it is empty." Charlie then says, sadly:

Rats! Nobody sent me a Christmas card today. I know nobody likes me. Why do we have to have a holiday season to emphasize it?

I know I'm not the only person who has felt a little like Charlie Brown this year. Many friends and family and church members have expressed that this year they aren't quite in the holiday spirit. Every year there are some people for whom this is true, which is one reason the Charlie Brown special is such a classic.

You know how the rest of the story goes. Lucy gets Charlie involved as the director of the Christmas pageant where all the kids prefer dancing to rehearsing. Charlie then goes to pick out a Christmas tree and comes back with a puny, frail thing. All the kids laugh at and mock him. Then good Linus says he knows what Christmas is all about and he tells the Christmas story, reciting most of Luke 2. I cry every time. Then the kids go and find Charlie and decorate the puny Christmas tree, and everything ends with joy and friendship.

Here's the thing. Advent is over. The time of waiting and preparation when we look for signs of light in the darkness. It's Christmas. It's time to celebrate. You can go back to worrying and grieving next week, there's plenty of time for that. But right now, tonight, and tomorrow, is a festival, a party, a time for dancing.

Maybe you're cynical about the happy ending? Maybe you don't dance? Maybe you're a scrooge? Bah humbug. Maybe you think this story is only a fairy tale?

What's wrong with fairy tales, I ask?

You need to celebrate. All of us need to celebrate. We need some fantasy and festivity. So, please, do that. Get in your pjs, put your favorite Christmas carols on, and dance awkwardly in the living room. Laugh at yourself for looking foolish. Laugh at each other. Trust me, it will do you good.

Have a Merry Christmas.