



The Messenger

Messenger Project Newsletter

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Messenger Notes



Joie Verona added vocals at the Youth Camp gig.

Joie Verona joined **Lionel De Leon** with vocals at a Juvenile Detention Camp in Castaic. Lionel and Joie are engaged to be married on Valentine's Day in 2004. They will also be performing a 45 minute set of **Messenger** songs at the Eastgate Café in Bellflower on New Years Eve, starting at 7:00 p.m. For more information, please call (562) 866-7989.



Avery Burdette added keyboards to our new CD.

Avery Burdette played some tasty keyboard tracks on a **Raymond Genovese** original that will be on our upcoming CD. Raymond is on fire from on high and determined to push **Messenger** to the next level!

MP3.com has closed. We are looking for another website to host our music online.

Hanukkah and Christmas

The connection between Passover and Easter is well known to most Christians. The "lamb without defect" that was killed on the Jewish Passover represents the Christian "Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." I suspect that every detail of the Passover can be applied to the Crucifixion. I believe that God established the Passover not only to commemorate the Exodus of Jews from Egypt, but also to commemorate Jesus' death on the cross.

It made me wonder if there is a Jewish religious holiday that commemorates Jesus' birth. Hanukkah is the Jewish observance closest to Christmas, so I decided to investigate its history and possible connection to Christmas. The first common link I noticed was that they both are held on the 25th day of their respective months. Christmas is observed on December 25th and Hanukkah begins on the 25th of Kislev. Secondly, the observance was established before the birth of Christ. Hanukkah commemorates the dedication of the Temple and is an eight-day celebration because the oil that was only enough to burn for one day miraculously lasted eight days. In Luke 2:21 we are told that Jesus was brought to Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord on the eighth day after his birth, because of the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord." Jesus called his body a Temple and it was dedicated to the Lord. On the eighth day, Jesus was circumcised and shed blood. It makes sense to me that God would commemorate the birth of his Son with an eight-day Jewish religious holiday like Hanukkah.

The Bible doesn't tell us when Jesus was born. It could have easily mentioned that he was born on a Jewish holiday if it were important for us to know. Jesus' actual birthday is pure speculation on my part and not to be taken as anything more.

Christianity in America

In April's newsletter, I listed some Christian facts and dates from America's early history (1631-1752). This list continues to explore our religious history.

1769 Steady hold of **religious tradition** in America's scientific community was reflected in a conclusion accepted at Harvard that reptiles in America were descendants of Noah's creatures.

1782 The growth of **rationalism** in America was reflected in the fact that Princeton College could claim only two church members in its student body.

1833 Massachusetts was the last state to **disestablish its church**. From this date on, legal separation of church and state was complete in America.

1851 The first American charter of the **Young Men's Christian Association** (YMCA) was organized in Boston.

1858 A **Religious Revival** swept across the country, beginning in New York and Philadelphia. Conversions to various churches reached unprecedented numbers, accompanied with daily prayer meetings in every major city.

1860 **Charles Darwin's** *Origin of the Species* appeared in America.

1925 The Florida House of Representatives passed a bill that required **daily Bible readings** in all public schools. In Tennessee, **John T. Scopes** was arrested and convicted for teaching the theory of evolution.

Today, the theory of evolution is taught in place of Creationism. Although the Bible is losing its stature in American culture, it remains fixed in American history. I will continue in another issue of our newsletter.