



Wisconsin Gossellers

January 2019 Newsletter

Christmas Truce of 1914

This is one of my favorite stories for a few reasons. #1 because it's true. #2 because it shows the kindness and love that people can have for each other despite any differences. And #3 because it is a great story of keeping the Christmas spirit alive. I found a good version of the story on the History Channel website and have shared it in this month's newsletter. Alicia Gardner

During World War I, on and around Christmas Day 1914, the sounds of rifles firing and shells exploding faded in a number of places along the Western Front in favor of holiday celebrations in the trenches and gestures of goodwill between enemies.

Did you know? On December 7, 1914, Pope Benedict XV suggested a temporary hiatus of the war for the celebration of Christmas. The warring countries refused to create any official cease-fire, but on Christmas the soldiers in the trenches declared their own unofficial truce.

Starting on Christmas Eve, many German and British troops sang Christmas carols to each other across the lines, and at certain points the Allied soldiers even heard brass bands joining the Germans in their joyous singing.

At the first light of dawn on Christmas Day, some German soldiers emerged from their trenches and approached the Allied lines across no-man's-land, calling out "Merry Christmas" in their enemies' native tongues. At first, the Allied soldiers feared it was a trick, but seeing the Germans unarmed they climbed out of their trenches and shook hands with the enemy soldiers. The men exchanged presents of cigarettes and plum puddings and sang carols and songs. There was even a documented case of soldiers from opposing sides playing a good-natured game of soccer.

Some soldiers used this short-lived ceasefire for a more somber task: the retrieval of the bodies of fellow combatants who had fallen within the no-man's land between the lines.

The so-called Christmas Truce of 1914 came only five months after the outbreak of war in Europe and was one of the last examples of the outdated notion of chivalry between enemies in warfare. It was never repeated—future attempts at holiday ceasefires were quashed by officers' threats of disciplinary action—but it served as heartening proof, however brief, that beneath the brutal clash of weapons, the soldiers' essential humanity endured.

During World War I, the soldiers on the Western Front did not expect to celebrate on the battlefield, but even a world war could not destroy the Christmas spirit.

Citation for story:

Author: History.com editors

<https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/christmas-truce-of-1914>



Mission Statement: To bridge cultural divides and touch souls through the transformative power of gospel music

Vision Statement: A world where God's love triumphs over that which divides us.



<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Lunch by</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Sat Feb 16th *3rd saturday	10am-3pm	Olivet UCC 313 W Prairie St, Columbus, WI 53925	Men	Rehearsal
Sat Mar 9th	10am-2:30pm Rehearsal 3pm- Concert	Congregational UCC 1511 Nicolet Blvd Neenah, WI 54956	Sopranos	Rehearsal and Concert
Sat Apr 13	10am-3pm	Olivet UCC 313 W Prairie St, Columbus, WI 53925	Altos	Rehearsal
Sat May 11	10am-3pm	?	men	Rehearsal
Sat Jun 9	10am-3pm	?	?	Rehearsal
Sun Jun 23	?	?	?	?
June 24-July 12, 2019	Details coming	Germany	N/A	Details coming

? = still tentative and could change. Stay tuned!

*There's NO June 2019 Annual Mtg @ Green Lake because General Synod is in Milwaukee June 21-25.

Vision and Dreams

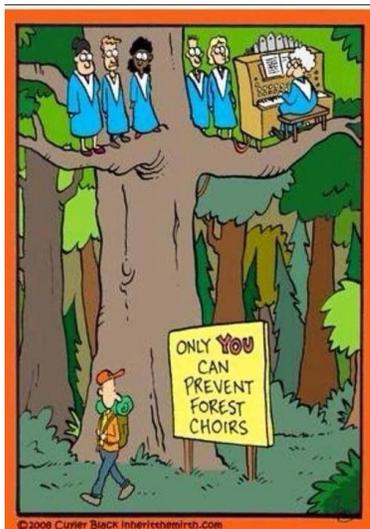
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