

**Surprise Edition (We'd Said We Wouldn't Publish This Week): Reflections of Christmas**



Photo by Darin Oswald, published in The Idaho Statesman newspaper on December 24, taken during Epworth's caroling in the neighborhood on December 23. Mercedes Blackburn, 9, left, joined 40 Christmas carolers. "It's fun," she said. A children's program followed, and hot chocolate and cinnamon rolls followed that. About 50 persons attended altogether.



Epworth Chapel on the Green's chancel, ready for the Christmas Eve candle-light service of Word & Table. This is the only service in the entire year when the chancel is decorated and lit in just this way.

**Advent 4 Sermon: God Is Not Dependent on Our Belief**

Ahaz was not ready to believe Isaiah's message from God, the Rev. Dr. Brook Thelander said, "and it's not enough that he won't believe; he also clothes his belief in pious, spiritual language. But guess what: God is not dependent upon our belief or unbelief. God sends the sign of promise anyway. And in so doing, God makes clear his resolve to come to us and to be with us *despite our unbelief!*"

"On this fourth Sunday of Advent, God's promised Son is

drawing near to us. . . . But wonder of wonders, even if you say 'no' to it all today, God's mind is made up. God is coming anyway. God is resolved to be 'with us,' even in our unbelief."

**Christmas Eve Sermon: "If only I were a goose, I could save them."**

Per Paul Harvey: The farmer who scoffed that God would come to earth as a man nevertheless believed, on a Christmas Eve, when after his own efforts failed he was able to use his domestic goose to lead wild geese, lost in a snowstorm, to safety in his barn.

**Editor:** Box 972, Boise, ID 83701. 208-336-3951, harbingermail@aol.com

**Pastor:** The Rev. Dr. Brook Thelander, epworthrector@msn.com

**On the Web:** [www.epworthchapelonthegreen.org](http://www.epworthchapelonthegreen.org)



Cantors Dorothy Millard and Carollen Ryan are accompanied by harpist Julia Robison as they sing *Jesu Bambino* during the Christmas Eve service.