

Our Jubilee Year “Ponderings From the Past”

by Joan VanPatten

For the month of December I thought it would be interesting to reflect on the Christmas Bazaars held years ago at church. For many years the WSCS (Women’s Society of Christian Service) held Christmas Bazaars in late November or early December. They were known by several different names. One year it was called the “Silver Bells Tea and Bazaar;” other years it was “Christmas by Candlelight Bazaar and Silver Tea,” “The Mistletoe and Holly Bazaar” and “Christmas Around the World Bazaar.” There was a luncheon and a late afternoon or early evening tea. Some of the booths sold aprons, others sold baked goods, candy, grab bags & handicrafts; there was a mitten tree and knitted articles and Christmas decorations. One year Garden Gate Florist held a demonstration for those attending entitled, “How to make your own Christmas decorations.” Each of the Circles manned a booth. Other booths that appeared at the annual Bazaar were a 25-cent children’s grab bag, ceramics, stationery, Tupperware, a new unused white elephant booth, yarn booth and even a candle booth. One year Mrs. Santa and two of Santa’s elves treated us to a visit. Mrs. Santa had little gifts for all the small children, which she kept hidden in the many pockets of her apron. Craft workshops began in the spring and were held most weeks preceding the Bazaar.

The Bazaar’s proceeds were used to help the church and for missions supported by the WSCS. The last Bazaar was held in 1981. *Virginia Tracey*, a very active member of the WSCS, said the Bazaars ended because too many groups in the area were holding similar events and there was just too much competition. The Bazaar was held just a couple of months after the Fair and very often it was the same women taking part in both activities and it just got to be too much work. Ginny remembers all the craft workshops and says that sometimes the WSCS held meetings all day long. There would be a business meeting in the morning, then lunch followed by crafts. *Mildred Keating* is remembered for all the craft classes she held. There were also special decorations provided by *Audrey Kuhn* and wonderful dolls handmade by *Martha Lane*.

Thank you, Virginia Tracey, for your information about the past bazaars and for all you do for the church and its members.