

## The Great Christmas Tree Sale

Sometime after Thanksgiving in 1960 the MYF was presented with an opportunity to sell Christmas trees as a fund raiser. I believe that the father of one of the high school seniors knew someone who knew someone who was bringing in a truckload of trees. Needless to say, there were not too many days to plan and advertise for this event, but we were young and enthusiastic, so we decided to do it. Back in those days, thanks to the baby boom and significantly different demographics, the MYF had an active core of over 30, with probably another 25 or so on the fringe. Bruce Lister and a few other dedicated adults served as advisors, but the officers pretty much ran the show. Schedules were put together to provide for selling teams and I think we even needed to provide overnight watchmen. There must have been over 250 trees delivered to the rear parking lot. They turned out to be Scotch Pines, which was not a common variety, to say the least. A large sign was made to let the people driving by on Merrick Road know that trees were being sold, but there really was no visibility for the general public. I remember a snowy evening spent in what was then the Youth Room up on the second floor with a group of about six of us making phone calls to every member of the Church to tell them that we were selling trees. We also prayed very hard that the snow would be enough to cancel school the next day so that we could have a free day to "get organized." The ten days prior to Christmas turned out to be very cold, freezing actually, with about three inches of snow on the ground. It seemed like I spent the entire week either huddled in Whyman Hall to get warm or shivering in the cold selling trees. Almost every member of the church wound up with a Scotch Pine that year, but on Christmas Eve we still had an awful lot of unsold inventory. I think the deal we had made was that we only had to pay for the trees we sold, so the MYF didn't make a lot of money, but the supplier took a pretty big hit. The unsold trees all got carted down to the beach to help form dunes the day after Christmas. Needless to say, the MYF never sold Christmas trees again!

Pete O'Neill