

Underoos!
Bob Stillerman
Christmas Eve, 12/24/2022



You may find it silly, but I can't think about Christmas without thinking about Superman. And I can't think about Christmas and Superman without thinking about Underoos!!!

Do y'all know what Underoos are?!? In 1977, someone got the bright idea to make Superhero-themed t-shirts and underpants. Fruit of Loom loved it, and the next thing you know, millions upon millions of little boys and little girls were clad in undergarments that resembled the outfits of Superman, Super Girl, Wonder Woman, Bat Man, and Captain America. For more than a decade, Underoos were the only acceptable form of big boy and big girl pants!!!

My twin brother Harry and I refused to go to kindergarten without our Underoos – You may have thought it was the Stillerman twins at Buies Creek Elementary School, but in actuality, it was Batman and Superman hidden behind glasses and blue jeans and hushpuppies. When we wore our Underoos, we had no doubt that justice would prevail, that good really would overcome evil, that the spectacular, the unimaginable, the unbelievable, that the incredible really could come out of ordinary people. When we wore our Underoos, no bully, no mean teacher, no frowny-faced note stapled to our shirts to take home to our parents, not even arithmetic, could shake us from believing in a world that was good. To wear Underoos was to live with hope!!!

How fitting, then, that one of the Stillerman Family Christmas Eve traditions was for all of the Stillerman boys to receive a brand new pair of Underoos. For Christmas Eve is the night when expectant hope turns to realized joy – a night when it finally seems possible for the world to live into its potential, a night when the ordinary is made extraordinary.

Some years ago, the world was introduced to a very super person, but I'm not sure he's what we expected. He was not made of steel. He did not leap tall buildings in a single bound, and he did not outrun speeding bullets and locomotives.

He came as a child, made of flesh and bones. He was born the son of Jewish peasants in a forgotten corner of the world. And he came into the world as a stranger, welcomed by poor shepherds in a makeshift guestroom. And though he

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a spiritually
progressive
community
of faith

was made to be a stranger everywhere he went, he lived with an unparalleled sense of hospitality.

Jesus was a table – shepherds, saints, sinners, Samaritans, Sadducees, sisters and brothers of all shapes and sizes gathered round his presence. He invited them into God’s banquet. He told them that God lives and dwells among us. He told them that all of us matter, that we are God’s children. He told us that God has big plans for each of us. He told us that no matter who we are or what we are or where we are, God loves us. He told us that a new day was coming – liberty to the captives, freedom for the oppressed, sight for the blind...God’s Day!!!

Tonight friends, I am filled with hope. How much hope do I have? I have the hope of a little child!!! And so do my friends!

Jonathan – how much hope you got? (reveals t-shirt).
Hilary – how much hope you got? (reveals headband).
Tillie – how much hope you got? (reveals mask).
Kathryn – how much hope you got? (reveals wristbands).
Bob reveals t-shirt.

“An why do we live with hope?” you ask.

Jonathan: Because we know God’s peace.
Hilary: Because we know God’s joy.
Tillie: Because we know God’s love.
Kathryn: Because we live in a community of God’s faithful people.

Bob: Sardis Baptist Church, the Lord is come! God is with us! May we receive the hope, peace, joy, and love that God offers each one of us, and work to help bring about God’s newness in the year ahead. Amen!