

Christmas memories: Bloomington in 1884

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Even though Bloomington merchants didn't tout holiday buying until mid-December, Christmas hadn't slipped the minds of others. The Dec. 20 *Telephone* gave a run-down of the week's activities.

Santa Claus was expected to be busy. He was scheduled to put in an appearance at the African Methodist Church, where members were to enjoy addresses, singing and literary exercises. Another stop at the Christian Church on Christmas Eve.

First Methodist had dropped Santa from their holiday program in favor of a cantata and literary entertainment and "other performances." The children were not to be neglected: "Immediately after this, the chil-

dren will be invited to the basement and amply cared for in Christmas style."

At the Presbyterian School, children were to be treated to a concert, "short selection and different interesting things." Their Christmas Eve treat also awaited them in the church basement.

A non-church holiday activity was the Dec. 24 concert of the Colored Brass Band at the Colored Odd Fellows Hall on the northwest corner of the square. They promised those who came, "good music, plenty to eat and a general good time."

Apparently it was the custom of the time to charge 10 cents to all who participated in Sunday school Christmas parties. All but the Presbyterians tactfully included the charge in the information given to the *Telephone*.