

WEEKLY WORD



A Publication of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Urbandale, Iowa

December 17, 2006

Third Sunday in Advent

The Magi Looked Upward

by Karen Kennedy, staff

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." Matthew 2:1-2

For such a short scriptural entrance into the Christmas story, these Magi have caused centuries of conjectures as scholars have debated the details of their lives. Tradition tells us these three men traveled on camels across the desert, silhouetted against the navy-blue sky wearing large decorative hats. Many scholars suggest these wise men were from a priestly order that paid particular attention to the stars and were knowledgeable in the Old Testament scriptures, such as Numbers 24:17:

"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the sons of Sheth."

Whatever the exact details of the Magi's lives, we do know that they looked upward, which spurred them to travel to a distant land and worship an unknown child.

"Where are you going?"

"Not sure, just saw a star and have a strong inkling that we better follow it. We may regret it if we don't."

"How long will you be gone?"

"Not sure."

"Need a map?"

"No, we are only looking upward, that will lead us to where we need to go."

Sounds like an illogical, not-well-thought-out plan. Yet doesn't the journey of faith have those characteristics? Aren't we supposed to look upward, look unto something larger than ourselves and walk accordingly? After all, men and women in the scriptures walked into an unknown future, holding onto the compass of God's light. It only took a promise, a visible sign like a burning bush, an angel, or God speaking to them directly and they were on their way. The list is long. For example, Abraham packed up his belongings and left Ur; Peter left his fishing business and followed Jesus; and Mary took a complete risk by responding with, "May it be to me as you have said." And the Magi saw a star, left normalcy and journeyed toward their real treasures, which were seen in the heavens.

As you know, the story gets better. After a short detour with King Herod, the Magi continued to follow the star until they reached their final destination: Jesus Christ. They were overjoyed, bowed down, worshiped him and presented him with gifts.

The Magi's original hope was fulfilled in finding Christ. Certainly this encounter was forever etched into their minds and hearts.

"How was your trip?"

"Almost unbelievable; our eyes actually saw the Messiah."

"How did you get front-row seats?"

"I am not sure; we just followed the light."

We too have the awesome privilege of looking upward from the darkness of our night or circumstances to find our Savior, who is the light and hope in this world.

Enjoy the light of this Christmas season.

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Children's Christmas Programs, Sunday, Dec. 17

"A Shepherd's Christmas." Join our preschool children at the 9 a.m. worship service.

"A Piece of Christmas." Join our elementary-school children at the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Uganda Updates

At the end of December, a team from Gloria Dei will be traveling to Uganda to lead a worship conference. Pastor Burcham, Steve Kohtz, Chris James, Stan Greenwood, Jennifer Simpson, Travis Smith and Hilton and Denise Galabuzi



Kampala, Uganda

will travel approximately 26 hours to Kampala, the capital of Uganda, which is approximately 85 percent more populated than Des Moines. Kampala, built on seven hills, has all modern necessities (minus the good coffee places) of Des Moines.

The team will stay in several houses within the city as they prepare for the three-day worship conference starting Wednesday, Jan.

3, for 34 Ugandan congregations.

“Our goal is to assist the Lutheran congregations to develop a blended format for worship, so that they can reach their neighbors and friends with the relevant and contemporary message of Jesus Christ,” said Steve Kohtz, Director of Worship Ministry.

On Friday, Pastor Burcham, Senior Pastor, will be teaching the lay leaders and the two pastors on how to construct messages that relate to their culture.

“I want to teach tools and techniques of sermon building that will translate into their culture, so that ultimately lives are changed,” said Pastor Burcham. “Although the gospel message remains the same, the applications need to be relevant to their culture and not ours. It needs to be practical with real-life applications.”

On Saturday, the team has been invited to a Ugandan wedding and on Sunday they will travel across the equator to Jinga, a small city on the mouth of the Nile River where they will attend a church service at the Nakabonga Congregation.

Please keep the team, the conference and the congregations in your prayers.



Members of the Nakabonga congregation.

Gloria Dei
8301 Aurora Ave.
Urbandale, IA 50322
515-276-1700



www.gloriadeionline.com

Sunday Schedule

Sunday Worship
7:45, 9, 10 and 10:30 a.m.
Staffed Nursery from 8 a.m.-noon
Educational Times at 9:20 & 10:20 a.m.

Saturday Schedule

Saturday Worship at 5:30 p.m.
Grace Place at 5:50 p.m.
Staffed Nursery from 5:15 p.m.

Staff e-mail:

Rev. Ronald Burcham
Senior Pastor
rburcham@gloriadeionline.com

Rev. Kendall Meyer
Director of Adult Ministry
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Rev. Tim Phillips
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Mr. Chris Onsrud
Director of Media Ministry
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Mrs. Laura Rath
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Mr. Brandon Simpson
Facility Manager
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Mrs. Terry Steinke
Director of Early Childhood Ministry and Tiny Treasures Preschool
terry@gloriadeionline.com

Mr. Bill Wishman
Interim Business Manager
bill@gloriadeionline.com

Governing Board
276-1700

Offerings

In order to receive giving credit for 2006, your offering must be received by Sunday, Dec. 31, or postmarked by Saturday, Dec. 30, 2006. All items postmarked after Dec. 30 or received after Dec. 31 will be credited to 2007, even if the date is written for 2006.

In addition, if you are anticipating making stock contributions in the first part of 2007, you may want to consider accelerating them to 2006, so that your 2006 tax return will reflect the deductions or tax savings.

Your gifts to support our ministry are always appreciated. Thank you for your support.

Giving Envelopes: Pick Them Up Today

Please pick up your giving envelopes today in the narthex. **Please note:** The 2007 envelopes have a different numbering system than last year's; therefore, destroy all your old envelopes. If you have any questions, contact Bill Wishman, business manager, at 276-1700.

Worship Service Ministry Partners

We are thankful for our helpers today who assist in providing a great place to worship.

Elders:	7:45 a.m.	Organist:
Terry Woolman	Dennis Dean	Shirley Roberts
David Graaf	Mike Collins	Acolytes:
Vic Kesse	Joe Gilg	Alex Meyer
Ushers:	Kory Meyeraan	Cole Scavo
Northwind	Dan Timmons	Kofi Manteaw
Randy Bosworth	9:00 a.m.	
Brad Gerke	Jeff Monson	
Mike Mahler	Don Pevestorf	

God's People in Prayer

Blue prayer request cards are beneath the pews. Please indicate your prayer request and place the card in the offering plate. We have both e-mail and phone prayer chains available. Call Pastor Phillips in the church office, 276-1700, or Diane Young between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 993-3870 or Joan Kickbush after 5 p.m. at 987-4864 with your request.

Thanksgivings

- For our nation and the freedom we enjoy
- For our families

Prayers

- For Bruce Wardenburg, who will be having cancer surgery Monday
- For Dwight and Marilyn Carlson's granddaughter, Kiley, who will be having surgery on Wednesday
- For the health of Dawson Peterson
- For the health of Chuck and Shirley Hoveland
- For the grieving family of Armin Thielking
- For Ismael Serfino, father of Daff Miller, who is very ill
- For Howard Ingersoll, who is battling cancer
- For our children's Christmas programs
- For our Christmas services
- For those who have lost loved ones this year
- For all who visit Gloria Dei to be strengthened in their faith

Prayer Ministry Team

If you are interested in joining the prayer ministry team, please e-mail tphillips@gloriadeionline.com with your name, e-mail address and phone number.

Upcoming Classes

If you are interested in any of the following classes, please sign up at the Information Center or e-mail Pastor Phillips at tphillips@gloriadeionline.com.

2007 Weddings

Are you planning to be married at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in 2007? A pre-marriage class will meet in rooms 130/132 on Tuesday nights from 6:30-8 p.m. beginning January 16. This class is required and will meet for six weeks. The cost per couple is \$20.

Discovery 101

Our four-week new member class for people wanting to join Gloria Dei from a non-Lutheran background will be offered Wednesday nights in rooms 127/129 from 6:30-8 p.m. starting January 10.

DivorceCare

Our support group ministry will hold a class for those who have gone through the pain of divorce on Tuesday nights in the Youth Center from 6:30-8 p.m. beginning January 9. The ministry is offered for a suggested donation of \$18.

GriefShare

Our grief support ministry will begin its winter session on Thursday nights in the Youth Center from 6:30-8 p.m. beginning January 4. This ministry is offered for a suggested donation of \$18. Invite your friends, neighbors and co-workers to this comforting ministry.

Small-group Community

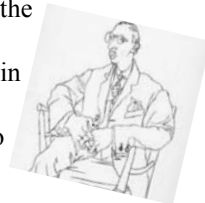
By Pastor Kendall Meyer, Director of Adult Ministry

Are you feeling lonely? Maybe when you come to church you are feeling disconnected because you don't know anyone. In large churches, countless faithful Christians find the church an incredibly lonely place. I don't want that to happen to you. It is easy to think to yourself, "I don't have the time to make small-group connections." Since time is a precious commodity, which seems to be getting scarcer and scarcer, the question moves from, "do I have time for this?" to "do I want to invest time in this?"

Becoming part of a small-group community allows us to make significant relationships with others at Gloria Dei. These relationships not only give support, encouragement, and sense of connectedness that we all desire, but also provides a wonderful atmosphere to grow in us relationship with Jesus. Is that a worthy investment of your time? I say YES! Start making an investment today by stopping by the small-group connections table to sign up and be placed into the small-group community.

Starbucks and Stravinsky

Join us as we share the sounds, aromas and tastes of the season in the Gathering Place today! All profits go to the upcoming Uganda trip.



Santa Stats



Just in case you are doubting the Santa Claus myth:

- 78 people named S. Claus and one Kriss Kringle live in the U.S.
- Santa's sleigh loaded with one Beanie Baby for every kid on earth would weigh 333,333 tons.
- 214,206 reindeer could pull this 333,333-ton sled. Of course, Rudolph would make it go airborne.
- Average wage of a mall Santa: \$11 an hour. If he has a real beard, the price goes to \$20.
- To deliver his gifts in one night, Santa would have to make 822.6 visits per second, sleighing at 3,000 times the speed of sound. At that speed, Santa and his reindeer would burst into flames instantaneously.



Meeting Dates & Times

Mary-Esther Circle

Mary-Esther Circle will meet Thursday, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. at the home of Hazel Schroedel, 5212 Cody Drive, West Des Moines.

Miriam Circle

Miriam Circle will meet on Saturday, Jan. 20 at 10 a.m. at Holmes Oldsmobile (Hickman & I-35) to help assemble food packets for the African Mission Project. At noon, the group will go to the Machine Shed restaurant.

Recycled Christmas Cards

The Honduras Mission team needs recycled fronts of religious Christmas cards for their mission trip to Honduras. Please save your cards and put them in the “donation-card” box located in the narthex in January. Thank you for your assistance!

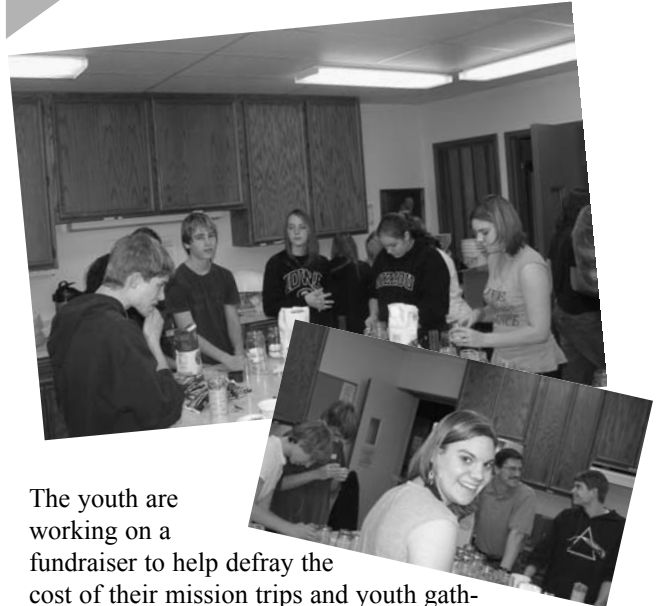
Honduras Mission Trip

We have open spots for our Honduras mission trip June 23-30. If you are interested, please contact Bill Clark at bill.clark@equitrust.com or Pastor Tim at 278-5544, ext. 204. We need a response by Jan. 24, 2007.

Sermons Available

The current weekend sermon on CDs can be picked up in the Toolshope immediately following the 7:45 a.m. worship service on Sundays.

Gloria Dei Youth Fundraiser



The youth are working on a fundraiser to help defray the cost of their mission trips and youth gatherings. Sales will take place during the worship services on December 16-17. The items being sold are:

- Brownie in a jar, \$8
- Cupcake in a cup, \$5
- Hot cocoa mix (pint), \$5

Keep these items in mind for Christmas gifts for day-care providers, teachers, co-workers, secret Santas, neighbors, friends, and more.

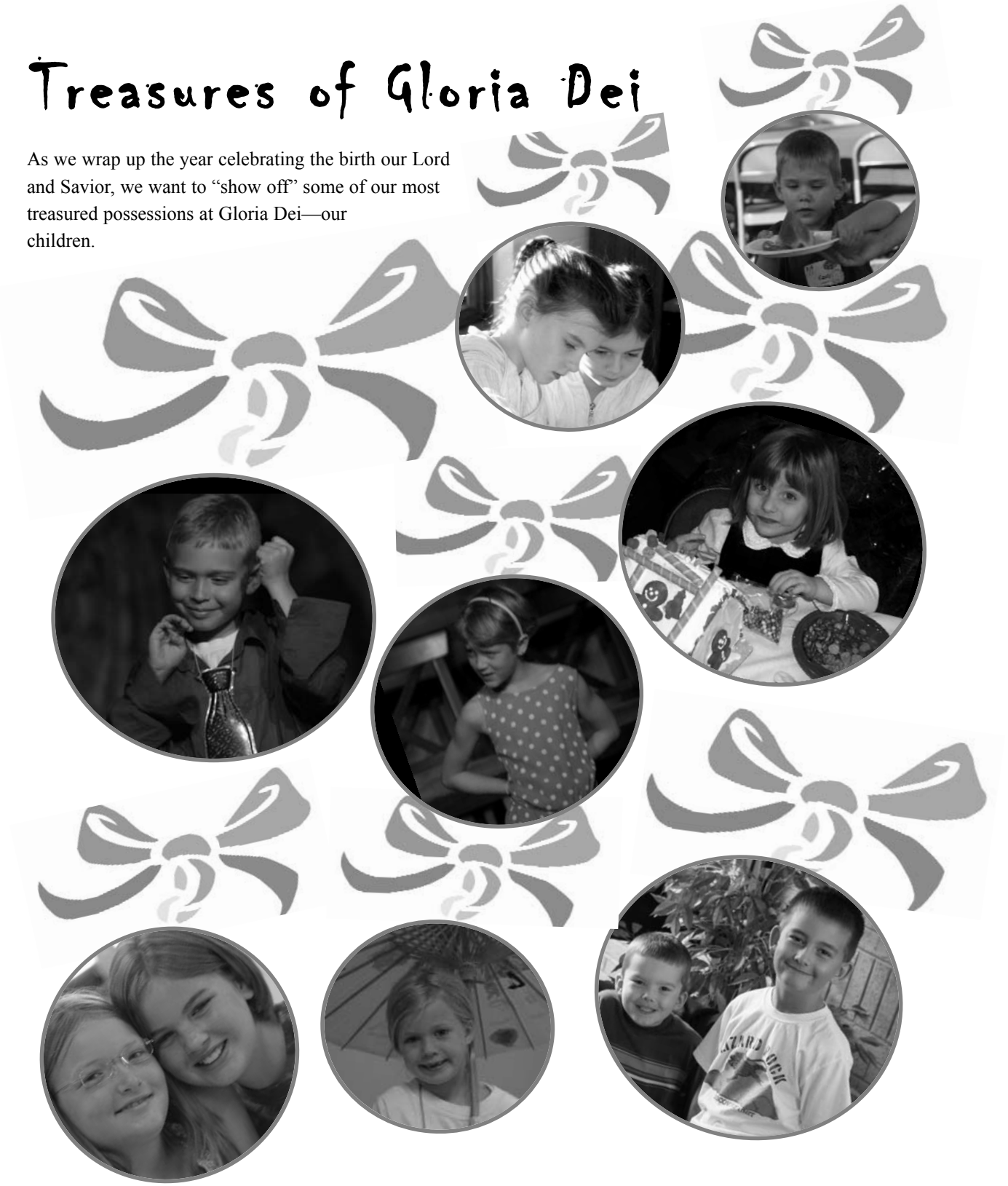
RUSH

A retreat for young adults at Camp Okoboji

Memorial Lutheran Church and Student Center, Ames, will sponsor a retreat for young adults Dec. 30-Jan. 1 at Camp Okoboji. High school seniors are invited to join with college-age adults for two-and-a-half days of teaching, fellowship and fun. RUSH is an acronym for Resolve, Unite, Share, Heal. The cost is \$62. For more information or to register, go to: www.rushwithchrist.org.

Treasures of Gloria Dei

As we wrap up the year celebrating the birth our Lord and Savior, we want to “show off” some of our most treasured possessions at Gloria Dei—our children.



New Life Ministry Action Team

If you love babies and would like to use that gift as a ministry partner, please join the New Life Ministry Action Team. This team will make initial contact with newborns and their families starting in January. We need lots of specialty workers on this team for the following activities:

- Sewing baby bags to give to families on a visit.
- Cooking a simple meal to give to a family on a visit.
- Visiting a family with a newborn.
- Helping a family with extra needs, such as cleaning, laundry, errands, etc.

If you are interested in this nurturing ministry, please contact Terry at 278-5544, ext. 305.



Wednesday's Meal



December 20

- Spaghetti and meat sauce
- Garlic Toast
- Fruit

The cost per meal is \$2.50; children ages three and under eat free.



5 p.m.

Tiny Treasures Updates

Tiny Treasures has the following positions available in January.

Assistant Teacher:

Half time (17 ½ hours per week) assistant teacher, Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. for a three-year-old class and a four-five-year-old class. Experience and training in young child development is preferred; job begins on January 3, 2007.

Playgroup Teachers:

Three part-time (3 hours per week) positions working with our playgroup program for two and three-year-olds (children must be three by September 2007 and toilet-trained). This program runs on Fridays from 9:15-11:15 a.m. in February through May. Teachers must be nurturing and have experience with young children.

If you are interested or know of someone who is interested, please contact Terry at 278-5544, ext. 305.

Playgroup

Tiny Treasures will hold a Friday morning playgroup for children ages 2 1/2 to 3 1/2.

- February-May 2007
- 9:15-11:15 a.m.
- \$40 a month

For more information, pick up a brochure at the Information Center.



Christmas Plans

Faith Alive: Get Ready to Visit Bethlehem

Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 6:15 p.m.

Faith Alive has one more week to visit Bethlehem. All Faith Alive students and their friends should go directly to their classrooms. All children in preschool to fifth grade will take part in the village experiences. All classes will dismiss at 7:05 p.m.; preschool and kindergarten children will return to their classrooms and grades 1-5 will dismiss from the Family Life Center. Advent worship begins at 7:15 p.m. in the sanctuary, where families are encouraged to worship together. Join us for a special time as we hear the news of our Messiah, Jesus, born in a small village called Bethlehem!

Gingerbread Tea: A Sweet Experience



We had so many great pictures of the Gingerbread Tea, we needed to show more. A special thanks goes to Stan Greenwood for taking these photos of this fun family event, which was held Saturday, Dec. 3.

A Special Thanks

Christmas Programs:

Thank you to all the teachers and helpers who made this year's Christmas program a success. We also applaud the children who offered a sweet sound to the Lord. Video DVDs can be ordered at the Toolshoppe starting today.

Teachers and Helpers:

As our fall and Christmas programs finish, we are thankful to our teachers and helpers who help our children learn about our wonderful Savior. Thanks!

Advent Schedule

Please remember that Faith Alive dismisses at 7:05 p.m. for Advent worship Dec. 20.

Children-Friendly Service

Please don't forget to invite your neighbors to our family-friendly Christmas Eve service at 4 p.m. in the Family Life Center. The service is designed for younger children to experience the truth of Christ's birth at a level they can understand. Come and enjoy!

growyeldminister



gloriadeiyouthministry

luke 9:23

Wednesdays

Service Hours

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade will be doing service hours on Wednesday, Dec. 20. Sixth grade will be assembling candles for Christmas Eve services; seventh grade will be helping midweek Market Place; and eighth grade will be assembling bags for the children.

No confirmation classes on Dec. 27 and Jan. 3.



Junior High

Castaway

No Castaway on Sunday, Dec. 17, 24 and 31.

Join us for next year on Sunday, January 7 at 9:20 or 10:20 a.m. for a high-energy time of study and fellowship.



The youth recently went to the Youth Gathering, which was held in Des Moines.

Senior High

Fundraiser

The youth are working on a fundraiser to help defray the cost of mission or youth gathering trips. Sales will take place during the worship services on Dec. 16-17.

The items being sold are:

- Brownie in a jar - \$8
- Cupcake in a cup - \$5
- Hot cocoa mix (pint) - \$5

Open Mike, Open Forum, Open Dialogue

Open dialogue for senior-high ministry; come and share your thoughts and feelings on Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 6:15-7 p.m.

The Island

We will not meet until Sunday, Jan. 7 from 6 to 9 p.m. Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

The Island will not meet on December 17, 24 and 31.

Mark Your Calendar!

The 30-hour famine will be held April 27-28, 2007. In 2006 our group was one of the highest fundraisers for the World Vision's 30-hour famine organization. All teens 12 years and older are invited to participate in saving kid's lives! An initial planning meeting will be in January. Those that feel led to help with the organization of this year's event, please contact Kim Phillips at 254-1036 or e-mail: TNK4JC1@msn.com.

Week of December 17-23

Sunday, December 17

- 7:45 a.m. Traditional Worship Service in Sanctuary with Communion
- 9:00 a.m. Traditional-Blend Worship Service in Sanctuary with Communion
- 9:00 a.m. Preschool Christmas Program
- 9:20 a.m. Relevant Topics
- 9:20 a.m. Stepfamily Survival
- 9:20 a.m. No Castaway
- 9:20 a.m. No Grace Place, Ages 2-Grade 5
- 10:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service in Family Life Center
- 10:20 a.m. No Journey with Dr. Luke
- 10:20 a.m. No Castaway
- 10:20 a.m. No Grace Place, Ages 2-Grade 5
- 10:30 a.m. Elementary School Program
- 10:30 a.m. Contemporary-Blend Worship Service in Sanctuary with Communion
- 5:30 p.m. Young Couples with Children
- 6:00 p.m. No The Island- Psalm 18:2
- 7:00 p.m. AA Meeting

Monday, December 18

- 3:30 p.m. Mt. Olive Basketball
- 6:45 p.m. Men's Basketball

Tuesday, December 19

- 1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting
- 1:00 p.m. Helping Hands Group
- 3:30 p.m. Mt. Olive Basketball

Wednesday, December 20

- 10:00 a.m. Bible Study with Pastor Meyer
- 5:00 p.m. Midweek Meal
- 5:30 p.m. Music Alive
- 6:00 p.m. Advent Orchestra Rehearsal
- 6:00 p.m. Christmas Caroling with Gloria Dei's Music Ministry
- 6:15 p.m. Faith Alive (Bethlehem Village)
- 6:15 p.m. Lord, I Want to Know You Class
- 7:15 p.m. Advent Worship
- 7:30 p.m. The Alleluia Ringers
- 7:30 p.m. Gloria Dei's Infusion Worship Team

Thursday, December 21

- No Preschool
- 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study
- 10:00 a.m. Sew and Sews
- 2:00 p.m. Home School Choir
- 3:30 p.m. Mt. Olive Basketball Practice
- 6:00 p.m. Gloria Dei Thirsty Worship Team
- 6:00 p.m. Advent Orchestra and Choir Dress Rehearsal

Friday, December 22

- No Preschool
- 3:30 p.m. Mt. Olive Basketball Practice

Saturday, December 23

- 4:00 p.m. Northwind Worship Team
- 5:30 p.m. Northwind Service with Communion
- 5:50 p.m. No Grace Place

Outpouring of Love	
General Fund Offerings	\$49,397
YTD Offering	\$582,060
YTD Budget	\$643,440

Attendance			
Northwind	138	Communion	
7:45 a.m.	193	Northwind	87
9 a.m.	433	10 a.m.	59
10 a.m.	79		
10:30 a.m.	230	Advent	
Total	1073	Wednesday, Dec. 13	270

Week of December 24-30

Sunday, December 24 Christmas Eve

- 7:10 a.m. Orchestra Rehearsal
- 7:45 a.m. Advent and Carols Service in Sanctuary
- 8:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal for Advent
- 9:00 a.m. Advent and Carols Service in Sanctuary
- 9:20 a.m. No Castaway
- 9:20 a.m. No Grace Place, Ages 2-Grade 5
- 10:00 a.m. No Contemporary Service in the Family Life Center
- 10:20 a.m. No Castaway
- 10:20 a.m. No Grace Place, Ages 2-Grade 5
- 10:20 a.m. No Journey with Dr. Luke
- 10:30 a.m. Advent and Carols Service in Sanctuary
- 4:00 p.m. Family-Friendly Service in FLC
- 4:30 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Service in Sanctuary
- 6:00 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Service in Sanctuary
- 7:30 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Service in Sanctuary

Monday, December 25

- Offices Closed
- 9:30 a.m. Christmas Day Service

Tuesday, December 26

- No Preschool
- 3:30 p.m. Mt. Olive Basketball
- 7:00 p.m. Board of Elders

Wednesday, December 27

- No Preschool
- 10:00 a.m. No Bible Study with Pastor Meyer
- 5:00 p.m. No Midweek Meal
- 5:30 p.m. No Music Alive
- 5:30 p.m. Gloria Dei Orchestra and Choir
- 6:15 p.m. No Faith Alive

- 7:30 p.m. The Alleluia Ringers
- 7:30 p.m. Gloria Dei's Infusion Worship Team

Thursday, December 28

- No Preschool
- 6:30 a.m. No Men's Bible Study
- 10:00 a.m. Sew and Sews
- 2:00 p.m. Home School Choir
- 3:30 p.m. Mt. Olive Basketball Practice
- 6:00 p.m. Gloria Dei Thirsty Worship Team

Friday, December 29

- No Preschool
- 3:30 p.m. Mt. Olive Basketball Practice

Saturday, December 30

- 4:00 p.m. Northwind Worship Team
- 5:30 p.m. Northwind Service
- 5:50 p.m. No Grace Place

Educational Attendance					
	Saturday, 5:50	Sunday, 9:20	Sunday, 10:20	Wed., 6:15	Misc.
Preschool	7	27	23	28	Music Alive
Elementary	11	67	30	102	69
Junior High	2	34	10	118	Wed. Meal
High School					82
Total	20	128	63	248	

Christmas Schedule

Feel free to invite your neighbors and friends to all the Christmas activities as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior.

• **Sunday, Dec. 17**

Children's Christmas programs
9 a.m. Preschool children
10:30 a.m. Elementary children

• **Wednesday, Dec. 20**

Advent service at 7:15 p.m.

• **Saturday, Dec. 23**

Northwind Service at 5:30 p.m.

• **Sunday, Dec. 24**

Advent Lessons and Carols services at
7:45, 9, and 10:30 a.m.

Please note: There will be no 10 a.m. worship service in the Family Life Center.

• **Sunday, Dec. 24**

Family-friendly service at 4 p.m. in the Family Life Center

• **Sunday, Dec. 24**

Traditional Christmas Eve services at 4:30, 6 and 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary

• **Monday, Dec. 25**

Christmas Day service at 9:30 a.m. in the sanctuary

• **Saturday, Dec. 30**

Northwind service at 5:30 p.m.

• **Sunday, Dec. 31**

Regular Sunday services at 7:45, 9, and 10:30 a.m. Communion will be offered.

Please note: There will be no 10 a.m. worship service in the Family Life Center.

• **Monday, Jan. 1**

Office closed

Special note to parents:

Faith Alive will dismiss at 7:05 p.m. on Dec. 20 for Advent worship. Faith Alive will not be held Dec. 27 and will resume on Wednesday, Jan. 10.

Grace Place will not be held Saturday, Dec. 16 to Sunday, Dec. 31. Enjoy the holidays with your family in worship! We will start again Saturday, Jan. 6 and Sunday, Jan. 7.

