



Christmas for Everyone

Christmas For Everyone was a success, and you made it happen. I was so excited to see so many of the Elmwood family on distribution day. I was so proud to see us come together so that our light could shine bright.

I want to send out a big THANK YOU to:

- Dorothy Miller, Gail Ruhl, and the rest of the kitchen crew. You kept everyone happy and full.
- Mindy Hart and Brent Branstetter. Thanks for organizing the green bags and making sure everyone got the right one.
- Our Gift Wrapping Task Force! You worked like well-oiled machines for nearly 3 hours. I will not be able to name all of you so I'm not even going to try, but I will name one brave man that became a wrapping machine, Bill Bell. One lady receiving gifts said, "I was so impressed to see a man wrapping gifts!"
- To all of you that showed up to be good hosts. Many of you walked all of our *Christmas For Everyone* families through the whole process. They would have been lost without you. Others of you joined the families while they sat down to enjoy some soup. I'm sure they enjoyed the company.
- Carol Bell and Sherry Marks. You were the glue that held this thing together. If it were not for your help throughout the weeks that led up to distribution day I probably would have messed everything up.
- And finally (because I don't want to leave anyone out), anyone else that contributed in any way to this event.

All of you genuinely cared for these families and it showed. I cannot tell you how many times I looked around the room and saw my Elmwood family carrying on genuine conversations with our guests, and even playing with their children. You all became blessings to each and every guest that walked through our doors.

Again, thank you! I am ready to do this again next year. -Gilbert

The Word

It is very interesting to me to see the different ways that people read the text of the Bible. There are many different approaches taken, and though it has taken me longer to realize than it should have, each of the approaches are valuable and have an important place in the church body. Some people read the Bible academically; they enjoy studying the socio-political intricacies that surround the author and his text. Often the academic's goal is to understand what the author was saying to his original audience, so that one may discover how that text should apply to us today.

Approaching the Bible academically is not the only way to approach the Bible, it is also accessible through devotional reading. Instead of attempting to enter into deep study into the particulars surrounding the text, the devotional reader opens their heart and mind to God while they read through the text. While academic reading benefits from structure, devotional reading benefits from the lack thereof, allowing God to move through the very reading of the text.

These are just two simple examples of different ways that we as Christians approach the word of God. We also read by ourselves, and in community, in silence, and in proclamation. I think it's a testament to the power and love of God for his people that the text can be approached in so many different ways by so many different people, and yet all can come away from the text having heard the Word of the Lord!

-Phil

Cookin' Up Christmas

December 19, 7 PM

This year's children's musical, "Cookin' Up Christmas," had to be rescheduled because of the snow, to this Wednesday, December 19, at 7 PM. Invite friends and family. The children have been working hard and want to share their story with you. Refreshments in A-2 following the program.

Prayer Concerns....

Seth Mullen is scheduled to have his pump replaced on Wednesday in Chicago. Hopefully in and out in 24 hours....**Henrietta Frampton** had successful surgery at St. Vincent's Hospital in Indianapolis last Wednesday to remove a tumor in her head. She was to be transferred to a rehab hospital on Tuesday where she will stay for at least a couple of weeks....**Mandy Anderson** had surgery on her shoulder on Friday. She also suffers from a torn disc in her lower back that will require surgery at a later date....**Perry Achor** has been suffering with a pinched nerve in his back. He will have an MRI on Wednesday and follow up with his doctor on Friday....**Paul Thomas**, brother of Thelma Hoyt, had surgery to remove a brain tumor on Thursday in Indianapolis....**Eileen Richardson**, mother of Teri Richardson, has been receiving low doses of chemotherapy to treat ovarian cancer....Continue praying for **Lynae Stafford, Herb King, Barbara Scott, Bob Stafford, Max Houlton** (has begun chemo treatments), **Delores Nolan** (well enough to travel to Maryland for Christmas!), **Chris Crable, Ginger & Terry Maxwell-Spenard, Scott Baker, Mickey Rigdon, Rick Sims, Clifford DePriest** (Carol Bell's uncle who has lung cancer), **Matt Rigdon, Willie & Calvin Batts** (ongoing health concerns), **Ellen Raguette, Marie DeWoody, Beth Holt, Elizabeth Tinkle, Sue Sill, Hattie Coffel, Kaden Koebecke, Irene Sims, Mary Tavana, Dick Waterstraat, Paul & Argie Verett, Delpha Allen, Ivan Ellis, Valley Stockton, Eagle Bailey, Minnie Scott, Anna Dale, Irene Fox, and Burnell Gulden.**

Expecting families: **Linnet & Joshua Chia, Sarah & Mark Bird, and Dana & Amos Miller.**

Serving in our military: **Michael Farris, & Michael Bryenton** in Afghanistan; **Ti Draughon** in Iraq; and **Chris Martin**, in South Korea. **Jeremy Crable** is now home (permanently). Praise God!!

Christmas for Everyone



Distribution of gifts at Elmwood for **Christmas for Everyone** was Saturday from 9 AM until 12 noon. All went well. There was plenty of helpers to wrap gifts, serve refreshments, and send our guests on their way with a container of stew and other goodies courtesy of our chefs Dorothy Miller and Gail Ruhl. Our sincere thanks to all of the helpers and to everyone who bought gifts for these families. It was much appreciated by all.



It's a Boy!

Karen & Kenji Totsuka are delighted to announce the birth of their son, **Kai Philip**. Kai was born on December 1, weighing 7 pounds 5 ounces, and measuring 20 inches long. Grandma, Hedi Devine, was there for the event and his uncle, Philip, will be coming home for Christmas! Congratulations to all!

Snow Servants



Elmwood is in need of some volunteers for light snow removal this winter. You may be asked to assist a senior servant or someone just home from the hospital. All you need is a snow shovel, a loving spirit, and some time to volunteer. Sign up on the back of your yellow attendance card this Sunday with a telephone number where you can be reached.



The food pantry is in need of personal items: **soap, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, and toilet paper.**

—John Stafford



Merry Christmas!

Well, it is that time of year again. Many of us are in the “spirit of Christmas”; the snow on the ground really helps me. I heard a commercial on the radio this morning that said, “There will always be Christmas.” Will there really? I honestly wonder if the world we live in will continue to push Christians around to the point that the true meaning of Christmas will just slip away. I know many of you are saying it could never happen, but go back and take a look at Psalm 78 and see what “God’s chosen people” forgot. If we are not careful to pass on our faith heritage, we are always just one generation from extinction.

“...an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.” Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: **See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name Him Immanuel, which is translated “God is with us.”** (Matthew 1:20-23 HCSB).

I believe the story to be true and so do the majority of Americans. A recent Barna Survey said, “*Three out of four adults (75%) said that they believe Jesus Christ was born to a virgin, Mary, as described in the gospel narratives. Of the six Bible stories examined in the survey, this story was the most widely accepted. A majority of all but one of the sixty population subgroups studied in the research took the virgin birth at face value. The exception was atheists and agnostics (among whom just 15% said this really happened). Some people groups in which a majority rejected every other Bible story tested broke that pattern in relation to the virgin birth. Mary’s virgin birth was accepted as literally true by two-thirds of upscale adults (66%) and by a bare majority of the un-churched (53%). Even a strikingly large share of those who describe themselves as mostly liberal on political and social issues (60%) adopted the biblical view of Christ’s birth.*”

So what are we going to do with that information? We often seem to have the philosophy that God can fend for Himself. He can, but God has given His Word and His Spirit to support us in the task He has given us. It is our job to proclaim the Good News, to lead others to be followers of Christ...to *Know Him and to Make Him Known*. People are thinking about Jesus right now...let’s help them fill in the blanks! Let’s live like we believe in God, that we believe the virgin birth, and that we intend to live for Him and make a difference in this lost and dying world.

Merry Christmas everyone! I look forward to sharing a very Happy New Year with the Elmwood family as we serve Him with all we are and all we have!

– Lee

**No Newsletter next week.
Have a Merry Christmas
and safe travels for all.**



Holiday Gift Lift



The **Holiday Gift Lift Program** of Mental Health America who distributes new essential items to adults who might not otherwise receive a gift over the holiday season. Suggested gifts (leave them unwrapped) include: sweatshirts, sweaters, warm socks, nightwear, hats, gloves, sweatpants, flannel shirts (all in xl-xxl adults sizes, please). **Gifts may be placed in the collection box located in the Farris foyer. Let’s fill it to overflowing!!** These items may be given right up to the end of the year.

Senior Servants

The Senior Servants **will meet Wednesday, January 2**, at 11:30 AM. The group will meet again on the 16th of January at Elmwood, and have an outing for lunch on the 30th at Cristo’s (Teal Rd.) at 11:30 AM.

Video & Sound Assistance Needed

Volunteers are needed to do video and/or sound for Sunday morning worship hours. If you can help with either worship hour, please call the church office or email Tom Miller at mille219@purdue.edu.



Dec. 19, 7 PM....”Cookin’ Up Christmas”

Children’s musical (rescheduled because of inclement weather); refreshments to follow

Dec. 23, 6 PM....Worship & devotional at Elmwood

Dec. 30....No evening worship at 6:00

Dec. 31, 7 PM....Special time of worship and singing

This Week's Highlight: Christmas Greetings



Each year the elders have suggested that we contribute money to a special fund in lieu of sending greeting cards to one another in the congregation. This year this money has been designated for the two "Let's Start Talking" mission teams from Elmwood. In summer 2008, Elmwood will send out its largest group of mission workers for Let's Start Talking. LST offers free English practice using the Bible as the text. Here are the Elmwood team members: 6-week team: Josh, Gina, Kinley, and Knox Boyd, Mandy Anderson, Farrell Simmerman; 2-week team: Jimmy and Susan Huff, Jason Cochran, Amy Berkshire.

*A BIG thank you to the following **members and families** for their contributions. God's richest blessings to all this Christmas season.*

Perry & Janet Achor
Kenny & Mandy Anderson
Tommy & Ramona Bartlett
Bill & Carol Bell
Mark & Sara Bird
Josh & Gina Boyd
Brent & Christi Branstetter
Andrea Browell
Joshua & Linnet Chia
Gayle & Lisa Crowe
Yssa & Andrew DeWoody Family
Bill Farris
Bernie & Armilda Follick
Mike & Scheryl Gaylor
Larry & Brenda Gibson
Margaret Gustafson

Gene & Nancy High
Jim & Marihelen Johnson
Gilbert & Kate Kerrigan
Camilla Lawson
Jan Lucas
John & Sherry Marks
Paul Marks
Joe & Joyce Mathews
Oscar & Dorothy Jane Miller
Tom & Beth Miller
Jim, Marsha & Mark Moore
Earl & Janet Nelson
Barbara Newberry
Connie & Ken Nicholson
Miranda & Rashelle Parson
Chad & Becky Pitt
Lee & Sharon Porter

Sam & Sara Postlethwait
Mickey & Carolyn Rigdon
Joe & Gail Ruhl
Farrell & Phyllis Simmerman
Pauletta & Rob Smith
Bob & Penny Stafford
Greg & Chris Sutherlin
Rick & Doris Swensen
Cheri Vaughn
Paul & Argie Verett
Don & Patty Vice
Ruthann & Ron Wagoner
Kevin & Marilyn Walters
Bob & Nan Waltz
David & Lorraine Weckerly

