



What Do You Believe?

In his book entitled *Prayer*, Philip Yancey writes about a time that he made a visit to Tokyo. While there he found himself in the office of a local pastor who wanted to spend a little time discussing an issue. So there they are, three men – the pastor, Yancey, and an interpreter – in the wee hours of the morning discussing this pressing issue.

The pastor quickly told Yancey that he had wrestled with this particular issue his whole time in ministry, but that he had not shared this with anyone up to this point. He shared with Yancey this startling statistic for Japan: only 1 percent of the entire population is Christian. Yancey then writes, *“For the next twenty minutes without interruption the pastor poured out the agony he felt over the 99 percent of Japanese who had not accepted Jesus. Would they all burn in hell because of their ignorance?”* He was looking to Yancey for a message of comfort and hope with this issue he had wrestled with for so long.

This is not a new question. We have all at some point asked, or heard someone ask, about the tribes deep in the jungle who have never heard of Jesus. What would happen to them? What is their final destination? We are not talking about those who have rejected Jesus. We are speaking of those who have never heard of Jesus. How will God deal with them?

I like Yancey’s answer. He responded to this pastor by saying, *“I do not know the answer to your questions, but I believe strongly that at the end of time no one will be able to stand before God and say, ‘You were unfair!’ However history settles out, it will settle on the side of justice tempered by mercy.”*

I do not know the answer to this pastor’s question either, but like Yancey, I have to believe that God is just, fair, and full of grace and mercy. As James writes, I have to believe that *“the Lord is full of compassion and mercy.”* ~ James 5:11

-Gilbert Kerrigan

Midnight Breakfast

Monday (12/15) was the beginning of the Exam schedule for Purdue students, so we wanted to make sure they had plenty to eat! We had the Superhero Midnight Breakfast and fed about 20-25 students.

Thank you so much to everyone who helped out by donating baked goods, and griddles. A special thanks to those of you who came out and helped cook and serve the food!



Ethel Cable fell Monday night and broke her pelvis and has a head injury. She is in Clarian Arnett Hospital, room 509....Continue praying for **Dick Stout, Herb Whiteman, Gloria Holderfield, Eric Waltz** (still in IU Medical Center), **David Henke, Dorothy Walters, Eileen Richardson, Hattie Coffel** (now in Rosewalk Village), **Irene Fox, Wanita White, Willie Batts, Edith McCoy, Randi Verett, Jean Stockberger, Lance & Lane Pepper, Eugene Zinn, Kaden Koebeke, Julie Lichty, Pat Johnson, Marge Campbell, Valley Stockton, Irene Sims, Henrietta Frampton, Marie DeWoody, Paul & Argie Verett, Delpha Allen, and Minnie Scott.** Pray also for all the students taking finals this week.

Serving in our military: **Shawn Wilson.**



Bill Farris turns 92!

The Senior Servants want to help **Bill Farris** celebrate his 92nd birthday at Golden Corral for breakfast **this Saturday, December 20, at 9:30 AM.** After you have bought your breakfast, come join the others in a special reserved area to share breakfast....and stories from Bill! **EVERYONE IS WELCOME AND ENCOURAGED TO COME!**

2009 Spiritual Adventure

Week 3: January 12-18

Read Genesis 36-50; Luke 8:1-11:28

The Good News

This section of Luke begins with the statement "...Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God" (8:1). What exactly was the good news? Jesus healed the sick, he raised the dead, and taught principles of living. He emphasized the importance of faith. When the disciples were frightened by the storm on the lake Jesus asked, "Where is your faith?" (8:25). The woman who was cured of her bleeding was told "...your faith has healed you" (8:48). To Jairus, whose daughter had just died he said, "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed" (8:50). Belief led the disciples to go out and preach (9:1-6 and 10:1-17), and to feed the multitude (9:12-17). On the other hand, Jesus condemned unbelief when, because of lack of faith, they could not cast out a demon (9:37-43). Jesus said "O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I stay with you and put up with you?" (9:41). How long, indeed? Fortunately for us, evidently until the end of time based on the disciples failing to understand the main points of his message. In this passage we find them arguing about who was the greatest among them (9:46-48), worrying about many things other than the main thing (10:38-42) and not knowing how to pray (11:1-13). This section concludes with Jesus saying "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it" (11:28). There are many parables and statements of Jesus about the word of God. He summarized the essence of what God expects by accepting the statement of an expert in the law, who responded, when Jesus asked, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" (10:26), by saying "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself" (10:27). So what was the Good News? Have faith and love God and love your neighbor as yourself and "you will live" (10:28).

-Rick Swensen



Dear Everyone at Elmwood Church, Thank you for making my children's Christmas great this year. I do appreciate everything you provided my family. - Jennifer Chapman
(CFE participant)

Snow Servants



The snow servant this week is **Brian Guthrie, 409-0829.**

**NO NEWSLETTER NEXT WEEK
OR THE WEEK AFTER. NEXT
ONE MAILED JANUARY 6**

December 14, 2008

Class: 181 Worship: 289 Contribution: \$10,034.34



Youth Intern 2009

Our youth intern for the summer of 2009 will be Randy Kerrigan. You may believe that Randy's last name being the same as that of our Pulpit Minister is a coincidence, but, of course, there are no coincidences. Randy is Gilbert's brother. Over the last few years, when we search for a youth intern, we have learned to look for a couple key things. One, is this person committed to being in ministry, second, is this person engaged in a formal educational program that requires internships, and finally, after reviewing credentials and conducting interviews, are we convinced that this person is committed to answering the call of full-time ministry. If we find no one who fits, then we do not hire. This guidance has served us well. Phil Travis, our campus minister, and Steve Corp, a staff member now at Rochester College, were both Elmwood interns. Randy's strong credentials ensure that he will follow our recent successes in helping to prepare people for full-time ministry. Further, he is the first Elmwood intern to bring international experience to the table as he is currently serving with a congregation in Italy as part of the two-year AIM program. We thank Gilbert for introducing him to us. Randy will be here on December 28 as part of a holiday visit, and will report to work later in 2009. Take this early opportunity to welcome Elmwood intern Randy Kerrigan.

-Bill Bell



BIG Thank You to CFE Crew

I want to thank all of you that helped make Christmas for Everyone a success. Mandy Anderson did a wonderful job putting all of the pieces together. Dorothy Miller and our kitchen crew kept everyone warm and fed with soup and other foods. Our gift wrappers were like well oiled machines. Our greeters acted like professional tour guides as they guided the families through our CFE process. Many others came just to hang out and carry on conversations with the families. And there would not have been a CFE if so many of you had not volunteered to buy gifts for these children. I can't say it enough-THANK YOU!

-Gilbert

Caroling Wednesday



Everyone is invited to go caroling to nursing homes this Wednesday evening at 6:30. Be at the church building ready to go at 6:30.

Wedding Bells for Mark Wilkins & Lana McClurg

Former Elmwood member, **Mark Wilkins**, who grew up here, will be marrying **Lana McClurg** this Saturday, December 20, 2008, at 2:00 in the afternoon, Crosstown Church of Christ in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Our congratulations and best wishes to the couple and to Mark's parents, John & Janice Wilkins.



December 17, 7 PM....Bible classes for all
December 21, 6:00 PM....Showing of the video,
"The Star of Bethlehem"
December 24....NO WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASSES

Read:
Genesis 20-35; Luke 5-7

2009 Spiritual Adventure



Week 2: January 5-11

Abraham and Abimelech

In Genesis 20, we see Abraham fearfully telling King Abimelech that Sarah is his sister. Since God had repeatedly promised Abraham that he and Sarah would produce a son, and that their heirs would eventually outnumber the stars, why does Abraham feel that he must use his own devious plan to protect Sarah and himself? I think the answer is twofold. The last time we see Abraham in Genesis 19, he is looking toward the fresh, smoking ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah. He is probably wondering if Lot or anyone was saved from that devastation, and possibly there is an inkling of doubt in his mind about God's promise of protection for Sarah and himself. Next we see him in Gerar, where he has already judged Abimelech's kingdom as a pagan stronghold (. . . *There is no fear of God at all in this place* . . . Genesis 20:11b) and he feels that he must rely on himself alone. Abraham is clearly experiencing a failing of his faith when he chooses to rely on his own plans. Despite his strong relationship with God, he has allowed his heart to become fearful. But because of his strong relationship with God, he will return to faith.

King Abimelech took Sarah believing that she was Abraham's sister, but he did not sin with her. Even though he is not a Hebrew, God commends him *for the integrity of your heart* (Genesis 20:6). Furthermore, God actually prevented Abimelech from sinning with Sarah because of that same integrity of his heart. From this, I gather that our work to keep our hearts pure does not go unnoticed by God and is even rewarded at times. However, Abimelech was a Philistine and not a prophet of God like Abraham, so it was necessary for Abraham to ask God to heal Abimelech and his household.

Although Abimelech did well through his good intentions, he was helpless before God when he needed healing for himself and his household. Abraham, despite his mistakes, belonged to God and would be heard when he prayed. -Teresa Jones

 Weekly Schedule	 Elders	 World Missions
Sunday Worship 8:00 a.m. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Life Groups 6:00 p.m.	Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Mathews 474-8369 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99536
Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m.	 Staff Ministers Gilbert Kerrigan 418-3652 Lee Porter 463-6993 Phil Travis 447-2874 Office Sherry Marks, Manager 447-2874 Carol Bell, Secretary 447-2874	Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000 E-mail: lholly54@yahoo.com Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774
 Our Vision: Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known.		



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Periodical
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at
Lafayette, IN

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 (more than \$2,000) has been designated for Bren & Cheryl White and their work with Operation French World Missions. A BIG thank you to the following people for their contributions. God's richest blessings to all this Christmas season.

Perry & Janet Achor
Bill & Sue Adams
Kenny & Mandy Anderson Family
Laura Barlament
Tommy & Ramona Bartlett
Joy Batcha
Bill & Carol & Peter Bell
Elaine & Austin Borie
Janet Boston
Josh & Gina Boyd
Chuck & Betty Brown
Courtney Buss
Ethel Cable
Gayle & Lisa Crowe
Mary Kay Ciesielski
Hedi Devine
Gene & Jeanie Dilling
Diann & Amanda Doty
Shirley Farmer
Bill Farris
Bernie & Armilda Follick

Mike & Scheryl Gaylor
Larry & Brenda Gibson
Margaret Gustafson
Dave & Vicki Henke
Gene & Nancy High
Beth Holt
Jim & Marihelen Johnson
Gilbert & Kate Kerrigan
Camilla Lawson
Jan Lucas
John & Sherry Marks
Paul Marks
Joe & Joyce Mathews
Ann McConnell
Oscar & Dorothy Jane Miller
Jim & Marsha Moore
Dick, Michelle, Seth & Cody Mullen
Earl & Janet Nelson
Barbara Newberry
Connie & Ken Nicholson
Delores Nolan

Lee, Sharon, & Nichole Porter
Sam & Sara Postlethwait
Mickey & Carolyn Rigdon
Joe, Gail, & Patrick Ruhl
Farrell & Phyllis Simmerman
Cody & Jenny Sipe
Pauletta & Rob Smith
Sally Smith
Bob & Penny Stafford
Greg & Chris Sutherlin
Pete & Vernell Swank
Rick & Doris Swensen
Tammy Tatman
Paul & Argie Verett
Don & Patty Vice
Kevin & Marilyn Walters
Bob & Nan Waltz
David & Lorraine Weckerly
Patty Wenning
Wanita White
Joe & Cheryl Woody



Every few years we need to "purge" our newsletter list. Years pass, people move, situations change, and you may not feel the need to receive our newsletter. If you wish to continue to be on our mailing list, please send us your request by a phone call (765-447-2874), email (office@elmwood-church.org), or regular mail. We will delete those we don't hear from after the first of the new year. **PLEASE NOTE! If you attend Elmwood regularly you will continue to receive the weekly newsletter. This affects only those who don't attend Elmwood and/or have moved away.**

***No newsletter next week or the week after.
Next newsletter mailed January 6***