



## Recapturing the Joy

I can remember being a small child on Christmas night like it was yesterday. My brother and I would go to bed as early as possible. We thought that the earlier we went to bed the earlier we would wake up. Usually we ended up lying in bed super early with our eyes wide open, too excited to fall asleep.

I can remember waking up in the early hours of morning, sometimes 3 or 4AM, just to sneak down the long hallway into the room with our Christmas tree. I was so eager to discover what Santa had brought me.

To this day my dad still makes us wait to open presents as he takes his time getting up and making his pot of coffee. The rest of us just sit there, anxiously waiting to exchange gifts.

I thought about these memories of excitement and expectation as I read the story of the shepherds in Luke's account of Jesus' birth. Luke writes, *That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger"*(2:8-12).

I imagine there had to be great excitement and even some anxiety as they journeyed to find this baby who would *"bring great joy to all people."* This truly is a joyous time of year.

~Gilbert

***Our vision:  
Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known***

## The Love of God

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"* John 3:16.

*"And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!"* Philippians 2:8.

The wedding ring in our culture is a symbol of love. It functions in that respect fairly well- a circle, the two dimensional representation of a ring has no beginning, nor does it have an end- it is perpetual.

However, as with any symbol, it is not perfect in its representation. A jeweler may be able to stretch the gold a few sizes larger, for a circle to really grow, it must be broken. You cannot draw a circle and then make it larger without erasing what you have drawn and starting over.

I find it interesting then that the symbol of love that God chose to use (though originally it was a symbol of shame) is two line segments. If you were to draw a cross on a piece of paper, you could enlarge it simply by adding to the line. It extends outward from the center- up, down, left, and right- ad infinitum.

So it is with God's love, he extends his love to his son, and to his people, then from his people out to the rest of the world as we show his love to the world.

-Phil

**Dick Stout**, former Elmwood member now living in South Carolina, is receiving treatment for a virus he contracted 11 years ago in Ukraine while on a mission trip. He is in serious condition....**Herb Whiteman**, father of Vicki Henke, is in Home Hospital, room 4333, with a blood clot in his leg....**Gloria Holderfield** had surgery for skin cancer on Tuesday....**Isabella Beeler**, granddaughter of Ronda & Harry Tidrick, had successful surgery on Friday....Continue praying for **Eric Waltz** (still in IU Medical Center), **David Henke**, **Dorothy Walters**, **Eileen Richardson**, **Hattie Coffel**, **Irene Fox**, **Wanita White**, **Willie Batts**, **Edith McCoy**, **Randi Verett**, **Jean Stockberger**, **Lance & Lane Pepper**, **Eugene Zinn**, **Kaden Koebcke**, **Julie Lichty**, **Pat Johnson**, **Marge Campbell**, **Valley Stockton**, **Irene Sims**, **Henrietta Frampton**, **Marie DeWoody**, **Paul & Argie Verett**, **Delpha Allen**, and **Minnie Scott**.

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 on 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!**

## Christmas for Everyone, Dec. 13



If you haven't already brought your gifts to the church, please bring them by this Wednesday night, December 10th. **Please keep the paper attached when you turn the gifts in (UNWRAPPED) to Gilbert or Mandy.** This **Saturday, December 13**, is distribution day for the gifts. Parents will be coming in from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM. Thanks to those who have signed up to greet them and help with the distribution and gift wrapping.



*Jenna and I and the kids and my entire extended family would like to say "Thank you" so much for all the loving thoughts and prayers for us and my Mom, and the beautiful flower arrangement. Additionally, many thanks for all the well-wishes for Amanda. We're very blessed to have so many wonderful, supporting friends at Elmwood and we greatly appreciate you lifting us up with your unyielding love and prayers. Thank you all and God bless you all!*

-Craig & Jenna Powlen

## Midnight Breakfast at CSC

This year at the CSC we are going to host a Superhero "Midnight" breakfast! This event will be on the evening of **December 15** (the Monday of finals week). While traditionally a midnight breakfast happens at midnight, we are going to host it a little earlier at 10:00 PM.

There are many ways you can volunteer to help with the event. We need people to help set up, cook, serve the food, and clean up. We also need a collection of electric griddles for cooking the food.

Finally, any muffins, bagels, and breads you would like to donate would be greatly appreciated! We encourage you to come dressed up as your favorite superhero! Any questions should be directed to Phil Travis.



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.**

**December 7, 2008**  
**Class: 179 Worship: 288**  
**Contribution: \$9,708**

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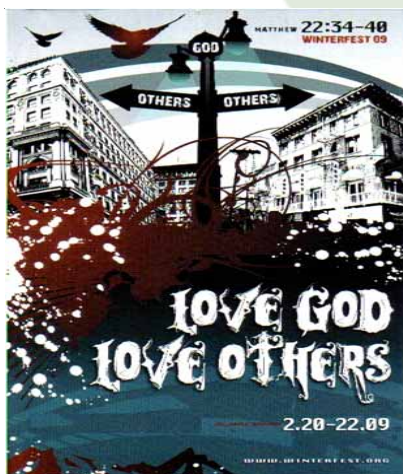


**Winterfest Gatlinburg**  
**Feb. 20-22, 2009**

Winterfest is a weekend retreat intended to encourage teens in their walk with God. This weekend is geared toward discipleship. The teachers and guests that come use real life stories, drama, music and scripture to make the Christian life come alive to the teens involved. Acappella praise and worship times are uplifting and engaging. We have rooms reserved at the Riverside Lodge – we have enough places for 24 people, first paid/first served. We can add rooms as long as they are available, but please don't wait to sign up. The tickets need to be purchased soon. Both sessions sold out last year. A Winterfest Pass is \$25. T-shirts are \$8 (XX sizes are \$9). The DecembeRadio Concert Ticket is \$8. After January 5, all prices increase. Registration is not a sure thing. If you want to go, please turn in your \$25 plus T-shirt and concert money (if you want a shirt and/or want to go to the concert) as soon as possible; I will need your money within the next couple of weeks. If you have any questions, you can ask any Winterfest veterans or go to [www.winterfest.org](http://www.winterfest.org).

Please also remember this is a great time to invite your friends...we even have scholarship money available for you to be able to invite your friends at a discounted rate. See me for details. Also, if money is an issue for you, please let me know! Mark your calendars and bring your deposit!

– Lee



# It's a Wonder- FULL Life December 14, 6:00 PM



Elmwood's children's Christmas musical, *It's a Wonder-FULL Life* will be presented this Sunday evening at 6:00. The children have been diligent about their rehearsal, and are excited about giving this program. We hope you will set aside this time and invite family and friends to share the evening. *Refreshments will follow and cookie donations will be appreciated.*

## CHRISTMAS CARDS



In lieu of sending cards, all who wish to contribute to our annual **Christmas Card Fund** may do so this Sunday, **December 14**. You may hand your check to one of the elders, ministers, and/or Sherry Marks or Carol Bell, drop it into the collection plate (with Christmas Card Fund designated) or send it to the church via regular mail by December 15. *If you give cash, be sure to attach your name on a piece of paper.* In **next week's, December 16 newsletter** we will include a list of all who have contributed to this fund.

This year Christmas card money will go to Bren & Cheryl White and the Operation French World Missions.



- December 10, 6:30 PM....Rehearsal for "It's a Wonder-FULL Life"
- December 10, 7 PM....Bible classes for all
- December 13, 9:00 AM....Dress rehearsal for "It's a Wonder-FULL Life"
- Dec. 13, 9 AM-3 PM.... *Christmas for Everyone*, distribution of gifts
- December 14, 6:00 PM...."It's a Wonder-FULL Life" Children's program
- December 24....NO WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASSES

Read:  
*Genesis 1-19; Luke 1-4*






# 2009 Spiritual Adventure

## Week 1: December 29-January 4

Christmas is my favorite time of year. One of the things that makes it so special are the carols that we sing. The words and the music never fail to remind me of the true meaning of Christmas, Jesus' birth. I don't remember a Christmas without singing carols. Every Christmas Eve my family would attend midnight mass. We would sing in Latin and English the words of Luke, Chapter 2 verse 14, "Glory to God in the Highest and Peace to his People on earth...we worship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your Glory." This song commonly referred to as "Gloria" or "Angels We Have Heard On High", encompasses the meaning of the season for me. The angels invite us to sing with them, at this joyous occasion, the song of Christ and his salvation. They give God their highest praise at this time, the time that God has blessed us with the greatest gift of all, his son, Jesus.

I was reading a sermon by Reverend Adrian Dieleman of the Trinity United Reformed Church in California. He was giving a sermon titled, *A Portrait of Christmas*. He began his sermon by asking a question, "What would we see in a photo album of Jesus' birth?" He then went on to talk about the material portrait of Christmas in today's society. Showing pictures of the mall, the presents, and cards about declaring Happy Holidays with no mention of Christ. Then using the text in Luke he gives us a spiritual portrait of Christmas. The last picture he describes touches me the most. He describes it like this, "The fourteenth picture shows a choir – a magnificent numberless choir of angels. Rank upon rank, wings and robes and light. Every hand and every voice is lifted up to a throne. In the bottom corner we see the shepherds. Their hands and voices too, are lifted up to the throne. The caption reads, "Glory to God in the Highest."

Wherever you are and whomever you are with this Christmas season, pause to sing Glory and Praise to the Most High King.  
*-Katy Travis*

 Weekly Schedule	 Elders	 World Missions
<b>Sunday</b> Worship 8:00 a.m. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Life Groups 6:00 p.m.  <b>Wednesday</b> Bible Study 7:00 p.m.	Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Mathews 474-8369 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653  <b> Staff</b> <b>Ministers</b> Gilbert Kerrigan 418-3652 Lee Porter 463-6993 Phil Travis 447-2874 <b>Office</b> Sherry Marks, Manager 447-2874 Carol Bell, Secretary 447-2874	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99536  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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