

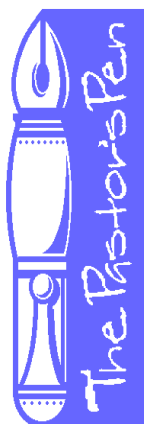


Connections

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 23

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 03, 2009

A CHRISTMAS LETTER FROM JESUS TO US



I received the following email from two of our St. Andrew regulars after last Sunday's sermon. Not only were they actually listening to the sermon, but they actually read their email as well! The email takes the perspective of Jesus writing his annual Christmas letter to his followers. It certainly offers a novel

approach to a lot of the small skirmishes that have become associated with advent and Christmas. And though you might not agree with all of it, there is some prophetic word in this letter for each and every one of us. *(It's been edited slightly for length.)*

...It has come to my attention that many of you are upset that folks are taking My name out of the season.

THOUGHTS DURING ADVENT

"On my way to worship this morning, I was told:

*Walk gently on this Earth.
Live in harmony with all things,
And in peace with all men.*

*Be strong.
Be patient.
Be quiet.*

Listen and watch.

How I personally feel about this celebration can probably be most easily understood by those of you who have been blessed with children of your own. I don't care what you call the day. If you want to celebrate My birth, just GET ALONG AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

Now, having said that, let Me go on. If it bothers you that the town in which you live doesn't allow a scene depicting My birth, then just get rid of a couple of Santas and snowmen and put in a small Nativity scene on your own front lawn. If all My followers did that there wouldn't be any need for such a scene on the town square because there would be many of them all around town.

Stop worrying about the fact

*Hear and see.
Think and try to understand.
I understand what Jesus said—
Love God
Love others as yourself*

But there are times I need more specific instructions. What I was told this morning seems right, for me."

-anonymous St. Andrew Member



that people are calling the tree a holiday tree, instead of a Christmas tree. It was I who made all trees. You can remember Me anytime you see any tree. (Decorate a grape vine if you wish: I actually explained who I am in relation to you right there in John 15: 1 - 8.)

If you want to give Me a present in remembrance of My birth, here is my wish list. Choose something from it:

1. Instead of writing protest letters objecting to the way My birthday is being celebrated, write letters of love and hope to soldiers away from home. They are terribly afraid and lonely this time of year. I know; they tell Me all the time.
2. Visit someone in a nursing home. You don't have to know them personally. They just need to know that someone cares about them.
3. Instead of writing the President complaining about the wording on the cards his staff sent out this year, why don't you write and tell him that

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(Continued from page 1)

you'll be praying for him and his family this year. Then follow up... It will be nice hearing from you again



4. Instead of giving your children a lot of gifts you can't afford and they don't need, spend time with them. Tell them the story of My birth and why I came to live with you down here. Hold them in your arms, and remind them that I love them.
5. Pick someone that has hurt you in the past and forgive him or her.
6. Did you know that someone in your town will attempt to take their own life this season because they feel so alone and hopeless? Since you don't know who that person is, try giving everyone you meet a warm smile; it could make the difference.
7. Instead of nit picking about what the retailer in your town calls the holiday, be patient with the people who work there. Give them a warm smile and a kind word. Even if they aren't allowed to wish you a "Merry Christmas" that doesn't keep you from wishing them one. Then stop shopping there on Sunday. If the store didn't make so much money on that day they'd close and let their employees spend the day at home with their families.
8. Here's a good one. There are individuals and whole families in your town who not only will have no "Christmas" tree but neither will they have any presents to

give or receive. Buy some food and a few gifts and give them to a charity which believes in Me, and they will make the delivery for you.

9. Finally, if you want to make a statement about your belief in and loyalty to Me, then behave like a Christian. Don't do things in secret that you wouldn't do in My presence.

Don't forget; I am God and can take care of Myself. Just love Me and do what I have told you to do. I'll take care of all the rest. Check out the list above and get to work; time is short. I'll help you, but the ball is now in your court. And do have a most blessed Christmas with all those whom you love and remember:

I Love you,

Jesus



APPRECIATION GIFT TO STAFF

It's a wonderful time of the year when we get to show others how much their love and support is appreciated throughout the year, and there is no exception for our St. Andrew staff! Each year, we ask the congregation to consider the hard work and service of our faithful staff and make a small financial contribution to honor their hard work. There are boxes in The Commons and in the main office waiting to receive your contributions. Let's show the staff how much we appreciate them. If you have questions or comments, contact David Lasater or a member of the Staff/Parish Comm.

ON CHRISTMAS EVE...



Christmas Eve worship continues to be the moment when our neighbors and friends turn their hearts and attention toward God. As you consider who you will invite to join you in worship on December 24 this year, be aware of our Christmas Eve schedule at St. Andrew.

- * 6 p.m. Contemporary "Family Oriented" Worship
- * 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Christmas Eve Reception
- * 7:30 p.m. Lessons and Carols Traditional Worship
- * 9 p.m. Celtic Christmas & Holy Communion

Pastor Tim will preach the first two services, and Pastor Pat will preach at our new Celtic Christmas Eve service. Our 9 p.m. service will feature Celtic influenced music as well as Holy Communion.

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON DRAWS

CHRISTMAS NEAR

The Midweek Worship Team would like to invite you the *Sounds of the Season* worship service on Wednesday,

CONCERT

December 9, in the Great Room at 7:00 p.m. Join the Simply People Puppet Troupe, Waiting to Wake, future Beethovens, and more in an evening full of favorite sacred and secular Christmas music. Refreshments will be served after the service in The Intersection. You won't want to miss it!



FINAL UPDATE BEFORE JUBILEE



Thank you to everyone who has agreed to help with Jubilee Christmas. If you agreed to serve as a host, you should have received a letter with the information about your guest family and should contact them ASAP. If you didn't receive it, please contact Melissa Martin (cm.martin@comcast.net or 463-4773). There are envelopes in The Commons and in the registration pads for financial contributions (or just mark your check or giving envelope "Jubilee Christmas"). Please remember to bring all toys (unwrapped and with batteries), stocking stuffers, hats and mittens, and books to the church by Tuesday, December 8. There is a red collection tub in The Commons. If you signed up to provide cookies, please deliver those to the church by Friday, December 11. You can leave them in the kitchen, but please make sure they are labeled "Jubilee". With your support, we will be able to provide a wonderful Christmas for 22 families on December 12.

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR OUR TROOPS

At VBS this year, our children made Christmas cards for our armed forces serving around the world that won't get to come home for Christmas. Our kids sent 104 hand-drawn cards through the American Red Cross Holiday Mail for Heroes program. There will be 104 men and women that will have a much brighter Christmas thanks to our talented kids, to be sure!

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT (info for participants)

Don't forget—Christmas pageant rehearsals: Saturday, December 5 from 10 a.m.-11:15 a.m. (part of Christmas Fun Day) and Thursday, December 10 from 5:30 p.m.-7 p.m. (includes a pizza party).



Costumes

- * Main characters should have received costume information via e-mail. We will provide tunics/robes and headdresses for characters that need them. Please contact Melissa Martin if you need assistance with your costume as the church has many items available. All other children will be angels, sheep or donkeys.
- * Angels should wear light colored clothing. We'll provide the white gowns and halos.
- * Sheep should wear white, gray, or black sweatpants and sweatshirt turned inside out and black socks on their hands and feet. We'll provide ears and tails.
- * Donkeys should wear gray or brown sweatpants and sweatshirt and black socks on their hands and feet. We'll provide ears, manes and tails.

Finally, please arrive at church on Sunday, December 13 at 8 a.m. ready to get in costume and present a fabulous pageant to the congregation! If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Martin at melissa@andrew-umc.org, 497-7755 (church) or 463-4773 (home).

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT (info for congregation)

Three young shepherds joyfully shouted God's praises after visiting the baby Jesus. How were they to know they were "disturbing the peace?"

*Join them in a Bethlehem courtroom for a rib-tickling trial. The children of St. Andrew will present *The Not-So-Silent Night* on Sunday, December 13 during the 8:45 a.m. worship service. This is a Christmas pageant you won't want to miss!*



SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE CHANGES for December Only

There will be **NO** children's Sunday School on December 13. Instead, *we will celebrate with the children following the Christmas pageant with a cookie and punch reception in the Children's Area.*

The children's Sunday School classes will combine on December 27 for a movie and/or activity. The combined class will meet in the Children's Area.



Volume 1 Issue 6

December 3, 2009



InTouch Members of the Month— Oscar & Beverly Hopkins

Beverly and Oscar Hopkins are long-time members of St. Andrew, beginning with meeting in the funeral home before it merged with the Evangelical United Brethren to form St. Andrew. Bev and Oscar continue to meet regularly with their long-standing Koinonia group and have regular visits from various members of St. Andrew.

Last year, Beverly and Oscar celebrated their

50th wedding anniversary! They live in West Lafayette and have three grown children - Carol, Karen, and John. They also have four grandchildren - Evan, Erin, James and Taylor. Beverly was employed as a dental hygienist for almost 50 years before retiring, while Oscar retired from Purdue University after 31 years where he worked in the Community Extension Service. Although retired, Oscar

has continued to work on various projects, including building an apartment onto their home for Oscar and Bev to live in so their daughter Karen can live in the original house and help with Bev's care. Currently, Oscar is helping their son, John, finish off the basement in his house. Beverly says "he'll never quit working; he's always doing something!"

"We are big sports fans," says Bev. "We have

season tickets to the football games and both men's and women's basketball games at Purdue." Although Bev was unable to attend any of the football games this year, she has been able to get to the basketball games and root for the Boilermakers.

Thanksgiving and Christmas traditions for the Hopkins' are centered on family. No matter what day they actually celebrate the holiday, all the family was together. What a blessing!

Keeping in Touch with InTouch A Season of Hope by Monica Arrowsmith

I struggled with the concept of hope, especially when I read a phrase such as "hope in Christ." What does that mean? Because I equate the word "hope" with "wish," I didn't find it a very comforting word. I don't want hope. I want certainty, confidence, unequivocation. As it turns out, I DO have that in hope. I discovered that the true meaning of hope



is more about the when, than the if; more about active waiting and its companions, perseverance and patience. In unpacking the word "hope," I asked myself, in what do I have hope? Well, words for one. I have perpetual, unwavering hope that just the right word or combination of words is there for the taking, to capture perfectly the essence of what I am trying to convey. Sure, they're outside of my grasp sometimes,

but I KNOW they're there. I imagine those who paint have such hope in color. That just the right shade and intensity of color is there for their taking, to capture perfectly the essence of what they are trying to convey. And with just a little bit more work, a little bit more time, the right words or the right color will be realized. I also have hope in medical science. Many of us do. Those of us who are or have loved ones struggling with Alzheimer's,

Cancer, Diabetes, Heart Disease or Parkinson's have hope that a cure will be discovered or a way to limit the pain and tragedy of the disease will be developed. This hope is not about whether such cures or treatments will be discovered; it's a matter of when. All we have to do is look at diseases that have been eradicated from our existence or the astounding rate of discoveries that are translating into health every day to know that

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STAFFING ADDITION



Have you noticed a familiar face back in the church of-fice? Tricia Sembroski accepted the position of Financial/Office Asst. and began working at St. Andrew in mid-October. She steps into the role formerly held by Melissa Martin.

Tricia's contributions to St. Andrew are many. She served as Assistant Secretary for seven years and has served on Ad Board, Finance Committee, Ministry Development, Staff Parish Committee, the Education Committee and Family Ministries. Upon accepting

the Financial/Office Asst. position, Tricia resigned her position as Treasurer of the Finance Committee. She brings many years of experience and a vast knowledge base to the position.

Please welcome Tricia the next time you see her.

DIR. OF MUSIC TO BE HIRED

In the past year, both the Praise Team Director and the Director of Music at St. Andrew have stepped down from their positions to pursue retirement or more demanding duties at a



full-time position. When Paul Addison left, Dave Evans began directing the praise teams and then stepped in as interim Director of Music when Mary Warren retired. Staff/Parish intended to do a full search for the position when they had the job description up-to-date.

Staff/Parish is now ready to begin that search. If you are interested in the Director of Music position or know someone who might be, you may pick up a description of the job in the church office. Please send a cover letter, resumé, and references to the Staff/Parish committee at St. Andrew or drop them off in the office. Someone from Staff/Parish will contact you to get you further information.

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the diseases of today will become medical history of tomorrow. And while we wait, we pray, and we educate ourselves, and we participate in fundraisers, in walks and rides and runs for awareness, and in clinical trials. All the while bravely facing the disease at present and knowing that it will not always be like this for everyone who comes later.

And I have hope in the abolition of hunger, of poverty, of war. I can have this bold of a hope because God already gave us all the tools and resources we need to abolish these as well. And that is when it struck me; God gave us this amazing planet and ourselves and each other. AND on top of that, He gave us His Son to show us the way. The way of love, of caring, and of using our collective gifts and talents, ourselves, for the benefit of others. So, as we now

face Advent, the season of Hope, I do get it! Our hope in Christ is not wishful thinking, not whether the Kingdom will be realized; it's WHEN it will be realized. To realize the hope that is the Kingdom of God, all we have to do is follow Jesus. Sure it takes work and perseverance and patience

on our part, just like it does to write a great novel, paint a masterpiece or discover a cure. But He is right there within our grasp, there for the taking - and for the giving.

Blessing of the Cookies



A special gathering is scheduled for Dec. 19 at 10 a.m. in the CrossRoads Intersection. InTouch will be making up packages of cookies for members of our congregation who have been touched by our ministry this year. A special prayer will be said on behalf of the recipients of the cookies. If you'd like to be a part of this experience, please contact Laurie Klenosky at 497-7755 and let her know.



Please remember to let us know if there is someone in our congregation who would benefit from receiving a card, phone call, or visit from our ministry. We'd also like you to let us know about scheduled and emergency hospital stays. Our ministry works best when we know whom and how we can help. Please call the church office at 497-7755 with specific information.

ECHOES OF THE GOSPEL

Sunday, January 10, 6-7:30 PM
Beloved, by Toni Morrison, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1988 and is the next selection for the St. Andrew book group. Everyone is welcome to come discuss it on Sunday, January 10, from 6-7:30 p.m. in Adult I. This book was an early Oprah Book Club selection and is often part of university curriculum. It is described as depicting the devastation and human cruelty that takes place in the business of slavery and slave trade. It is definitely disturbing, but you will be glad you read it. *Beloved* is available in paperback and at our local libraries.

"Echoes of the Gospel" is a group that talks about books, applying the lens of our faith and our understanding of lessons we learn from the Bible. It is an informal group, and a good place to get to know others at St. Andrew. Some read every book and come to every session, others attend just when the chosen book is of interest. You are always welcome to enjoy the conversation, whether you have read the book or not. Please join us

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Census Takers and other jobs! Watch for flyers and posters in your neighborhood businesses and meeting places or call toll-free 866-861-2010 for information on testing/recruiting sites, dates, and times.

You may also download a practice test to help you prepare by visiting www.2010.census.gov.

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR, AGAIN!

We're talking about the annual **CrossRoads Cares Quilt Give-Away**. Some lucky person will have a chance to win a gorgeous quilt made by the very talented Robin Thomas and just in time for Christmas! Drop by the CR Cares table in The Commons the next two Sundays and fill out a card with your name and contact information. Please, just one card per person. And, if you would like to, make a donation to CrossRoads Cares (the Mission arm of the CR). All proceeds go towards helping fund various CR Mission trips and local mission-related projects. Donations are appreciated but not necessary to win this beautiful quilt. Thank you, Robin, and to all who support the CR Cares Ministry. The winner will be notified on Monday, December 14.



NEWS FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE

2010 Giving Envelopes

The giving envelopes for those that wish to use them during 2010 will be available in the church office beginning on December 6. Boxes with names pre-printed on them will be available for those that used envelopes during 2009. There will also be weekly and monthly sets with no names for those that wish to begin using them during 2010; just be sure to enter your name and box number on the list. The use of numbered giving envelopes does save time for the counters and the financial secretary, but the use of them is entirely your choice.

Pledge Cards

You may still turn in pledge cards for the 2010 operating budget if you are planning to do so. Contact Larry Biehl if you have any questions.

Building Fund Status as of 11/30/2009

Total Income:	\$3,820,213
Total Expenses:	\$5,002,643
Total Loan Balance:	\$1,294,642
Relocation Account Balance:	\$112,212
Follow-on campaign income for November:	\$20,062
Expenses for November:	\$6,894
Loan principal payments for November:	\$42,093

Note that the loan balance dropped below \$1.3 million during November.

The finance report and detailed building fund/follow-on campaign report for November will be available at the Welcome Center. Contact Larry Biehl if you have any questions.

THANKS FROM BOY SCOUTS!!

Thank you, St. Andrew, for your support of our Spaghetti Dinner. Our goal was to raise enough money to build shelves in the new garage. With your help that goal was realized. Thank you again for your dedication and commitment to Troop 335!

CENTER STAGE EVENTS

Our December luncheon will be on the 13th at 12:30 p.m. at John and Bev Bryan's (321 Walker Lane, Lafayette). Please bring a dish to share, and join us for several congenial hours of great food and conversation--and be sure to RSVP if you plan to attend (beverlybryan@comcast.net or 474-3033).



On a second note, the date for our first Community

Meal at Trinity United Methodist for 2010 will be February 28 (please note the change of date from our original plans). Watch for more details as the date draws nearer.

ST. ANDREW UMW TO MEET

Our St. Andrew unit of the **United Methodist Women** will meet Tuesday evening December 8, at 7:00 p.m., at Helen Hayden's home. Her address is 5511 N. 225 West, West Lafayette. Helen will be presenting the program: **The Christmas Story According to Big Matthew.** Helen will also be in charge of our **Christmas "Sweatshop."** We will be sewing clothing protectors (bibs) for Tippecanoe Villa Residents. The women of St. Andrew are most welcome to come and enjoy fellowship and refreshments along with the program. For more information or directions to Helen's home, contact Helen Hayden at 463-6587 or Mary Satterly at 463-5374.

THANK YOU FROM FOUR HOMES

By Richard C. Nelson for the Missions Work Area



For over ten years St. Andrew United Methodist Church, through its Missions Ministry, has helped to support Four Homes of Mercy in Israel/Palestine, and we have received many notes of appreciation in return, often told through stories of the residents.

In an Easter 2009 letter, Liz Mulford, President of The Friends of Four Homes, mentioned Suheila, a 12-year-old and the youngest of eight children, who "arrived shy, completely dependent, unable to sit, stand, talk or communicate her needs," whose "parents could not provide her with adequate medical care or therapy.

"Five years later, she sparkles as she sits in her wheelchair, feeds herself, happily brushes her hair and teeth, takes part in all activities, is learning to maneuver her wheelchair, can speak a few words... and easily charms all who meet her."

In a July letter, Liz expressed gratitude for funds that enabled an aide named Abba to be paid. "Recently, Abba accompanied her charges on their trip to [a] zoo in the town of Qalqilia. This was a very special treat for these youngsters and the accompanying adult residents.., [whose] eyes, smiles and squeals reflected their excitement at seeing animals most had never before seen. They also greatly enjoyed the adventure of traveling together in a large bus, and having a picnic."

In an October letter, the daughter of Four Homes' founder, Henrietta Siksek Farradj, wrote: "Thank you for helping keep the doors of the Four Homes of Mercy open... On behalf of all who benefited by your generosity I wish you God's care and protection."



We of St. Andrew United Methodist Church are indeed blessed to be able to provide support to a number of missions, and the Missions Ministry would like to call attention to the envelopes that are inserted in the attendance folders for use in contributing to our priority missions, Four Homes included. Note that acknowledgement letters may be provided to those who wish to send a mission gift in the name of a friend or relative.

U.S. CENSUS JOBS ANNOUNCEMENT

Recruiting For Jobs With The U.S. Census Has Begun! Job Applicants Are Needed In West Lafayette!

- Great temporary full & part-time temporary job opportunities with flexible hours
- Work in your own area
- Competitive pay with mileage reimbursement

The 2010 Census is offering testing/recruiting sessions in your area for

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St. Andrew Connections

St. Andrew United Methodist Church
4703 N. 50 W.
West Lafayette, IN 47906
Thursday, December 03, 2009

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Lafayette, Indiana
PERMIT NO. 54

ST. ANDREW CONNECTIONS

St. Andrew UMC

Phone: 497-7755

Traditional Worship: Sunday 8:45 a.m.

Contemporary Worship: Sunday 11:00 a.m.

Mid-Week Worship: Wednesday 7:00 p.m.—September—May

Sunday School: 10:00 a.m. Childcare provided at all times



Staff

Pastor:	Tim Burchill
CrossRoads Pastor:	Pat Sleeth
Administrative Secretary:	Donna Biehl
Financial/Office Asst:	Tricia Sembroski
Dir. of Children's Ministry:	Melissa Martin
Director of Music:	Dave Evans
Organist/Pianist:	LuAnn Boggess
Asst. Organist/Pianist:	Lisa Tally
Dir. Of InTouch Ministry	Monica Arrowsmith
Coordinator InTouch Ministry	Laurie Klenosky
Joyful Sound Director:	Jeni Leaird
Caretaker:	Linda Hamilton

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