

Volume 25 Issue 12

December 2009

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A TALL TALE, INDEED!

From far beyond our view or imagination a universe-creator and star-sprinkler becomes a planet-visitor. He strips himself of the perks of his royal estate and clothes himself in the most simple attire, even choosing to invade time and space at an inconvenient time and place. No comfortable transportation. Forget about electricity. Let's not even speak of hygiene accoutrements.

Why this journey to the dark side...the human bailiwick? Ah, that is the mystery. There is nothing here that heaven lacks. No treasure trove to be sacked. Rumor has it that this

condescension is simply and totally a matter of selfless love. See... somebody should write a play or publish a book about this beyond-belief rescue mission. But isn't it a bit over the top, a real stretch and out of sync with our every-man-for-himself mood?

I like telling this tale. Even if it was but half true and happened in real life and real time it would be the best news to hit the papers in recorded history. But the story goes on. It is more than a creator-god slipping into our population and wearing common threads. He even takes those off and hangs naked on an instrument of death. Mutinous men insist on his death. And he goes along with it. All of the weaponry of

the other-world remains unexplainably silent as his life slips away. There is no protest. No friends call for leniency. And no last minute flight of angels to halt the travesty. It seems to be the great-

est of all tragedies. For three days all of heaven holds its breath. His body, wrapped in linen, grows cold. But... then came Sunday.

This riches-to-rags-to-riches saga was meant to include us. He took us to that horrid cross and we slept in the



O Little Town of Bethlehem 'The first Christmas'
Baker: Melisa Corcoran (November 2005)

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death cave with him. We (praise God!) felt the life-tremor surge through our veins and hearts. Our shadows were exterminated by the flood of his light. We believers of the Story and followers of the executed One received a life line from Out There. He placed us in the never ending story.

The crèche of Christmas hardly gives an inkling of where the Story is going. But we gaze at this ink drawing of a shivering baby, farm animals in attendance, and see there the seed of a full color tale worth hanging your stocking (and life) on.

Merry Christmas,
Fellow Space Travelers




THE MAN AND THE BIRDS

Now the man to whom I'm going to introduce you was not a scrooge, he was a kind, decent, mostly good man. Generous to his family, upright in his dealings with other men. But he just didn't believe all that incarnation stuff which the churches proclaim at Christmas Time. It just didn't make sense and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just couldn't swallow the Jesus Story, about God coming to Earth as a man. "I'm truly sorry to distress you," he told his wife, "but I'm not going with you to church this Christmas Eve." He said he'd feel like a hypocrite. That he'd much rather just stay at home, but that he would wait up for them. And so he stayed and they went to the midnight service.

Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier and then went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound. Then another, and then another. Sort of a thump or a thud. At first he thought someone must be throwing snowballs against his living room window. But when he went to the front door to investigate he

found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They'd been caught in the storm and, in a desperate search for shelter, had tried to fly through his large landscape window.

Well, he couldn't let the poor creatures lie there and freeze, so he remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter, if he could direct the birds to it. Quickly he put on a coat, galoshes, tramped through the deepening snow to the barn. He opened the doors wide and turned on a light, but the birds did not come in. He figured food would entice them in. So he hurried back to the house, fetched bread crumbs, sprinkled them on the snow, making a trail to the yellow-lighted wide open doorway of the stable. But to his dismay, the birds ignored the bread crumbs, and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow. He tried catching them. He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them waving his arms. Instead, they scattered in every direction, except into the warm, lighted barn.

And then, he realized, that they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature. If only I could think of some way to let them know that they can trust me. That I am not trying to hurt them, but to help them. But how? Because any move he made tended to frighten them, confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him. "If only I could be a bird," he thought to himself, "and mingle with them and speak their language. Then I could tell them not to be afraid. Then I could show them the way to safety ... to the safe warm barn. But I would have to be one of them so they could see, and hear and understand."

At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sounds of the wind. And he stood there listening to the bells - Adeste Fidelis - listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. And he sank to his knees in the snow.

-- Author Unknown --

(Shared by the late Paul Harvey on his radio show)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:1, 14 KJV)

HANGING OF THE GREENS

Each year on the first Saturday of December we have a tradition of decorating the church for the Christmas Holiday season. Everyone is invited to help out. Our volunteer head decorators already have the plans prepared so all you need to do is report to the Fellowship Hall at about 10:30 a.m. Saturday the 5th of December following the Saints Alive Breakfast in Phoenix. You will then be given your assignments. About noon we will break for a light soup lunch. If you have questions or would like more information call Laurie Royer at 541-772-0689.



OH, THOSE MEN!

Come to the oasis. Plenty of people stop by our table these days to receive refreshment from our joyous guys. We (Real Men) meet in the center of the restaurant and our behavior is there for all to see. Our laughter gives pleasure to the ear. Our Bibles are open and our conversation sincere. We are a little illustration of Jesus' remarks about 'light that cannot be hid'. There is no fanfare or preachiness. We are just Real Men looking at Real Life through the lens of the scriptures. Come join us, guys. Your first visit is rewarded with free breakfast, thanks to one of our long-timers. The Old Farm House, Phoenix, 7:45 Monday mornings... pretty please.

POTLUCK

Have you been wanting to try a new recipe for that great family Christmas dinner, but you're not sure about it yet. We have the perfect opportunity for you to try it out on someone else first. Just fix it for

our December Potluck on Sunday the 20th and we'll let you know what we think.

Our monthly potlucks are a great opportunity to get to know others in the congregation and especially newcomers.

If your last name begins with **A-K**, please bring a **main dish and a dessert**. If your last name begins with **L-Z**, please bring a **main dish and a salad**. Single folks just bring one item to share.

Remember the ovens are on for keeping food warm, so please bring your food already cooked.



SAINTS ALIVE...AND LAUGHING

Ditties from the internet provide for much laughter on the first Saturday of each month. Saints Alive has been going on for many years now and is a much anticipated by a bunch of our older folk. These days younger people are getting in on the action, including families. Everyone is welcome. Join us at the Iron Skillet Restaurant at the Pear



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Tree truck stop. We are now located back in the arboretum. See you on Saturday, December 5 at 9 a.m. Order from the menu or pick and choose at their buffet.



TWO GOOD GUYS BAPTIZED

Oh, what a glorious day. Lucas (Luke) Crawford and Andrew Rose were baptized into Christ, right before our teary eyes, on Sunday, November 1st. I have had the pleasure of weekly Bible study with these cousins who live in White City. They love Jesus and want to serve him with all of their energy. God bless you, dear brothers. Jim Larsen

LADIES CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

This year's Ladies Christmas Brunch will be held at the church on Saturday, December 12 from 10:00 a.m. noon. I lieu of a gift exchange, please bring an item to be donated to the Pregnancy Center. Quiche will be provided; bring a breakfast bread or fruit to share.

There is an optional cookie exchange. Bring 6 dozen cookies. (5 dozen to exchange and 1 dozen to go don't Arbor House for our Shut-ins.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT CARE CENTERS

If you'd like to bring a good bit of cheer to some wonderful, but house bound, folk, consider joining Gene and Janice Stringer at Arbor Place in Medford (address?) on Sunday, December 20 at 3 p.m. Elea-

nor Olson and Jim Larsen invite you to blend your holiday voices with theirs at Jackson House in Talent (Suncrest Road) at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, December 22. Directions and more details are readily available from any of these servants. Your warmth and presence would be appreciated.

JIM OFF TO PERU IN DECEMBER

I've been trekking to South America for about fourteen years, first to Chile and, more recently, Peru. This year I'll be teaching young preachers and their wives, as well as a large group of volunteer leaders in Trujillo. From Trujillo I'll travel into the high country with John Hendee to do more preaching and teaching. I am delighted to serve a congregation which encourages these forays for Christ. If you wish to participate in my trip you could send along a few pieces of clothing for our friends there. I fly out early on December 2 so the deadline for your generosity is Sunday, November 29.



FIFTH SUNDAY VARIETY HOUR... DECEMBER 29

Oh what fun it is laugh and sing...at Variety Hour.

It's that time again...another Fifth Sunday and an evening of music, humor, readings, (whistling, anybody?). Join your church family for another night of entertainment, inspiration and hymn singing, with dessert to follow. It is not too late to plan for your contribution. Find a poem to present or a solo (duets, trios, etc.) to share. Ice cream will be furnished to top off desserts, and another pie or cake would be welcome. Sunday...November 29...6 p.m.

CHRISTMAS PARTIES ANYBODY?

With a good number of Christmas events on the calendar, including "hanging of the greens", Christmas Potluck on December 20 and caroling at the care centers, we are encouraging our folk to plan home events during the holidays...for your family, neighbors and friends. We've also decided to forego a Christmas Eve service, in favor of home gatherings. With so many grand Christmas Eve events going on in the Valley, those who want to go to church will have no problem finding plenty of choices.

BUDGET TIME IS HERE AGAIN

The budget represents a plan to be the church in the clearest sense of the word. We plan to assist missionaries as we have for years. We plan to turn our pastor loose on the valley, and regions beyond. Yes, we plan to meet regularly, to worship, to study and to find ways to touch the communities represented by our folk.

The plan only works if we team up to undergird it with our time, energy, and yes...money. Last year we did serious surgery on the budget to match it up with the congregation's level of giving. This year we have done even more chopping. What is needed from each member of the church who votes on the budget in December is this: Decide if this plan is worthy of your support. Your continued presence here would lead to the conclusion that you are part of the team. Then pray for the faith to be visionary, consistent and perhaps even sacrificial in your giving. That is the only way the church can carry out the ambitious plan we have to put a dent in the darkness and put the Great Commission into practice. The proposed budget will be available for your review and may be picked up in the foyer.



JULIE CONTINUES IN LEADERSHIP ROLE...EMPHASIS ON PRAYER

Julie Hamilton has already led us on two prayer treks...one to Howard Prairie Lake and the other in Prospect. Your elders and pastor have invited Julie to continue on in this prayer ministry leadership role. Beginning in January you'll read her monthly column in the newsletter.

Take a look at photos from our Summer and Fall editions of prayer excursions.

HELP WANTED

Did the headline attract your attention thinking maybe there is a job available that will help finances in these difficult times? Well it is true. There are actually two jobs. They involve you and that friend who may be suffering financially and/or spiritually. There is a great opportunity to help them with their problems. Bring them with you to...

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY is one proven way to get off the financial disaster train wreck that so many are dealing with these days and get started on the road to financial peace. In this course Dave Ramsey (www.fpu.com) challenges us to break the chains of bad financial management which is one of the leading causes for divorce. He will explain clearly how to get rid of accumulated debt and get on the road to financial prosperity. You will not want to miss the last lesson in the 13-week course where the connection is strongly made between financial peace and your relationship with

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God. The course leader is Doyle Cornwell who will be pleased to answer your questions and sign you up.
Tuesdays at 7 PM starting January 5, 2010.

ALPHA will provide answers to your spiritual questions and/or deepen your walk with God. **ALPHA** Pastor Nicky Gumble from London opens the 10-week video series (www.alphausa.org) with a provocative question such as "Why Did Jesus Die?" or "Does God Heal Today?" This is followed by an open small group discussion where any question you have is welcomed and encouraged. Inquiring Christians, agnostics, atheists are all welcomed. It all starts with a delicious meal at 6 p.m. and ends with the small group discussion around 8:30 p.m.. An Invitation Dinner will give you a chance to sample the course on January 6 with the first class to follow two weeks later. The course leader is Gene Stringer who will be pleased to answer your questions and sign you up.
Wednesdays at 6 PM starting January 6, 2010.

39 PLUS

We always start our month on the 1st Wednesday at Marie Hoffman's place, 61 N. Mountain Avenue. Games kick off the morning at 10. After some fun competition Jim Larsen leads us in a study from the Bible

Noon time finds us enjoying a potluck built around Marie's main course. New to the church? Hey, here's an opportunity to get acquainted with some mighty fine people. On Wednesday December 30, our 39Plus folk fold the monthly newsletter after a bit of Skip Bo, dominoes or a card game. Bring a dish to share for the pot luck lunch. Arrive at 10 to get in on the whole deal.

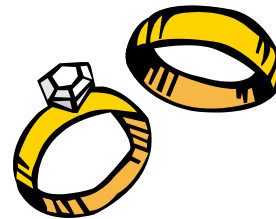


Today in the town of
 David a Savior has
 been born to you; he is
 Christ the Lord.
 Luke 2:11 NIV



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 3 - Janie Moore
- 7 - Phyllis Smith
- 10 - Jade Rudy
- 12 - David Wing
- 18 - Catherine (Kitty) Ellis
- 19 - Kiley McDonald
- 21 - Isaac McDaniel
- 22 - Allicia Pepper
- 24 - Harvey Ellis
- 25 - Ala Jones
- 25 - Dan Tiller
- 25 - Keith Nixon
- 26 - John Wing
- 29 - Alice Sweeney
- 30 - Dan Acery
- 31 - Muriel Ellis
- 31 - Brendan Ellis



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 24 - Mike and Laurie Royer
- 30 - Gene and Janice Stringer
- 30- Russ and Marge Russell

Editor's Note: If I have missed your birthday or anniversary please let me know so I can update my calendar and include them in the future. If I have included any that you would like removed please let me know that also. Just send corrections to the church office.

Brad

"JESUS, LORD OF ALL"

"The Family of God"

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																										
<p>November 09</p> <table> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30						<p>6 12:30 PM Ladies Ministry Mtg</p> <p>7 7:45 AM Men Alive-Old Farm House Cafe 8:00 AM Ladies Monday Morning Study Group 2:00 PM Ladies Monday Afternoon Bible Study Phyllis Smith, B'day</p>	<p>1 6:30 PM Ladies Study in Talent</p> <p>8 6:30 PM Ladies Study in Talent</p>	<p>2 10:00 AM 39 Plus - Marie Hoffman's Home</p>	<p>3 Janie Moore, B'day</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5 9:00 AM Saints Alive Breakfast - Iron Skillet 10:30 AM Hanging of the Greens</p>
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<p>13 12:30 PM Board Meeting</p>	<p>14 7:45 AM Men Alive-Old Farm House Cafe 8:00 AM Ladies Monday Morning Study Group 2:00 PM Ladies Monday Afternoon Bible Study</p>	<p>15 6:30 PM Ladies Study in Talent</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 Catherine (Kitty) Ellis B'day</p>	<p>19 6:30 PM Old Time Movie Night Kiley McDonald, B'day</p>																																										
<p>20 12:15 PM Potluck</p>	<p>21 7:45 AM Men Alive-Old Farm House Cafe 8:00 AM Ladies Monday Morning Study Group 2:00 PM Ladies Monday Afternoon Bible Study 7:00 PM Ladies Study in Eagle Point Isaac McDonald, B'day</p>	<p>22 6:30 PM Ladies Study in Talent Alicia Pepper, B'day</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 Harvey Ellis, B'day Mike & Laurie Royer, Ann</p>	<p>25 Christmas Keith Nixon, B'day Ala Jones, B'day Dan Tiller, B'day</p>	<p>26 John Wing, B'day</p>																																										
<p>27 12:30 PM Deacons Meeting - Volunteer Office</p>	<p>28 7:45 AM Men Alive-Old Farm House Cafe 8:00 AM Ladies Monday Morning Study Group 2:00 PM Ladies Monday Afternoon Bible Study 7:00 PM Ladies Study in Eagle Point</p>	<p>29 6:30 PM Ladies Study in Talent Alice Sweeney, B'day</p>	<p>30 10:00 AM 39 Plus - Newsletter Folding Dan Acery, B'day Gene & Janice Stringer, Ann Russ & Marge Russell, Ann</p>	<p>31 Brendan Ellis, B'day Muriel Ellis, B'day</p>	<p>January 10</p> <table> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31							
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DECEMBER 2009

CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF ASHLAND

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Service Schedule

9:30 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Discovery Club
10:45 AM Worship

Faithful to God, Responsive to People

We're on the Web
www.cc-ashland.org



OLD TIME MOVIE NIGHT

We considered skipping the December version of Old Time Movie Night. Then we remembered the outcry when we passed up this favorite of the Ashland scene a year or two ago. People simply love to walk through our doors, buy a treat from the snack bar, watch a double feature and chat during intermission. To miss even one month would be a misdemeanor.

WOW! A HOLIDAY GRAB BAG OF ACTION, SUSPENSE AND ADVENTURE AWAITS ALL WHO ATTEND OUR DEC. 19 ADDITION OF OLD TIME MOVIE NIGHT!

The evening's fun starts with "DICK TRACY DETECTIVE", an RKO 1945 gem starring Morgan Conway as the intrepid plainclothes crime fighter, lovely Anne Jeffreys as his steadfast sweetheart Tess Trueheart and Mike Mazurki as (gulp) Splitface.

Our second feature is Director John Ford's 1948 MGM masterpiece "3 GODFATHERS," a western retelling of the Biblical Three Wise Men tale in which even men of dissolute character can follow that inner star of Bethlehem to their own redemption. Join us as Dick Tracy pursues the bad guys and three fugitive bank robbers (John Wayne, Harry Carey Jr. and Pedro Armendariz) care for a newborn infant bound for the little cowtown of New Bethlehem.

Doors and Snack bar open at 6:00 p.m.
First movie starts at 6:30 p.m.

