



## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Jim Brannon

Christmas is a time of giving, so that means that Christmas is a time of shopping. Ever notice how, beginning with Thanksgiving week, the traffic increases, the checkout lanes everywhere are full and there's even more of a crowd at the grocery store. I suppose ever since the wise men from the east showed up at the stable with their gifts people have been exchanging gifts.

It's a lot more complicated today than in the day of the wise men. They didn't have to go to shopping malls and stand in lines or look for parking spaces. No decisions to make between Wii or play station, sizes, colors or return policies. Whether you view shopping with anticipation and glee or think it's slightly more desirable than a dose of castor oil, we will be shopping. Millions of dollars will change hands as gifts are purchased.

This year, like every other, millions of people, young and old will open millions of gifts. Some will be the wrong size or color. Many will be returned or exchanged. Some will be cherished. Others will be placed on the shelf until sufficient time has elapsed till we don't feel guilty for giving them to Goodwill.

There is one gift that meets everyone's need. One gift that will never wear out, break or need repairing. It's a gift that is appropriate for a small child, teenager, young adult or senior adult. A gift that is needed by the richest person alive. A gift for boy or girl, man or woman. It makes no difference. The gift we all need, the most valuable gift of all is the baby in the manger.

The gift of the king who did it all backwards. Leaving the throne of heaven for a bed in a manger. Leaving the adoring angels for the unbelieving masses. Laying aside his heavenly crown for a crown of thorns. Leaving the glory of heaven to plumb the depths of hell. The one gift that makes this season Christmas. It's not just a holiday. It is a Holy day!

God's gift is none other than Jesus Christ, Himself. "God with us". It is the gift of greatest value. It is the gift that must be received. It is a sad thought that many will go through the motions of celebrating this season but walk away from the "tree of life" having never accepted the gift. I pray that all who read



## MEN'S MINISTRY

Cris Alexander

Being a shepherd in old Israel must have been one of those occupations where endless hours of boredom were occasionally punctuated by a few seconds of stark terror. It was probably hard to keep awake while watching over the flock at night, but you had to because a predator could appear at any minute. And although shepherds were vital to the economy of the nation, they were universally looked upon with disdain by their culture. They were the lowliest of the low.

And yet it was to this very ragamuffin group that God chose to announce the birth of the Savior to Israel. Why was this? Could it be because the shepherds had empty hands? Could it be because they didn't have their own agendas? I think so.

Do you come to God with empty hands? Are you unencumbered, as were the shepherds, by your own agenda and ready to be used by God? If not, perhaps this Advent Season would be a good time for some quiet introspection and prayer, a time to empty your hands and make them available to the Redeemer.

The RBC Men's Group is taking the month of December off, but we'll meet again on January 15. See you then!

## INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Jeanne Fruh



"One of the greatest mysteries of prayer is the need for perseverance. That our loving Lord so longing to bless, should have to be sought time after time, sometimes year after year, before the answer comes, is not easy to understand. It is also one of the greatest practical difficulties in the exercise of believing prayer. When after persevering supplication our prayer remains unanswered, it is often easiest for our pampered flesh (and it has all the appearance of pious submission) to think that we must stop praying because God may have a reason for withholding His answer. By faith alone the difficulty is overcome." (Quote taken from **Believing Prayer** by Andrew Murray.)



## YOUTH NOTES

Radu Pasca

### FUNNY THINGS KIDS SAY AT CHRISTMAS

#### What gifts did the three wise men bring?

Jay, five: "The three wise men brought Jesus presents of gold, frankincense, smurr (sic) and silver. But I think he would have preferred wrestling toys."

William, seven: "I don't know what presents the wise men brought Jesus but a Lego set would have been better."

Ellie, six: "When he was born three kings brought him gold, coins and a sheep."

#### Who was the Angel Gabriel?

Molly, six: "Angel Gabriel was also there and he has yellow wings and a white costume."

Katherine, nine: "Gabriel was this herald angel. He was a boy but he's played by a girl in Christmas plays."

Millie, seven: "I don't know who the angel is but I like Jesus."

#### Who is Jesus?

Antonia, seven: "Jesus is Mary and God's little boy."

Zoe, six: "Jesus is really old and his birthday was on Christmas 2007 years ago."

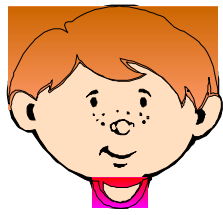
Sarves, seven: "Jesus is the God of the Christians."

#### What did the wise men follow to find the stable where Jesus was born?

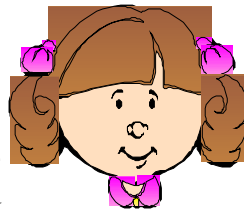
Unnamed child, six: "They followed a star to find Jesus, it's a very special star, but I forgot the rest." (Read more: [www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk))

**Matthew 1:21 "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."**

**Luke 2:11 "Today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."**



**KIDSTUFF**  
**Kathy Sanders**



Two big events in December! Draw a big red and green wreath around the second weekend.....

- Saturday, Dec. 11 from 10 AM until 11 AM will be our annual **"Birthday Party for Jesus"**. Games, crafts, the nativity story and, of course, birthday cake! Preschoolers - 5th grade (and any friends or neighbors) are invited to join us as we celebrate our Savior's birth. After the party, ALL Praise-KIDS and anyone else participating in the Christmas program are invited to stay and share a chicken nugget lunch before your dress rehearsal.
- Sunday, Dec. 12 during morning worship - **"The Christmas Puzzle"** will be presented by our PraiseKIDS. Break out the video cams - you will not want to miss this! Many thanks to Patricia Livermore, Wendy Johnson and PJ Andersen for their hard work with our young musicians. Pray for them as they continue to prepare, that God would be glorified in their presentation.

As you prepare for the upcoming holidays, parents - remember to teach your children the "reason for the season"!

### **UPCOMING DECEMBER EVENTS**

**Youth Christmas Party, Dec. 9th, 6:30 p.m.**

**Missions Banquet, Dec. 10th, 6:30 p.m.**

**Children's Christmas Party, Dec. 11th, 10:00 a.m.**

**Young Adult Christmas Party, Dec. 12th, 6:00 p.m.**

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion, 6:00 p.m.**

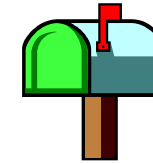
**Redeemer Baptist Church**  
**18800 E. Iliff Avenue**  
**Aurora, CO 80013**

# ***Redeemer Reflections***

*A Newsletter of Redeemer Baptist Church*  
*18800 E. Iliff Ave. Aurora, CO 80013*  
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*December, 2010*

## **To Our Out-of-Town Friends**



We had a great celebration of Thanksgiving at our annual "Thanksgiving Feast". It's the biggest "eating meeting" we have, both from the standpoint of the volume of food as well as the number of people involved. It's very much like a huge family dinner where everyone in the family is responsible for bringing a dish.

We also welcomed eight new members who completed the "Redeemer Life" new member orientation, two of whom we will be baptizing soon. There are eight more ready for our next new member class.

December will be full of all the usual holiday celebrations and annual events. The highlight of the month's activities will be the Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion. It is always a special time of focusing on the "reason for the season". We normally have lots of visitors attend. I am always encouraged by the number of people who set the time aside to focus on what really matters.

Site preparation will begin for construction of the playground and, weather permitting, will be completed by month's end.

We have begun receiving greeting cards and Christmas letters and it is a real joy to hear from so many of you. The years have brought many changes in the lives of all of us. Just this past year we have experienced the loss of many cherished friends in death. Christmas always affords the most poignant time of reflecting on relationships and to be reminded that they are the most important thing in life. Toys and trinkets can't give us a hug or share a tear. It's the flesh and blood, human companionship and relationships that make life worthwhile. Sandy and I want to make sure that you know of our love for you all and to know that we cherish the times that we have spent together. The miles separate but the love we share is not diminished by that fact. May you and yours have a most blessed Christmas!!