

Any Advent Aspirations?

Perhaps "ambition" is too vigorous a word. That implies strategy, sweat and elbow grease. "Aspiration" is a bit gentler, yet requires spiritual focus and deliberate intentionality. Aspiration asks that we focus beyond our internal moods and attitudes and search for signs of Christ's advent in our ordinary lives. After all, Christ came the first time in a very ordinary event; so why wouldn't his 2,003rd Advent be amidst the ordinary as well?

Maybe we make the mystery of Christmas a bit too mystical and miss the small, simple, quiet ways Christ comes anew to a world in desperate need of healing and blessing. Study the dawns and dusks of these early December days. They confirm that "heaven and nature sing" their joy to the world. One worthy aspiration might be to simply enjoy as many Advent sunrises and sunsets as we can possibly take in. The way sunlight plays across familiar landscape might serve as a sign of longed for luminescence within. Will we let the light of God touch the deep, sad places within? Would we allow the warmth of Christ's love melt cold places in our relationships? A worthy aspiration.

Consider another aspiration. Instead of cursing the crass commercialism of Christmas, find a way to laugh at the absurd lengths our culture is willing to go to create a felt need within us

for something useless but profitable! When commercialism is earnestly trying to part us from a bit of our money, it can't stand to be laughed at. So let's have fun at their expense, and channel our resources toward making God's world a better place. A worthy aspiration.

Here's another: consider a slight shift in family tradition. I know many families who are moving away from the "piles and piles of presents" approach to Christmas morning. They still exchange gifts, but set a reasonable limit while funneling the rest of what they might have spent per person toward the pressing needs of the poor, the AIDS epidemic, missions at home and abroad, emergency aid, global and local relief. Of course there needs to be something for everyone to open, but directing gifts in honor or memory of dear ones is a worthy aspiration.

Let's try another. What about asking God to reveal to us someone, some situation, some need that we can touch and transform during this Advent season? The need might be for a kind word, an act of mercy, some quiet bit of service, an anonymous surprise or blessing, perhaps a phone call, thoughtful note or visit. When we ask for this revelation in prayer, we will likely be the ones most surprised! Advent aspirations; found one yet? gws



Year End Gifts

As the year draws to a close and we prepare to complete our giving for the year 2003, there are a couple of things to remember.

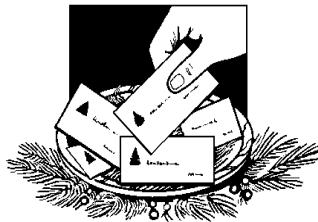
The IRS requires that all contributions credited on the 2003 Contribution Report must be received by the church or post-marked by December 31, 2003.

Also, please be aware the church office will be closed December 24, 25 & 26 for the holidays.

To help avoid the year-end rush, we will be

mailing Contribution Reports which include giving through the last Sunday in November.

This will give everyone the opportunity to look over the report for errors, and use the month of December to catch up and /or make corrections. **Remember, December 31 falls on Wednesday this year and will be the last opportunity to drop off a contribution to the office or it can be mailed and postmarked by December 31.**





FAMILY MINISTRIES

Mystery Night at Youth This Sunday
4:30 – 6:30PM



Wear weather appropriate clothing -- you just never know where we might go! We'll be leaving the church by 4:40 so be on time! If you've not completed a medical release form, please do so **BEFORE** this weekend.

Frankfort Community Christian Coffee House on Sunday, December 14th from 4:30 – 6PM at FCC

Come out for a good music, a casual atmosphere, friends old and new, and a light supper. Lifted Up will be leading music and some informal worship. Bring a canned good for the Food Pantry and **FRIENDS!**

The next Family Ministry Team meeting is Monday, December 15 from 5-6:15PM in the Conference Room. Please note that this is a change from our regular meeting on the third Sunday of the month.

Hey Frankfort High Students! Don't forget lunch on **THURSDAY, December 11**. The vans will meet you in front of school. \$3 for hot food, no walking in the cold or snow to lunch and a great Christmas giveaway – you just never know when hard, cold cash might be tossed out into the crowd!! Friends are welcome! Please help us out with food planning and RSVP to Megan Greenwell or Dawn M.

Jamaica and Fazoli's
Thursday, Dec. 18
From 5PM – 9PM



Please sign up for at least one shift on the sign up sheets posted on Dawn's office

door. Parent help is needed as well so feel free to sign up for a shift (5-7 or 5-9). Proceeds will support youth missions.

The annual New Horizons Child Development Center Christmas Play will be Friday, December 19th in Fellowship Hall at 5PM.



Come out and enjoy the sweetness of Christmas on the faces and in the laughter of our NHCDC children!

CYF Mission to Jamaica in 2004
July 16-25

If you're interested in going on the Jamaica Mission Experience this July, plan to attend an informational meeting on Sunday, December 14 following 10:45 worship. A \$75 non-refundable commitment deposit is due by December 31.

Canned Goods During Children's Blessing
Sunday, December 7 and 14th

Help serve God by serving others! Don't forget your canned good this week for this year's Christmas baskets. Bring more than one if you'd like! Green beans, corn, vanilla wafers, carrots, stuffing, peas, soup, mixed veggies, and pudding!

Family Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 21
4PM – 6 or 6:30PM



Don't forget to get this date on your calendar! After caroling, we'll enjoy a Christmas supper prepared by Naomi! This is a great time to invite a friend or that family down the street that you've been wanting to invite to church all year long!

Calendar of Events

- Dec. 7 Mystery Night 4:30PM
- 11 FHS Lunch @ FCC
- 14 CYC #7 4:30-6PM
- 15 Family Ministry Team 5PM
- 18 Jamaica & Fazoli's 5PM
- 19 NHCDC Christmas Play
- 21 Family Christmas Caroling
- Feb. 15 Fabulous February Follies
- 27-29 Family Retreat



Thankful News...

t Thanks to the youth who helped to serve the WEF meal this week! Your work was appreciated.

t Thanks to the Family Ministry Team for so faithfully serving the families of our congregation!



Wondering what the Family Ministry Team is up to these days? Here's a few events that you won't want to miss. Get these 2004 dates on your calendar right away!

t Fabulous February Follies and Silent Auction
Sunday, February 15th

t Family Retreat
February 27 – 29 at Lake Cumberland State Park (Pumpkin Creek Lodge)

t Journey to Baptism Retreat Weekend
March 19 – 21 at Lake Cumberland State Park

t Vacation Bible School
June 14 – 17



The December issue of Pockets has arrived. Pick your copy up this weekend!

Pastor Dawn DMM020309@aol.com/223-2346 @ church

Christmas Baskets

We have to act quickly and get the food and money in by December 17th so that the food can be sorted and taken to the Salvation Army on December 18th. There will be food boxes in Fellowship Hall to receive your donations and checks should be made payable to the CWF and may be dropped in the Offering Plates or left in the Church office. If you have any questions, please contact Diana Stewart at 223-2469 or email at IAMHON4@aol.com.



Jamaica Mission Trip Meeting - Sunday Dec. 7th







Team members will meet on Sunday Dec. 7th, immediately after the 10:45 service in the first floor conference room. Bible study and trip planning will be the focus of the meeting. The third payment will be due, along with various forms that were passed out at the November meeting. Questions, please call Jim True, 695-4385 or Harold Fletcher 695-8364.

Governor's Inaugural Prayer Service

Board of First Christian extended an invitation and was selected as the site for the Governor's Inaugural Prayer Service at 8:30 am this Tuesday, December 9th. One of our elders, Harold Fletcher will bring the message on that occasion. We expect a packed house and will use the Fellowship Hall for remote TV broadcast and overflow. Our hospitality ministry will host a brief breakfast reception just before the parade, which begins right outside our doors on Broadway at 10 am. *Church members are encouraged to park in the Commonwealth Credit Union Parking Lot.*

Salvation Army Angel Tree - Nov. 30-Dec. 10

The annual Salvation Army Christmas tree is decorated with sweet angels ready to be lovingly picked from the tree and gently cared for by you. The angels include children (not many though), youth and seniors this year. Descriptions, wish lists, sizes, etc., are listed on the individual cards. There is also a suggestion list for seniors next to the sign up poster. **Please follow these simple instructions when selecting your angel. Following this process will help your gift to be placed in the hands of your angel without one hitch!**

-  Pray for your angel from Advent through Epiphany.
-  Please leave the angel ornament on the tree, take only the bottom portion (the perforated part) of the angel (this is the part that has name, sizes, age, wish, list, etc.)
-  Please sign your name next to your angel's code which is listed clearly on the tag.
-  Please make sure that your tag is taped securely to your unwrapped gift or the front of the gift bag or box.
-  Please checked that you have returned your gift - this will help us as we process and take the gifts to the Salvation Army.
-  Please make sure that your gift is to the Angel Christmas tree no later than noon on Dec. 10.

Christmas Gifts for Staff

It is customary at Christmas for the members of our congregation to recognize the outstanding service our church staff has given our church. If you would like to show your gratitude to them, you may send a check to Cheryl's attention in the church office and designate your check "Staff Christmas Gifts." *Please have your gift in by Friday, December 12th.* Thanks.

Brooks Talley, Chair, Administrative Board

WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Saturday (5:35) December 6, 2003

Sunday (8:30 & 10:45) December 7, 2003

"Snowball Factor"

Malachi 3:1-4/Phil. 1:3-11

Dr. Gary Straub

Elders: 8:30am - Raymond Webb

10:45am - Joe Ray Gatewood and Eva Ellis

December Communion Team Leader: Judy McDonald

December Offertory Team Leader: Glen Hood

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

HOSPITAL: Margaret Marcum (FRMC)

RELEASED: Betty Arnold, Betty Puttoff, Bob Smith, Roy Thurman

PRAYER CONCERNS: Jane Barbour, Sue Boden, Ellis Bryant, Edith Campbell, Troy Cartwright, Mary Elizabeth Chenault, Joann Conway, Elsie Dean, Roy DeWitt, Malinda Dunlap (Delle Blair's sister), Dennis Earls (Evelyn Mills' brother-in-law), Carl Erbeck, Alice Fields, Martha Fincham, Janet Gatewood, Ken Goin, Carrie Goins (Ed's wife), Dorothy Gray, Mary Alice Harmon, Doris Harrod, Diana Hellard (Dave Fallis' mother), Bob Hodges, Butch Hughes (runs Soup Kitchen), William Hughes (Sharley's father), Lynda Jalbert, Mary Jane Jeffers, Frances Lee, Miranda Lee, Eloise Lewis, Bette Long, Fannie Lyon, Frances Malone, Mary Metz, Harold Minnis, Fannie Mitchell, Elsie Moore, June Munson (Barb Conway's mother), Zelma Nash, Margaret Norris, Kenny Perkins, Hallie Redford, Dale Rogers, George Simmons, Ann Snelling, Aliene Stivers, Doris Thurman, Anne Winn Vansant, Mary Vaughn, Edna Mae White, Earl Williams (Gina Weekley's grandfather), Jeri Wise, Margaret Zeigler (Mary Boden's mother)

THANK YOU: Len Shirrell and his family wish to express their appreciation for all the words, prayers, and acts of kindness you extended to my wife, Joyce, during her several months of sickness. The love and care you gave made those difficult times more tolerable. I would like to thank each of you personally, but that is not possible so Christian love to all. *Len Shirrell*

We would like to thank all of our Christian friends for their support, prayers, cards and visits during Roy's recent surgery. Through your prayers, we have been blessed. In Christian Love, *Roy & Betty Thurman*

I wish to give a big heartfelt "THANK YOU" for all the messages of encouragement and best wishes during my illness and subsequent move to the Episcopal Church Home at 7504 Westport Toad, West Wing #200 in Louisville, KY 40222. It is so good to have such dear friends and I treasure and appreciate each of you. *Eloise Lewis*

WELCOME: Congratulations to Hannah Wilson on her recent baptism. Her address is 1003 Gayland Dr, Lawrenceburg. Phone number is (502) 839-8736.

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR DEC. 6 -12, 2003

SATURDAY, DEC. 6
 8:00 First Place
 8:30 Tal's Basketball Group
 5:35 535 Service
 5:50 Children, Worship & Wonder

SUNDAY, DEC. 7
 8:30 Informal Chapel Service
 10:45 Sanctuary Worship
 12:00 After-Church Sunday Dinner
 - CWF Quarterly Meeting follows
 12:00 Mission Team
 3:00 Youth Band Practice
 3:30 Card Making
 3:45 Kids Bells

4:30 Youth Groups
 4:45 Adult Bells
 7:00 Men's Basketball

MONDAY, DEC. 8
 11:30 Staff Meeting
 12:00 535 Team
 1:00 Pastoral Staff
 5:30 Administrative Board

TUESDAY, DEC. 9
 Inauguration Day/Office Closed
 10:30 Gum-Chenault Circle
 5:30 Butterflies Small Group
 6:30 Nunnely & Emily Tubman Circles
 Christmas Potluck

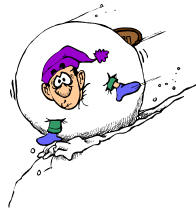
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 10
 Dr. Holdren - Counseling at FCC
 11:15 Brooks Circle
 5:00 Children's Choir Practice
 6:00 WEF Meal
 6:30 Beginner Band Practice
 6:40 Bell Concert
 7:30 Choir Practice

THURSDAY, DEC. 11
 Linda Blair—Counseling at FCC
 6:00 5:35 Band Practice
 7:00 Youth Basketball
 7:00 Shepherd's Small Group

NOTE: Due to the Inauguration, Weavings has been moved to Dec. 16th

5:35 Hard to believe that Advent is upon us, but the busy days are already unfolding, and what a great time to end your busy Saturday in late afternoon worship at First Christian.

This week Dr. G has a message called "Snowball Factor"---- maybe he knows more about the weather than he lets on! (just kidding, rev!). As usual the 5:35 band will be up to some joyful praise and they will be joined in one special song by members of the Chancel Choir- check it out!!



The 5:35 team encourages you to take a long hard look at your circles of friendship, and kinship. You are surrounded by people who are hungry for the spiritual connection you have found through 5:35. These folks are waiting for you, in a simple, warm way to offer an invitation to attend 5:35. So how about it? If you don't ask the people you know to come, who will?

NOTES:

Nunnely Circle & Emily Tubman Circle will meet together for a Christmas Potluck on December 9th, 6:30pm at Carol Wilson's, #7 Timberlawn. Bring \$4 and items for PUSH.

Brooks Circle will meet December 10th at 725 Bluegrass Ave, 11:15am and leave for lunch at Cavenaugh's. Please bring food gifts for PUSH.

Alathean Class Luncheon
 December 15th at Noon in Fellowship Hall

CWF Quarterly Meeting will be held Sunday, December 7, in the Chapel following the After-Church Sunday Dinner. At this meeting, the CWF will present Christmas Love Gifts to the church staff, hear financial news of the Bazaar, make preparations for "Blanket/Tools of Hope" Sunday in January. Members of the Executive Committee will be assisting in the preparation of the meal, providing desserts, and decorating tables. We encourage all CWF members to join us for dinner, and to stay for this brief meeting.

Christmas Blessing of Children

The Worship Team invites any family who wishes to participate in a Children's Blessing and Dedication Service on Christmas Sunday December 21st, to contact the Church Office.

November 29 & 30, 2003

Operating Budget:
 Needed thru week 48: \$536,249.68
 Receipts thru week 48: \$491,649.70

Attendance:
 119 (S.S.)
 81 (5:35 service)
 50 (8:30 service)
 188 (10:45 service)

"We Do Windows" donations: \$9,404.00

Hospitality Notes

[Make Wednesday Your Night Out for the Family]

Dec. 7 After-Church Sunday Dinner - - - CCLC at 12:05pm

Menu includes Pork Loin with Dressing & Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Apples, Mixed Vegetables, Cranberry Relish, Salads, Hot Rolls and Assorted Desserts.



Dec. 10 "Christmas at First Christian before the Ringing of Bells" - Self Risin' Hospitality presents a variety of your Christmas Favorites gathered in a Special Buffet including an array of desserts. CCLC

The Christian Messenger

(usps 108-680) Published weekly, except last wk. in Dec. by First Christian Church, 316 Ann Street, Frankfort, KY 40601. Periodical Postage Paid at Frankfort, KY. POST-MASTER: send address changes to: THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER, 316 Ann Street, Frankfort, KY 40601-2886. (502) 223-2346.