



# Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 12

December 2005

## Kreider's Korner

### Responses to the Coming of the King

Matthew 2:1-18

The story of the magi, who have come from afar to worship the one who was born king of the Jews, is a familiar one, and yet every time I read it I experience a sense of wonder and amazement. This wonder is brought about by a variety of factors. There is, of course, the wonder of the Christ (the second person of the Godhead) coming to earth and taking on human form, which overcomes me in every time I hear any account of our Lord.

In addition to this, there are three occasions of wonder and amazement in Matthew's account of the story of the magi.

First, I am appalled by the irrational jealousy of Herod the Great toward an infant, born in

an obscure little village. I am horrified by the cunning and cruelty of Herod, who is willing to kill all of the infants in the vicinity of Bethlehem in order to eliminate the threat of one child.

Second, there is the additional wonder of the incredible persistence and zeal of the magi, whose search for the "one born king of the Jews" compelled them to travel to a distant land to worship a foreign king, who was still in its mother's arms. And according to the text, this search is prompted by the appearance of a star.

Third, I find myself struck by an even more intense feeling of wonder at the response (or should I say the lack of response) of the entire city of Jerusalem. The magi diligently search for the infant king to present gifts and to worship Him. Herod the Great also seeks eagerly to find the child, so that he may put him to death. However, the vast majority of those who live in Jerusalem are seemingly unwilling to travel five short miles to the south of the city of Jerusalem to Bethlehem where they could have found their promised Messiah.

As we come once again to the Christmas season, this passage has much to say to

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St. Paul's Bible Church

# *Missionary Update*

December, 2005 Prayer Update

Dear Friends,

**A Merry Christmas to you as you once again set time aside to consider the blessings that are ours because Jesus left heaven to dwell among men.**

God was praised and glorified during the Xavante New Testament dedication. Instead of 1,000, there were about 500; instead of 3 cows, it was 4 to feed everyone! But pastors and deacons took hundreds of New Testaments back with them to distribute in their remote villages. Some of our missionary colleagues have taken several trips to help distribute Bibles, and the distribution will continue for months.

## **Answers to prayer this month:**

1. Our tribal partner Joan returned to Cuiaba this week after a 10-week session among the "R" people. The 3 new Christians and the shaman had many hours of reading and checking Scriptures. No one but the Lord knows what's happening in their hearts. But Joan has God's promise that the Word will accomplish what God has planned. Now at 70+, Joan's been praying for some years for a replacement, someone with whom she can work before she retires. Patricia has answered God's call. See prayer requests #1.
2. Our math teacher Dean was able to extend his plane ticket so that he can be here to finish the semester.

## **Prayer Requests for this month**

1. During Patricia's physical exam, cancer was found. This past week she had surgery and now plans for radiation treatment. May the Lord give her grace and strength to endure, heal, and continue down the path to Brazil in order to finish this translation project among the "R" people.
2. Another family and we are planning our neighborhood Christmas party for Saturday, December 10. Last year we gave Bibles in modern Portuguese. This year we plan to give the book *The Purpose-Driven Life*. Pray with us that the Lord will use this book and our efforts to love our neighbors and introduce them to a personal relationship with Christ.
3. This week Jean's mother has been in the hospital with dehydration, but she's improving. She has decided to try kidney dialysis. May the Lord take care of her and bless Jean's sisters with continued strength as they provide such superb care for her.

Yours,

Jean (and Wes) Bell - Wycliffe Bible Translators - Brazil

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Dear St. Paul's Bible Church

What a tragic time for so many people as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and terrorist bombings have destroyed or altered their lives forever. We have been horrified at the extent of the damage that has been wreaked upon the peoples of many nations this past month. We join with our international friends and pray that our God will comfort and give hope to the millions who have been affected. Members of the YFC community have been active from the Gulf States in the USA to the highlands of Pakistan providing aid and support to thousands.

Our own news is more encouraging as Kit and Robyn approach the birth of their first child at the end of November. All are well as they prepare for the event.

Kit has started his doctoral program at the local Baptist Theological College and will now be coping with two major projects in the New Year!

Amy is in the midst of her final exams for her law degree and Luke is being unusually quiet. Actually he has been elected project manager for the Wakisa Project in Uganda, and will be very busy, very soon. The Wakisa Project is the follow-up to our two trips to Kampala. Luke and his boss Dick are designing a residential centre where Vivian Kityo can care for up to twenty pregnant girls at a time, providing ante and post-natal care as well as life skills and commercial training. This is another huge, but essential undertaking. On my last visit the First Lady of Uganda told me she had personal contact with over a hundred needy girls at that time and why hadn't I already built the facility? No pressure!

Alexis is having some good days and her specialist is very pleased with her progress. We have all had bad flu-like infections that hung around for weeks but we are doing well at present. Alexis is still very tired but in good spirits.

Two weeks ago I presented at a Sydney University on the topic of a Christian psychologist's view of the supernatural as seen in exorcism (a hot topic here after a very controversial TV screening). I was to "dialogue" with a secular psychologist who would present his views. On the day he failed to show so I was asked to present both sides. I really enjoyed the debate!

Actually the question time was the best part of the event. All the feedback was positive and I believe many students were challenged to consider the possibility of a more open universe where the natural world is but a subset of reality. Praise God!

Thank You for being a part of our international support family.  
God Bless you

The Barkers - Youth for Christ International

## *Kreider's Korner (cont. from page 1)*

us about our response to the King of the Jews who has come as the Savior of the world. Our response will undoubtedly be like that of the magi, or Herod, or Jerusalem. How we respond has eternal implications. In addition to our response to the birth of the King, this passage also has a lot to say to us concerning our perspective on prophecy. We are now awaiting the second coming of the Christ, as promised by writers of the Old and New Testaments. Like the magi, Herod, and Jerusalem, we may respond to this coming of Christ in different ways. This story focuses our attention on the condition of our own hearts as we await the return of Messiah to the earth.

The three responses of the magi, Herod the Great, and Jerusalem are the typical responses of mankind to the message of a Messiah, who has come to redeem fallen man, and later, to reign over all the earth as king. Throughout history there have always been those who, like the magi, have sought God's Messiah and found Him. Often they have been those whom we would have least expected to find worshipping and adoring the Christ. God often seems to draw people to Himself from the least likely places and situations, like the magi whose journey began far from that little town of Bethlehem. We who are Gentiles should have a very special place in our hearts for the magi because in many ways we are like them. The apostle Paul wrote, "Therefore remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who called themselves "the circumcision"... remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ." (Eph. 2:11-13)

Then there are also those, like Herod, who take the claims of Jesus seriously, but who, for selfish reasons, actively seek to remove His sovereign rule from their lives. There are few who have been as active and aggressive as Herod in resisting the reign of Christ. However, history has recorded the fact that some earthly rulers have zealously sought to overthrow the rule of Christ and His church.

Finally, there are those like the vast majority of those who lived in Jerusalem. They are so apathetic to the claims of

Christ that they will not bother to make the minimal effort required to respond to the fact that He has come. On Christmas Sunday in a few weeks millions will not make the effort to travel a mile or two to a church where they may adore the Christ who came to save mankind from sin. In both America and Jerusalem it is not because they were not told of His coming and of His claims, but simply because they do not really care to bother themselves to respond to Him. The apathy of Jerusalem (or America) may be more socially acceptable than the atrocities of men like Herod and others, but it is in some ways more offensive. At least those who have committed atrocities against our Lord and His people have taken Christ's claims seriously.

Apathy and indifference do not stay around long. The city which could care less about the birth of their king thirty years later, in Herod-like fashion, is seeking out the death of Messiah. Rather than repenting of their sins and receiving Him as Savior and Lord, the city of Jerusalem was crying out, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" (Luke 19:21)

The controversy over Christ was whether or not He was the "king of the Jews". And rather than bowing down in worship before Him as their king, they shouted, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). What started out here as indifference later turned into animosity. Those who had at first ignored that Christ had come were later on attempting to rid the world of Him and His rule.

May I ask you very honestly as we approach another Christmas celebration, "Which response most accurately reflects your response to the coming of our Lord Jesus?" I doubt that there are any Herod's around because they would probably be trying to burn the church building down. However, is it possible that we have become so preoccupied with our holiday celebration that we have failed to do the most important thing of all - to seek Him out and to worship Him? Let us learn from the apathy of the city of Jerusalem.

### *Poinsettias*

The poinsettias are all ordered (20) and they will be \$17.50. That may sound a little high but comparing them with what Jewel, or florists are giving you for that price, I think it is fair. We are consistently provided with two huge plants in a decorated pot that, if cared for properly, will last until Easter. I disposed of mine one year because I got tired of dusting it!

If you are interested in getting one of the poinsettias that will decorate our Sanctuary for Christmas, please see Dee Mulvey.

## ***Adult Christian Fellowship (ACF) December Activities***

**Sunday, December 11, 6:00 p.m.** The whole family is invited to join us for the **Annual Wassail Party**. We will enjoy fellowshiping and singing Christmas Carols, followed by a time of fellowshiping and enjoying food and, of course, Wassail. We are asking people to volunteer to bring food for the evening, cookies, cakes, sandwiches, veggie trays, etc. Please see a committee member if you are able to bring something. This is a St. Paul's tradition that has been going on since the 1940s!

**Saturday, December 17, 5:30 p.m. The Progressive Dinner** is another Holiday tradition at St. Paul's. The schedule for the evening is as follows:

- o 5:30 – Appetizers – Hollander Home, 9360 S. Pleasant
- o 6:15 – Soup – Wenner Home, 9357 S. Winchester
- o 7:00 – Main Course – Church, 1960 W. 94th Street
- o 8:30 – Dessert & Grab Bag – Pilditch Home, 9409 S. Leavitt

**Reservations are needed by Wednesday, December 14.** The cost is \$10.00 person. If you would like to participate in the Grab Bag, please bring a \$10.00 gift, women should bring a gift for a woman and men should bring a gift for a man. This is an adults only event, and due to the nature of the event, we are unable to provide a baby sitter.

The ACF Committee:

- o Linda & Karen Jillson – 773-445-7166
- o Suzy Jillson – 708-597-5122
- o Sue & Jason Kreider – 773-339-9648
- o Jessica & Pete Oakley – 773-779-2653

For anyone interested in the origins of the word Wassail:

In Saxon times you would have used the original form of this word, *was hail*, to greet or say goodbye to somebody; it literally meant "be in good health". By the twelfth century, it had become the salutation you offered as a toast, to which the standard reply was *drinc hail*, "drink good health". (*Hail* is an older form of our modern word *hale*, "health; well-being" and is also closely connected with our word *hail* meaning "to salute, greet, welcome".) The toast seems to have come over with the Danes; by the twelfth century the Norman conquerors of Britain regarded it as one of the most characteristic sayings of the country. Later on, the word came to be used also for the drink in which the toast was offered, especially the spiced ale or mulled wine that was drunk on Christmas Eve or Twelfth Night. In the western counties of Britain, the tradition grew up

## ***Volunteers Needed***

PLOWS council on Aging, is now conveniently located at 7808 College Drive in Palos Heights. PLOWS is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing assistance to persons who are 60 years old or older. Currently, volunteers are needed to help deliver meals to homebound elderly. This valuable service can often mean the difference between living at home or being placed in a nursing home. Older people who are unable to shop or prepare meals for themselves may have prepared food delivered to them through the Home Delivered Meals Program at PLOWS. Hot meals are delivered on a daily basis by volunteer drivers to make sure these homebound seniors receive proper nutrition.

Volunteers are asked to drive one morning a week for approximately two hours to take meals to the homebound in Alsip, Chicago Ridge, Hickory Hills, Worth, and parts of Bridgeview. Additionally, PLOWS provides meals to residents of Palos Hills for a limited time when the Home Delivered Meals Program at Palos Hospital has a waiting list. Many retired husband and wives find this a rewarding experience to share. Services are provided on weekdays only, Monday through Friday. No weekends or evenings are required! Volunteers must have their own cars with insurance, and will receive a small stipend to defer the expense of gasoline.

You are invited to schedule a "trial run" with an experienced driver to learn more about this rewarding volunteer opportunity.

Call PLOWS at 708/361-0219 for more information about becoming a volunteer in this or other programs..

### ***Coffee Time Hosts/Hostesses***

The 2006 sign up sheet for Coffee Time Hosts/Hostesses is posted on the refrigerator. Please sign up for a Sunday or a month of Sundays.

Thanks to all of the Hosts and Hostesses for doing such a great job in 2005

### ***Trustees on Top of the Snow***

The trustees have contracted with a snow removal company for the winter snows. There should be no reason to not come to the church for fear of the plowing not being done. If you feel they are missing some part of the property, please let one of the trustees know. - Eleanor

*Wassail (cont. from page 4)*

on Twelfth Night of toasting the good health of the apple trees that would bear the crop from which next year's cider would be made. Pieces of bread soaked in cider were placed in the crooks of trees, guns were fired to ward off evil spirits, and special songs were sung.

Source:

<http://www.worldwidewords.org/weirdwords/ww-was1.htm>

### ***Ponderisms***

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

Gardening Rule: When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.

Never take life seriously. Nobody gets out alive anyway.

Health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospitals dying of nothing.

Have you noticed since everyone has a camcorder these days no one talks about seeing UFOs like they used to?

Whenever I feel blue, I start breathing again.

All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?

Why is there a light in the fridge and not in the freezer?

If Jimmy cracks corn and no one cares, why is there a song about him?

## ***Holidays with The Other 3 Tenors***

St. Paul's very own **Franco Martorana** and **Daniel Vines**, along with a friend, will be singing at the Beverly Arts Center on Sunday, **December 18, 2005 at 4:00PM.**

What better way to continue celebrating the Christmas Season.

See Franco or Daniel for tickets (\$15.00/person)

Beverly Arts Center - 2407 W. 111th Street.

[www.beverlyartcenter.org](http://www.beverlyartcenter.org)

***Coming To a Theater Near You***

***From a True Story***

***End of The Spear***

***In Theaters January 20***

Mincayani is born into the most violent society ever documented by anthropologists. the Waodani in the eastern rainforest of Ecuador. As he grow he learns what every Waodani understand, he must spear and live or be speared and die. Mincayani's world changes when he and his family kill five missionaries, Nate Saint, Jim Elliot, Ed McCully, Pete Fleming, and Roger Youderian. This incident propels Mincayani's family group down an extraordinary path that culmintes in them not only departing from violence, but also caring for the enemy tribe they had once violently raided. Nate Saint's son Steve was a boy when his father and friends were killed. He returns to the Waodani as an adult and finally learns from Mincayani what happened during the last minutes of his father's life. Together Mincayani and Steve find that what Nate accomplished in his death gave them both a new life and Steve's family becomes part of the Mincayani's family



***Jesus is the Reason  
For the Season***

# December 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 Pageant Practice 10AM Lydia Williams BDay
4 Worship Service 10AM Communion Sunday Sunday School	5	6 Dorothy Fitch BDay	7 Bible Study 7PM Kid's Club 7PM	8	9	10 Men's Prayer 8AM Pageant Practice 10AM
11 Worship Service 10AM Sunday School Wassail Party 6PM	12	13	14 Bible Study 7PM Kid's Club 7PM	15 Jason Kreider BDay Jessica Oakley BDay	16	17 Pageant Practice 10AM Progressive Dinner 5:30PM (1st course at Hollander's)
18 Worship Service 10AM Christmas Pageant Brian VanderMey BDay	19 Jim Collins BDay Rich Boban BDay	20 Elders & Trustees 7PM	21 Bible Study 7PM Kid's Club 7PM Alanna Oakley BDay	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 6PM
25 Christmas Worship Service 10AM Torricelli Magett BDay	26	27	28 Bible Study 7PM Kid's Club 7PM	29	30	31 New Year's Eve