



Newsletter

Volume 10, Issue 12

December 2006

Kreider's Korner

Into Filth, Christ Was Born

Christ has come. Think about that for a moment. Jesus Christ, the God-man, the redeemer of all creation, has come.

Think about the typical way our culture views the Christmas story. You know what I'm talking about. You've seen the nativity scenes sitting on television entertainment centers, on top of white angel hair. You've probably received a Christmas card heralding a nice scene of Jesus in a manger with lots of people around... everyone looks so clean, their all standing in just

the right places and the cattle are peacefully laying there watching everything unfold.

In presenting the story of Christ's birth, I'm afraid we've cleaned it up and neatly packaged it. From our telling of the story, it's a scene that you can expect to find in anything ranging from the Sunday comics to our front lawns. There is no depiction of the blood... all is silent and peaceful. But let's not fool ourselves... birth is messy and a little chaotic and loud, even more so when there is not a presence of doctors and nurses. There was the discomfort of being in the home of animals, the presence and the smell of the animals... and the tiredness and frustration of Mary and Joseph after wandering around trying to find a place to give birth. None of this is seen in the typical depiction of Christ's

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St Paul's Bible Church

Missionary Update

Bells' December, 2006 Prayer Update

Dear Friends,

At the end of November we finished our speaking commitments—how wonderful to sit and to hear a sermon again, to be a participant instead of a speaker!

Besides traveling and speaking, we've had great times with our family. After packing up our things that we used at the mission home in Huntington, Indiana, we moved in with our daughter and her family, spending three weeks with them until we finished our speaking engagements in Indiana. We had hours of great times with each of the grandchildren—our grand daughter is a hand crafter after Jean's own heart; they sewed, made Christmas ornaments, etc. for many hours together. Our whole family spent two days together at Thanksgiving time at Sarah and Mike's home in Fort Wayne—what a blessing to be together again.

We are now in Ypsilanti, Michigan for our last 5 weeks before returning to Brazil. Among our activities will be travels over to Pennsylvania to visit supporters/friends whom we've not seen for five years, make last minute trips to see a few others we've not been able to make contact with as yet, buy last minute needs, pack, say good-bye to family, etc. Wes will fly out to Seattle the second week of December to spend one last week with his parents. On December 2, Jean's family gathers for their extended family Christmas time—what fun it will be to see all the nieces and nephews and their children. Even though it will also be the first Christmas without Mom/Grandma Garcia, we'll have much to rejoice over.

Answers to prayer requests

1. Sheila's trip to the R. people went well with many renewed contacts of encouragement, and preparation for the coming workshop.

2. For God's grace given us in the midst of so much change this past month.

Prayer requests Pray for

1. Joan, as she continues to work and turn over the program in the "W" language to Patricia and for Patricia as she tries to learn this difficult language.

2. Betty Camp as she continues to work alone in the "B" language program since her partner retired a few years ago. It's lonely and hard work to continue to plug away at such a huge project.

3. The annual translation workshop which begins again in January. May the Lord bring in the needed co-translators in each language group—the ones God knows will be able to take best advantage of the Bible study and translation time together.

4. For us and for our monthly financial support which is short by about \$300.

5. For our working situation at the mission school as we return because of the changes in administration.

Continuing Prayer items

The "Y" language people and the Jensens need our prayers as they work, for their protection, both spiritual and physical. In the area there's malaria that's not responding to medication.

Yours, Wes and Jean Bell, Wycliffe Bible Translators

Here's how to contact us over the next weeks:

Way to contact us:

phone or mail at Jean's sisters' (Carolyn and Betty Garcia) home at 1170 Jay Ave., Ypsilanti, MI 48198, phone 734-484-4391.

Our email address remains the same:

wes-jean_bell@sil.org

We have airplane reservations returning to Brazil, January 1, 2007. To contact us after the first of the year, use

CP 3006

78080-970 Cuiaba, MT

Brazil

Phone (home) 55-65-3664-3370, in the evenings

School 55-65-3664-3142, during the day

Mission office 55-65-3664-3707

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Dear St. Paul's family,

Yesterday was Thanksgiving, and we had our whole family together. It was so special to see the kids and grandkids and to have fun together. Besides the wonderful meal we had a great time to visit, play

Kreider's Korner (cont.)

birth.

Jesus was born into filth... it was messy, infested, uncomfortable, stuffy, dark, smelly... and this is where God most high chose to reveal Himself in human form through His son. Christ has come. His entrance was not grand, there was no fanfare, just tired Mary and Joseph. I can't imagine what it would be like for Mary to have wandered that far, to be that exhausted, only to then give birth without any medical assistance.

Christ has come. He is not distant from filth... He was born into it. Not only that, but His human life ended in the midst of it. Crucifixion is bloody, torturous, and cruel. Not to mention filthy. Men stood and mocked Jesus as He died... here is a man, who claimed to be God, and yet He was born in Bethlehem in a manger because nobody else would welcome Him in.

Jesus was born in filth and died in filth. Our King. The expected one. Our redeemer.

There are times when I feel filthy, like damaged goods. As if there is no possible way that God could ever use me for His purposes anymore. As if approaching Him would require me to clean myself up and be completely Holy before him... only to realize how futile such efforts are.

Christ has come. There is no reason to shy away from Him, or to hide. Yes, we may be as filthy rags before Him... but our filth doesn't scare Him. He has come to redeem us, to clean us up. To restore us to what He intends for us to be.

This Christmas, I celebrate the fact that Christ came to embrace me, despite the rags I

wear. I celebrate the love that I've found in Him, and the grace that challenges me to live as a man of God. I celebrate that Christ has come. And all the world falls to its knees in the presence of our humble king.

Long lay the world in sin and error pining.

Till He appeared and the Spirit felt its worth.

A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,

For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices!

He knows our need; our weakness is no stranger to Him.

Behold your King! Before him lowly bend!

O night divine, the night when Christ was born;

O night, O Holy Night, O night divine!

O night, O Holy Night, O night divine!

Wassail Party

Join us for the Wassail Party, tonight (December 3) at 6:00 pm. The Wassail Party is a St. Paul's tradition that has been held annually for more than 50 years. We'll enjoy a time of singing Christmas Carols, followed by treats and Wassail. Families are welcome at this event. Please see a committee member if you would like to bring something for the treats table (cookies, sandwiches, etc).

Wassail is a hot, spiced punch often associated with winter celebrations of northern Europe, usually those connected with the Christmas holiday such as Christmas, New Year's and Twelfth Night. Particularly popular in Germanic countries, the term itself is a contraction of the Old English toast *wæs þu hæl*, or "be thou hale!" (i.e., "be in good health"). Alternate expressions predating the term, with approximately the same meaning, include both the Old Norse *ves heill* and Old English *wes hál*. (from Wikipedia)



Missionary Update (cont.)

games, and for a good part of the day...just sing together. I'm wondering how your day went. I trust it was special for each of you.

We are enjoying our work at the Monte Sion church. This month we are all getting shoe boxes together filled with little gifts for the children of Tijuana, Mexico. We have a sister church in Tijuana that we are partnering with in this, and our pastor will take the shoe boxes down to be distributed at Christmas time.

Next week I will be having our women's gathering. This little group has grown, and the women seem to really enjoy getting together and learning and sharing together.

When you get this you will all be thinking about Christmas and all the things that go on at St. Paul's at this time of the year. May you celebrated the season with great joy. We thank God for you.

In His love,

Gail, for both of us

Jim & Gail McKelvey, CAM International

Primary Class Verses

December 3 - Revelation 1:3

Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it because the time is near.

December 10 - Review

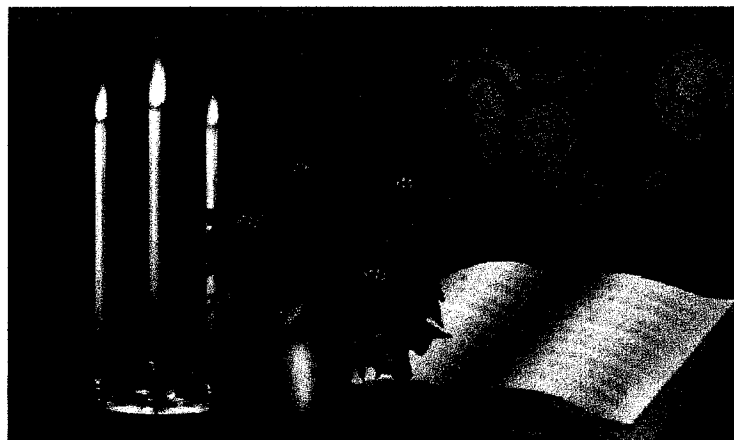
Thank You

Thank you to all that have served as Coffee-time Hosts and Hostesses over the past year. Special thanks also to Heide Sullivan who has been the coffee-time coordinator. There are a few weeks in December where a host/hostesses is needed December 10, 24, and 31. If you are able to do coffee-time one or all of those days please contact Heide.

The sign-up sheet for 2007 has been posted on the refrigerator in the kitchen so if you wish to sign up for one week or a month in 2007 please mark the sheet.

IT'S POINSETTIA TIME !!!

Place your order early for a beautiful double poinsettia plant that will decorate our altar throughout the Christmas holiday, and take it home on Christmas Eve to add to the joy of your holiday. Cost is \$18.00 and you can place your order with Dee Mulvey.



Progressive Dinner

The Progressive Dinner is another Christmas tradition at St. Paul's. This year's dinner will be held on Saturday, December 9, beginning at 5:30 pm. We will progress as follows:

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

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.

Reservations are needed by December 6, and the cost is \$10.00 per person.

Since we will not be in one location for the entire evening, we are unable to supply child care.

Your ACF Committee:

Linda & Karen Jillson - 773-445-7166

Suzy Jillson - 773-779-5124

Sue & Jason Kreider - 773-779-9648

Jessica & Pete Oakley - 773-779-2653

1000 Marbles

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the garage with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me tell you about it:

I turned the dial up into the phone portion of the band on my ham radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning swap net. Along the way, I came across an older sounding chap, with a tremendous signal and a golden voice. You know the kind; he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business. He was telling whom-ever he was talking with something about "a thousand marbles." I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say.

"Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. It's too bad you missed your daughter's "dance recital" he continued. "Let me tell you something that has helped me keep my own priorities." And that's when he began to explain his theory of a "thousand marbles."

"You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about seventy-five years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about seventy-five years.

"Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900, which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime. Now, stick with me, Tom, I'm getting to the important part.

It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail", he went on, "and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred

Saturdays." "I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy. So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round up 1000 marbles. I took them home and put them inside a large, clear plastic container right here in the shack next to my gear."

"Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away. I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight."

Thought for the day

In case we find ourselves starting to believe all the anti-American sentiment and negativity, we should remember England's Prime Minister Tony Blair's words during an interview. When asked by one of his Parliament members why he believes so much in America, he said: "A simple way to take measure of a country is to look at how many want in... And how many want out."

Only two defining forces have ever offered to die for you:

1. Jesus Christ
2. The American G. I.

One died for your soul, the other for your freedom.

Pastor's Business Card

A new pastor was visiting in the homes of his parishioners. At one house it seemed obvious that someone was at home, but no answer came to his repeated knocks at the door. Therefore, he took out a business card and wrote "Revelation 3:20" on the back of it and stuck it in the door. When the offering was processed the following Sunday, he found that his card had been returned.

Added to it was this cryptic message, "Genesis 3:10." Reaching for his Bible to check out the citation, he broke up in gales of laughter.

Revelation 3:20 begins "Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

Genesis 3:10 reads, "I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid for I was naked."

December 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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3 Worship Service 10AM Communion Sunday Sunday School Wassail Party 6PM	4	5	6 Bible Study 7PM Kid's Club 7PM Dorothy Fitch BDay	7	8	9 Progressive Dinner 5:30PM
10 Worship Service 10AM Sunday School Youth Group 6PM	11	12	13 Bible Study 7PM Kid's Club 7PM	14	15 Jessica Oakley BDay Jason Kreider BDay	16
17 Worship Service 10AM Christmas Program Youth Group Christmas Party 6PM	18	19 Trustees/Elders 7PM	20 Bible Study 7PM Kid's Club 7PM	21 Alanna Oakley BDay	22	23
24 Christmas Eve Worship Service 10AM No Sunday School Christmas Eve Candle Light Service 7PM	25 Christmas Day Torrice Mageff BDay	26	27 Bible Study 7PM Kid's Club 7PM	28	29	30
31 New Year's Eve Worship Service 10AM Sunday School						