

The Bell



P.O. BOX 1191

ISSAQUAH WA 98027

The monthly newsletter of The Community Church of Issaquah December 2014

Making Room for Jesus

“[Joseph] also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.” Luke 2:4-7

Such a familiar story – especially at this time of year. But do we take time to fully realize its implications for us and our day? The Son of God was born into this world, but there was no room for Him. No room for Him, even though the people of Israel had been expecting the Messiah for centuries. Why do you suppose that was?

We set up the routines of our life, leaving little to no room for God. Oh, yeah, except for an hour or so on Sunday morning. So, when He comes to us, as He always does, we have no room for Him.

- We have no room for Jesus when He wants to give guidance for our life, because we already have our life planned out.
- We have no room for Jesus to heal our blindness, because we believe we already see.
- We have no room for God to get close to us, because we have filled the spaces close

to us with things.

- We have no room in our budget for God because we committed all we have to the things of this world.
- We have no room in our schedule for caring for others in Christ’s name because we are spending so much time making sure we can take care of ourselves without having to trust God.

When Joseph and Mary could find no room, God MADE room. Because the places for people, the inns, were all filled up, God provided room for them in the place where animals were kept. Tradition pictures a stable of wood, but more ancient sources refer to a place for keeping animals in a cave. Whichever was the case, it was not a place of comfort. Joseph and Mary did the best they could, making a crib out of a manger where the animals ate.

This Christmas, let’s MAKE ROOM for Christ. Let’s make room in our society for Christ, by declaring to all the “reason for the season”, that God sent His Son to bring us redemption and new life. And let’s make room for Jesus in our own hearts and lives, by giving acts of devotion and service priority places, not the left over stables of our lives, but the prime places, the time in our schedule nothing else can take away from Him. Only then will we have truly learned from this ancient Christmas story.

-Pastor Keith Madsen

True Holiness

The life of true holiness is rooted in the soil of awed adoration. It does not grow elsewhere. . . No blend of zeal, passion, self-denial, discipline, orthodoxy and effort adds up to holiness where praise is lacking.

~ J.I Packer, *Rediscovering Holiness*

From Issaquah Community Services

“On behalf of all the volunteers and the board of directors at Issaquah Community Services (ICS), we want to *thank you* for your generous financial contribution in 2014. ICS is a non-profit organization that provides financial assistance to families living in the Issaquah School District. With our donor’s help in 2014, we were able to assist 490 families. Some families needed financial assistance with rent to keep them from being evicted, and others needed assistance from having their utilities shut off. Others need bus tickets to get to a job interview or to a medical appointment. ICS volunteers distributed 100% of the funds your church provided. They are also available to lend a compassionate ear when needed and provide many other resources to help our families get the help they need. Your donation allowed ICS to exist and we wanted to let you know how important you are to us. Please share our *thank you* with your membership and if they would like more information about ICS, they can check out our newly updated website at: www.IssaquahCommunityServices.org. Your membership can also read stories about the families that were helped with the donations from 2014.

Again, thank you for everything you do to make our community a better place to live.”

From ABCUSA Connections – New Prayer Focus

The Board of General Ministries (BGM) Action Group, “Communicating ABC Identity,” will be sharing a prayer list highlighting a Region/Associate Ministry Organization, Caucus, etc., for each month. The three groups for each quarter will appear in issues of *ABCUSA Connections*. In our monthly Enewsletter, we will provide a picture and brief story/prayer request given to us by that group. We hope that through this, American Baptists will learn about stories of the denomination in local areas so that we will know how God is at work in our American Baptist communities. Be on the look-out for your region or group to be highlighted in future newsletters.

October: American Baptist Women Travel to the Republic of Georgia.

November: Rochester Genesee Region.

December: Highlight on our newest Associated Ministry Organizations, Chin Baptist Churches USA and Karen Baptist Churches USA.



Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering

The next Mission for which we are asking donations is the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering. We will be taking donations to thank our RM&M for their years of service to bring God's word and love to all the people of this world. Help thank them for all their years of service by donating in the month of December.

Community Outreach

Issaquah Food Bank—Holiday Gift Giving

The Holidays are upon us! Can you believe it? There is a box in our entryway for the Issaquah Food Bank Holiday Gift Giving. The food bank will take all the unwrapped gifts to Pickering Barn. The gifts are then separated by age groups for display. Parents will be given a certain amount of points to "buy" gifts for their children. Donations should be brought and placed in the decorated box in our Church entryway anytime from now through December 8th. The gifts that you donate are strictly up to you. If you would like any gift suggestions, see the list on the counter in the office. As you are out and about pick up a gift and bring it to church. Help put a smile on a less fortunate child's face this Christmas.

Merry Christmas Issaquah

One of the projects of our Deacon's Fund is to send approximately \$100 per month to Issaquah Community Services (ICS). Each December ICS emphasizes the *Merry Christmas Issaquah* fund with a goal of \$100,000. Our church plans to participate in this event with our regular Deacon's Fund offering.

ICS helps the most needy in our community by providing emergency aid for rent, fuel (home and vehicle), utilities, and medical assistance. Remember the Deacon's Fund in December.

"Jesus did not come to make God's love possible, but to make God's love visible."
~ Author unknown

"Don't let your happiness depend on something you may lose."

~ C.S. Lewis

The Greater Community

Sing-Along Messiah

Singers of all ages and skill levels, and instrumentalists comfortable playing Baroque music are invited to come sing, play, or hear the Christmas portion of Handel's Messiah and help raise funds for Merry Christmas Issaquah.

The annual event will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 14th at St Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, 325 SE Darst Street in Issaquah (near the high school).

Elder Care Assistance

From Irene Stewart, Planner, Aging and Disability Services, Seattle Human Services Department. Email: irenestewart@seattle.gov

Navigating the Elder Care Maze

“I need to find assisted living for my mom.”

“My father-in-law doesn't drive and can't use Metro. He needs information on transportation options.”

“I'm providing regular care for my adult son, who has a disability. I need help!”

“Who do I call?!”

Do those questions sound familiar? Finding help for an older adult – yourself or a loved one – can be a daunting task. Fortunately, two local programs provide guidance in navigating the maze of community and government programs:

Senior Information & Assistance (1-888-4ELDERS) is the go-to number for anyone age 60+ and their family members who needs help identifying resources that meet their needs. http://www.agingkingcounty.org/consumers/sixty_plus.htm

The King County Caregiver Support Network provides guidance to unpaid primary caregivers of adults of any age who are unable to care for themselves – typically family members or close friends or neighbors. <http://www.kccaregiver.org>

Aging and Disability Services (ADS) – the Area Agency on Aging for Seattle-King County – currently funds both programs. In the coming year, services may be enhanced to help a broader range of older adults and individuals with disabilities plan to live independently in the community.

If you have questions of any kind, feel free to contact Irene.

December Church Events

Sharing the Adventure Fellowship

We will meet the 1st Wednesday, December 3rd, for prayer, singing, and devotions. Bring a soup, salad, or sandwiches to share with the group. Let's maintain our great attendance. Pastor Keith and Mary Cline will share some of their pictures and experiences of Haiti on December 3rd. We will not meet the 3rd Wednesday, December 17th. Be ready to join us again in January 2015.

Christmas Social Potluck

December 14th, after worship we will hold our Christmas Social potluck. Please bring a main dish, salad, side dish, or dessert to share. **Wear your holiday sparkle!**

Worship

We will hold two services on December 21st, 9:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. There will be no Adult Forum this day.

Board Meeting

Our Board meeting will be Sunday, December 28th, after worship and coffee fellowship.

Adult Forum

We are studying the book of Acts. Acts is about what the church did after Christ's resurrection. All are welcome to join us. The Forum meets Sundays at 10:00 a.m. We will not meet on Sunday, December 21st.

Other Church News

Our Building

We are still seeking final approval from the City Planning Dept and the Fire Marshall for occupancy. We have some final touches to make it feel even more like our church home. Many thanks to all the volunteers who have helped in this process.

Nominations for Church Board

It's time to nominate people for Board positions for 2015. Please prayerfully consider serving Christ through a position on your church board.

Pastoral Search Committee

Pastor Keith will be retiring in about a year. It is time to start planning for that eventuality by seeking a new pastor. Members are being sought for a Pastoral Search Committee to begin work the first of the upcoming year.

Food for Thought

Every year I enjoy baking Christmas cookies for my family and friends. I will admit that I can get overly ambitious. My “Cookies to Bake” wish list can get so long that it can become more of a dream than actual tins filled with cookies. Each recipe holds a memory – some new and some lovely old ones. When I make the Krumkaka (a thin, rolled cookie) I think of my grandma and how she spent hours making these light, airy gems one at a time on a stove top cookie griddle. I started out with the same process, but several years ago I discovered the electric griddle and now I have doubled my output: the new machine makes two cookies at a time. I have a recent peanut brittle recipe that my mother especially loves. I always think of her while I am stirring the scary, hot kettle of candy and squinting through the steam at the thermometer hanging on the side of the pot. It gets a little intimidating waiting for that magical moment when the temperature is high enough to take it off the burner and finally add the peanuts. Whew!

This year my list is just as long as it is every year, but I have a new one to try from our 1990 Family Favorites cookbook from the Community Baptist Church. I hope you will try it, too.

Confection Cookies submitted by Wilma Hill

2 ¼ cups flour
½ cup powdered sugar
1 cup shortening or margarine
1 tsp. vanilla or almond flavoring
¾ cup nuts of your choice
½ cup coconut (optional)

Sift flour and sugar. Add shortening and other ingredients. Mix well with hands until it forms a ball. Take small portions and roll into small balls. Bake at 400 degrees for 10 minutes or more. Remove before brown. After they have cooled, put them in a container or plastic bag with some powdered sugar and shake until covered.

~ Teri Hansen

“Maybe Christmas, [the Grinch] thought, doesn’t come from a store.”

~ Dr. Seuss

Special Dates in December

- Second Sunday of Advent - Sunday, 12/7
- Third Sunday of Advent - Sunday, 12/14
- Fourth Sunday of Advent - Sunday, 12/21
- First Day of Winter - Sunday 12/21
- Christmas Eve - Wednesday, 12/24
- Christmas Day - Thursday 12/25
- New Year's Eve/Watch Night - Wednesday 12/31



TO...

14 Kevin Lindsay

29 Woody Ross

**Birthdays
This Month**

December 2014 at CCI

- Sharing the Adventure - 12/03
- All-Church Christmas Potluck Social - 12/14
- Worship Services: 9:15 a.m.; 11:00 a.m. - 12/21
- Bell Article Deadline - 12/26
- Board Meeting - 12/28

LONG TERM PRAYER LIST

Perhaps you would like to add these church family members to your prayer concerns:

1. **Craig & Karyn Akishin** - *at home*
2. **Marge Armstrong**
*16300 St Hwy 305, #37
Poulsbo, WA 98370*
3. **Sylvia Coulton** - *at son Peter's*
*8912 Wildwood Ave SW
Lakewood, WA 98498*
4. **Jane Forbes**
Kirkland, WA
5. **Don & Alice Good**
Bellevue, WA
6. **Geri Hardisty**
*Premier Adult Care
Sammamish, WA*
7. **Elvira Lindsay**
8. **Martha Nordhagen**
Adams House, Oregon
9. **Sylvia Olsson** (425) 793-5488
*Chateau Valley Ctr.
4450 Davis Ave S.
Renton, WA 98055*
10. **Joe Shultice**
*219 Cedar Ave S.
North Bend, WA 98045*
11. **Dody Tweeddale**
Cascades Adult Family Home, Bellevue
12. **Cherie Vivolo** - *at home*