

INTOUCH

December 27, 2009

Glory in a Manger

By Margaret Manning

THE WEEK AHEAD

SUNDAY – DECEMBER 27

No rehearsals this week

6:00 PM Sunday Evening Prayer Library

MONDAY – DECEMBER 28

10 AM-3PM Shortened Office hours
9:00 AM Women's Aerobics – "Turbo Blast" Fellowship Hall

TUESDAY – DECEMBER 29

7:00 AM Women's Prayer/Study not meeting, will meet again on Jan. 5th
10 AM-3 PM Shortened Office hours

WEDNESDAY – DECEMBER 30

10 AM-3 PM Shortened Office hours
9:00 AM Women's Aerobics – "That's A Stretch" Fellowship Hall
5:30 PM Elder Prayer Sr. Pastor's Office
6:45 PM LOGOS Kids Club Christmas break
Will meet again on January 6, 2010
6:45 PM EXCEL Student Ministry Christmas break
Will meet again on January 6, 2010

THURSDAY – DECEMBER 31 *New Year's Eve*

10 AM-3 PM Shortened Office hours

FRIDAY – JANUARY 1, 2010 *New Year's Day*

Wishing You and Yours A Safe and Blessed New Year!

*May the LORD bless you, and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine on you,
and be gracious to you;
The LORD lift up His countenance on you,
And give you peace.*

Numbers 6:24-26

SATURDAY – JANUARY 2

7:00 AM College/20-Something Ski Retreat be at CBC
Meet in east parking lot for departure to Colorado!

SUNDAY – JANUARY 3

9:00 and 10:40 AM MORNING WORSHIP Sanctuary
Dr. Tim Savage
LIFE AS SUFFERING, Part III
"Seeking God with Our Hearts"
Job
9:00 AM Nursery (birth – 23 months) 301-304
9:00 AM Children's Discipleship (24 mo – gr. 3) 101-104, 201, 203
9:00 AM Adult Fellowship 209
9:00 AM **Discovery I** – Our monthly introduction to the church Library
10:40 AM Nursery (birth – 23 months) 301-304
10:40 AM Children's Church (24 mo – 3 years) 101-104
10:40 AM Children's Church (4 years – grade 3) 201, 203
10:40 AM EXCEL (Jr. High & High School) Christmas Break
12:30 PM Nursing Home Ministry meets Fellowship Hall
2:00 PM Nursing Home Ministry serves Osborn Health & Rehab
6:00 PM Sunday Evening Prayer Library
No evening music rehearsals

Every time I read Luke's account of the birth of Jesus, I marvel at the details he chooses to emphasize surrounding God's coming into the world as a baby. I am struck by the way Luke juxtaposes the announcement of the King of Israel – "For to you is born this day in the city of David the Savior who is Christ the Lord" – with the sign of this king's kingship, "And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger" (Luke 2:11-12). The King of Kings will be born in a lowly, dirty manger, kept in a feed trough for animals, and the King's royal vestments will be woven cloth strips.

Luke's narrative highlights what seem to be the most ordinary and the most mundane details of Jesus' birth for us as modern readers. And yet, these seemingly ordinary details highlight how God communicates God's glory in the birth of Jesus. Luke's preoccupation with ordinary details reveals his belief that God's kingdom would look very different from the kingdom the people of Jesus' day were expecting.

Out of the silence of 400 years, out of the silence of that quiet night, the angel spoke and announced what the people had all hoped for: He is here, Luke tells us, born in the same city as your great king of old, King David! The people now would look upon the new David, their new deliverer, their Messiah. The prophet Micah announced this special context, "As for you, Bethlehem, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity" (5:2). Out of the silent sky came the news that surpassed all news. The king had come and the world would never be the same again, for a king had been born this day in the city of David – Christ the Lord!

And yet, this king would not be born in an expected palace or even into the household of a priest, like John the Baptist, for example. God had other plans. The glorious place of Israel's new king would be different than expected: "And this will be a sign for you; you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger." Born this day, in the city of David is your Christ, your Messiah. And guess what? You'll find him in a manger, which is the feeding trough for dirty, smelly, ordinary farm animals. The Messiah, the King of Israel is born in a manger?

Not only does God choose a manger for a palace, but God chooses to reveal this glorious news to the least likely recipients. We might expect that the birth of Israel's king would be heralded throughout the nation to the most influential members of the society: the priests, the rulers, and the leaders of the people. But, in fact, only a few people actually hear about it. The coming Jesus, the Messiah, is but a whisper into the ears of a few select individuals.

The announcement first comes to an unmarried young girl, who would bear the baby. She was young and insignificant, and this announcement of an illegitimate and unexplained pregnancy wouldn't help her place in that society. The announcement also comes to shepherds – the least influential folks in that society – young boys, out in the fields, far from their towns and villages, tending to the sheep. The glory of Israel is revealed to those most would deem inglorious. Israel's new king is born to a young, unmarried girl, in a town not her home, in a dirty small manger with animals as the only witnesses to the birth. The heavenly announcement is made only to a group of poor, unnoticed shepherds.

Unveiling the glory of God through humble means and ordinary details is a point Luke doesn't want us to miss? The Almighty God, who created heaven and earth, who created the shepherds and the animals, Mary and Joseph, was the same God who chose to be glorified in human flesh as the baby Jesus.

Humility reveals the glory of God! Humility demonstrates God's greatness and glory, and humility is the hallmark of Jesus' Kingdom. Dr. James Denison elaborates: "As a young child, [Jesus] was celebrated by foreign Magi, not of his own people. He spent his public ministry touching lepers, welcoming Gentiles and prostitutes, discipling tax collectors and other despised people, and offering the gospel to all who would receive it." His birth proved his words: "God so loved the world that God gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but receive eternal life" (John 3:16).

In a world that confuses glory with glitter, glamour, power, and prestige, would we see God's glory in this seemingly inglorious package – cradled in a feed-trough, presented to peasants, announced to shepherds? Luke's record of these events reminds us that the most humble circumstances reveal God's glory. May this glorious humility grace our hearts this Christmas.

Margaret Manning, associate writer for Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM) in Atlanta, Georgia. This article: Slice 1578, December 25, 2007, *A Slice of Infinity*, more information at www.rzim.org/USA.

UPCOMING WINTER RETREATS

College and 20-Somethings, January 2-6 at Durango Mountain Resort in Colorado. Join us for three days of skiing and snowboarding, capped off each evening by a message from God's Word by Pastor Chris Davis (Senior Pastor of Whitton Avenue Bible Church). We'll be asking important questions. Should I get married? Should I stay single? How can I stay sexually pure? What does the Bible have to say about these issues...and how do I live to the fullest regardless of what God has for me in life? These are important questions—with important answers. Pastor Chris will be leading us through this discussion from 1 Corinthians 7. It's relevant to all of us, especially as we make life decisions in our college years and in our 20's. Don't miss out on an opportunity to seek God's will for YOUR life as we consider His Word together! The cost of \$250 includes a 3-day lift ticket, food, travel and lodging. Register online at www.cbcaz.org/college through 12-30-09.

EXCEL Student Ministry (Junior High and High School), Winterroutine, January 15-18 at Pine Summit in Prescott, Arizona, with speaker James Hoxworth, Pastor of Youth at Covenant Community Church in Scottsdale. To quote the retreat flier: "Follow Me." These are the words that Jesus spoke over and over again to the people He came into contact with. Some decided to follow. Many others did not. Did they not know that they were rejecting the King of the universe? Do you think they had any idea that this Jesus was the one who spoke them into existence? Do you suppose if they had known that Jesus could forgive their sins and restore them to God for eternity they would have still walked away from Him? Or that they wouldn't have killed Him? What about you? Do you know Jesus? Have you heard that He is both your God and your Savior? Hear it for yourself in Jesus' own words at Winter Retreat 2010—will you follow Jesus?"

TELEIOS 2010 WINTER/SPRING CLASSES: We will soon be starting the new Teleios classes. The listing, with class descriptions, is available at the Welcome Center on Sunday's, in the office during the week, and on line 24/7. Stop by the table on the patio on January 3rd, or call the office, to register for one or more of the classes. Listed by beginning dates, the classes are:

January 5 (Tuesday)

Women's Prayer and Bible Study, led by Susan Manor

January 6 (Wednesday)

Simple Answers to Hard Questions, led by Elder Bill Weldon

January 10 (Sunday)

Delighting in our Calling – Part II (women only), led by Sharon Moore

Two Ways to Live: Know and Share the Gospel, led by Pastor Ron Elward

Being Salt and Light in Contemporary America, led by Malcolm Hartnell

January 12 (Tuesday)

James: A Faith That's Real (women only), led by Nancy Whalen and Karen Kelly

The Apostle's Creed" – Part II (women only), led by Karen Fye

Peacemakers, led by Mike and Cindy Bailey

Lies Women Believe and the Truth that Sets Them Free, led by Beccy Jones

January 14 (Thursday)

Memory and Scripture, led by Elder Gordon Donaldson

January 31 (Sunday)

Foundations, led by Elder Dave and Beccy Jones

February 7 (3 weeks) (Sunday)

Baptism Preparation (Students Grades 4-8), led by Pastor Jason Doughty

February 13 (Saturday, then Tuesdays)

GriefShare, led by Sandra Cook

February 21 (Sunday)

Six Steps to Talking About Jesus, led by Elder Bill Eaton

February 28 (Sunday)

Titus 2 Discipleship Training (one day only), led by Beccy Jones

Discovery III: Finding Your Place of Ministry, led by Pastor Ron and Gary Balok

March 4 (Thursday)

How People Change, led by Fred Roh

March 7 (Sunday)

Lies Women Believe and the Truth that Sets Them Free, led by Beccy Jones

March 11 (Thursday)

Six Steps to Reading Your Bible, led by Elder Gordon Donaldson

March 14 (Sunday)

Being Salt and Light in Contemporary America, led by Malcolm Hartnell

PRAYING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION Monthly Prayers for our Children

January's Theme: Repentance

Father, may our children come to a deep and abiding repentance. May they come to that change of mind that enthrones Christ, and leads to a changed life. When our children sin, compel them quickly to confess and repent so that they might enjoy a clear conscience and unbroken fellowship with you.

Isaiah 1:10-20, Psalm 32, 1 John 1:5-10

PLEASE BE IN PRAYER: that God would bring many to Himself through this wondrous season of the year, using us, His people – drawing us more intimately to Himself while drawing others, through Christ's love in us, to His saving grace and unshakeable peace; that God would move mightily within the family and ministries of CBC in the new year; for God to lead many to participate in the excellent **Teleios Classes** being offered over the next several months; for our **College & 20-Somethings** who leave on their Winter Ski Retreat on Saturday, January 2nd and return on Wednesday, January 6th; may God protect and provide; may His Spirit minister to minds and hearts; for **Paul Saduskyj**, at home still battling the persistent and disabling infection in his foot and feeling pretty isolated; for **Mike and Katie Siebert** (daughter and son-in-law of CBC missionaries Malcolm and Peggy Hartnell) following the loss of two of their triplets (born very premature) with their remaining son, Will, still viable in utero and with a fighting chance; for **Tom Cook, Jr.** (son of Tom and Kay Cook), a Chaplain with the U.S. Marine Corps currently serving in Afghanistan but on his way home (to California) to have his heart carefully checked out, the result of a recent episode of experiencing a heart rate in the 40s.

SHOULD GOD LEAD YOU TO WRITE to Katie Siebert (see prayer request above) with a touch of love and encouragement, write to her at Palmetto Richland Memorial Hospital, Rm. 4010, 5 Richland Medical Park Drive, Columbia SC 29203.

THE CBC PICTORIAL FAMILY ALBUM (DIRECTORY) IS STILL AVAILABLE.

Stop by the church office during the week (normally Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, but this coming week Monday-Thursday, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM) to pick up your copy or to purchase additional copies.

PEACE BOOKS FOR SALE: Additional copies of the *Peace* book from the Women's Christmas Brunch are available for \$5. What a wonderful gift! Stop by the church office or pick one up at the Welcome Center on Sundays. If you didn't attend the Brunch, this is a wonderful way to receive the message shared by Lesli Savage.

OSBORN HEALTH AND REHAB is the site of our Nursing Home Ministry, an outreach to the residents and staff of this nursing/care facility. On the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the each month, after meeting together at the church (following the conclusion of the second service), sharing lunch on the premises or elsewhere, we hold a service for the OH&B residents at 2:15 PM. We would love to have families or individuals join this important ministry by adopting a resident and/or by participating in the twice-monthly worship services. Please, if you have questions and/or an interest, contact Elder Doug White at ashpenaz@cox.net.

JANUARY IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER and that means the Sunday of P.F. Chang's Rock 'N' Roll Arizona Marathon & ½ Marathon is close behind, January 17th to be exact. Please be aware and plan for the disruption it causes to accessing the church campus on that day. We'll have more detailed information for you next week; information is available online at www.competitor.com/community.

PATHWAYS TO GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING, 2010, a 13-week course is being offered at several different churches throughout the valley: NW Community Church at 16615 North 43rd Avenue in Phoenix, Bethany Community Church at 6240 South Price Road in Tempe, and Scottsdale Bible Church at 7601 East Shea Blvd. in Scottsdale. Held over different dates at each church, the class is held from 6:30 to 9:30 PM in the evening. Detailed information is available in a brochure available at the Welcome Center, in the office, and online at www.PathWays2.org.

CBC GIVING UPDATE

Fourth Quarter (Oct.-Dec.) Giving Need	\$ 795,679
Fourth Quarter Giving to Date	\$ 483,646
Remaining Need	\$ 312,033
Last Week's Giving	\$ 55,012