

Goose bumps rise on my arms when I remember the holiday that made an impact on my entire life. I was about seven and the memory of that night when an angel visited is still vivid. This was a holiday when no gifts rested under the tree. But in fact, I received one of the best gifts of them all.

I don't remember if we needed an angel because of a bad economy—my parents sheltered us from hearing those things. I know that my dad worked that year as he did all the years I was growing up. My mom worked periodically and only part-time when she could do so and still be home for us.

I wonder if the reason we needed an angel was because we had large bills to pay that year? Our house was pretty big by some standards—although we were only middle-class and it must have taken an arm and a leg every month to heat it. We gathered wood for the winters and burned in a woodstove. As a child, I thought it was for extra warmth, a cozy home and a back up for making popcorn and hot cocoa when the electricity went out. I know better, now.

I don't know if the reason we needed a miracle that holiday was because we had over-spent or under-budgeted. Or because dad hadn't worked enough overtime or holidays, as he normally did, for extra money. Or maybe we were just not making it with three kids and related expenses.

I do know that I cried when I heard the news and I'm ashamed of that now. I remember both my brothers and I being upset. Why? Because Dad informed us that there would be no gifts for us that holiday. There was just no money.

I thought, "How can there be no money for presents? There's always money for that." And then I thought, "No fair. Why me?"

My brothers and I lapsed into silence for the rest of the drive home and my parents thought we took it rather well. Of course, they reminded us that the holiday was truly about celebrating the birth of our Savior, not stacking gifts next to the couch as they were opened. But it was a letdown, just the same. We talked about making each other presents, as we couldn't buy anything. I still cried big alligator, little-girl tears that night and prayed that somehow we would have a few gifts.

The next evening, it snowed. I looked longingly out the window at the beautiful drifts and wished that the season were over. The tree was bright and pretty but depressing with no presents underneath. It looked very incomplete.

When the phone rang, I wandered over to tuck myself under Dad's arm as he talked. He sounded surprised. He said, "You're kidding?" and "from who?" The call was very short and as he hung up, he told me, "Someone left a card for us at the gas station up the street."

When we stopped to pick it up the envelope, I remember feeling cozy in the car with the coldness outside. Dad walked out of the station with an envelope that I strained to see as he neared the car. Why would someone drop a card off instead of mailing it? And why not just drop it off at our house, only a mile away? Dad stomped snow off his shoes as he opened the door and the windows fogged up inside when the cold air hit.

Inside the envelope was a holiday card with no signature. Included was two hundred dollars.

"Guess we'll have presents after all." Dad said.

"But who is it from?" I asked, my eyes wide.

"I have no idea."

To this day, our giver's identity is unknown. I'm sure there were probably better things that my parents could have spent that money on. I bet there were unpaid bills and groceries to buy. But they didn't spend it on bills. They gave us gifts. The kinds of gifts, although they seemed so important at the time, are lost in my memory. I have no clue what we received.

We were privileged to be recipients of an incredibly unselfish act—a miraculous gift that I will never forget. The important part of the holiday implanted itself in my heart: no matter how little we may have by our standards, it is much compared to many others. Giving each Christmas is a joyous act that my children and I practice to this day.

-Julie Bonn Heath

Christmas time...a time where the generosity and kindness of humanity seems to flourish. It is truly a time of unselfish acts by folks all around the world. Yet, let us not forget the grace, love, and unselfishness of our God when He sent Jesus Christ to this earth to be crucified for the sins of us all. The love acts of people around Christmas are just a hint of a reflection to the infinite goodness of our Creator.

Thankful for what Christmas does to us; but I stand in awe of what Christmas shows us,
Pastor Rob

Wednesday Night Services

Menu

Cooks

Dessert

12.05.12 Chilll Dogs, Salad and Dessert

Mary Gordon

Linda Hafley, Pam Gillette and Jeannie Ruth

12.12.12 Chicken & Noodles, Green Beans and Dessert

Nancy Kaplan and Pat Brown

Amy Schwartze, Pat Brown and Traci Brown

12.19.12 Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Salad, Chips and Dessert

JoAnn Pierce and Verna Gilliland

Amanda Bolden, Christina Bolton and Judy Redcay

12.26.12 NO SERVICES TONIGHT

Cost:
Adults \$4
Children \$2 (10 and under)
Family \$10

WORSHIP
TEAM
PRACTICE
Thursday
@ 6:00 pm



Christmas Eve Service

Monday, December 24th, 2012

@ 6:00 pm

This is a great opportunity to celebrate the birth of the Savior with your family.



Operation Peanut Butter Drop

Brought to you by Track Meet

Look for more information in the days ahead!



The Youth will be making Sausage & Cheese Gift Baskets and Party Trays!

Perfect for Christmas Parties!

More info to come!



Rehearsal on
12. 15.12 9am -12pm
Presented on
12.16.12 @ 10am

Women's Bible Study
12.03.12 @ 6:30 pm



Annual Church Budget

Monthly Budget 2011-2012	\$16,665.00
Monthly Debt Reduction (Bldg)	\$3,020.00

Actual Giving	Budget	Building
May	\$11,395.35	\$1,700.00
June	\$13,122.60	\$1,976.00
July	\$15,504.69	\$2,338.00
August	\$14,545.46	\$1,755.00
September	\$18,411.24	\$2,610.00
October	\$15,461.61	\$2,715.00



Join a LIFT Group near you. This will provide you and your family a place to connect, grow and serve within a small group. LIFT Groups will meet ...

Nash Group12.09.12
Gilliland Group12.14.12
Larimore Group12.16.12
Redcay Group12.02.12
Ruth Group12.08.12

Contact Pastor Rob for additional information.

December

2012

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

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2 L.I.F.T. Sunday School 9 am Worship 10am	3	4 Food Pantry 1-2 pm	5 Wednesday Night Services Dinner 5:30 Track Meet 6:15 Rock the House 6:15 Bible Study 6:30	6 Worship Team Practice 6:00 pm	7	8 L.I.F.T.
9 L.I.F.T. Sunday School 9 am Worship 10am	10	11	12 Dinner 5:30 Track Meet 6:15 R the H 6:15 Bible Study 6:30	13 Worship Team Practice 6:00 pm	14 L.I.F.T. YOUTH LOCK IN	15 Children's Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal @ 9am-12pm
16 L.I.F.T. Sunday School 9 am Children's Christmas Program	17	18 Food Pantry 1-2 pm	19 Dinner 5:30 Track Meet 6:15 R the H 6:15 Bible Study 6:30	20 Worship Team Practice 6:00 pm	21	22
23 Sunday School 9 am Worship 10am	24 OFFICE CLOSED at noon <i>Christmas Eve Service</i> @ 6:00 pm	25 OFFICE CLOSED MERRY CHRISTMAS	26 NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERVICES	27 Worship Team Practice 6:00 pm	28	29
Sunday School 9 am Worship 10am 30	31					

Faith in Action

December 2012

**First Church of God**
Connect. Grow. Serve.
1614 Southwest Blvd.-Jefferson City, MO 65109
573.635.0963 www.jeffcityfirstchurch.com

Schedules

12.02.12

Nursery: JoAnn Pierce, Chelsea Kilmer and Thom & Amanda Bolden
Early Elementary Church: Christmas Musical Practice
Children's Church: Christmas Musical Practice
Worship Team: Randy Gilliland, Kayla Kespelher, Mark Sneller, Mariah Gilliland, John Kriete and Mary Crader
Audio: Chris Bolton
Visual: Dan Gessman
Head Usher: Michael Larimore
Greeters: Michael Larimore and Pam Gillette
Ushers: Mike Nash, Elmer Redcay and Nathan Redcay

12.16.12

Nursery: Debbie Whitener, Erin Larimore, Carmen Bentsch and Autumn Bush
Children's Christmas Program
Audio: Dan Gessman
Visual: Robert Schwartz
Head Usher: Michael Larimore
Greeters: Michael Larimore and Pam Gillette
Ushers: Mike Morris, Travis Glenn, Junior Shikles and Brandon Redcay

12.30.12

Nursery: Tresha McBaine, Alex Gilliland and Thom & Amanda Bolden
NO Early Elementary & Children's Church
Worship Team: Randy Gilliland, Norma Gilliland, Courtney Kilmer, Mariah Gilliland, John Kriete and Mary Crader
Audio: Brian Bush

12.09.12

Nursery: Travis & Lisa Glenn, Desiree Redcay and Courtney Kilmer
Early Elementary Church: Christmas Musical Practice
Children's Church: Christmas Musical Practice
Worship Team: Randy Gilliland, Mark Sneller, Carmen Morris, Kim Highfill, Mariah Gilliland, John Kriete and Mary Crader
Audio: Keith Denny
Visual: Mike Morris
Head Usher: Michael Larimore
Greeters: Michael Larimore and Pam Gillette
Ushers: David Larimore, Adam Sneller, John Caples and Justin Caples

12.23.12

Nursery: David Larimore, Laura Smith, Shelby Hoener and Pat Brown
NO Early Elementary & Children's Church
Worship Team: Florine Tripp, Betty Nash, Courtney Kilmer, Mariah Gilliland, John Kriete and Mary Crader
Audio: Robert Schwartz
Visual: Dan Gessman
Head Usher: Michael Larimore
Greeters: Michael Larimore and Pam Gillette
Ushers: Harold Brown, Keith Denny, Kent Denny and Kevin Griep

Visual: Mike Morris

Head Usher: Michael Larimore

Greeters: Michael Larimore and Pam Gillette

Ushers: Robert Schwartz, Chris Bolton, Zach Bolton and Charlie Ruth