



## What Do You Want For Christmas?

I wonder how different Christmas would be if we wouldn't focus our energies on what we want for Christmas but on what we are willing to give to others this Christmas season. In what ways can we give to others in the same spirit in which God gave the gift of a Savior to us?

God's entire mission was one of deeply investing in us for the purpose of bringing us into fellowship with Him and His son, Jesus Christ. He did not see us as greedy little children and feel the need to buy our love. Instead He gave joyfully and freely in order to give us the choice of deciding whether or not we would accept His gift of love, fellowship, and saving faith.

In the same way, when we give gifts to others, we will be a tremendous blessing to them if we give out of a deep desire to point them to the greatest gift of all – Jesus Christ. The shepherds were told, "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the

town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord." God gave for the purpose of providing a gift that would be of utmost value to our lives in the here and now and in the life to come. Think of the ways you can help make Jesus more real in the hearts and minds of your loved ones this Christmas. Give in ways that others know they are precious in the sight of God and that they are valued and loved.

In Luke 11 we read, "Would your father give you a snake if you asked for a fish? Would he give you a scorpion if you ask him for an egg?" Jesus then says, "in the same way your Heavenly Father delights in giving you gifts that satisfy." God wants to give His very best to us in order to bring joy, love, and peace into our lives. May we give to others with the same kind of Godly desire to see people experience the love of Jesus in their hearts.

*Scott Swartzendruber*

### Special points of interest:

- Give in ways that others know they are precious in the sight of God and that they are valued and loved.
- How far are you willing to go? Just far enough to get what you want? As far as you have to? Just enough to get by? or are you completely, and utterly in, your whole heart, your whole being, all of you?
- Occasionally, I get the question "How's retirement going?"

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**"Mini Mustard Seed" will be printed in January, which will include the January Calendar. Look for the full size Mustard Seed again in February.**



## WHAT'S HAPPENING!!!

Occasionally, I get the question "How's retirement going?" Well, last week I sat with my sick grandson on Monday & Tuesday. Then Wednesday thru Saturday we made lots of trips to Iowa City for another family illness. So I guess you just roll with the punches and wait to see what happens next. But, don't worry about me, you see I have a new friend; her name is "Foxy". I did get to take "Foxy" pheasant hunting several days this past week and we had a blast! Now for more news....

Todd Thompson, who is part owner of several pharmacies around Eastern Iowa, recently opened an innovative tele-pharmacy in Victor, Iowa. The customer can visit with a pharmacist in a neighboring city via cameras and monitor, thus providing service to small rural communities. The grand opening was on November 3<sup>rd</sup> and Governor Terry Branstad was also there to help celebrate Iowa's 1<sup>st</sup> tele-pharmacy. Congratulations, Todd & Sherri.

Mary Stoll recently turned 90! The family had a big open house at KMC several weeks ago. Family came from North Dakota, Indiana and rural Riverside, Iowa (daughter Elsie Mast & Wilbur). Mary had her 1<sup>st</sup> ride in a limousine, traveling all the way from 210 C Avenue to 902 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Mary's chauffer was her favorite Iowa son-in-law, Wilbur Mast. Congratulations, Mary.

Delores & Mahlon Leichty are 1<sup>st</sup> time great grandparents. Olivia Ann was recently born into this world, the daughter of Brett and Lindsey Hochstetler. Olivia's grandparents are Lynn & Deb Hochstetler. Congratulations!



Ez shot an elk. Yes, Ez Schrock went on his annual big game hunt to N.W. Colorado and actually brought home some meat. He & his cousin Devon Schrock have been going out to Craig, Colorado since 1987 and have only missed a few trips in all those years. They were in a hunting party of eight, but Ez was the only hunter to

get an elk this year. He shot a young cow so there were no antlers to bring home and hang on the wall. We're glad to have you back safe & sound!

Congratulations to Cristina Richards for recently completing a Master's Degree in Health Administration & Informatics. She presently works for The University of Iowa in the College of Nursing. Way to go Cristina!

KMC had a number of young people involved in the Bible Memory Camp held recently at Crooked Creek. We had six campers, which included: Emma Beachy, Rachel & Katelyn Lehman, Cole & Kennedy Roth and Lauryn Weiss. We also had 4 camp counselors there as well: Reggie Hostetler, Emily & Michelle Lehman and Larissa Wyse. We are sure you all had a great time!



WMSC had their monthly meeting and had 30 ladies in attendance. They had an all church project of collecting items for the Kallona Food Pantry. Their meal that day was "Gobblestew," prepared by Aline Schipper & Mary Fern Chupp. WMSC also sponsored the "Pillow Cleaning Project" and a total of 281 pillows were cleaned and sanitized. The women meet the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month. Keep up the good work!

JW's Foods recently celebrated National Dairy Month by participating in a nationwide contest. Larissa Wyse & Jonathan Wyse were part of a team that built displays and decorated the store. Their team won a Silver Penguin Trophy for being one of the best "whole store promotions" in the country. Good job, Larissa & Jonathan.

We hope you all had a nice Thanksgiving and you still have lots of good leftovers. So long for now. Enjoy the Advent Season.

*Blessings to all, Ed V. & Carol Miller*



## High School Seniors: What Next?

If you are a high school senior, now is when you are deciding what to do after you graduate next spring. If you are the parent of a high school senior, you are looking at tuition costs and probably wondering if you can afford four years of college costs.

The choices these students and families are making can have life-long consequences so everyone should take this decision very seriously. College brings significant changes in a young person's responsibilities, it is a tremendous financial commitment for both the student and their family, and it often plays a major role in a young person's future decisions about where to live, what work to do, and even wo they marry.

Students feel pressure as promotional materials from college and university admissions offices flood their mailboxes. Students visit college and university campuses as they decide where to apply to college and parents struggle through the maze of financial aid documents they need to file. It can be an overwhelming time as families balance factors such as distance, cost, available majors, and a host of other factors in their decision. Each year, several thousand new freshman arrive at the University of Iowa. In my position as an advisor and as an instructor, I watch as new freshman adjust to a new living situation and to the demands of a college classroom. For most, it is a positive experience and they thrive in this new environment.

For some, it is a difficult transition. For a variety of reasons, a number of students struggle during this time and some of them do not succeed. At Iowa, about 15 percent of incoming freshman do not return for their second year. These numbers vary from school to school but most colleges and universities lose at least 10 percent of their class after the first year. Some transfer to another school but many leave college for good. One reason for this attrition is that students are not always ready to cope with college life.

When I see such students, I wonder what would have happened if these students had spent time doing something else before coming to college. Would they look at college differently and be better equipped to handle the changes? Have we created a society that leaves high

school students thinking they must decide between going to college or getting a job? The Mennonite Church offers another option and I think it is a good one.

The October 21 bulletin had an announcement from the Mennonite Mission Network about a 10 month program called Service Adventure which is designed for high school graduates. For someone who is uncertain about college, this can be a wonderful opportunity.



Not only does Service Adventure offer an opportunity to serve others, it does it in a structured environment. Young people are part of a larger program that offers support and oversight even as participants gain a certain degree of independence. If you are 18 and want something new, this could be your chance.

Service Adventure has some practical advantages as well. Service Adventure is a chance to have real world experience in a variety of settings. This can be a great advantage when a student does go to college because they see the connection between academics and what goes on the world of work. In addition to a rich experience, participants are not burdened with debt nor do they have long-term commitments that limit their options. When their service ends, they are not tied to a job, an apartment lease, car payments, or any of the other obligations that appear so quickly when young people enter the work world.

Most importantly, this program allows young people to help others. Few things are as valuable as developing a sense of caring for others and having an opportunity to do tangible good for people who are less fortunate.

For information, go to [MennoniteMission.net/Service](http://MennoniteMission.net/Service). This site will give you a sense of the range of opportunities as well as providing useful information about the process of applying and becoming part of this program.

*Frank Yoder*



## MYF

Last Sunday at MYF we were looking at part of John the Baptist's story in Luke. John was in jail. He sent two of his disciples to Jesus. "He sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" Luke 7:19

This question just got to me. John wasn't asking if it was Jesus. What was John really asking? He was asking can I trust you? Can I trust God? He sent me to prison. He let me be stuck in prison and won't let me out...Can I trust Him?

"So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me." Luke 7:22-23

Well the first verse was like a slap in the face, but this verse was like a punch in the gut. Again it's not what was said but what wasn't said. Jesus pretty much listed off reasons why John could trust him. He healed BLIND so that they could now SEE. He gave the LAME the ability

to WALK. He let the SICK be HEALED. The DEAF, HEAR. I mean he RAISED someone from the DEAD! John was questioning whether he could trust God when God was doing all of these miracles for people who had less than him.

It's almost as if Jesus was saying You can trust me, but are you WILLING? Because if you aren't willing that trust is useless.

How far are you willing to go? Just far enough to get what you want? As far as you have to? Just enough to get by? or are you completely, and utterly in, your whole heart, your whole being, all of you? That's what God wants. EVERYTHING. If you want to have that relationship with God you can't be wondering if you can trust Him. You have to be willing to give up everything. Once you give up everything you will find yourself.

"For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it." Matthew 16:25 Find yourself.

*Larissa Wyse, MYFer*



## A Word From the Elders

To all those who participated in the congregational meeting October 28, thank you. The Elders have been reviewing the responses and considering the many positive ideas and suggestions. We appreciate your prayers, support, and your words of advice as we process the responses at the meeting.

Jeff Miller will be licensed by Central Plains Mennonite Conference, during the morning worship service December 2. Normally this is done at the time the pastor is installed but the Pastoral Leadership Committee was not able to meet until recently. Pastoral licensing begins the process which leads towards ordination. We trust that you will continue to pray for our pastors as they lead the congregation.

The Elders met with Karen Harvey to learn more about grief and the grieving process. Karen reviewed the stages of grief, describing the process as a roller coaster, or as I interpreted her, a roller coaster which often goes off the tracks. Karen shared how each of us have differ-

ent backgrounds, different family systems and different experiences which shape how we respond to death and tragic situations. Karen recommended several books on grief which have been ordered and will be placed in the library. We found her input to be helpful to us personally and as a group. We thought others at KMC would benefit from her input so we invited Karen to share during the Sunday School hour, December 9<sup>th</sup>. More information about this will be coming later.

As we deal with grief, we also move forward, trusting that God will continue to lead and provide. We ask for your continued prayers.

*Marcus Miller For the Elders*

*Marcus Miller, Joyce Ropp, Carla Slaubaugh, Frank Yoder*

We trust that you will continue to pray for our pastors as they lead the congregation.



## A Letter From Bailey

Hello KMC!

To say that living in our nation's capital is an adjustment from living in rural Iowa would be a bit of an understatement. Here I am never more than dozen yards or so from another person, whether that is one of my house mates or a stranger passing on the street. It is a strange thought but one that I have gotten used to. Living in DC has its perks. I am only a short walk away from a Target, a grocery store, and a dozen or so places to eat. I am also able to get anywhere I need using public transit with the nearest metro station located two blocks from my front door. I am also a twenty minute walk from the Smithsonian National Zoo which our house visited two weekends ago.

Speaking of walking, I am happy to say that as of



In the picture are (from top left): Anne Schrag of Freeman, SD and Cara Smith of Topeka, KS (from bottom left): Keith Suter of Bluffton, OH, Alisha Bender of Pittsburgh, PA, and Me

Thanksgiving I am no longer using a walking cast. I broke my foot about 6 weeks ago while riding the metro. It was difficult getting around for a few weeks after that but soon enough I got used to wearing

a walking cast. It isn't until something as basic as walking is taken away that you realize how much you take that for granted. I am blessed to be in good overall health and know that God is looking out for me during this year. Here in DC we were spared from the damage of Hurricane Sandy. We MVSers were given two days off from work due to the weather, but we never lost power and there was no lasting damage to the area.

I am working for Kid Power during this year. This is an organization which runs after school programs at ten DC public schools. We teach underserved students about gardening and nutrition as well as civics. I spend my mornings at the program office planning lessons and doing other tasks to help the organization run smoothly. My afternoons are spent at Cesar Chavez Prep, a middle school located three blocks from the MVS house. I enjoy working with the students and I am glad to be part of this nonprofit.

This year has been a lot of fun so far. I appreciate all the support I have gotten from KMC and look forward to seeing all of you at Christmas.

Peace and Blessings, Bailey Schrock *(serving in Mennonite Voluntary Service)*

*Want to send a note to Bailey?*

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## In Pursuit

There was a look of radiance on the face of my Grandma as she came up out of the baptismal tank. I was a freshman in high school at the time and I had never before seen such a look of joy and peace on her face. It had to be God's glory. Grandma was 77 years old and a new Christian. Because of her act of obedience in being baptized, God's glory was seen by everyone there as it was reflected in Grandma's face.

The last few weeks I have thought quite a bit about what the purpose of Christians and their churches is meant to be in this world. God wanted the Israelites in the Old Testament to be set apart. This was so that when others looked upon them they would see what a huge

difference God makes. God wanted to be seen by everyone for all that He was, is, and will always be. He wanted and still wants His glory to be seen and attributed to Him.

I Peter 4:11 says, "If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen." Everything that we do should be done so the God receives the glory. But what exactly does this mean? (Cont. on page 6)

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# KING SIZE BED



**The Original King Size**

**Bed!**

**Thank God for that bed  
and the baby who slept  
there!**

## In Pursuit (Cont. from page 5)

Eugene Peterson gives an example in his writings that led me to see being a Christian is like being a window. My thoughts on this concept have gone further than what Eugene Peterson stated, but I still want to give him credit for the idea.

A window's job is to allow something to be seen and to allow light into a dark place. A Christian's job is to allow God's glory to be seen and to help God's light to be shown into the dark and sinful world that we live in. The trouble is that some of us know we are a window and spend all our time cleaning the window, trying to make our window perfectly spotless. We do this, not realizing that the whole time we are scrubbing away the spots and streaks we are physically blocking the view of God's glory with our cleaning efforts. But others of us spend all our time looking out the window, never being concerned about the dirt accumulating on the window. We just want to see the view, never realizing that the window does need to be cleaned from time to time. If we don't clean the window sometime, then we don't really show the true view of God's glory and we darken God's light from being able to shine in its full magnificence into the dark places. God's intent is somewhere in the middle of these two. We need to be repentant and obedient, but we also need to spend time taking in God's glory and light.

Next my thoughts have roamed to what kind of window am I? Am I like the peephole in a privacy door that requires someone to be the right height to see out of it? Even then the view is more often than not small and distorted. Or am I like a beautiful, ornate window that is so distracting that only the window is even seen. This win-

dow is so eye-catching that neither the view nor the light that comes in is ever noticed. Am I like a car's windshield? Do I go so fast that all I do is become splattered and streaky or do I accumulate ice and only scrape off enough to get me semi-safely from point A to point B? Am I like the infinity room at the House on the Rock giving a view for miles and miles, but can make the person who is scared of heights a bit nervous? (The Infinity Room has 3,264 windows for walls that treat guests to a truly spectacular view.) Or am I a spacious window in a comfortable room that gives an endless view that is a joy to be seen all the time?

My conclusion is that all of us, both as Christians and churches, are primarily meant to show God's glory and be a way of letting God's light into our dark and sinful world. (Just like my Grandma when she was baptized.) We, as Christians, are windows. Some of us aren't very good windows. But God is trying to do a work in us. If we allow Him to work in us He will continually upgrade the type of window that we are, so that we can do a better and better job at showing God's glory and letting His light into our world. My prayer is that I will continue to allow God to upgrade my window so that I may pray as Christ did in John 17:4 "*I have glorified you on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.*" I also pray that Kalona Mennonite will do the same. May we, as a group, become an amazing way for God's glory and light to be seen. *As always, in pursuit, Dawn Wyse*