

The Connection

Volume 5, Issue 12, December 2007

from Pastor Mike...

Wise men still seek him

by John Fischer

*"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter;
to search out a matter is the glory of
kings." (Proverbs 25:2 NIV)*

I normally don't like bumper stickers, especially with Christian slogans, because they so often seem to trivialize the message, but one exception stands out. It used to show up around Christmastime, though I haven't seen it for a while. It is the simple but profound assertion: WISE MEN STILL SEEK HIM.

I like this because it says at least two things. First, those who seek God are wise. God affirms the dignity of the searcher and the search. The fact that God has set it up this way – has concealed his matters and invited us to search for him – confirms our nobility. It says we have enough smarts to look for him and recognize him when we find him. In fact, the proverb above puts the searcher in the realm of kings. It's a noble task to seek after God.

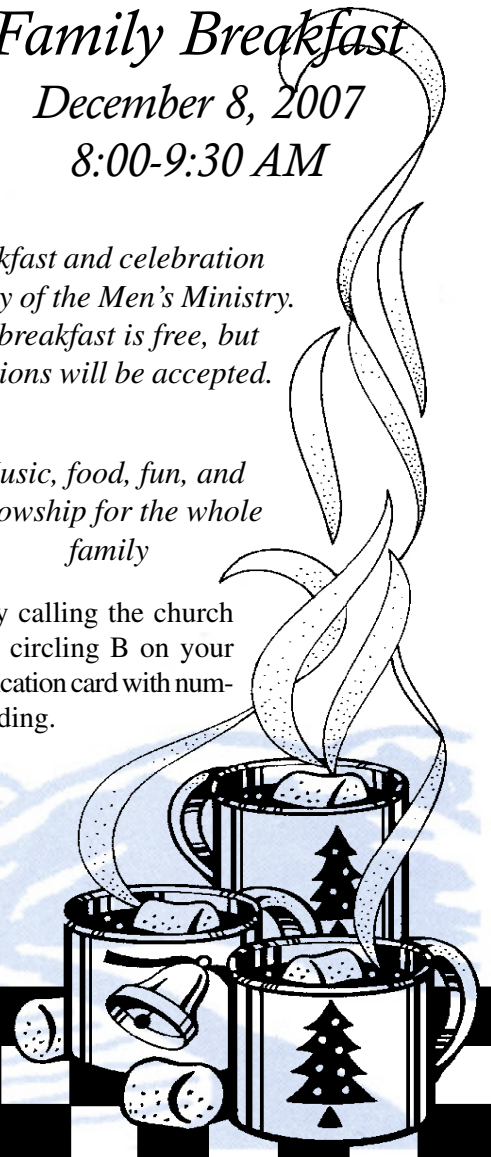
Second, those who seek God are given the benefit of the doubt that if they seek him, they will find him. This is actually a promise in Scripture: "He rewards those who earnestly seek him." (Hebrews 11:6 NIV) This is why those of us who already know him don't have to jump all over those

First Annual Christmas Family Breakfast December 8, 2007 8:00-9:30 AM

*Breakfast and celebration
courtesy of the Men's Ministry.
The breakfast is free, but
donations will be accepted.*

*Music, food, fun, and
fellowship for the whole
family*

RSVP by calling the church office or circling B on your communication card with number attending.



continued on page 6



From Your
Administrative Pastor

I wrote this article for The Connection last year and liked it so much...I am having it reprinted for you for this Christmas season...

Can it really be December already? I'm not sure I'm ready, how about you? Our personal lives can get so busy and full of stuff that sometimes it becomes difficult to refocus and look to this season as the reason for the hope we have.

I have a coffee mug that I always use during the Christmas season that says, "Jesus is the Reason for the Season." In a way, we are the reason for the season because God needed to come to earth as a baby to remind us of His love for us.

We are the reason that Jesus went to the cross. How could God love us that much? Easy — we are His creation, He loves us.

Here are some things that help me stay focused during the holidays:

- our church in worship
- our home group
- reading God's word
- praying
- listening to modern worship music
- listening to the classic Christmas anthems
- family

Christmas can be just another holiday or it can be a time to refocus on Jesus. Worship Him this season.

Until next time...
Pastor Dan

Families in Training *Christmas Party*

December 19
6:30-8:30 PM

Games, music, prizes, and more. Come together as a church family for a fun night, celebrating Jesus birthday!

Kids K-5 bring a gift for exchange, Middle and High School bring a white elephant gift.



Newsletter Deadline

If you have an upcoming event you'd like to promote, faith story or poem you'd like to share, or anything else that pertains to the life of the people of Blue Mountain Community Church, please consider writing a small article (300 words or less) and submitting it to the newsletter. The deadline for articles is the second Wednesday of each month. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.



Christmas is a time to celebrate with food, gifts, and family, but also a time when we look forward to certain family traditions. Maybe it's picking out the family Christmas tree, baking cookies, or reading certain Christmas stories. In my home, we enjoy the classic holiday TV shows such as Charlie Brown Christmas and Frosty the Snowman. These holiday customs hold many happy memoirs from our childhood and we look forward to the day when our children will pass them down to their children.

Every now and then our children can reveal how we may improve on these holiday traditions and bring clarity to the point of Christmas and Christ's love.

My hope is that each family will allow room for Jesus' love to be revealed through your Christmas Traditions.

Pastor Sharon



Everyone's Welcome

by Kami Gilmour

Our family has always set up a beautiful Nativity scene on our front hall table at the beginning of Advent. The kids carefully unwrap each piece and place it on the table. We always put Jesus in the manger last and then say a prayer thanking God for sending Jesus. Each year we remind our kids the Nativity scene is a display of our faith, not a toy to play with.

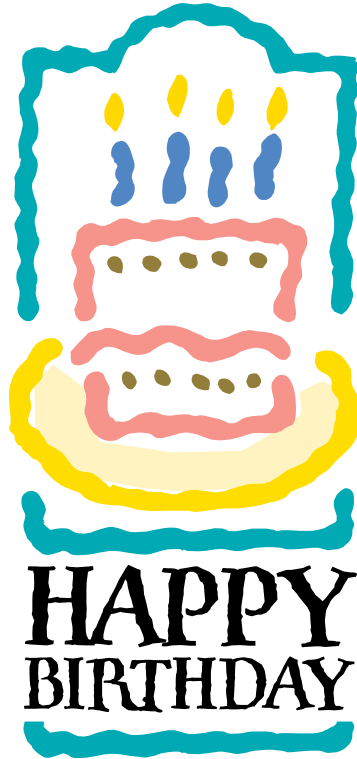
One year, though, 3-year-old Caleb had something different in mind. One afternoon I noticed about 30 extra plastic creatures—from barnyard animals to dinosaurs—on display among the original ceramic animals. All the plastic toys had been carefully placed so they faced baby Jesus. I gathered the kids to review the rules regarding the Nativity scene when Caleb exclaimed earnestly, “But Mommy! My animals wanted to know about Jesus, too.”

His words took my breath away. From that day forward, the kids have been allowed to bring someone new to the manger. It's not perfect and pretty, but it's real—because Caleb's right. God wants everyone to know about Jesus.



- 2 Jeff & Sandy Goodson
- 8 Bob & Terry Conwell
- 14 Dan & Claudia Huntley
- 18 Harold & Reva Ewing
- 23 Calvin & Cristy McNeil
- 28 Gene & Jinny Daniels
- 29 Michael & Laurie Klicker

- 1 Quinn Anderson
- Debbie Sands
- 2 Sharon Hale
- Megan Hoppen
- Zamora Wilson
- 4 Matthew Skifstad
- 5 Don Coble
- Kenneth McMillan
- 6 Barry Culbertson
- Ken Erb
- 7 Charlie Greiner
- Ashley Kershaw
- Evan Walker
- Valerie Vicari
- Olivia Watson
- 9 Ruth Hicks
- Sarah Jameson
- 10 Nikki Barroza
- Nora Carrillo
- Ryan Evans
- Bryce Henline
- 12 Jean Bell
- Vincent Cannone
- Brandon Snider
- 13 Michael Clark



- Amber Culbertson
- Neosha Guse
- Zelda Kelso
- Andrew Miller
- Ernest LaFont
- 16 Richard Easton
- 17 Carol McMillan
- 18 Claire Clark
- Joey Stephens
- 19 Jeremy Azelton

- Dora Gonzalez
- 20 Scarlett Figgins
- 22 Davin Jones
- Kevin Linn
- 23 Joyce McManus
- 24 Bob Hoppen
- Bill Thrasher
- 25 Cristy McNeil
- 26 Paul Davisson
- 27 Carrie Schultz
- 28 Don Blair
- Mark Farr
- Don Groat
- Joshua Lancaster
- Jolene Queen
- 29 Kevin Blair
- Alex Jones
- Vance Jones
- Kathy Nelson
- Cameron Spencer
- Cyndi Walters
- 31 Don Lemons

Monthly Events

- 1 Baby Shower for Shaunna Bennett 1:00 PM
6 SAMS* 10:00 AM
Celebrate Recovery Leaders 7:00 PM
8 Family Breakfast 7:30 AM
10 Ladies Christmas Tea 6:00 PM
11 Quilter's Guild 6:00 PM
13 MOPS* 9:00 AM
Secret Sister Revealing Party 6:00 PM
Board of Elders 6:30 PM
17 Ark Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
19 The Ark Christmas Program 4:30 PM
FIT Christmas Party 6:30 PM
20 Building and Grounds 6:45 PM
Missions Commission 7:00 PM

* SAMS- Senior Adult Ministries

MOPS- Mothers of Preschoolers

Weekly Events

Sunday

Middle School Group 6:00 PM

Tuesday

Taking Off Pounds Sensibly 5:30 PM

Boy Scouts 7:00 PM

Wednesday

Women's Bible Study 9:00 AM

Families in Training 6:30 PM

Thursday

Worship Team Rehearsal 7:00 PM

Friday

Celebrate Recovery 7:00 PM

**Merry
Christmas**



24 Christmas Eve

25 Christmas Day

31 New Year's Eve

D
C
M
C
M
M
B
M
R



who are seeking when they get something wrong or don't put it in exactly the right words. If they are truly seeking, they will find him, and it will be God who opens their eyes anyway. We need to respect the search of those we know who are seeking and not get impatient with them or think of them as stupid for not seeing what we see. When it's time, they will.

This may mean you might have to bite your tongue a little bit and not say everything you know all the time. Better to listen for those parts of the truth the seeker has already found and affirm them. Jesus didn't spill all the beans as soon as he started preaching. He let a little bit out at a time. He talked in code (parables). He asked a lot of questions. He protected the search. He didn't give what was sacred to dogs or throw out pearls to pigs. He always said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear," and then he went on to not say everything. He made them hang on his words and come back for more. All of this protects not only the dignity of the search and the searcher, but also the dignity of the truth.

It really should be this way; otherwise, we could just put it all on a bumper sticker.

Pastor Mike

The Christmas Spirit

When the Christmas spirit springs to life
In the human heart each year,
The world becomes, for a little time,
A haven of love and cheer.

The poor in body are clothed and fed,
And the lonely know once more
The warmth of hearing a welcome knock
On a too long silent door.

For these few days we remember well
That all mankind is kin,
Bound by the love of the Babe who found
No room in that long-ago inn.

But the days go by, and the spirit dies,
So busy with living are we,
And the poor and the lonely are left once more
In hunger and apathy.

I have been guilty too, God knows,
Too busy to lend a hand,
Too busy to stop for a friendly chat,
Too busy to understand.

"No more, no more let this happen to me,
Dear Lord," I earnestly pray.

"Let me keep the Spirit the whole year through
As bright as it is today."

— Virginia Blanck Moore



Wise Men and Women Still Seek Him



MISSIONS CORNER

by Ron Groom

In this month's article, I would like to report on the results of our 2008 Faith Promise campaign. In October, the Missions Commission set a goal of \$30,000. Thanks be to God and His faithful people, we have received pledges of \$25,844. We are only \$4,156 short of our goal.

As many of you know, we help to support a wide range of ministries, including: an orphanage, Bible school, several missionaries, an Egyptian Church of God, Young Life, Campus Crusade for Christ and Birthright, just to name a few. Every year there are increased needs in these organizations along with new requests from other worthy ministries. Even though we realize we can't help fund everyone, we want to serve as many as possible. Therefore, if any of you have not yet made a pledge, please prayerfully consider what the Lord would have you do.



Celebrate Recovery

by Teri Stewart

Step 10: So if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! 1Cor. 10:12.

Mom's relatives lived in the Seattle area. We only associated with one of her two sisters. We were told the other sister was religious. That meant that she was self-righteous, narrow minded, and not at all fun.

The religious sister wasn't invited to our house. When we visited Seattle, mom's sister would discourage us from visiting her religious sister because we might get trapped, "listening to a bunch of religious garbage," and "miss out on all the fun."

When my folks quit drinking and got sober, this put them into the category with the religious sister. The fun sister stopped visiting as often, and finally grew away from us completely.

In later years, my mom grew ill and her religious sister, out of concern, came to visit her. She cared for Mom, was faithful about staying in touch with her, and entertained her with a listening ear and good sense of humor. Mom confessed to me that her newfound friend was nothing like her reputation. She accepted Mom completely even though she had been so cruelly snubbed. Mom apologized to her.

I thought back to how my folks lived: the parties, the fights, the troubles, and the lack of responsibility. I got goose bumps as I realized. My Christian Aunt missed out on absolutely nothing! As her sisters stumbled through their misery, she was enjoying a fulfilling life. With love and grace, she lifted her sisters up in prayer.

I realize now, I need to forget the snubs, live my life according to God's purpose, and pray for those still out there.

The people walking in
DARKNESS have
seen a
great light.



Isaiah 9:2

Our Ministry Team

Senior Pastor — Mike Hinrichsen
Administrative Pastor — Dan Huntley
Children's Pastor — Sharon Wiles
Student Ministries Pastor — Isaac Freeman
Worship Interim Pastor — Richard Easton

A monthly publication of **Blue Mountain Community Church** 928 Sturm Ave., Walla Walla, Washington 99362, (509) 529-1212, www.bluemountainchurch.com, Editor: Julie Caton, bmccbulletin@gmail.com. Deadline for submissions: The second Wednesday of the month prior to publication. Editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. Unsolicited materials welcome.
© 2006 Blue Mountain Community Church.