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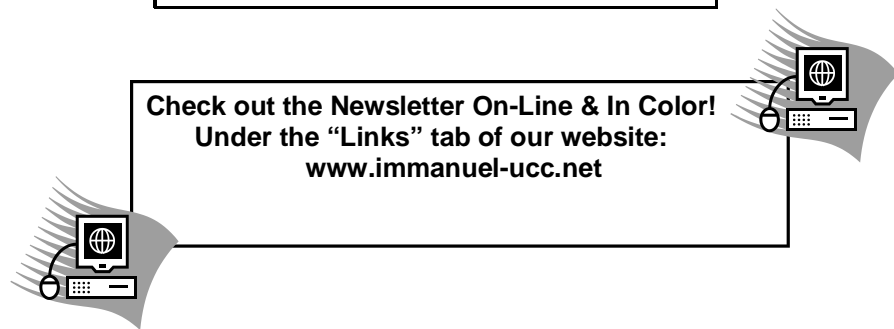
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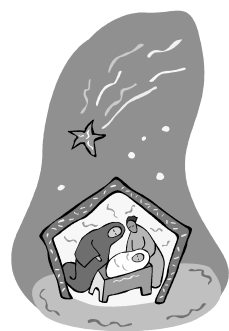
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Under the "Links" tab of our website:
www.immanuel-ucc.net



December
Newsletter
2011



Wishing you a
Very Merry Christmas!

Immanuel United Church of Christ

December 2011

Tom's Tidbits



Rev. Dr. Tom Schwartz
Sr. Minister
1-281-617-6198
1-888-760-0150

Rev. George R. Kuebler
Pastor Emeritus

Shay Meyer
Director Christian Ed

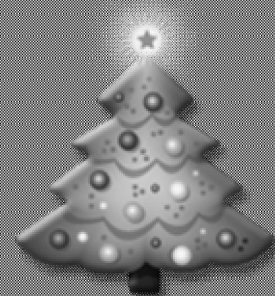
Larry Dunlap
Choir Director

Andrew Moses
Organist

Leanne Bourgeois
Church Secretary

Church Office
979-793-6125

Fax Number
979-793-6199



Children's Christmas
Program is
Sunday, December 11th
during worship!

Christmas Contata
Sunday, December 18th
4:00pm @ St. Paul's



JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

It was Christmastime. Two women, their arms filled with bundles and their coat collars raised against the wintry wind, walked past a large, downtown church. On the lawn was a life-size scene of the Nativity – the Christ child in the manger. Mary and Joseph, the kneeling shepherds, and the cattle stood nearby. "Can you beat that!" one of the women was overheard to say. "The churches are even barging in on Christmas!"

What irony – that some have drifted so far from the original significance of the Christmas season that our Savior and Lord should be accused of "barging in" on his own birthday party!

Or what about this? Many years ago, the English playwright George Bernard Shaw organized a society for the abolition of Christmas. For him, Christmas was simply a "nuisance," supported by the "mob" as a "carnival of mendacity, gluttony and drunkenness." But after years of campaigning, Shaw had to admit his society was a failure. "So far," he said, "I am the only member."

Now contrast the above with this moving story:

Wally was nine when asked to participate in the church's Christmas pageant. He was to be the innkeeper.

After some rehearsals, the long-awaited event occurred. Joseph and Mary came to the inn, and there was Wally, standing at the door with his lantern. "What do you want?" he asked.

"We seek lodging," replied Joseph.
"Go elsewhere," Wally replied. "The inn is full."

"But, sir, we have asked everywhere in vain. We have traveled far and are very weary. Please, good innkeeper, this is my wife, heavy with child. You must have some small corner for her."

Wally now looked down on Mary with pity. But the prompter called to Wally, "Go on with your lines!"

So Wally continued: "There is no room here; begone – go on your way."

At this point, Joseph sadly placed his arms around Mary. Mary laid her head upon his shoulder, and the two started to move slowly away.

Wally stood there in the doorway, watching the forlorn couple with obvious concern, and with a tear trickling down his cheek.

Suddenly this Christmas pageant became different from all others. "Don't go, Joseph!" Wally called out. "Bring Mary back!" And Wally's face lighted up with a bright smile. "You can have MY room!" His tender heart had made room for the Savior.

Thanks be to God, despite the efforts to commercialize it or eliminate it, Christmas lives on – its spirit having captured the hearts of both young and old. And the tender beauty of Christmas sentiment and Christmas singing lightens the load and puts a spring in the step of everyone except the greatest of Grinches.

Sisters and brothers, your heart can overflow with joy if you will read again, and hear again, and allow yourself to be moved again by what happened in the little town of Bethlehem more than 2,000 years ago. Only one other event in history can compare with Christ's birth into the world, and that is his death upon Calvary's cross.

Yes, hear again the wondrous story, that in the town of Bethlehem was born the King of Glory! Remember that Jesus is the Reason for the Season!

See you in church on Sunday...or wherever else our paths may cross. Remember that God loves you, and so do I!

NOVEMBER ATTENDANCE

October 30 283
November 6 121
November 13 —
November 20 191
November 27 180

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

December 4 Megan Elkins, Mark Bosse
December 11 Tyler Anderson, Regann Hedt
December 18 Morgan Yelderman, Kayla Hester
December 25 Julie Arrington, Grant Arrington

LAY READERS and GREETERS NEEDED!!!

If you are interested in being a Lay Reader or a Greeter and assisting the morning worship services, please see Yvonne Lingnau, or a member of the Worship committee.

MOMENT FOR THE YOUNG

December 4 Carol Gerken
December 11 Leslie Kolkmeier
December 18 Pastor Tom
December 25 Marla Sebesta

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS



Cadey Lynn Chapman
Born on November 7, 2011
Parents: Jeff and Casey Chapman

Ryder Lee Stasney
Born on November 11, 2011
Parents: Jarrod and Amy Stasney

Evan Hunter Otto
Born November 17, 2011
Parents: Johnny and Jill (Mach) Otto



OPEN MARKETPLACE NEWS

The Open Marketplace Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that was involved in making this year's even a huge success! We raised approximately \$20,852.00.

The raffle winners are as follows:

Quilt	Eli Romero
5" Diameter Tree	Sandy Eversole
Half Calf	Christine Smyers
\$250.00 Mastercard	Sandra Wendt
\$250.00 Target Card	Mark Evans
\$200.00 Academy Card	J.O. Villarreal
Glider Swing	Carol Bosse
\$150.00 Bass Pro Shop	Deborah Wendt
\$100.00 Mastercard	Larry Ross
\$100.00 Lad's Gift	C.W. Lamensky
Men's/Lady's Watch	Mark Wendt
\$50.00 Needville Feed	JoAnn Leago

Again, we would like to thank everyone who helped with Marketplace this year!

ARE YOU IN NEED OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE?

Through the generous initial contribution of a church member, a new fund has been established to assist members and attenders of Immanuel United Church of Christ with any financial needs that they might experience. Virtually any and every kind of financial need is eligible for assistance.

Your confidentiality is assured. Here's how it works: Speak personally to Pastor Tom about your need. He will then submit the details of your need (but not your name or any other identifying information) to the members of the Mission and Outreach Committee: Leslie Kolkmeier, Bruce Oberhoff, and Debby Wendt. They will review this information and make a determination as to whether or not to provide assistance, and in what amount.

Pastor Tom will then make arrangements to have a check written on this account directly to the provider of the good or service. Again, no personal identifying information will be revealed. Pastor Tom will then personally deliver the check to you, and you may submit it to the good or service provider.

The Mission and Outreach Committee is very excited about this new opportunity to ministers to the needs of members and attenders of Immanuel. If you have any kind of need, please contact Pastor Tom, who will initiate the process to provide assistance.

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

In a Special Congregational Meeting following the church service on November 13th, the Congregation voted to have Mechanical 73 replace and fix problems in the air conditioning of the sanctuary and fellowship building. The cost of the project is \$22,767.00 and will come out of Building and Grounds with the addition of the Open Marketplace funds.

Regular monthly Consistory Minutes and Financial Reports are no longer being included in the monthly newsletters.

A notification will be listed in the Sunday bulletin when they are available to be picked up in the church office.



POINSETTIA ORDER FORM



The Women's Guild offers the opportunity to purchase Poinsettia Plants to decorate our sanctuary for Christmas {25 plants available} or as a gift to the Building Fund or Memorial Fund "In memory of" or "In honor of" a loved one.

PAYABLE TO: IUCC WOMEN'S GUILD

Deadline for Bulletin Recognition is December 15th

FORMS and MONEY can be given to Erna Thielemann Or mailed to the Church Office.

_____ [PHONE #] _____ wishes to make a gift:
(NAME)

In Memory of:

and/or In Honor of:

NUMBER OF PLANTS: _____ \$12.00 each

TOTAL GIFT: \$ _____ Building Fund \$ _____

Immanuel UCC Memorial Fund \$ _____
P O Box 505
Needville, Texas 77461-0505



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1	David Luedeke James Pasteka Keylan Poe Merylyn Leus Pat Pavlock	15	Cris Meyer Harold Heidemann Randal McGuire Tommy Kostelnik
2	Kathy Luedeke Magnolia Kramer	17	Kim Stegman
3	Jeffrey Chapman Makala Smith	18	Crystal Smith Sharon Roberson
4	Hester Whorton-Bain Reid Hedt Sean Warncke	19	Lottie Gerken Tim Lawless
5	Carol Bosse Eileen Alaminsky William Schodek	20	Beverly Altimore Clarence Lamensky
6	Erna Thielemann Geraldine Winkelman Lauren Bosse	22	Kynsleigh Zatopek
7	Glenn Shroeder, Sr. John Bosse	23	Cody Mach
8	Brian Zwahr Mark Meyer	24	Cameron Raska Zachary Sullivan
9	Carol Gerken Lana Gallatin Michael Richter	25	Delbert Wendt
10	Dawn Charanza Gilbert Vallet, Sr. Kelton Poe Lena Maresh Mark Evans Renee Richter	26	Brett Legendre Jenny Stack Julie Stack
11	Bobby Zwahr, Sr. K.B. Otto	27	Emily Otto Kelly Miller
13	Patty Bettin Peggy Heidemann	28	Blair Gerken
14	Grace Hankins Lawrence Zwahr Tannor Baker Trevor Baker	29	David Stegman Eugene Arlitt Lil Sacra Reid Halbert
		30	Alli Eversole Roland Conrad Wayne Ley
		31	Candis Monroy Jennifer Bellingroot Tommy Wendt

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

1	Jay & Faith Finley
2	Darrell & Sandra Weidemann Greg & Janet Raesner
4	Ray & Kristi Archer
7	Michael & Denise Ramey
8	Darrel & Carrie Hartfiel
10	Jason & Angela Herrin
18	Marc & Karen Gadway
19	Bubba & Jo Ann Morton Fred & Teresa Banda
20	Kevin & Diane Urbanek



Joy to the World



PRAYER LIST

P.U.S.H. = Pray Until Something Happens!



Justin Barcak
Harold Beck
Steve Beck
Jodi Boone
Tanya Castaneda
Inez Cowling
Cindy Davila
Don & Marilyn Dillard
Bernadette Dodge
Raymond Freund
Sue Garver
Herald Gaddy
Kayla Hester
Kathy Holub
Kellye Hyde
Hazel Jurek
Jeanne Otto Keeney

Ryann Kolkmeier
Frances Landers
Donna Kay Langton
Raquel (Condel) Levy
Santos Mendez
Alice Nestor
Evelyn Oberhoff
Donette Paige
Mark Paweleck
Carl Petrosky
Ruby Poncik
Melissa Ramos
Herbert Richter
Judy Ross
Raeleigh Schlitzkus
Waline Sebesta
Jim Sims

Jane Slaughter
Thelma Staley
Alberta Steffen
David Stegman
Roy and Barbara Steffen
Mary Ann Talley
Cayden Thomas
Elton Tiemann
Tim Timmons
Susan Wallis
Willie Wallick
Brendan Warncke
Courtney Warncke
Jackie Witcher
Dee Wright
Cheryl Zwahr

It is an honor and privilege to pray for the needs of those on our prayer list. However, as you may have noticed, our list has been growing. This is certainly not a problem if all those on the list still have specific requests for which ongoing prayer is needed. However, if you have added someone to the list, and you know the need for which they were added has been answered, please contact the church office so that the list may be updated. You may also contact the church office to add the name of anyone who is in need of prayer.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter!

December 4th Blood Drive

Thanks to everyone for the big success in the last blood drive. We collected 28 units. This is a lot better than we have been doing in our last few drives. Keep up the good work!

This drive we'll be doing something new. We will be set up to add people to the National Marrow Donor Program. This is a database that contains all of your vitals so that you can be checked for compatibility to other people who may need this life saving procedure. Every year, more than 10,000 patients in the U.S. are diagnosed with life-threatening diseases such as leukemia or lymphoma for which a marrow or cord blood transplant from an unrelated donor may be their best or only hope of a cure.

I know what you're saying. "Now that sounds great Mike, what can I do to join the registry and have the chance of saving someone's life?" Well here are some of your questions answered.

- Do I qualify to be a member of the registry? You have to be between the ages of 18 and 60, be willing to donate to any patient, and meet the health guidelines.
- Is registering easy? You bet it is. We will have a couple of people available to register you with a quick questionnaire, a screening, a mouth swab, and answer your questions. That's it! Then you will be ready to take your turn to save a life if you're called to.

• Don't worry. If you are chosen, the risks are very low, most of the procedures do not involve surgery, and you'll be back to normal in a few days. It's a small sacrifice to save someone's life. I know if one of my loved ones were in need, I'd want everyone in the United States to be registered to have the best chance of saving their life!

Please give this your thoughtful consideration. Come to the drive, donate blood, and registering yourself for the donor program. Who knows, the life you save may be sitting right next to you.

May God bless and guide your decisions,
Michael Altimore
Blood Drive Chairman



YOUTH CLUB PERFECT ATTENDANCE for OCTOBER 2011

Bourgeois, Isaiah
Dick, Deanna
Fredrickson, Ryan
Kostelnik, Kaitlyn
Polak, Gracie
Whatley, Janna
Winkelman, Bree
Wood, Sutton
Baker, Tannor
Baker, Trevor
Bean, Riley
Bishop, Jack
Bourgeois, Daniel
Carson, Marilyn
Elliston, Jace
Fredrickson, Reese
House, Abby
Jurek, Amber
Legendre, Tayah
Teykl, Keeli

Thumann, Kyle
Todd, Cole
Winkelman, Chase
Wood, Slade
Bosse, Justin
Dick, Deven
Gadway, Anna
Hedt, Reid
Jurek, Kevin
Kostelnik, Bradley
Rister, Garrett
Teykl, Kyler
Thumann, Bryce
Baker, Connor
Bean, Hunter
Dick, David
Fredrickson, Shay
Hedt, Ryan
Hester, Kimberly
Legendre, Cale

Legendre, Trace
Pawlak, Brayden
Reeh, Tori
Schodek, Josef
Schodek, Lindsey
Anderson, Tyler
Arrington, Grant
Arrington, Julie
Bosse, Mark
Elkins, Megan
Gadway, Madeline
Hedt, Regann
Hester, Kayla
Yelderman, Morgan
Blazier, Shae
Elliston, Justine
Hester, Michael
Rhodes, Kaitlan
Schultz-Zwahr, Landon



SUNDAY SCHOOL PERFECT ATTENDANCE for OCTOBER 2011

Avery Schwaiger
Lita Meyer
Suzanne Mikeska
Mikayla Mikeska
Anna Gadway
Morgan Yelderman
Regann Hedt
Megan Elkins
Madeline Gadway
Tyler Anderson

Grant Arrington
Chase Miller
Casey Chapman
Bruce Oberhoff
Becky Oberhoff
Verna Dell McGuire
Carolyn Kaluza
Roxy Graeber
Ruby Gerken
Carol Bosse

YOUTH POSTINGS!
(KINDERGARTEN - 12th)
DECEMBER

TTSKCE Follow-up:

We had a blast strolling through Highland Point, well more like skipping and running to get canned and dry shelf items from all of the houses. **Mr. Mark Evans** on Consistory suggested a hay ride and we did...in style. **Mr. Cris Meyer** and Mark both carefully drove us around and through the neighborhood and we still didn't get to everyone. We brought back about 200 items, sorted them and placed them on the rolling carts so **Mrs. Carolyn Conrad** and **Mrs. Mildred Novak** could work their magic getting it all lined out in the pantry for food boxes. These ladies sure do a great job of keeping the food pantry stocked and boxes ready for handing out. This is one of those many things done behind the scenes in our busy church. Please give them a pat on the back of appreciation for keeping this ministry going strong.

Open Marketplace Follow-up:

All the figures are in and we had another great year. Thank you everyone for all of your help with the kids games, the soda booth and walking the live auction items around. I'm sure even more was done that I don't even know about, but thank you all for everything that took place to make it such a wonderful event to be a part of. I'm certainly proud of all of you!

Guest Speaker Follow-up:

Elena Huegel spent some time with our younger youth and talked about what a missionary is, what they do, where the country of Chile is and where she stays in that long, skinny country. With the older youth and adult crowd, Ms. Huegel lined up pictures and showed us the faces of Chile. Wow! Those were such great pictures and then we chose a few to hear "the story behind the face". As we were listening youth were already asking to do a mission trip to Chile before she was even done! That right there is the good stuff - kids with hearts that are mission sensitive. Keep up the great work Immanuel! We ARE doing great things and the future looks bright as well.

Christmas Program:

Wednesday, December 7th, Kinder - 5th, do *NOT* ride the bus to church. Please come at 5:30 for dinner then program practice. 6th grade up you will come at your regular time, 6:00 pm and we will practice then eat dinner. Confirmation please be prepared to stay until 7:30 if possible.

Settegast Heights:

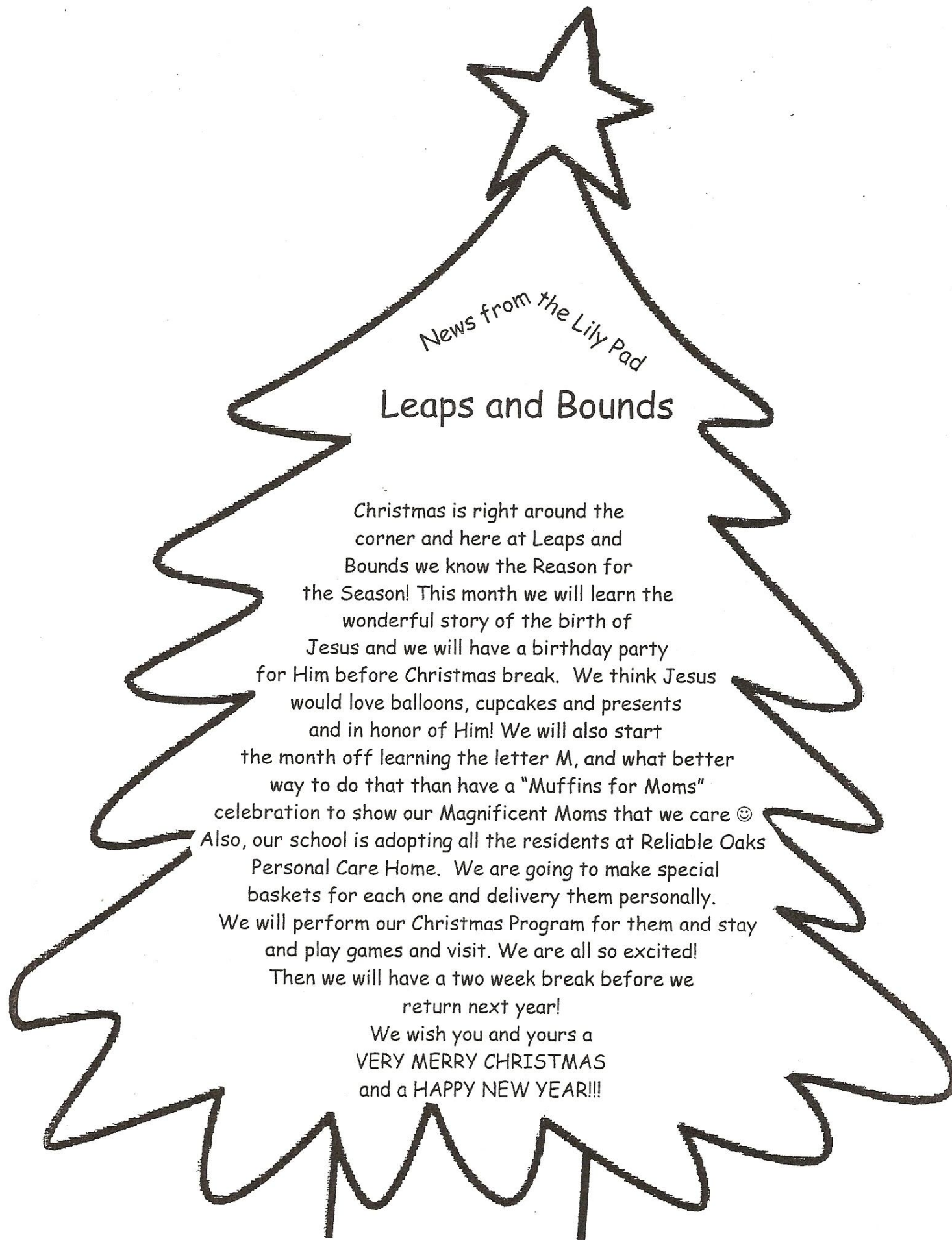
Have you seen the Library lately??? It looks like Santa's elves have been very busy. Well of course it's really all of you that have arisen to the need once again to supply underprivileged youth and even some senior citizens with some Christmas gifts. A huge hand to **Mrs. Marla Sebesta** for taking this year's Confirmation class and a couple extra out shopping for quite a few of these blessed recipients. Last I heard **Mrs. Debby Wendt** was still in need of sandwiches and cookies for the party. Maybe you were not able to buy gifts this year, but you can help in the food department. Attendance is not necessary if you want us to take the food for you. Please call her and let her know. Debby has worked hard at making sure all the children on our "Settegast Heights Tree" were well taken care of and we can't wait to see their faces as we bring them their gifts. They will be going there on **Saturday, December 10th**.

Food/Toy Drive Preparation ("Love in Action"):

Every year the high school group loads up and we head a street or two over to Needville Community Church to unload a small enclosed trailer full of food. This year it will be on **Wednesday, December 14th** and we will ride over in style on a hayride. We will also be making up the food boxes for the Christmas basket give-a-way for families in need of assistance this year. Please join us and help "get your Jesus on". There's nothing like volunteering and giving of yourself to help really know what the season is all about! If you would like to help on the day they are given out then mark your calendars for **Saturday, December 17th**. Assistance will be needed with toys, keeping kiddos entertained while their parents shop, and in general just being helpful with whatever comes up. As part of "Love in Action", Kindergartners through 5th graders carted up all the food brought in from Little Jay's daycare and then by assembly line we stored all the extra boxes neatly in the attic. Now you want to talk about having a blast...that made their day! Be looking for pictures on the website. So adorable and helpful!

Notes:

~**Schedule change: No youth groups meeting on Wednesday, December 21st or 28th**, for Christmas and New Year's break. Enjoy the time off from school and I hope it refreshes and renews your spirit!
~We have started collecting aluminum cans for the youth account. This will help offset some expenses during the year such as lock-ins and special parties. Your assistance is greatly appreciated. Please bring them in plastic bags and leave them in the container by the dumpster if I am not at church to accept them in person. Please do not leave them in the building.
~8th grade and High School, Winter Lock-In will be, Friday, December 16. Keep posted for details. We have some good stuff cooked up for all of you. Hope you can make it. Please RSVP ASAP! Lol
Jesus is the Reason for the Season,
Shay Meyer. Questions, comments, concerns? shay@meverranch.net (832) 595-4028 cell. Feedback always welcome.



December 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Leaps & Bounds 8:30am-2:30pm Scouts 6-9p	2 ADK Set-up	3 Breakfast w/ Santa
4 Blood Drive 8am—12pm Sunday School 9a Worship/Communion 10:15a	5 Pastor Tom-Out	6 Leaps & Bounds 8:30am-2:30pm MDO Board Mtg Scouts 7-9 Pastor Tom-Out	7 YOUTH CLUB Dress Rehearsal K-5th 5:30-7:00p 6th-HS 6:00-7:30p Confirm. 6:00-7:00p	8 Leaps & Bounds 8:30am-2:30pm Scouts 6-9pm	9 NES Carolers @ Sr. Lunch 11:00am Oberrender Rehearsal 6:30-10:30	10 Settegast Heights Party 11a-2p Oberrender Wedding
11 Sunday School 9a Worship/SS Perf. Attendance CHRISTMAS PROGRAM	12 Scouts 6-9p Consistory 7p Woodmen Party 6:30p	13 Leaps & Bounds 8:30am-2:30pm Brotherhood 6:30p Worship/Evang. 7p.	14 YOUTH CLUB K-5th (snack) 4-5:30p 6th-7th (meal) 6-7:30p Confirm. (meal) 6-7p HS Youth (meal) 6-8p Adult Bible Study 7p	15 Leaps & Bounds 8:30am-2:30pm Guild Christmas 12:00p Scouts 6-9 Sr. Fundraiser Mtg 7p	16 Scouts 6-9p	17 NMA Basket Distr. 9-11a @NCC Oberhoff Hall Rental 4-8p
18 Sunday School 9a Worship/ABCelebration 10:15a Christmas Contata 4p @ St. Pauls Enax Reunion 11:15a-4p	19 Scout Christmas Party 6:30-9pm Pastor Tom-Out	20 Pastor Tom-Out	21 NO YOUTH CLUB NO BIBLE STUDY	22	23 OFFICE CLOSED	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Svc. 6:30p
25 MERRY CHRISTMAS! Sunday School 9a Worship 10:15am	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27	28 NO YOUTH CLUB	29	30	31

IMMANUEL WOMEN'S GUILD

The Immanuel's Women's Guild met on Friday, November 18, 2011 with 13 members present. Olie Eixmann gave the program. She talked on "What are You Most Grateful For"? Everyone has something to be thankful for. She then read "Lending a Hand".

President Richter called the meeting to order and also took minutes as Jeanette Balcerowicz was not present. Erna Thielemann gave the Treasurer's Report. A big "thanks" goes out to Carolyn Conrad for getting items on sale for the Thanksgiving Baskets. Someone paid A Flower & Gift Shop for the altar flowers and roses for the infants. We thank you, whoever you are!

Old Business: Erna Thielemann said she found school bags at WalMart for \$3.00 a bag.

New Business: President Richter brought up the upcoming Christmas party. Willie Mae Tielke made a motion we have chicken; Viola Fuchs seconded the motion. Motion carried. A motion by Viola Fuchs that we pay \$4.00 for that meal. Erna Thielemann seconded the motion. Motion carried. Jim Bain gave a gift certificate to help pay for the Christmas luncheon which will be held on December 15th.

Servers for the Huegel missionary presentation on Wednesday, November 30th will be Evelyn Schmidt, Hester Bain, and Willie Mae Tielke. Viola Fuchs will bring a fruit tray and Erna Thielemann will bring a vegetable tray. Anyone available is asked to help serve.

A motion was made by Hester Bain to give \$100.00 to the Memorial Fund for our deceased members. Shirley Wendt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Hester Bain will contact Roxy Graeber for the cleaning of the brassware.

Alice Bergen made a motion to continue our projects for the next year. Motion was seconded by Olie Eixmann. Motion carried.

Hester Bain reported on the "Program and Refreshments" for next year. A few more members were needed for serving refreshments. Call her if you can serve.

People celebrating birthdays in November were Alice Bergen, Ora Lee Lamensky, Ruby Gerken, Barbara Sims, and Melinda Hammock.

Anniversaries were Carol and Tom Bosse, Viola and Clarence Fuchs, and Willie Mae Tielke and Melvin Tielke. Hymns were sung for all.

Prayer concerns were for Evelyn Oberhoff, Herbert Richter, Donald Dillard, Steven Christy, Jim Sims, Ruby Lee Oberhoff, Ruby Poncik, Willie Mae Tielke, and Julius and Jeanette Balcerowicz.

The meeting was closed by joining hands and singing "Blest Be The Tie That Binds", and praying the "Lord's Prayer".

Refreshments were served by Lillie Richter and Shirley Wendt.

Jeanette Balcerowicz, Secretary

GUILD CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

The Women's Guild Christmas luncheon, program and meeting will be held on Thursday, December 15, 2011 at 12 noon. Guests are invited to attend. The luncheon will be chicken fried chicken with sides and salad at a cost of \$4.00 per plate. The remainder of the cost has been donated. Please **RSVP by Sunday, December 11** to Lillie Richter, 979-793-4717 or Erna Thielemann, 281-232-6321