



Bright Horizons

Rev. Bruce Hitchcock, Executive Director Angie Brown, Newsletter Editor

December
2008



A Celebration Worthy of "Christ"

One of the great wonders of Christmas is that Jesus Christ is the gift of God to the world as an infant. People are deeply moved by babies. We are nurturing, protective, careful and loving around infants. Our behavior and manner of speaking change in the presence of babies. We coo and cuddle. Our language skills become rudimentary. We become fascinated with fingers and toes; ten of each! And so the wonder of an infant Christ is easy for us to appreciate.

Did you know that Matthew shares the birth of Jesus in eight short verses? The childhood of Jesus takes only twenty-three verses. Mark and John share nothing about the birth and childhood of Jesus. Luke takes fifty-two verses to share the birth of Jesus and his boyhood. A total of eighty-three verses in only two of the four gospels seems too few to announce the birth of the Messiah.

The rest of the four Gospels orient themselves around the adult Jesus. Celebrating the birth of the Jesus in worship is a glorious act, but we would do well to keep in mind that Christ is among us as the fully developed Savior and Lord. Celebrating Christmas as the coming of the baby Jesus who needs us to care for him, to raise him, to teach him is a seductive way to view God. We celebrate the birth of the Messiah, not the opportunity to raise up God in our image.

Christmas is a full celebration of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the life of the cosmos and in our lives. For too long we have allowed marketing, civil celebrations, and a disgusting display of materialism to turn the scripture and the church into servants of the dollar. We casually read the stories of Jesus' birth without seeing the poverty and danger of that world. Perhaps that is why so much of our nation cannot see the poverty and danger that exists in our world. There was no room in the inn. How can it be ok for any child to be born in a barn? How can it be right that any child, or senior citizen, can find no room at the doctor's office?

Jesus Christ expects Christians to serve the poor and the unnoticed in our midst. Jesus spoke of this expectation and he demonstrated how we are to respond to the poor and the unnoticed in our midst. This Christmas is the time to celebrate the Living Lord Jesus Christ in our midst! Let our celebrations reflect the life and love of Jesus Christ. Let us consider that whatever we spend upon ourselves for Christmas we also ought to spend a portion of that upon the poor. A display of wealth and gift giving to ourselves, while ignoring the needs of the poor, is no celebration worthy of the name *Christmas*. Jesus said "what ever you did for the least of these, you did for me." What gift will you give to Jesus this Christmas?

-Love, Pastor Bruce

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Healthy Bingo

**Unity Kitchen
December 10, 2008
1:00 p.m.**



Healthy Bingo is a game designed to teach cancer education in a non-traditional way.

Members of the WIAACC of Jefferson County will give health information between the bingo games and participants will have opportunities to win health and beauty prizes. All are welcome.

*Event Sponsored by:
Women in Action Against
Cancer Coalition*

Christmas at Urban Mission

Christmas Kids Program



Our Christmas programs are in full swing! This year, we started with **766 low-income children 12 and under** needing to be adopted and as of this writing we have narrowed that number to **151**. We still need your help!

If you are looking for a Holiday project, please consider adopting a child. We have all the information you need to help these families have a wonderful Christmas. If you would like to adopt more than one child, we can give you siblings from the same family.

If you would like to take part in this program, please call Linda at 740-282-2911 and she'll send the information right out to you. Please help us put a smile on a child's face on Christmas Day!

Operation Teen Stocking!

This year we have over **200 teens ages 13 to 18 years old** who will be receiving a **stocking** filled with goodies. Items that can be included are toiletries, hair accessories, make-up, fast food restaurant gift certificates and any thing you think a teen would like. **We have a special need for male stockings this year.**



Please have the stockings to the Mission at 301 North 5th Street, by **Monday, December 8, 2008**.



Mitten Tree

Our mitten tree is filling up with socks, underwear, hats, scarves and mittens! Can you help us provide these items?

Donations toward this project can be brought to the Mission by **Monday, December 8, 2008**.

Candlelight Christmas Service

On **Saturday, December 20 at 6:00 p.m.**, our Mission Rejoice families will be treated to a special **candlelight service**.

This will be a night full of worship, music, joy and fellowship as we celebrate the true meaning of Christmas – the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



Santa's Recycle Shop

December 17 & 18, 2008
9:00-12:00; 1:00-3:00
Urban Mission Warehouse
311 North 6th Street, Steubenville

Santa's Recycle Shop is in need of good used toys, puzzles, books and games. The items will be cleaned up and the Parent's who missed the Christmas Kids registration will be able to come in and "Shop" for toys and gifts for their children.

We ask that any donations be in very good condition as they will be Christmas gifts for children. Please deliver all donations to the Warehouse by **December 15, 2008**.

Christmas at Hutton House

The Thanksgiving holiday has come and gone and Christmas is just around the corner. This is often a difficult time for the families staying in our homeless shelter. Even when Mom or Dad can't provide gifts, children are still believing and hoping that "Santa" will stop by their "home".



Would you consider being "Santa" and providing gifts for one of our families at the Shelter? Perhaps you would like to make a donation to the Hutton House to purchase gifts. If you are interested in donating to the Hutton House or information about how you can help spread Christmas joy to our families at the Shelter, give me a call at 282-8903 and I'll be happy to speak with you about the Hutton House.

-Debra Bryan, Shelter Director

Christmas Distributions

December 11 & 12

9:00-12:00 &
1:00-3:00

Christmas Kids Toys

Teen Stockings

Mitten Tree Items



Parish Nurse News



Respiratory infections are more common during the winter months. These respiratory infections include colds and flu. Let's review some facts about respiratory infections.

Respiratory infections such as colds and flu are spread by droplets. Droplets are those little drops of moisture that come out when people cough or sneeze. The viruses that cause colds and flu can be spread by breathing in the droplets or may be spread by touching objects that are contaminated with the droplets. If you touch a contaminated object and then rub your eyes or nose, you can infect yourself. Remember to catch all your coughs and sneezes in disposable tissues. Wash your hands after you dispose of the tissues or if you touch a contaminated object.

The flu vaccine is one way to help protect yourself from the flu. If you are unsure whether you should take the flu vaccine, check with your family doctor. Flu vaccines are administered during the fall and early winter months and may be covered by your health insurance plan. Colds are caused by many different viruses and there are no vaccines to protect against a cold, so you must take additional measures to keep yourself healthy. Remember to get enough sleep and rest. Eat well-balanced meals, which contain fruits and vegetables. Drink plenty of fluids including water. Wash your hands frequently, especially if you have been around someone who has been coughing or sneezing. If you are not close to a sink, you can use an antibacterial hand wash to clean your hands, then wash them with soap and water as soon as you can.

If you feel that you are getting sick, stay home and take care of yourself. Get plenty of rest and drink lots of fluids. Contact your doctor or another health care professional about treatments. Do not take any medications (including herbal remedies) without first checking with a health care professional.

Respiratory infections are common during the winter months. Take the above precautions to keep from getting a respiratory infection, but if you get a respiratory infection, contact a health professional for the best treatment.

-Michalene A. King, PhD, RN

The Best Thanksgiving

One of the articles I receive on the internet is the Simple Truths newsletter. It usually offers good words of advice and it also advertises items that are for sell. This edition was offering a book titled "Finish Strong" written by Dan Green. Mac Anderson, Founder of Simple Truths states in the article...

"Finish Strong" is more than a statement, it's an attitude. It's an attitude of believing you can do something, and having the courage and determination to see it through.

There is one thing that we all have in common. That is... at some point in our life, we will face adversity. It's not a matter of if but...when.

I have come to realize that the difference in our success or failure is not chance, but choice. Because when adversity strikes, it's not what happens that will determine our destiny; it's how we react to what happens.

A large majority of us have the ability and resources to overcome those times when adversity strikes us. But, there is a very large group who do not have those resources. And because of this, organizations such as Urban Mission offer assistance to help these families through those tough times. BUT...we cannot do it by ourselves.

And such is the season of Thanksgiving. Today it is Friday, and on Wednesday and Thursday we provided food for a Thanksgiving dinner to just under 1,000 families. This was accomplished with the help of everyone who provided the monetary donations, the food donations and the manpower to provide this wonderful distribution. There was also the cooperation of Urban Mission, Mid-Ohio Foodbank and Riesbeck's Food Stores working to put together a wonderful Thanksgiving bag filled not only with the food items, but also overflowing with the love that went in right next to the food.

Just as Mac Anderson states...our success is not chance, but choice. Everyone worked together to help a group of folks living through the adversity of another holiday with limited funds. Everyone chose to react. God bless everyone who was involved with allowing this Thanksgiving at Urban Mission to be the best ever.

-Linda L. Smith, Program Director

Mission Rejoice Calendar Open

As the end of 2008 approaches, it's time to make our plans for next year. **We are now scheduling Churches and/or groups for service as a Host Church for the 2009 calendar year.**

Mission Rejoice is a community effort for all denominations to come and minister to the poor in our valley. This worship service is held Saturday's in our beautiful sanctuary from 6-8 p.m. A meal is served following the service. We invite singing groups and welcome different styles of worship.

Perhaps your Church, UMW, Youth Group, Sunday school class or Missions group would like to come and be a part of this ministry. All are welcome. To take part or to receive a brochure with additional details, please call Rev. Toni at 740-282-8010.

DECEMBER 2008
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Upcoming Events in December 2008

1, 8, 15	Parish Nurse (Monday's)	11:00 a.m.
2	God's Pantry Hunger Committee Meeting	10:00 a.m.
3	No Program Evaluation Committee Meeting	No Meeting
4	Urban Mission Board of Directors Meeting NCDC & GSCDC meeting at Froelich's Classic Center	4:30 p.m. 5:30 p.m.
5	Lupus Support Group Program Outing Steubenville High School Orchestra Concert (Call 282-8010)	7:00 p.m.
9	Packing for Food Distribution Finance Committee Meeting	9:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m.
10	Healthy Bingo-Unity Kitchen (immediately following lunch)	1:00 p.m.
11	Christmas Kids, Mitten Tree and Teen Stockings Distributions God's Pantry Food Distribution (Thursday only!)	9-12; 1-3 9-12; 1-3
12	Christmas Kids, Mitten Tree and Teen Stockings Distributions	9-12; 1-3
15	CSFP Senior Food Distribution (Please note the new date!) Lupus Support Group Meeting: Martin Luther King Center	1:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.
17-18	Santa's Recycle Shop: 311 North 6th Street	9-12; 1-3
20	Candlelight Mission Rejoice Service (See page 2)	6:00 p.m.
23-31	Offices Closed for Christmas and New Years Holidays	Closed
<i>Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!</i>		

Save the Date!

Thursday, February 26, 2009
5:30 p.m.

Annual Dinner and 50th Anniversary Celebration. Make plans to join us for this joyous occasion.

Holiday Closing



Urban Mission will be closed **December 23, 2008 - January 2, 2009** to allow our employees to spend time with their families. There will be **no Mission Rejoice on Saturday, December 27.**

Merry Christmas from our family to yours!