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The Nutshell, December 2018



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Ellensburg, WA 98926
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The Nutshell



December 2018
Volume 27, Number 12
Frank R. Johnson, Managing Editor
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News and Information from Chestnut Street Baptist Church

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Christmas Celebration Features Various Choirs

Join us Sunday, December 9, at 6:00 p.m. for a wonderful evening of musical celebration. We will have the opportunity to hear from the CSBC Pre-school, the Children's department, our adult choir, as well as join in congregational singing. The chapel choir will be presented a collection of music both traditional and contemporary, that will help us turn our hearts to worship during this season. The adult chapel choir is under the direction of Pastor Jeremy Johnson.

There will be a cookie social to follow, so bring your favorite Christmas cookies to share and join the time of fellowship afterwards.



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As I See It ... by Pastor Frank Johnson What the Birth of Jesus Means to Me

For the month of December, I asked the writers for Messages of Faith in *The Daily Record* (Saturdays) to use the theme "What the Birth of Jesus Means to Me." Here is my attempt at the same theme.

Christmas was a special holiday in my home growing up. One year, after my brother and I went to bed, my mother and father tied a clue to the Christmas Tree with a string attached to it. Each of us had to follow our string all over the house reading new clues stashed here and there until it led us both back into the living room behind the couch. There we found a special gift that my brother and I still cherish. Every year, we couldn't wait for the wrapping paper that was on yard-long cardboard cylinders to run out. Then, we would have sword fights with the cardboard cylinders. I think we were the kind of young kids that were almost more interested in the boxes in which toys were packaged than in the toys themselves.

Also, when my family gathered for Christmas Dinner, my father, who was also a pastor, took out his well-worn Bible and read part of the Christmas story—from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 2, if memory serves. You could sum up Christmas in my home in two words: *family* and *faith*.

I have since become painfully aware that in many homes, the Christmas season does not evoke fond memories. For many, it recalls scenes of pain and sorrow, including abuse and neglect, even abandonment or death. It may call to mind the awkward attempts to try to relate to parents who are separated by divorce, having Christmas in two places, all the while wondering why things can't be more like they were, or more as they imagine other families are.

Now as an older adult, I appreciate even more the impact of the story: God comes down into the muck and mire of broken humanity. He humbles Himself to enter the world as a helpless infant. He is born to ordinary parents. His human life is threatened almost immediately by the human powers that could hardly celebrate the rumored birth of a "king." And all of this is announced to the people least likely to receive a royal announcement to anything, the shepherds. In Jesus' time, they had a bad reputation. They were usually unable to leave the flocks to maintain the ceremonial law. They were suspected of stealing as they moved about the land. The Jewish Talmud (collection of oral traditions) decreed that their testimony was inadmissible in court because they were unreliable. Yet, these men were chosen by God to receive the announcement of Jesus' birth: "I announce as good news to you a great joy which will be for *all the people*, because today a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, has been born for you in the city of David. And this will be a sign for you; you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger" (Luke 2:10-12, my translation and emphasis). I think these guys really got the point: "I announce ... to you a great joy which will be for *all the people* ..."

As I see it, Christmas is a bold statement that the coming of Jesus is meant for "all the people" of God's world. That means I must both take it very personally, and I must not keep it only to myself.

My love in Christ,
Pastor Frank



In the Coming Month: December 2018

Sundays	9 a.m. Bible Study Hour, and 10:15 a.m. Worship
Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.	LIFE Group at Johnson's, 808 E. Capitol
Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.	Prayer Group at the church's facilities, room 202
Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.	Cornerstone Kids Club
Wednesdays 7:00 p.m.	Ignition (youth group, grades 6-12)
Thursdays 6:00 p.m.	LIFE Group at Jim & Laura Bisonnette's, 2406 N. Ellington
Thursdays 7:00 p.m.	LIFE Group at Boudreau's, 1001 E. Mountainview
Thursdays 7:00 p.m.	Crosswalk (Collegiate students and young adults)
Fridays 4:30 p.m.	LIFE Group at Briarwood Commons, 1001 S. Chestnut St.
Sunday, Dec. 9, 6 p.m.	Adult and Childrens' Choir Performances with Cookie Social to follow
Sunday, Dec 16, 2 p.m.	Baby Shower for Stacia Harmsen
Sunday, Dec. 16, 3 p.m.	Lessons & Carols at Grace Episcopal Church
Sunday, Dec. 16, 6 p.m.	Regular Business Meeting
Sunday, Dec. 16	Last day to drop off Angel Tree gifts
Monday, Dec. 24, 6 p.m.	Christmas Eve Candle-light Service
Tuesday, Dec. 25	Christmas Day (Church office closed)



Stacia's Notes: Youth Ministry Update

Youth Greetings

Merry Christmas! I am so excited to enter this season of advent and see how God brings peace, hope, love, and joy anew this time of year. I hope and pray that as you read this you are filled with His Spirit and recognize His work in and around you.

Ignition

As we talked a bit about thankfulness this month, we took a tradition I heard of from a friend's church. They did a Tree of Blessing each year and so I decided to do one with our youth. One Wednesday evening we trekked to the Dollar Tree and each had to find an item that represented something from the past year that we are thankful for. One student chose glow sticks because they reminded him of a camping trip he went on with family. Another chose a special cup because it represented time with friends and family getting treats. Now we will turn these representations into ornaments with string and ribbon. We will include a small tag with a brief description of what it represents. Then we will decorate our youth room tree with these blessings! It may not turn out to be a very attractive, classy, or traditional Christmas tree. But I think it will be full of beauty and thanks, a wonderful way to honor and remember what God has already given to us!

During advent on Wednesday nights we will talk about different key words that go along with this time of year. The Bible Project is a wonderful resource with beautifully animated videos and sound Biblical teaching that we will use for this. They have an Advent Word Series that has a short video for each of the words Peace, Hope, Love, and Joy. They talk about what the Biblical meaning of the word is and how Jesus brought and fulfilled these things with His coming. It encourages us to anticipate His future coming as well. I hope you will pray for us on Wednesday nights to have hearts to understand what God is teaching us! And check out these great videos on your own if you get a chance! They are simple and great for any age!

We will have Ignition from 7-8:30pm like normal through December, only taking a break on December 26. On December 19 we will have a sort of Christmas Party together! Sunday School will also continue at the normal time through this month, though we will partner some with the kids' Sunday School department for the season. All 6-12-graders are welcome to join in these events!

Highlight Story

Each year we have a Wednesday night dedicated to a Thanksgiving meal together. I have loved this tradition! Not only does it mean I get another Thanksgiving feast with a group of people that I love, but it also means we get to remember together what Thanksgiving is really about. Each year we have a lovely lay of food provided by our young students (and their parents). Our conversation flows easily, and the time is a joy. We had a new face this year and that makes it fun, too. I also decided to add in a Thanksgiving breakfast this year during our Sunday School class, another great time of blessing. The same new face joined us for this second meal together and I had to break the news that we don't eat together EVERY week! She has continued to be involved and that is encouraging to me! May God continue to bless us and work through our lives in old relationships and new ones. →

Collegiate Ministry Pastor Jeremy's Update:

Collegiate Ministries

This month has flown by! (Do I say that every month?) We were blessed to spend the first weekend of November in Auburn, leading worship and receiving teaching from Beth Masters on our Living Hope, Jesus. Singing with young men and women from around the northwest was inspiring and humbling. If you have the chance to join with college students crying out praise to God, you should do it! These were so eager to offer praise, and the team of us who went were honored to prompt this praise.

And another great blessing from the weekend was spending some time with our partner school, Tarleton State University. A crew from there came to serve us by making delicious food on a weekend mission trip! Pray that God would continue to bless the ministry there at TSU, and that of those coming to the northwest to serve, God would raise up workers for the fields here too. We are excited to be hosting a group of four students from Tarleton in January, as they will be spending a week doing outreach with us to Central. Pray that God would set up appointments even now for great conversations January 7-10.

We are so thankful to God for many things, but fellowship with one another is high on the list. Thank you to the Congers for hosting our NCM "Friendsgiving" (our Thanksgiving potluck) and allowing us to share wonderful food together and to express thankfulness once again. God has been very generous with us with the love and support of the church, and we say thank God and thank *you* for continued love of students. Our desire is to keep looking outward to our campus and community, and to grown inwardly towards maturity in Christ. Join us in that prayer! (And look at that happy group of NCMers enjoying Friendsgiving!)

As CWU students head home for the holidays, pray that God would bring a burning desire for Him as Christmas is celebrated. And pray that we will be there and ready to introduce them on returning to school in January. We have a great opportunity and privilege to serve together here. So thanks! And merry Christmas!

Yours,
Jeremy



How great that He provides ways for us to share life together!

With hope in Christ,
Your Youth Director, Stacia Harmsen

Christmas Eve by Candlelight

Our church will hold our annual Candlelight Worship on Christmas Eve, December 24, at 6:00 p.m. This combination of Scripture and song tells the Christmas story from prophecy through announcement to birth and beyond.

Bring your family and guests for this special service, closing with the Lighting of the Candles as we remember that Jesus was and still is the Light of the World.



Angel Tree Ministers to Children

We have received our list of children's names for the Angel Tree this year! This is our 5th year using the program to bless families and outreach in our area. We have 26 children in Kittitas County and the Yakima area who currently have a parent in prison.

To help these parents keep connected with their child at Christmas time, we buy a gift that the custodial parent or grandparent requests for the child. We have given toys, boots, coats, gloves & books. The gifts are around \$20-25.

Please pick up a name or two and help our church add to this outreach. The names will go up in late November and the unwrapped gifts need to be dropped off at the church by December 16.

Any questions, please talk to Kathy Hollar or Kim Woody.



Baby Shower for Stacia Harmsen

Rachel Conger will be hosting a baby shower for Stacia Harmsen at her home on Sunday, December 16th at 2p.m. Stacia and Brice are registered at Target and on Amazon. Come share in the celebration of new life being brought into the world!



Cold Weather Shelter

The Cold Weather Shelter is in full swing! Seven different churches are hosting the shelter each week for one night each. Our church hosts the shelter on Friday night. We use trained volunteers to serve during the three shifts: evening, overnight, and wake-up. If you have been thinking about being involved, contact Jordan and Lydia Gross or Bryce Harmsen for more information about upcoming training sessions. Those who are already trained should use sign-up.com to schedule their times to volunteer.

The shelter has come under the oversight of FISH Food Bank, which is administering a grant provided by Kittitas County for the next three years. The grant makes possible the hiring of a director and the provision of morning and evening boxed meals. Ben Harbaugh is the new director of this ministry that goes from mid-November through mid-March.

Women's Ministry Events

Our regular Women's Breakfast will be on Saturday, December 15, at 9 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Join us for a light breakfast, conversation, and a short devotional.

We will be postponing our Game Night until after the Holidays. Contact Lydia Gross, our Women's Ministry Director for more information.

Lessons and Carols

Please join us in prayer, Scripture and song on December 16, at 3:00 p.m. when Grace Episcopal Church hosts its annual Service of Lessons and Carols.

This service is one of the ways in which we celebrate the shared nature of prayer and worship in our community, with Scripture readings alternating with music provided by church choirs and by the congregation.



Men's Ministry Events

Monthly Breakfast

All Gentleman are invited to join together Saturday, December 8, at 8:00 a.m. for a time of scripture, food and fellowship.

CWBA Retreat

Thank you to everyone who assisted with or attended the Men's Retreat at the end of November. We had a great time of growth and fellowship while at the Lazy F Camp and Retreat Center.