

- CHILSON HILLS CHURCH -

# CMT NEWSLETTER

The Children's Ministry Team



Monday December 1, 2008

Volume I – Issue 6

## THE CMT'S THEME FOR 2008-2009

“Beginning to Live B.I.G.”

Our Scripture verse for the year is **John 14.1**  
“Believe in God, Believe also in me.”

### December's B.I.G. Idea:

We believe that the story of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem shows us that Jesus is the promised Messiah.

### December's B.I.G. Theme:

The Story of Bethlehem

### December's Bible Verse:

*He will be born in Bethlehem just as the prophet wrote.*  
**Matthew 2:5**, CEV

### Three B.I.G. (Believe in God) Truths

- God is a great big God
- God loves us with a great big love
- We are part of God's great big world

### Objectives:

- Children will hear that as Christians, we believe that Jesus' birth was a fulfillment of prophecy.
- Children will recognize that Jesus came as the one who brings peace.
- Children will discover the definition of the term prophet.
- Children will explore how the message of the promise of Jesus continues to speak to them today.
- Children will hear the story of Mary and Joseph journeying to Bethlehem for the census.
- Children will discover where Bethlehem is and what it was like in Jesus' time.
- Children will learn what a census was and how it was taken
- Children will explore how the journey of Jesus' family relates to them today.
- Children will hear the story of Jesus' birth.
- Children will discover how the birth of the baby Jesus changed the course of history.
- Children will explore how they can make room in their hearts for Jesus.
- Children will hear the story of Jesus' birth being announced to the shepherds.
- Children will discover how this story shows that the good news about Jesus was for all people.

- Children will learn about who the shepherds were and how they lived.
- Children will explore ways they can respond to the good news about Jesus.

### December's Lessons:

December 07: The Prophecies -	Micah 5:2-5a
December 14: Journey to Bethlehem -	Luke 2:1-5
December 21: Jesus' Birth -	Luke 2:6-7
December 28: The Shepherds -	Luke 2:8-20

“Believe in God, Believe also in me.” (John 14.1)

## PARENTS CORNER

### Teaching Kids the Meaning of Christmas

By Stacey Schifferdecker

### Beyond Santa Claus:

All I want for Christmas is... a dancing Elmo and a Kid zoom camera and a Littlest Pet Shop Pet Town and...

It is all too easy during the Christmas season to lose focus on Jesus and concentrate only on gifts, parties, decorations, and fun. If even adults have trouble keeping Christmas as a celebration of Jesus' birth, how much more difficult it is for children entangled by the excitement and mystery of Santa Claus. However, you can help your young children learn the true meaning of Christmas. Incorporate some of these ideas into your Christmas festivities this year—

### Have a Nightly Christmas Story Time:

Libraries and bookstores are full of Christmas books – you can easily find enough to read one book every night of December. Choose books that tell the story of Jesus' birth rather than a Santa, Rudolph, or Frosty story. Some good choices for young children include

- Q B is for Bethlehem
- Q God Gave us Christmas
- Q Room for a Little One
- Q Who is Coming to Our House
- Q One Baby Jesus

Make this a special time each night, perhaps snuggling up in front of the Christmas tree and reading by candlelight or flashlight with a cup of hot cocoa at hand. On Christmas Eve, read the story of Jesus' birth straight from the Bible in the book of [Luke 1.5 >](#)

### **Give to Others**

Opportunities abound to give to others at Christmas time. Perhaps your church has an "Angel Tree" where you can choose a person to buy gifts for. If not, most malls have a tree or you can contact a social services agency in your town. Children especially enjoy choosing gifts for another child their own age. As you shop together, talk about how happy the recipient of the gift will be. Talk about how Jesus is a gift for us and how we can share his love with others.

### **Have a Birthday Party for Jesus**

Whether or not December 25 is the day Christ was actually born, it is the day we celebrate his birth. So why not have a birthday party as part of your celebration? This can be as simple as a birthday cake as part of your Christmas dinner to a children's party with games, food, and gifts of baby items that you will donate.

### **Buy a Nativity Scene your Child Can Play With**

You may have a beautiful heirloom nativity set as part of your Christmas decorations – obviously, you do not want your children to play with it! However, you can buy plastic or plush nativity scenes and let your children act out the Christmas story. Alternatively, the kids can make their own nativity pieces out of clothespins, wooden spoons, clay, cardboard tubes, etc. Many ideas are available on the internet or in children's craft books.

### **Choose Religious Christmas Music**

Kids love music and can learn a lot by listening to it. Songs like "Rudolph" and "Jingle Bells" are fun, but your children will absorb the meaning of Christmas if you focus on more traditional Christmas carols that tell the story of Jesus such as

- Q Away in a Manger
- Q Hark! the Herald Angels Sing
- Q Joy to the World
- Q We Three Kings
- Q The First Noel
- Q Come, All Ye Faithful
- Q Silent Night

You can also encourage your children to participate in a Christmas pageant at your church or just make one up with their friends.

Does focusing on the real meaning behind Christmas mean no more Santa? Not necessarily. Kids love Santa and his spirit of love and giving is a fun addition to Christmas. The key is to incorporate Santa without letting him overshadow Jesus' birth. Some ways to do this include—

Q Telling children the story of Saint Nicholas, the real man on whom the Santa legend is based

Q Separate Santa gifts from Jesus' birthday celebration. Take a cue from other cultures, where Santa gifts are given on St. Nicholas day (December 6), New Year's Day, or Epiphany (January 6).

Q If you don't want Santa gifts to be so far from Christmas day itself, make them just one part of your Christmas celebration. For example, devote Christmas Eve to a celebration of Jesus' birth and let children open their gifts from Santa on Christmas morning. On the other hand, go to church Christmas morning and let the kids open their gifts Christmas afternoon.

By making Christ the center of your Christmas celebrations and taking time to teach your children the true meaning of Christmas, you set a firm foundation for their faith in years to come. Give your children the best Christmas gift of all – a life centered around Jesus.

### **Check it Out!**

Did you know that there is a library downstairs in the children's area? It is filled with reading material and resources to help you continue your child's faith journey after Sunday school. Stop by soon or contact Sheryl Goddard for more information.

## **CHURCH NEWS**

### **Family Christmas Party – December 14, 2008**

Come celebrate Christmas with your church family. Good food, good company and a good time are planned for all! Mark your calendar now and watch for details in the Herald.

Nursery workers needed for this event – please contact Sue Wilson or Lisa Gabriel if you can help care for our littlest ones during the party

Second Annual **Christmas Craft Show** – Saturday, December 6, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### **Coupon Books Support VBS!**

Entertainment '09 Coupon Books are available from the Children's Ministry Team and VBS. Coupons good throughout 2009. Contact Mike Kontz at [mike.kontz@gmail.com](mailto:mike.kontz@gmail.com) or see him at church! \$25.

### **REHEARSALS START—ONE WEEK**

#### **Chilson Elementary Performers Starting:**

Rehearsals for the Chilson Hills Elementary Performers appearances on Dec. 21 and 24 are planned for 4-weeks on Sunday mornings at 9:30

a.m. during the month of December. Led by Amber Wist and Karen VanHentenryck. Contact the Children's Ministry Team for more information.

### CMT NEWS & UPDATES

There is a place for every young child in our church. If you are a parent with a young child and not involved in the activities of our young people, then you are missing something special. Give your child something special in his/her life and let them learn about Jesus in a fun way with great friendships. Not sure where to go or who to ask...Start by calling our church office at 810-227-9596.

### \*\*\*HELP WANTED\*\*\*

The CMT is looking for volunteers who would be willing to share their skills with our children for 6 weeks during the 9:30 hour. If you or anyone you know would be interested, please contact Jamie Swink ASAP. Some class ideas: Sewing (basics, quilting, and rug hooking), Origami, Art, Archery, Astrology, Bird / Animal Calls, Kites or any other crafts.

Our nursery is in desperate need of volunteers – please contact Sue Wilson or Lisa Gabriel right away to let them know of your interest in caring for God's littlest ones.

Please contact Jamie Swink or Debbie Lovin if you are able to greet children and parents before Sunday school each week and take attendance. A small commitment with great rewards!



### ANGEL ENCOUNTERS

*The Angel encounters reported throughout the Bible confirm the fact that there are two realms: the material and the spiritual.*

The spiritual realm is home to God and the angels; the material realm is home to human beings and to all living things on earth. While we cannot pass from one realm to the other, evil angels (like Satan) and good angels (like the Angel of the Lord) can cross into our realm and act in it!

There can be no question that the existence of angels is presupposed in the Bible. In the Old Testament (NKJV), the word "angel" appears 15 times in the Books of Moses, 13 times in the Historical Books, 8 times in the Poetical Books, and 17 times in the Prophets. Angels are mentioned much more frequently in the New Testament (NKJV): 30 times in the Gospels, 16 times in Acts, 30 times in the Epistles, and 74 times in Revelation. In addition, angels are called "living creatures" 23 times, cherubs or cherubim 10 times. Two angels, Gabriel (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26) and Michael (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev. 13:7), are identified by name. God's angels are called "spirits" 4 times (in the NKJV) and "holy ones" 10 times (in the NIV). The phrase "heavenly hosts" is applied to angels once (in the NKJV), but God is called "Lord of hosts" (that is, commander of heaven's angelic armies) no less than 281 times in the Old Testament. These 535 biblical references are all to God's angels and do not include the many references to Satan and the dark angels who follow him.

Scripture refers to angels in other ways also. The Bible uses the word "stars" symbolically to refer to angels, as in Job 38:72. In Psalm 89:6, angels are called *bene elim* ("sons of the mighty"), a name that emphasizes their great strength. In Psalm 103:20, David cried out, "Bless the Lord, you His angels, / Who excel in strength." The name "sons of the mighty" is surely appropriate, for Scripture depicts angels as performing feats impossible for human beings.

Another name for angels is *bene 'elohim*, "sons of God" (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7). The phrase "son of" is often used idiomatically in Hebrew to indicate the class to which one belongs. For instance, the phrase "son of man" emphasizes the fact that the one described is truly, or merely, a human being. Even the term *'elohim*, normally translated "God," is applied to angels in Psalm 8:5 and in descriptions of an experience such as Jacob's (Gen. 35:7; see also Dan. 3:25). In such cases, the expressions "sons of God" or "gods" simply mean "supernatural beings." These texts emphasize the fact that angels belong to the realm of the supernatural, not the realm of the natural.

## ANSWERS TO OUR QUESTIONS ABOUT ANGELS MUST BE DRAWN FROM MANY DIFFERENT BIBLE PASSAGES

Despite the many references to angels in the Bible, no single passage develops a theology of angels or tries to answer all our questions about them. Instead, we must examine all of the references in order to come up with answers to the questions people ask. Here are some of the typical questions—and their answers.

***Can we see angels?*** Not normally. **Colossians 1:16** speaks of Christ as the Creator of all things in heaven and on earth, visible or *invisible*. We cannot see the spiritual realm with our eyes. Neither Moses nor the Israelites saw the Law and Order Angels who brought destruction to Egypt. No one saw the angel who struck Herod. When Elisha was protected by an army of angels, he had to pray that his servant's eyes would be opened before the servant was able to see the mountainside filled by a fiery angelic army, which stood between the prophet and the enemy (**2 Kings 6:17**). Even though angels are normally invisible to us, they *are* present.

## ANGELORE

### DO ANGELS HAVE WINGS?

Artists portray angels, both good and evil, as beings with wings. Even the “Christmas angel” figures that top our Christmas trees are winged. However, do angels really have wings? Two special classes of angels, seraphim and cherubim, are described as winged (**Isa. 6:2, 6; Ezek. 1:5–8**). Although other angels are said to “fly” (**Dan. 9:21; Rev. 14:6, 7**), Fred Dickason notes, “They do not have material wings, for wings are for planning or flapping in flight for bodies with weight. Since angels are spirits, they have no weight. They certainly could move without physical wings” (C. Fred Dickason, *Angels Elect & Evil*, 1995, 42).

***Where do angels come from?*** The Bible makes it clear that angels are created beings. **John 1:1–3** teaches that Christ's own creative acts were the source of everything that exists; the text specifically says, “***Without Him nothing was made that was made.***”

The psalmist recognized this by calling on the visible and invisible creation to praise its Creator:

Praise the LORD!  
Praise the LORD from the heavens;  
Praise Him in the heights!  
Praise Him, all His angels;  
Praise Him, all His hosts!  
Praise Him, sun and moon;  
Praise Him, all you stars of light!  
Praise Him, you heavens of heavens,  
And you waters above the heavens!  
Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
For He commanded and they were created.

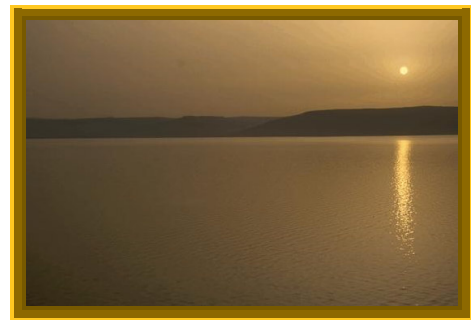
### Psalm 148.1-5

#### ***When were angels created?***

*The spiritual realm was populated with angels before the creation of the material universe. The Lord asked Job where he was when He designed the earth and laid its foundation, “When the morning stars sang together, / and all the sons of God [angels] shouted for joy?” (**Job 38:7**).*

Angel's Knowledge will continue next newsletter with the question:

### WHO OR WHAT ARE ANGELS?



“Peace on the Sea of Galilee”

“Believe in God, Believe also in me.” (John 14.1)

