

December 2008



Blessings



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Pastor's column

Cell phone Christmas



Andy Blankenship

I get an average of 10 text messages on my cell phone each day. Most of them are from friends who use the technology of cell phones to try to encourage me in my life and ministry. Every once in a while I get one of those forwards that ends with the phrase, "If you love Jesus you will send this to 10 friends."

If I can be honest for a moment I must say that those messages get on my last nerve. As a matter of fact I really despise them. Most of the time I simply ignore the message, but every once in a while I will respond with a statement like, "If you love Jesus you will have a face-to-face encounter with a person and stop hiding behind your phone." Once I leave that reply, a person will stop sending me those forwards. I wish people would stop reducing my love of Christ to ten text messages a day.

The most recent of these forwarded messages is one pertaining to Christmas. I have already received two messages on my phone that speak of keeping Christ in Christmas. This is a worthy cause to say the least, but what can really be done from a cell phone?

Keeping Christ in Christmas is much more than sending a text message to 30 people from my cell phone. Keeping Christ in Christmas is much more than using the phrase "Merry Christmas" as opposed to "Happy Holidays". Keeping Christ in Christmas will happen when God's people start recognizing Christ in their daily lives, not just one month out of the year, and they start acknowledging that God came to this planet as a man. He lived for 33 years a sinless life. He was tortured, mocked, despised, scorned, and nailed to a Roman crucifix for crimes against a holy God that He did not commit. He was crushed, not lightly hit or spanked, but crushed for our iniquity.

Keeping Christ in Christmas happens in my life when my family and I focus more on the Savior than Santa Claus, elves, nutcrackers, trees, lights, candles,

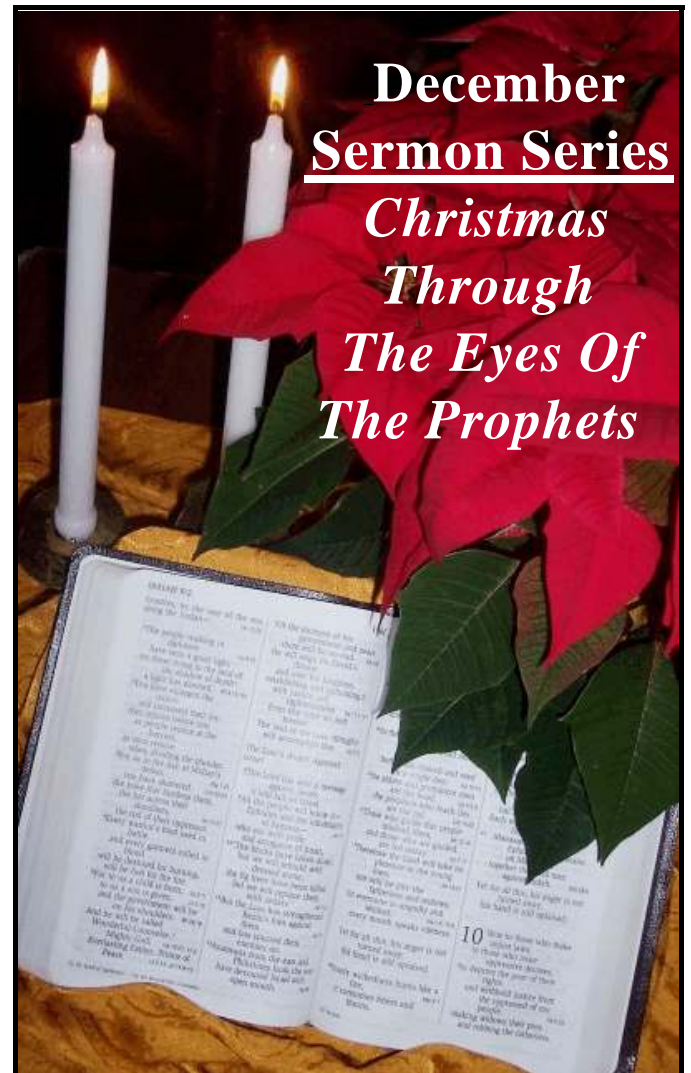
decorations, candy, turkey, Rudolph, Frosty, The Grinch, Charlie Brown, and presents.

My earnest desire for each and every one of us is not that we send a trivial message by phone, email or letter but that we live a life that celebrates the birth of Christ. I pray that we truly celebrate Christmas!

Because He Lives
Brother Andy

About the cover

Children's Church leaders Elaine and Tim Phelps had a bunch of kids to lead in worship on Homecoming Sunday November 2. Thanks to Jeff Witmer for the great photograph.



Celebrating Christmas at BBC

Senior Adult Christmas Luncheon, Dec. 6 at 12 Noon

This fun and delicious annual event for senior adults in our community is sponsored by the GEMS (formerly known as BYW and Women on Mission Night Group.)



Toyland Concert, Dec. 7 at 6:00 p.m.

This fun event features local people sharing their talents as well as an opportunity for our children to take part in our corporate Christmas celebration.

But the main focus of our 19th annual Toyland Concert is the toys--toys that will be shared with the children in our community who might otherwise not receive anything for Christmas. That's why we ask everyone who comes to please bring a new toy.

Members are asked to bring finger foods for a time of fellowship and refreshments in Saliba Hall following the concert.



Churchwide Breakfast, Dec. 20

As their Christmas present to the church, the Brotherhood will host a breakfast for everyone on December 20 at 8:00 a.m. in Saliba Hall.

Live Nativity and Birthday Party for Jesus

The children will be staging the nativity scene in the church yard. A birthday party for Jesus in Saliba Hall will follow for all the children. Date and time will be announced.



Candlelight Communion Service, Dec. 21 at 6:00 p.m.

A favorite of many, this annual service includes the Christmas story in song and scripture, the Lord's Supper and ends with a candlelight ceremony.

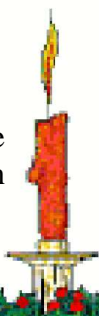


Small group parties

The **Seasoned Saints'** Christmas party will be on December 14 (*NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE*) at 1:00 p.m. at Golden Corral in Cordele. The church van will leave the church house at 12:30 p.m. Instead of buying a new gift, please bring a \$10 gift card for the Children's Home. Also, bring a "recycled gift" to exchange--something you already have but don't want or need anymore. Hosts are Pat and Ronnie Hatcher and Louise Kirksey.

Sally Averill will host the **Women on Mission Day Group's** Christmas party at her home on December 15 at 11:30 a.m. Members should bring a Christmas present for their secret pal and a covered dish for lunch.

Check the calendar for other small group Christmas parties.





GO TELL

the story of Jesus

Week of Prayer for International Missions
December 7-14, 2008
Prayer guides available at church house.

National Goal: \$170 million

LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING®

Our Goal: \$2,000

International
 Mission Board
 www.imb.org

Christmas gift suggestions for Pinehill residents



Men's flannel shirts, sizes large to 3X
 Tshirts, sizes large to 3X
 Men's sweaters, sizes XL to 3X
 Women's sweaters, sizes XL to 3X
 Men's white socks, sizes 9 to 12
 No skid socks
 Tobaggons (hoodies), any colors
 Gloves for men and women
 Shower gel for men and women
 Toothpaste and toothbrushes
 Men's sweat suits, sizes large to 3X
 Women's sweat suits, sizes large to 3X
 Men's belts, sizes 34 to 3X

Please wrap your gift **and** write on the outside exactly what is inside. Bring gifts to the church house by December 21. There will be a collection box right outside the pastor's office.



Because Southern Baptists gave to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, the Quichua people can hear God's still, small voice. Missionaries Darrell and Rogene Musick's Bible recordings on cassette cost \$1 each; a set costs \$15. "We have translated God's Word onto cassette for those individuals who can't read," Darrell says. "They can sit in their homes and listen to it all day long."

Known as "Ginny and Ray," the Musicks also offer animal husbandry to the Quichua in the Andes Mountains of northern Ecuador.

Top 10 reasons to give blood

10. You will get free juice and cookies.
9. You will weigh less — one pint less when you leave than when you came in.
8. It's easy and convenient — it only takes about an hour and you can make the donation at a donor center, or at one of the many Red Cross mobile blood drives.
7. It's something you can spare — most people have blood to spare... yet, there is still not enough to go around.
6. Nobody can ask you to do any heavy lifting as long as you have the bandage on. You can wear it for as long as you like. It's your badge of honor.
5. You will walk a little taller afterwards — you will feel good about yourself.
4. You will be helping to ensure that blood is there when you or someone close to you may need it. Most people don't think they'll ever need blood, but many do.
3. It's something you can do on equal footing with the rich and famous — blood is something money can't buy. Only something one person can give to another.
2. You will be someone's hero — you may give a newborn, a child, a mother or a father, a brother, or a sister another chance at life. In fact, you may help save up to three lives with just one donation.
1. It's the right thing to do.



Kids needed for live nativity

If your child wants to participate in the live nativity later this month (date and time to be announced), please let Robin Peavy know as soon as possible. This is for kids in grades five and under.

Women on Mission Night Group gets new name

The Women on Mission Night Group (aka BYW) voted at their November meeting to change the name of their group to GEMS, which stands for girls eating, meeting and serving.



Stephanie Zawada talks with her hands. As a missionary to the deaf in Moscow, Russia, it's an occupational necessity. Your Lottie Moon Christmas Offering gifts cover a variety of Stephanie's expenses, including her transportation, food and any medical attention she may need. The Lottie Moon offering also provides her with a place to live. In Moscow, apartment rent can run about \$2,000 a month.

Blood
DRIVE
 December 26; 12-5 PM
 Saliba Hall



Schedule of Volunteers for December					
Please remember it is up to you to arrange coverage if you are unable to serve on your scheduled day.					
Date	Flowers	Nursery AM	Nursery PM	Deacon of the Week	Ushers
Dec. 7	Flower Committee	Sue Thompson Rhonda Youngblood	Paula/Mark Smith	Mark Smith	Arthur Roney Mark Peavy
Dec. 14	Flower Committee	Robin Peavy Mary K. Bankenship	Laura/Keith Lamberth	Curtis Lamberth	Bob Latimer Kyle West
Dec. 21	Flower Committee	Patricia/Joe Kent	Brenda/Jimmy Lockerman	Jimmy Lockerman	Ronnie Hatcher Jeff Witmer
Dec. 28	Flower Committee	Caroline Collins Josh Peavy	Suzy Grantham Tori Lamberth	Arthur Roney	Frank Thompson Daniel Thompson

November Stats

Sunday School–Bible study for all ages

Senior Adults	14
FBIC	13
CIA	5
VOC	8
Young Adults	9
Older Youth	2
6 th , 7 th & 8 th Graders	4
3 rd , 4 th , & 5 th Graders	6
1 st & 2 nd Graders	6
Older Preschoolers	5
Younger Preschoolers	5
Nursery	3
General Officers	3
TOTAL	83

Financial Summary

<u>October receipts</u>	
General offerings	\$6,270.00
World Hunger Offering	50.00
Special–mosquito nets	50.00
TOTAL	6,370.00

<u>October disbursements</u>	
General expenses	5,395.74
Stove	55.44
Mosquito nets	470.00
State missions	475.00
Local missions	300.00
Cooperative Program	988.53
Houston Baptist Association	411.89
TOTAL	\$8,096.60

Wonderful Wednesdays

Adults	Not available
Youth	11
Older Children	6
Children in Action (Boys grades 1-3)	6
Girls in Action (Girls grades 1-3)	8
Mission Friends (Preschoolers)	10
Nursery	Not available



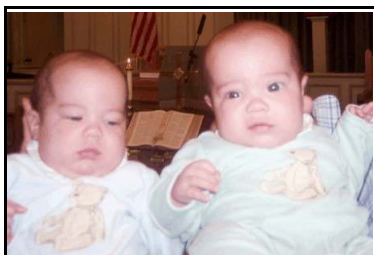
Twenty shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child were taken to the collection center in Americus last month. Special thanks to Marsha Taylor for delivering the boxes.



**Pictures made
in November
including
Homecoming.**



**See lots
more at
our
website.**



Come to Byromville's annual Christmas in the Park December 6, 2008 at 6 pm

Join friends and neighbors as we kick off the Christmas Season in Byromville at our annual Christmas in the Park in Groves Park. The Byromville Woman's Club will have sausage biscuits, sweets, hotdogs, soft drinks, hot chocolate and apple cider for sale. They also have several homemade cakes to auction off and will be selling chances to win a beautiful Byromville throw.

There will be live entertainment preceding the arrival of the evening's special guest, Santa Claus. Kids can get their picture made with Santa too. Of course, the best thing about the evening will be reconnecting with friends and neighbors and meeting the new folks in our community.



Blessings is published monthly by Byromville Baptist Church. Send news items and/or comments to Editor Brenda Lockerman at POB 217, Byromville, GA 31007, email to brendalockerman@windstream.net or call 478-433-2791.

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