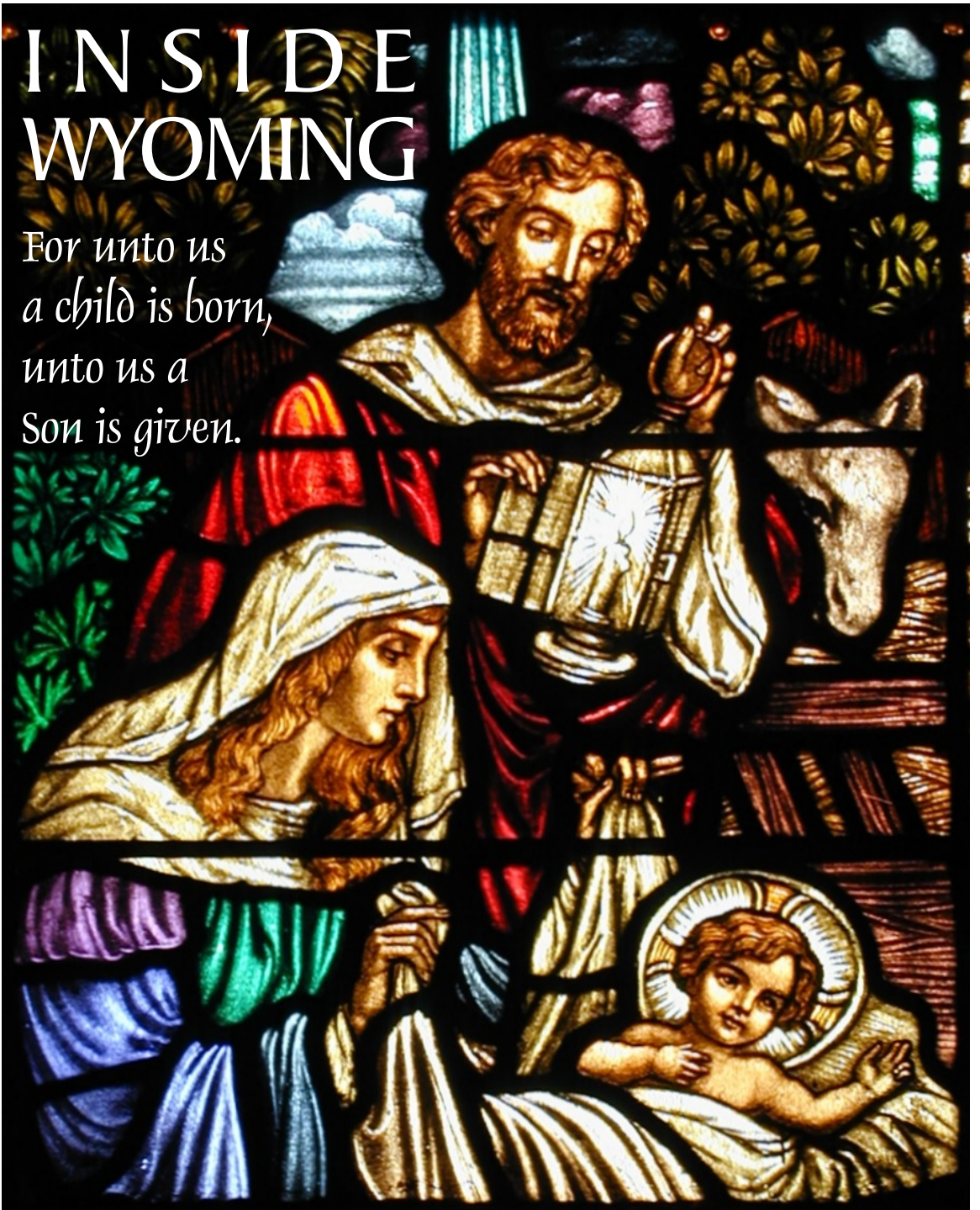


INSIDE WYOMING

*For unto us
a child is born,
unto us a
Son is given.*



Let This Mind Be In You...

by Walter Rice

Rev. Grover is currently in the middle of a series of sermons from the book of Philippians. The past two Sundays he has spoken from the beginning of chapter 2, first on the unity we have as Christians, and then on the humility of Christ in becoming a man. Rev. Grover pointed out this is the very thing we celebrate at Christmas.

The passage in Philippians (2:5-8) describing Jesus' humility is one of the best known in the Bible: *"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in*

the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." This is the love Jesus showed in his incarnation, that the Almighty God took upon himself the very nature of man, that in the working out of the Father's gracious plan he might redeem us through his death.

As we contemplate the birth of the humble King, let us particularly be reminded that Paul begins his description of Jesus with the words, *let this mind be in you*. What does that look like for us? The apostle Paul tells us we are to stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. We are to suffer together for the sake of Christ, doing nothing with selfish motives, but in humility regarding each other as more important than ourselves.

The result of humility, Rev. Grover says, is that it enables Christians to be unified and joyful in the face of adversity. In this way we reflect the glory of God, showing ourselves to be His children.

Have you taken up the challenge to Christian unity? Because of Jesus, we can be united across nationalities, races, and cultures. In a simple first step, Rev. Grover encouraged us to invite over for dinner another family in the church whom you don't know very well, or who may seem to be significantly different from your family. Unity is the joy and duty of every believer -- let us not forsake it!

Inside Wyoming

*The Newsletter of the
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Inside Wyoming is published approximately every three weeks by and for the members and friends of the Wyoming Avenue Baptist Church.

Contributions of articles and information are most welcome! Contact the editor, Walter Rice, Jr., at 215-820-0165.

Christmas Musical: He Has Come!

*by Debby Crockett
and Walter Rice*

On Sunday, December 22, 2002, the choir presented a Christmas musical program, "Christ Has Come!" While the choir sang of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, the children of the Sunday Bible School silently acted out the various scenes on the platform. The program was put together by the mother-daughter team of Debby and Becky Crockett, who directed the choir and the children, respectively. George Parcell narrated, reading selected portions of scripture between the scenes. Parts of the music were well-known Christmas carols, and the congregation was invited to sing along with the choir.

Starting with a resounding "REJOICE!" the choir sang about the good news that the angels brought to the shepherds on the night of Jesus' birth, while the children played the parts of shepherds, angels, and even sheep. The children were in full costume, including those playing the sheep, who were covered in cotton balls.

We saw the shepherds and their sheep as they were all surprised by the angels, how they went to visit Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus in the stable. We saw the Wise Men come to seek guidance from King Herod and his advisers, and then we followed them to



Mary and Joseph and little Ernie as the toddler Jesus (photo by Becky Crockett)

Bethlehem where they presented their gifts to the Child Jesus. As the choir sang, and the narrator read those familiar passages of Scripture, we were all reminded just what a simple yet wonderful story it is. And even though some of the kids acted like "kids," all who watched were blessed as the story of our Lord's birth was retold.

Many thanks to all who participated. Thanks also to those who helped out behind the scenes with the costumes and getting the children in their assigned places. A special thanks goes to Becky Crockett, who spent a lot of time getting the costumes ready, using what we already had, and adding some special touches of her own. This was truly a "Christmas to remember!"

Sunday Bible School Trim-a-Tree

by Debby Crockett

On Saturday, December 7, the children of the Sunday Bible School had their first Trim-a-Tree party. Two girls came early, so they helped get out the tree, put it together, and go through the old decorations. We used what was still good, and that was safe to put out, given we have some younger students.

Later, when everyone else arrived, the fun really began! We had fifteen children of various ages, along with Miss Debby, Miss Becky, and Alex and Ariel Ianovalle. Out came ornament craft kits, glue, scissors, crayons, markers, colored pencils, glitter, sequins, ribbon, and paper of all kinds. The creative energy was flowing freely – and with Christmas music playing in the background, there was excitement in the air!

continued on page 5



photos by Becky and Debby Crockett

Christmas Eve Service

by Walter Rice

On Christmas Eve, Wyoming held its traditional candlelight service. With the lights dimmed, we sang many carols, and listened to special music and to Rev. Grover reading from the Bible. Debby Crockett sang a song written from the perspective of

Mary, and Sharon Huckel sang and played a song written from the perspective of Joseph. Becky Crockett played a flute solo, and Walt Jr. sang while Cindy Rice accompanied on the piano. For the carols, Cindy Rice played the piano, Walter Rice Sr. and Jr. played the trumpets, and Becky Crockett played the flute. It was a pleasure to gather as God's people to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Trim-a-Tree, *continued from page 4*

We made new decorations for the tree, the room, the walls, and of course, a mess in the process! But when the work was done, we had many beautiful things to remind us of Jesus' birthday. We also enjoyed a snack of homemade Christmas cookies and juice. It was wonderful to watch them having such a good time in God's house, honoring Jesus' birth. Come visit our classroom (all the way up the balcony steps), and take a look at the handiwork yourself!



YOUR ARTICLE HERE!

Hey, I can't fill the blank spaces in every issue all by myself... so start writing about the events and groups at church that you are part of. Are you studying something interesting in Sunday School? Did a sermon make you think about some things that you want to tell others about? You could even write your testimony and let others know how God has been faithful in your life. If you need some ideas, talk to me and I can give you some starting points.

Walt Rice Jr.

Youth Group Takes Christmas Cheer on the Road

by Alex and Ariel Ianovale, Jennifer Rice, and George Wilson

On the 7th of December, the youth group went shopping in Neshaminy Mall. We were looking for gifts for stocking stuffers. The stockings were filled the next Saturday and contained toothpaste, tooth brushes, soap, hand lotions, cookies, slipper socks, candy canes, and stuffed animals. We got to visit our shut-ins and we delivered the stockings to them on December 21st.

We had a good time visiting and chatting with Annie Masterson, Bob and Sara Smith, and Betty Mitchell. Annie really liked having her picture taken. George Wilson got to talk football with Bob Smith, and Betty really liked her new stuffed animal friend.

The whole experience was enjoyable from the shopping to the wrapping to the visiting, and we hope it brought some Christmas-time joy to our shut-ins. Let's do it again some time soon!



Youth Group Christmas Party

Speaking of the youth group... they had their Christmas party on Saturday, December 28, at Cindy and Walt Rice's house. There was plenty of pizza, soda,

chips, and of course fun! They watched a movie (Disney's *Lilo and Stitch*) and exchanged gifts. Then they sat down and had a crazy time writing the article you see above. From what I can tell, they all had a good time.

Looking Back

From Charles H. Spurgeon's devotional classic,
Morning and Evening:

*"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."
1 Samuel 7:12*

The word "hitherto" seems like a hand pointing in the direction of the *past*. Twenty years or seventy, and yet, "hitherto the Lord hath helped!" Through poverty, through wealth, through sickness, through health, at home, abroad, on the land, on the sea, in honor, in dishonor, in perplexity, in joy, in trial, in triumph, in prayer, in temptation, "hitherto hath the Lord helped us!" We delight to look down a long avenue of trees. It is delightful to gaze from end to end of the long vista, a sort of verdant temple, with its branching pillars and its arches of leaves; even so look down the long aisles of your years, at the green boughs of mercy overhead, and the strong pillars of lovingkindness and faithfulness which bear up your joys. Are there no birds in yonder

branches singing? Surely there must be many, and they all sing of mercy received "hitherto."

But the word also points *forward*. For when a man gets up to a certain mark and writes "hitherto," he is not yet at the end, there is still a distance to be traversed. More trials, more joys; more temptations, more triumphs; more prayers, more answers; more toils, more strength; more fights, more victories; and then come sickness, old age, disease, death. Is it over now? No! there is more yet-awakening in Jesus' likeness, thrones, harps, songs, psalms, white raiment, the face of Jesus, the society of saints, the glory of God, the fullness of eternity, the infinity of bliss. O be of good courage, believer, and with grateful confidence raise thy "Ebenezer," for -

He who hath helped thee hitherto
Will help thee all thy journey through.

When read in heaven's light how glorious and marvelous a prospect will thy "hitherto" unfold to thy grateful eye!

**FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN, UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN;
AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER.
AND HIS NAME WILL BE CALLED WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.**

Don't Forget...

New Years Eve Watch Night Service

Tuesday, December 31, 9:00pm to midnight.
Come join us for an evening of fun, games, food, and fellowship. We will conclude the evening with hymns, a meditation from God's Word, and prayer.

Annual Luncheon and Meeting

Sunday, January 12, after the morning worship service. Everyone is invited to attend the annual luncheon of the church. There is no charge for lunch. Following the meal, members are requested to stay for the annual business meeting, where we will elect officers and decide on the 2003 church budget.

PRAYER CORNER

Preparing for the Coming Year

During this time of year, all kinds of things happen behind the scenes at Wyoming, as the nominating committee asks members if they would be willing to serve on boards, the treasurer and the financial secretaries prepare their final reports of the year, and the finance committee prepares a budget for next year. It is particularly now that the church, both its leaders and its members, needs our prayers as we plan for the coming year. Pray that God would grant us wisdom as we move into 2003.

Inside Wyoming

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Joy to the World