



The Beacon

News from St. John's Children's Ministries

Volume 5, Issue 8

December 2010



REMINDER

Upcoming Family Ministry Events

- December 05 – Christmas Pageant Meeting, 11:30a
- December 12 – Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 11:30a
- December 15 – Parent Talk: Internet Safety w/ Kirkland Police Dept., 6:30p
- December 18 – Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 10:00a
- December 19 – Christmas Pageant, 4:00p
- December 24 – Family Christmas Eve Service, 4:00p
- January 9 – Epiphany Party, after the 10a service



St. John's Giving Tree

This year your family has the opportunity to give Christmas to someone in need. St. John's annual Giving Tree has returned. It is filled with gift tags for needy families from KITH and residents of the nursing home, Life Care Centers of Kirkland.

Gifts for the **KITH** families must be **returned** this **Sunday, December 5**. Those for **Life Care** need to be returned by **Sunday, December 12**.

Remember that each tags represent specific requests from individuals. **If you take a tag, please follow through by returning the gift on time.** If you are unable to fulfill the obligation, contact the church office promptly so arrangements can be made.

Blue Angels Sing Christmas Eve

The **Blue Angels** look forward to participating in the 4:00 pm Family Service on Christmas Eve. They will sing "Children, go Where I Send Thee", "Jesu Bambino" and hold candles for our worshipful postlude, "Silent Night". During this busy, joyful time of year, please remember to praise God for his Christmas Gift to our world – like the Blue Angles will do on Christmas Eve. Blue Angles will not meet again until Sunday, January 16th, so they may attend the Epiphany Party on Sunday, January 9th.

Christmas Pageant & Greening of the Church Dec. 19

Our annual Christmas Pageant, **Away in a Manger** is coming up on Sunday, December 19th at 4:00 p.m. in the church nave. Following the performance there will be an all-church potluck. A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex, or email or call Cathy Christensen in the office. The pageant is presented by the children and youth from St. John's Sunday school classes.



After the pageant our families be able to participate in a tradition that is coming back to St. John's - the Greening of the Church! The children will have an opportunity to decorate trees in the Narthex, while the



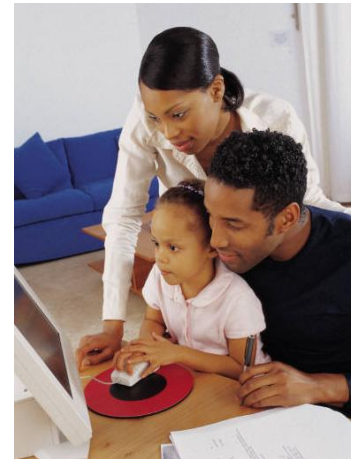
adults help with more difficult tasks. The event is open to the public, and is a wonderful occasion for family and friends to share in a time-honored tradition. As we wait and prepare for the birth of Christ, we can wait as a community and share in this tangible celebration of the love and wonder of Christmas.

Next Parent Talk: Internet Safety

It feels like kids are using the internet for everything – school projects, communication with family and friends, and fun activities and games. The internet has become an invaluable tool for research and long distant relationships but it can pose a risk to their safety as well.

On **Wednesday, December 15 at 6:30 p.m.**, Officer Jon Ishmael of the Kirkland Police Department will lead the next Parent Talk, **Internet Safety: Helping Your Child Surf the Net Safely**. The event will help parents better understand the technology their children are using, point out what hazards are on the internet and how to best protect children while online. The key focus will be to empower parents to teach children and youth how to use the Internet in a responsible and ethical manner, while protecting them from becoming victimized. There will be an opportunity for parents to ask questions of Officer Ishmael on this topic.

All *Parent Talk* events are free and begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Nave. Nursery, children's and youth programs are available at no charge. There is an all-church potluck that begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Marsh Hall. Please register by emailing or calling Cathy Christensen in the church office at 425-827-3077.



Epiphany Party Scheduled for Sunday, January 9

St. John's annual Epiphany Party will be in the Marsh Hall on Sunday, January 9 following the 10 a.m. service.

Families who would like to make a King's Cake to bring to church for the Epiphany Party. Recipes for a King's Cake can be found at the following web sites:
www.gumbopages.com/food/dessert/king-cake.html
<http://www.holidays.net/mardigras/cake.htm>



We will crown a few kings and queens during the party, so we need at least 4 cakes. If you would like to help or need more information, contact Cathy Christensen in the church office.

P.R.A.Y. Program Joining B.A.C.K. Program in January



Beginning **January 19th**, St. John's will offer **P.R.A.Y. (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth)** as part of the **B.A.C.K. Program** on Wednesday evenings.

P.R.A.Y is a religious awards program for students in 1st-6th grade. It is recognized by Camp Fire USA, Girl Scouts of the USA, Boy Scouts of America, and American Heritage Girl. However, participants do not have to belong to a scouting group or a specific church to earn the awards. However, registration and a \$15 fee are required to participate.

The P.R.A.Y. program helps young people develop a deeper relationship with God while learning about how God is active in their lives as well as the world at large. This Christian Ed resource uses Bible lessons paired with service projects to help young people grow their Christian faith while expressing that faith through love and service to others. P.R.A.Y. encourages families, youth agencies, and Protestant congregations to use this program to foster spiritual growth in children, youth and their families.

St. John's is opening this program up to the Greater Kirkland Ecumenical Parish, local school districts and interested scouting groups. B.A.C.K. is open to children in preschool-6th grade. For more information on either program, please contact Cathy Christensen in the church office.

Advent Ideas for Families



Advent, which began on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day (November 28), is a season in the church intended to help us prepare our hearts and minds for not only the Nativity celebration, but also the second coming of Christ. It gives us an opportunity for quiet reflection, even amidst the hustle and bustle. There are many ways for families to recognize and celebrate Advent including the traditional Advent Wreath (this is a good site on how to make and use one: www.kencollins.com/question-10.htm) and Advent Calendar (another good resource: crafts.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Make_Advent_Calendar_Craft). Here are two more to either add or create for your family's Advent traditions.

The "Good Deeds" Manger

An empty manger is placed in some prominent spot in the home (we have ours on the kitchen table). Next to the manger is a little bundle of "straw", which can be real straw, pine needles, or something similar. Each evening during this season, the family gets together to talk about the good things they've done for others during the day (for example, helping someone with his/her homework, writing a friendly note to someone who's feeling down, sharing your cookies with your sister, etc.). For every good deed done, the person who did the good deed gets to place one "straw" in the manger. On Christmas Eve, you place the Baby Jesus in the manger, on the soft bed you've made for him with your good deeds.



A Good Deeds Manger can be set up pretty simply by using an empty manger and Jesus figure from any Nativity scene, but it's also kind of fun to make your own (click below for printable instructions). Whichever you choose, it's a great way to focus on how we can "love our neighbors as ourselves."

A Christingle for Advent



The word Christingle means "Christ Light" and originated from the Moravian Church custom of giving children lighted candles on Christmas Eve in a small church in Marienborn, Germany in 1747. The minister wanted a simple symbol to bring home the message of Christmas for the children. He gave them a lighted candle tied with a red ribbon while praying, "Dear Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these dear children's hearts." This custom was imported to Britain, where it continues to be practiced today.

You will need:

- A large orange – represents the world
- A small candle – as a reminder that Jesus is the Light of the world
- A red ribbon – stands for forgiveness, a reminder of the blood shed by Jesus on the cross (red sticky tape or florist's ribbon works best)
- Small piece of aluminum foil
- Four toothpicks with dried fruit & sweets such as raisins and gumdrops – represent the four seasons and all the good things god created for us

Assembly:

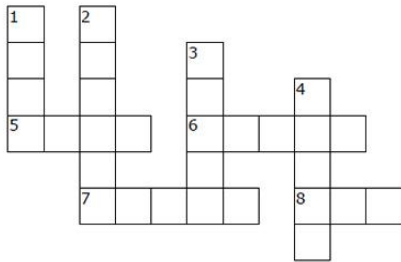
- Take a small slice off the bottom of the orange so that it can stand securely without rolling.
- Wrap the tape or ribbon around the middle of the orange.
- Make two slits crosswise, with a knife, to the orange, or use an apple corer to make a slight hole.
- Place a circle of silver foil over the hole made, to trap the hot candle wax.
- Gently push the candle into the orange until it is secure.
- Thread sweets, fruits and raisins onto the toothpicks, ensuring that the sharp point is covered and
- Fix four completed sticks into the orange.

Advent



Ready for His Return

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him." Matthew 24:36,44 (NIV)
Based on Matthew 24:36-44



ACROSS

5. A period of time sixty minutes long
6. One who steals something
7. The time period from sunset until sunrise
8. The period from sunrise until sunset

DOWN

1. Man in the Bible who built an ark
2. To come back
3. To look or observe attentively or carefully
4. To be prepared or available for service or action

HOUR	NIGHT	WATCH	READY
DAY	NOAH	RETURN	THIEF

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Color the picture, then each day color one star beginning with number one.

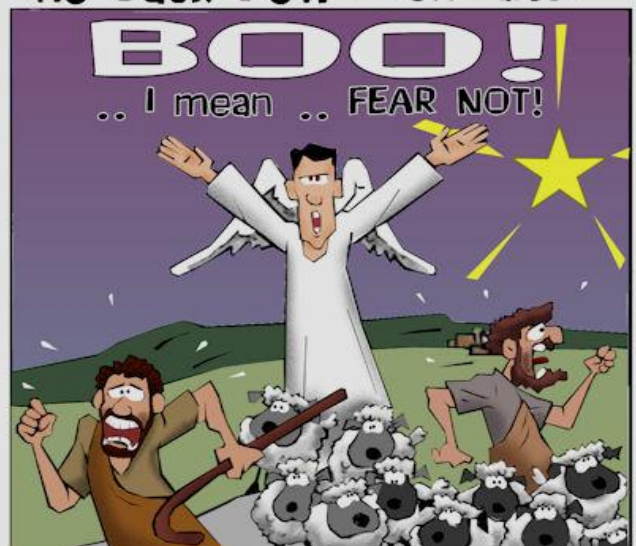
Advent and Christmas Humor

Knock Knock
Who's there ?
Avery
Avery who ?
Avery merry Christmas !

Q: How do cats greet each other at Christmas?
A: Have a furry merry Christmas and a Happy Mew Year.

Q: How do sheep greet each other at Christmas?
A: A merry Christmas to Ewe.

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



and the Angel said unto them.. "Fear Not!", but many of the shepherds in their glaring humanity shouted.. "AAAAHHH.. run away!" **Luke 2:10ish**