

**Reaching UP in our LOVE for God!
Reaching IN in our LOVE for one another!
Reaching OUT in our LOVE for the world!**



December 8 - 6:25 pm
Awana Store

December 15 - 6:25 pm
Awana Birthday Party for Jesus

December 15 - 6:30
Jr. High Christmas Party @
The Community Center

December 19 - 6:00 pm
Sr. High Youth Group
Christmas Party

December 24
Business office closed

December 24 - 3:00 pm:
Christmas Eve Service

December 24 - 5:00 pm:
Christmas Eve Service

December 26 - 8:15 am:
Regular service
No Sunday School or ABF classes

December 26 - 10:45 am :
Regular service
No Sunday School or ABF classes

December 27
Business office closed

January 3
Business office closed

The Library Christmas Tree

The 2011 budget for the library has been greatly reduced so we are looking for creative ways that we can continue to offer items that our readers and viewers are looking to borrow. We are asking you to consider purchasing an item or two from our library wish list this Christmas. You will find our book tree in the foyer containing lots of our wish list items.

1. Pick out an item from the tree that may be of interest to you or someone in your family
2. Take the ornament containing the wish list item off the tree and register the number and your name on the log next to the tree
3. Take the ornament with you to the store or have it with you as you shop online to be sure you have the correct item and purchase the item (new or gently used)
4. Return the purchased gift to the tree or leave in the office

If you simply can't choose what to get you might also consider purchasing a

gift card to Christian Book Distributors (CBD), Christian Family Bookstores, or even Amazon.com so that we can purchase items as needed. Remember to always use your Ministry Perks Membership card when shopping at the Family Christian Bookstore because the church earns dollars to purchase for the library for every dollar you spend in the store. If you don't have one of these cards please ask one of the librarians for one or call the office and we'll be happy to get you fixed up with one. And don't worry you are still able to get your card punched when using the Ministry Perks card.

If you have never been in our library please stop by soon. You will see that we have an excellent selection of both fiction and non-fiction for all ages. We also have a growing number of DVD's available for your viewing enjoyment as well as several DVD Bible studies. Books have a 3 week circulation and DVDs have a 1 week circulation.

We wish you a Merry CHRISTmas!

MOPS Group Sponsors Blood Drive at GEFC

MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers group) is hosting a blood drive on Thursday December 9th from 3pm -7pm. If you would like to donate blood please contact Alli Stahl at 309-441-5618. The Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center needs your help this holiday season. Please take some time and consider donating today. 40% of our population are eligible to give blood, but only 5% actually do donate. Remember to bring your ID and eat a nutritious meal before you donate. Please give Alli Stahl a call today!



Lessons from Paul: Colossians

by AJ Reynolds, Worship Director

In Colossians, Paul deals with spiritual immaturity in the church. The major issue being that people were far too comfortable with sliding back into sinful habits instead of progressing to understand new spiritual truths; and the more specific problems being listed in 3:5 and 3:8: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desires, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk. It seems Paul is warning this church to use their bodies to honor God (3:5) as well as their mouths (3:8).

Paul deals with this problem not by focusing on their error, but rather heeding them to put their focus back on Jesus. He starts in 3:1, saying, "If you have been **raised with Christ**, seek the things that are above, not things on this earth." This verse is closely tied to Colossians 2:20, "If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world..." Paul is showing the church a picture of Jesus' death and resurrection and

emphasizing our call to follow our Lord's footsteps; to die to ourselves and live for His glory alone.

Paul continues his point in 3:5 by telling the church to "...put to death therefore what is earthly in you...". Paul would have us imagine taking a knife to the jugular of our desire for sin's temporal gratification. His urge is not to be comfortable with sin, but to view it as our darkest foe. After listing out their sins of the body, Paul returns to this thought in 3:6, "On account of these (sins) the wrath of God is coming." Not only should the church not feel comfortable with sin; Paul reminds them that God is completely and totally opposed to it. And because of that fierce opposition, on the day of judgment God's wrath will be poured out unbridled and without hesitation.

Paul knew that it's never enough to merely shed light unto a problem, but he also unveils a solution which he starts in 3:10: "...put on a new self, which being renewed in knowledge

after the image of its creator." The new creation is the church, a place where, "...there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and is in all." Paul is challenging the church to move away from being a place that is comfortable with sin and becoming a place that puts Christ above all (3:11) For the church to become this type of society, they must exercise compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience (3:12) They must learn to deal with conflict in a God-honoring way, forgive one another, and , "above all these things put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony" (3:14) These great thoughts here from Paul can help us as a church think through what it means to be a "peacemaking church." A church that handles conflict to the glory of God, and aims our lives in service to Him.

Father/Daughter Dance?

In order for us to host another Father/Daughter Dance we need to have a steering team to organize the event. We currently do not have a team in place. If you would like to see the ministry continue in February 2011 and are willing to help organize please contact De Kosman at 944-6622 or dkosman@geneseo.net no later than **December 12**.

Child Abuse Prevention Help Needed

The Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Committee is seeking a volunteer committee member.

The CAP committee serves a vital function by helping screen persons interested in working in any child/youth related church ministry.

If interested or desiring more information please contact any of the following committee members.

Deb Anderson, Carol Gilson, Paula Price, Dawn Rettig, Bill White



*To Craig Henkhaus
and his family as they
mourn the loss of his father,
John Henkhaus,
who passed away on
November 20, 2010*

Elder Update

by Gary Dawson, Elder board chairman

As the year started, we were pursuing physical space expansion to support our growth when our basement mold and water issues emerged. The mitigation plans for these significantly impacted GEFC's financial posture. We have now been given an "all clear" from the independent air quality tester and the water mitigation effort is well underway. Looking forward, we still have to restore our basement space before we will be able to use it effectively. When that is done, we will still need more space for our Adult ABFs – pretty much where we started the year. For most of us this experience has seemed a frustrating interruption to our ministry and worship routines, and costly besides. We have yet to understand how God will bless us through all this – but I'm

confident He will. Much has changed since our building was built. Over the years, we tolerated our basement moisture problems because they weren't that bad – until they were. We have to exercise vigilance and good stewardship over what the Lord has given us in our church building – just like we try to do with our personal and spiritual lives. For sure, our youth will enjoy a better facility when this maintenance is complete. This has provided us an opportunity to consider more closely where we are and where we want to go in terms of space needs. It has also shown us the wisdom of managing finances responsibly by having an emergency fund. Our building committee has provided us some expansion options and some suggestions for improving our basement space usage. Please

pray that as we restore our church building we will move forward in unity honoring Christ with what He has given us. Pray also for wisdom on how best to satisfy our additional space needs.



Local Food Pantry News

by Nancy Noord

Merry Christmas! "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:13. Jesus' birth was the greatest gift ever given to the world. From Him, we have received forgiveness of our sins and eternal life. From Him, we have learned to have compassion for others and put their needs before our own. From Him, we have learned to love our neighbors as ourselves. With His help, may we remember that Christmas is the celebration of Jesus' birth. During the holiday season, our families are blessed by your compassion, and we are thankful for your generosity now and throughout the year.

Even though the deadline for adopting families for Christmas has passed, there are still many things that you can do to make the holiday special for the less fortunate in and around Geneseo. The following list contains inexpensive gifts that will

make kids and grown-ups happy: any variety of holiday food (nuts, M&M's, cookies), gift cards, lotions, body wash, fuzzy socks, CD's, DVD's, hand-held games, batteries, and books for any age. Items may be dropped off at the Food Pantry until December 17th.

Themed baskets or bags are also popular gifts. Some ideas are "Movie Night" (video rental certificates, microwave popcorn, candy, or other snacks), "Art" (paper, crayons, markers, paints, glue glitter, construction paper, scissors, etc), kitchen, laundry room, and kids' bedrooms.

Donations of blankets, warm clothes, waterproof gloves and mittens, snow pants in kids' sizes up through adults, hats, and scarves are needed. If you have extras, please consider donating them to the Food Pantry during business hours.

The Food Pantry will close for the Christmas holiday on Thursday, December 23 at noon and will re-open on Monday, January 3, 2011.

Food needs for December are: cake mix, frosting, baking soda, baking powder, vanilla, stuffing mix, snacks, hot chocolate mix, and chocolate chips

Non-food needs are: bathroom tissue, kleenex, paper towels, dish soap, household cleaning products, razors, shaving cream, deodorant, non-aspirin pain relievers, cold medicine, and diapers, sizes 3,4,5, and 6

Holiday hours:

Christmas: We will close on Thursday, December 23, at noon.

We will re-open on Monday, January 3, 2011 at 9 a.m.

How do you define missions?

by Myrna Williams

At a recent missions team meeting we were discussing the definition of Church Missions. We discovered it means different things to different people. In the Church Missions Policy Handbook we are reviewing they gave a generic definition: "Missions is the worldwide enterprise of making disciples of the nations that falls outside the normal outreach responsibilities of the local church".

There were some questions that arose from that definition. What are some of GEFC's outreach responsibilities? We listed several, 1) Helping with the flood victims, 2) The Womens' fellowship dinner every fall, 3) Helping the school clean the courtyard, 4) Helping the city with projects, 5) Reaching out to those in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, 6) The Awanna program, 7) The Easter presentation at the Theater, 8) The Christmas Story presentation during the Christmas Walk, 9)

Samaritans Purse Shoebox ministry. We could have listed more but time was limited.

Another question was, Is it just making disciples of nations? We concluded that it wasn't. Relationships have to be established first by seeing to the needs of the people by ministering to spiritual, emotional, and physical needs. Showing the Love of Jesus through our actions and proclaiming the gospel of Christ.

We have missionaries all around the world proclaiming the gospel of Christ. Some are in very life threatening situations. Some are working with government officials where these officials see the need to make moral and cultural changes. Some are showing the Jesus Film. Some are repairing helicopters so they have access to areas not attainable by vehicle. Some are planting churches and teaching the nationals how to minister to their own church. Some are ministering to orphans and widows and seeing that the children attend school. Some are in Prison Ministry.

Where is your mission field? You may say, 'but I'm not a missionary'. My understanding of God's word is that we are all called to be missionaries. Parents, your mission field is your home and your children. Those who are working, your mission field may be at your work place. Grandparents, your mission field may be your grandchildren or children in your neighborhood. Young people, your mission field may be in your classroom at school.



Something to think about.

NATIVITY SCENE POTS

Celebrate the joy of Christmas — and remember Jesus' birth — by making this craft to decorate your home or to give as a gift.



What you need:

- 3 terra cotta pots (any size)
- Acrylic paints (including one for skin color)
- Paintbrush
- Craft glue (or a glue gun, with an adult to help)
- Brown yarn
- Material swatches
- Straw-colored raffia

What you do:

1. Decide which pot will be Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus. Turn each pot upside-down and paint a face on each one.
2. Decorate the pots by painting hair and clothes or by using yarn and material as hair and head coverings.
3. For baby Jesus, glue raffia along the bottom to look like straw in a manger.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Awana 6:25 pm Jr. Hi Youth 6:30 pm	2	3	4 Politics Group 8 am
			5 Partners-in-Prayer 7:45 am Sr. High Youth Group 6-9 pm	6 Missions Team meeting 7 pm	7 Reading Connection 10 am	8 Awana Store 6:25 pm Jr. Hi Youth 6:30 pm
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Awana Store set-up</div>						
12 Partners-in-Prayer 7:45 am Parent's Forum 12-2 pm Sr. High Youth Group 6-9 pm	13	14 Elders Meeting 7 pm	15 Awana 6:25 pm Jr. Hi Youth 6:30 pm	16 Craft Night 6 pm	17	18
19 Partners-in-Prayer 7:45 am Sr. High Youth Group 6-9 pm offsite	20 Administrative Council Meeting 7 pm	21	22	23	24 Business office Closed Christmas Eve Services 3 pm & 5 pm	25 
26 Partners-in-Prayer 7:45 am	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28 Elders Meeting 7 pm	29	30	31 Sr. High Youth Group overnight	

He shows me

by Craig Henkhaus, Adm. Council Director

Lately, I can honestly say that God has been at work in my life. I know He's there all the time, but I don't actually feel His presence. However, these days, He is saying "Hello, Craig," in a big way! I am certain some of you know what I mean.

We recently purchased a new home in Geneseo. We have been prayerfully and patiently waiting for an answer about this move. It has been a long, prayed about, thought about and talked about thing for us. But, when it was time, God revealed this part of our plan in ways that left us saying, without a doubt, "It's Him." There is nothing like that feeling that I get when I know "it's Him."

It brings reassurance, joy, and a sense of relief knowing that He's got my back. I know He's there in my everyday life,

but I really like reminders from above. God's reminders allow me to firmly plant my feet, one in front of the other each day, knowing that it's on His solid ground I can stand. He has shown me during this time, that He is faithful to His promises (Deut.7:9). He has shown me that he cares for me and my family (1Peter 5:6). He has shown me that I can give Him all my worries (Matthew 6:25). He has shown me that He has a plan for each of us and that plan is very good (Jeremiah 29:11). He has shown me that there truly is a time for everything (Eccl.3:1). He has shown me that He will show me the way (Isaiah 30:12). I could go on and on. It's all been pretty amazing for me!

Another thing that I have become aware of is that God is showing me how to extend grace even when I really don't want to. I confess, I can be pretty stubborn sometimes. I have a strong sense of justice. I have a strong set of moral values. I tend to

be a black and white thinker also. All this can add up to trouble with a capital T for me when it comes to offering up a little grace for someone! It has been a slow, progressive journey for me on this one. This year, some events in my life have brought me face to face with just how much I can struggle with this grace issue. I have come to understand that grace is learned. It is a tough lesson. It is something that God calls me to because that is what He extended to me, even when I didn't deserve it. I can come up with hundreds of reasons why I can't/ shouldn't/ wouldn't extend grace to someone who I feel is wrong (Trish often tells

me I should have been a lawyer), but when it's all said and done, all those reasons really don't matter.

Grace is what He calls me to. Grace is what I have to give. Grace is what was given for me. Grace is how I can let others see His light in me. Grace, ultimately, is the pillow that all of us want to land on when we are falling. Like I said, it's a hard one for me sometimes, but I am learning that His grace truly is sufficient for me (Eph.2:8).

So, as I head into this transition with a new house and all that comes with that, and enter into the Christmas season as well, I have to say that I am grateful for the things that God has been working on in me this past year. I am quite aware of how much more God has to teach me, but I know I will continue to be more aware of God sightings and continue to strive to offer up grace, even in those times when it seems to go against everything in me. I pray you all have a blessed Christmas season, resting in His grace.



Free News

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Sunday Worship Services

- Conventional Service - 8:15 am
- Contemporary Service - 10:45 am

Education - 9:30-10:30 am

Senior Pastor - Greg Chenoweth
Worship Director - AJ Reynolds

The FREE NEWS

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