

Monday December 18th

Read 1 John 3:16-17. It's a biblical idea to give gifts. In fact, the Bible says that our love for each other and also God can be measured, at least somewhat, by our generosity and the willingness to give real gifts to each other. Now the gifts we are called to give might not be as fun as the Lexus ads say on TV, but gifts that help, encourage, and benefit others can be a reflection of Jesus. What gifts are you giving this year? How might God be calling you to help by giving as a reflection of Christ?

Tuesday December 19th

Read Isaiah 11:1-2. Isaiah wrote these words 700 years before Jesus was born and out of what looked like a dead royal line, when the Roman Empire occupied Palestine, God brought a new shoot. Jesus didn't rule like David and live in a palace or wear nice robes. He came in poverty and humility to reveal a heavenly kingdom. How do you think the poor in our world help to reveal deep spiritual truths? Do we value those we help? Or do we take on the role of benefactor, failing to see the sacredness and humanity in the other?

Wednesday December 21st

Read Acts 17:26-27. For as long as I can remember, I have come home after Christmas Eve service and watched *It's A Wonderful Life*. I think there is a little George Bailey in us all. We want to make our mark on the world on a huge scale and forget the small, daily ways we impact those around us. Thank God for where you are and the people you have been able to impact. You might not be able to see it immediately, but some day you'll hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Thursday December 22nd

Read Luke 2:1-20. Mary gave herself to bear the Savior. Joseph gave his humility and protection. An angel gave shepherds an invitation to on of history's greatest moments. Shepherds gave the first testimony and the Wise Men gave royal gifts. What gifts could you bring Christ today? Who needs your protection, love or even the reminder that God loves them? Those could be the best Christmas gifts ever!

Friday December 23rd

Read Isaiah 9:6, Luke 8:43-48. The cave where Jesus was born, the "stable" teaches us two things, humility and accessibility. Because he was humble, he was accessible. You wouldn't get an audience with a king just because you wanted to speak to him. Jesus, on the other hand, always made time for those who needed him. When he died he was buried in a borrowed grave, another cave. And yet he rose from that grave, and destroyed death itself. He did the most amazing thing from the most simple of places.

Saturday December 24th

Read Matthew 2:2 and Isaiah 7:14. The primary message of Christmas is: God is with us. No matter what. Period. What do you think about that?

Look at the prayer list. Who can you pray for? Who needs a little extra help in an area where you can make a difference?

Family & Friends: Betty Lou Reasoner, Karen Fulk, Karl Hinkle (friend of AUMC), Maple Hill UMC, Mark Thompson (Barbara's brother), Stan Enschede, Janet Coons (Donna McCullough's daughter)

Sympathies: Family of Betty Burton (Susan French's mother), Family of Mary Wright's mother

College Students: Noel Wolfe, Emily Crowel, Adam Zietlow, Emily Zietlow, Alexandria Meyer, Tatum Howell, Tanner Howell

Homebound Members: Mary Schmidt, Jeanne Carman, Ginny Compton, Clara Ford, Carolyn Loos

OTHER PRAYER REQUESTS & REFLECTIONS