

WORDS OF GRACE

A Publication of GracePoint Church

Have a Counter-Cultural Christmas

Christ declared, *"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."* Luke 4:18-19

Christmas brings out the best and the worst about American culture. Most people are more kind during this season, and many experience the joy of giving. Any event that gets people thinking about Christ and redemption is good. But this season can also foster greed, materialism, and indulgent excess.

As you seek to keep Christ the reason for the season, please be reminded just how much God has abundantly blessed us. Do you know that if you make \$25,000 a year, you are wealthier than 90% of the people in the world?

America, and the Church in America, is the wealthiest in the history of humanity. But we are blessed to be a blessing, not to horde up wealth for ourselves.

If all Christian would tithe their full amount to God's work, the Church in America could virtually eliminate global poverty, disease, lack of clean water, and inadequate education and provide basic health care and nutrition

for the most needy in the world. Such matters are not the job of government, but of God's people!

What if for every dollar we spend on buying gifts for one another, we give another dollar to the poor? What if we all did what many of you already do; instead of buying that gift that perhaps isn't really needed, we purchase something for the poor out of World Vision's catalog (or from a similar ministry) in that person's name?



So much about the Christmas story is un-American as to the ungodly aspects of our culture. Our culture values rising to the top. Christ left the glory of heaven to become a slave. Our culture values getting all you can get. Christ came to give all, even His life, on behalf of others.

Our culture values the rich, the famous, the beautiful, and the powerful. Christ came to love and serve the poor, the prisoner, the diseased, the oppressed, the outcast, and the forgotten. If we're to do what Jesus would do this Christmas, indeed every day, we would do the same. Let us be the love of Christ to someone in need this Christmas.

Pastor Chris



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Dubuque, Iowa
583-3929
gracepointdbq.org

Office Hours
Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm
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December 2010
Published Monthly

GLORIFYING GOD BY...

CONNECTING
people to God

LOVING
God and each other

GROWING
in grace and truth

SERVING
Dubuque and the world

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PRECEPTS BIBLE STUDY

The current Precepts study of Covenant will finish December 7th and 8th.

We will begin a new LORD study “Lord, Is It Warfare? Teach Me to Stand” January 11 and 12th that will run through mid April. The cost of the Lord study book is \$15.50. Contact Mary Hirschey if you have questions or want to reserve a spot in the new class.

YEAR-END FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The following information will help you make financial decisions for the coming year. If you have any questions, please contact our financial secretary Paulette Kress (557-6797).

- The financial books for GracePoint for 2010 officially close on December 31st. Contributions received January 1st and on will be credited to 2011.
- To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your income tax return until you have received written acknowledgment of your contributions from GracePoint. Any questions, contact, Paulette.
- Some members of our congregation regularly use numbered contribution envelopes. Others do not. An envelope is an easy reminder for giving on a regular basis. Just keep your stack of envelopes in a handy place to put your check or cash in every Sunday morning. You will feel good about the discipline of regular giving and be reminded of God’s goodness to you.
- Giving envelopes make it easier for your church to keep track of giving patterns to plan a yearly budget. All contribution records are confidential. Only the financial secretary and you know. Using envelopes makes it much easier for us to acknowledge your contributions. It is the only way that cash gifts can be credited to you.

If you do not have numbered envelopes and would like some, please call the church office (583-3929) or Paulette. As a bonus, you won’t have to request them next year. You will automatically be issued some before January 1.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE



December 24th,
7:00pm,
at Gracepoint

RED POINSETTIAS



The Worship Team is asking for help in decorating the sanctuary for Christmas. You can help by purchasing a red poinsettia in honor or in memory of a friend or loved one. The cost is \$7.00 each. Contact Pam De Meester, Wilma Sanders or the office (583-3929) by December 10th. The poinsettias will be part of the decorations in the sanctuary December 19th and 26th. You may take yours home after the service on the 26th.

Mexico Mission 2011 ~ First Meeting

People are asking questions and signing up for the next mission trip to Mexico, which is July 11-16, 2011. If there are enough people able to do construction work, we will help build a new church in western Cancun during the mornings and help with Vacation Bible School in the afternoons. The pastor and the church members of *God is Love (Dios es Amor)*, a Presbyterian church, will be in charge. We will be assisting them.

Our group will fly from Dubuque to Cancun and will have van transportation while there. Our lodging has not been decided, but a nice hotel is available if that is agreeable to all. The cost of the trip will be \$1200 per person, **before** fund raising. We hope to raise money and have donations so that the cost will be less for the travelers.

Safety is a concern. The Trip Advisor website notes that Cancun is one of the safest places in Mexico. Also one of our advisors living in Cancun said there is no trouble there for us. Of course, Cancun is a big city; we will be careful and stay together as a group.

The first meeting of people interested in the 2011 Mission Trip to Mexico will be December 7th at 7:00pm, at the home of Gilda Samuels. Even if you are still thinking and praying about the mission, please come to the first meeting. See Beverly VanDerZyl for the address and directions.



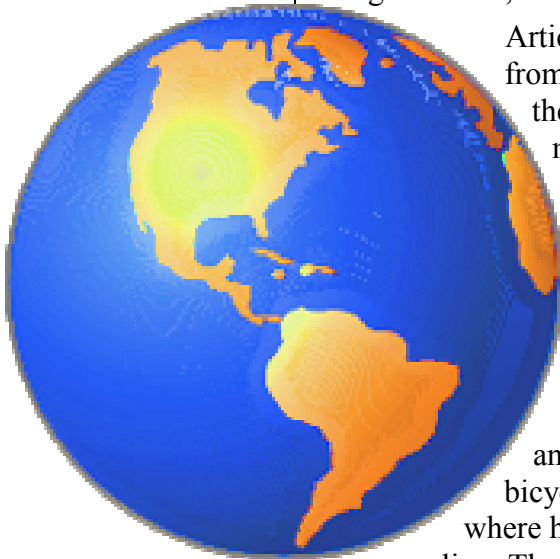
Merry
Christmas

Global Missions Report

A Christmas Story ~ 1983 Witnessing Ministries of Christ

Last year, Witnessing Ministries of Christ sent a celebratory mailing of their newsletter in recognition of 25 years of ministry to the Dalit (untouchable) people in India. A story of the beginning of this ministry was part of the newsletter. I find no way to condense the article, so please read it as a great testimony to God's leading and one man (and a woman) who answered the call.

Background: Philip Prasad was a Dalit child, who lived his early years in northern India. He was able to receive an education, come to the U.S. for more schooling, and graduate in 1961 from the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary (UDTS), where he met his wife, Elizabeth. After graduation, they lived in Fresno, Calif.; Philip worked for the city.



Article: For years Philip Prasad had eagerly welcomed guests from India into his Fresno home and anxiously questioned them on the status of the ministry among his people. The missionaries had begun these ministries that had given him his own strong faith and trust in the Lord. The conversation was always discouraging as the decline of mission work was increasingly revealed. Suddenly he felt a strong urge to fulfill a long-thought-about pledge made in the day of his youth to make a life work of bringing Jesus Christ among the Dalit people.

Just before Christmas 1983, he took a leave of absence and headed to India. On Christmas Day, he borrowed a bicycle and rode to a village near the city of Shikohabad, where he remembered a strong Christian congregation 25 years earlier. The name of the village was Rupdhani.

As he swung his leg off the bike, he saw an elderly village man sitting alone weaving a basket. Greeting him, he asked, "Is there a worship service here today?" The man concentrated on his weaving and declined to look at Philip's face. "I remember a Christian congregation here." The man, silently, kept on weaving as if he had heard nothing. "It is Christmas Day! Surely you are having a service today. Again, there was a long pause. Finally the man lifted his head and stared in confusion at Philip. He asked, "Who are you?" Philip answered, "I am a pastor." The man dropped his head and shook it. Then he lifted his head one more time and in disappointment asked, "Where have you been?" For decades no one had come to pastor them. No one had taken their children for education. With no one to connect to, the ancient caste system practices had securely locked

(Continued on page 5)

them out as much as if they had been in prison. Forward-thinking Philip replied, “Well, I am here now. Let us have a Christmas Day worship service.”

Upon hearing the news that a pastor had finally come, the women assembled in colorful saris. Men dressed in clean clothes kept carefully stored for special occasions. The children with a quick splash of water and slick of the hair moved with anticipation. Enthusiastically, they dug up termite-eaten Bibles and coins for offering. What followed was a most joyous worship service celebrating the coming of Christ.

The faith of the people was faded but intact. They had given up government incentives to keep their Christian identity, because Christians would have to deny their Christian faith to obtain these handouts. However, the faith was not getting any stronger because the children in the village never had seen a real pastor or contemplated the choices they might make as Christians.

Following the service, the man who Philip first encountered sternly commanded, “Come with me.” He led Philip to his thatched-roof, mud-walled home and began to dig in the earthen floor. After some time a large jar full of coins was visible. He lifted it out of the ground and literally shoved it into Philip’s hands as he sharply said, “Here. Take this. It is God’s money that we collected for months during worship services we tried to do ourselves when no one came. I buried it to keep it from being stolen. Now it is your responsibility.”

That experience plus others during the trip convinced Philip that if there was ever a call to action, this was it. His life’s preparation was done. Now it was time to put all that he knew toward ministry among the Dalits...outcast by Hinduism for more than 3, 500 years but always welcomed by the true Savior, Jesus Christ.

Philip wired the city of Fresno informing them that he would not be returning to work. Our family quickly shifted gears to assist in Philip’s newfound commitment, putting our family resources toward it. During 1984, the ministry was incorporated by the state of California and with faithful friends we raised the first outside support that put pastors on bicycles on the dirt roads and children in village and residential schools.

by Elizabeth Persaud

Along with Elizabeth, Philip, and the children of India, the Global Missions Team of GracePoint thanks you for your support of the Witnessing Ministries of Christ.

Note: The Adult GracePath Groups are supporting one Dalit child and GraceCompany is supporting a different Dalit child. Please remember to contribute once a month, and please pray for the children of India.

Submitted by Beverly VanDerZyl



DECEMBER 2010

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:15a Men's Prayer Breakfast 9:00a Precepts 5:30p Bell Choir 5:30p FE Praise Team 6:30p Fresh Encounters	2	3	4 8:00a Church Decorating
5 Season of Advent 8:00a Vocal Choir Practice 8:45a Traditions 9:30a Horizons Band 9:45a Bible Classes 10:35a Fellowship Time 11:00a Horizons 6:00p Grace Underground	6 6:00p Food Pantry	7 6:30p Precepts 7:00p Missions Trip Meeting	8 6:15a Men's Prayer Breakfast 9:00a Precepts 5:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Deacons Meeting	9	10	11
12 Season of Advent 8:45a Traditions 9:30a Horizons Band 9:45a Bible Classes 10:40a Special Cong. Meeting 10:35a Fellowship Time 11:00a Horizons 1:30p Bethany Home 3:00p Pantry Shopping Set-up 6:00p Grace Underground	13 6:00p Food Pantry	14 9:00a Missional Project Ladies 	15 6:15a Men's Prayer Breakfast 5:00p Golden Oldies 5:30p Bell Choir 5:30p FE Praise Team 6:30p Fresh Encounters Communion 7:30p Elder Ministry Teams	16 11:30a Red Hat Ladies 6:30p Session	17 Annual Reports Due	18
19 Season of Advent 8:00a Vocal Choir Practice 8:45a Traditions 9:30a Horizons Band 9:45a Bible Classes 10:35a Fellowship Time 11:00a Horizons 3:00p Deacons Caroling 6:00p Grace Underground	20 NO Food Pantry	21	22 6:15a Men's Prayer Breakfast 5:30p Bell Choir	23	24 Office Closed 7:00p Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day 
26 8:45a Traditions 9:30a Horizons Band 10:35a Fellowship Time 11:00a Horizons 6:00p GraceUnderground?	27 NO Food Pantry	28	29 6:15a Men's Prayer Breakfast	30	31 Office Closed	1 

CLERKS REPORT

Membership to Date:

Active	147
Inactive	3
Perm. Inactive	6
Total	156

Treasurer's Report

General Fund Beginning Balance, October 1, 2010	\$21,867.31
Total General Fund Receipts	Subtotal 30,940.44
Beginning Balance & Receipts	52,807.75
Subtotal Disbursements/Allocations	22,488.94
General Fund Ending Balance, October 31, 2010	\$30,318.81

4th Quarter Global Missions approved by Session:

EPC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Furr, Chris & Kirsten	\$300.00
Hamd, Robert	575.00
Barber, John & Barbara	250.00
Total EPC 4 th Quarterly Giving	\$1,125.00

General Quarterly Giving

Aisenbrey, Lou & Debbie – Wycliffe	\$250.00
Busse, Durwood & Barbara – Presbyterian Frontier	250.00
Dubuque Rescue Mission	225.00
Elangewe, Isaac (Cameroon)	250.00
Grote, Scott & Jessica – MMS Aviation	600.00
Hsu, John & Nellie – E Free Church	200.00
Jews for Jesus – Holly & Stan Meyer	200.00
Leverington, John & Becky – Wycliffe	250.00
Prasad, Philip – Witnessing Ministries	275.00
Shiloh Christian Children's Ministries	200.00
Tri-State Pregnancy Center/Clarity Clinic	225.00
UD Theological Seminary	100.00
Welde, Matt – US Center for World Missions	275.00
Yeats, Ted & Karey – Navigators	250.00
B.J. Weber – New York Fellowship	250.00
Total General 4 th Quarter Giving	\$3,800.00

Other Special Giving

EPC Gratitude Gift Fund	\$250.00
EPC Thanksgiving Offering	100.00
Total 4 th Quarter Other Giving	\$350.00

Per Agreement – PC(USA) Missions

Lim, Choon & Yen Lee	\$500.00
Siloam Eye Hospital	500.00
Outreach Foundation PC (USA)	500.00
Total PC (USA) 4 th Quarter Giving	\$1,500.00

TOTAL MISSION GIVING 4TH QUARTER \$6,775.00

GOLDEN OLDIES

Golden Oldies will meet on Wednesday, December 15th, 5:00pm, at Sunshine Family Restaurant.

Sign up at the Connect Center on the Sunday before the event or call Bob Boelk, 557-9166.

All seniors are welcome!



GUYS AND GALS

On the first Sunday of the month, after the first service, a group of seniors meet for brunch at Chuck and Jo's restaurant on Iowa Street. All seniors are invited to join us. If you have any questions contact Betty Muellich 582-3505.



**Tuesday
Dec 14th**

BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Don Sanders
- 4 Pete Andersen
- 8 Katy Perreard
- 9 Nick Lind
- 9 Connie Walsh
- 11 Lorene Hynes
- 13 Samuel Duehr
- 18 Chad Carlson
- 24 Rebeka Godwin
- 26 Jan Jenner
- 26 John Hillary
- 28 Jennie Burns



ANNIVERSARIES

- 30 Howard and Jean Higley
- 31 Dana and Katy Perreard

(Clerks Report Continued)

December Session Meeting, Thursday, December 16th – 6:30pm. Christmas Eve Services, Friday, December 24th – 7:00pm. Blood Drive will be January 12, 2011, at Grace Point. Annual Congregational/Corporation Meeting will be January 30, 2011, at 1:00pm with Potluck at 12:00pm.

Special Congregational Meeting on December 12th at 10:40am to elect Deacons, Elders, and Nominating Committee Members at large for 2011

Elder Candidates, Mary Burns, Ben Cernek and Mary Hirschey – this leaves 1 elder position still needing to be filled.

Deacon Candidates: Sharon Baker, Pauline Brimeyer (another 3-year term), Robin Wlochal.

Nominating Committee members at-large: Carolyn Arnold, Dwayne Intveld, Paulette Kress, Roger VanDerZyl.

Pat Kohler, Clerk of Session

Check Out the Library

Christmas books and videos are on display in the library. Be sure to check out some old favorites or some new items.

We receive donations of new and used books and videos all the time. There is always something new in the library.

The library is open Sundays from 8:30am till noon. If you have any new books or videos you would like to donate to the library, contact Mable or Bob Boelk, 557-9166.



MISSIONAL PROJECT LADIES

The Missional Project Ladies continue to make quilts and tote bags for the women's homeless shelters. In October four quilts, four blankets, and 10 caps were donated to Theresa House.

They meet the second Tuesday of each month at 9:00am in the Conference Room. They are looking for any donations of quilt fabric, backing pieces, upholstery fabric, and yarn. All women are welcome.

RED HAT LADIES

The Red Hat Ladies are meeting Thursday, December 16th, 11:30am, at the Point Restaurant. Please call Edie Ege, 583-1974, by the 14th to make your reservation. All women are welcome. Wear your red hat and join us.





Middle and High School Youth

6:00 to 8:00pm
Sunday evenings



DECEMBER

- 5TH GraceUnderground: 6-8 p.m.
"Christmas in the Crunch" Real gifts when the chips are down. Romans 12
- 12th GraceUnderground: 6-8 p.m.
"Christmas in the Crunch" Real gifts when the chips are down. Romans 12
- 19th GraceUnderground: 6-8 p.m.
"Christmas in the Crunch" Real gifts when the chips are down. Romans 12
- 26th TBA

Top Ten Mistakes Parents Make

9. Not Taking the Time to Know What's Up with Adolescents Today

We were all teens once. But teens are different every generation. They have different music and other cultural influences. The teen icons of the 70s and 80s were very different than the icons of today. Media influences are much stronger today, as well. Not only are teens exposed to more outside influences on TV, they are also exposed to the Internet, where there really are no rules of engagement. Anyone can put up a website. For example, there are websites by anorexic girls that teach other girls how to hide their disorder. It is a good idea to know the Internet and other cultural influences that may impact your children and impact their decision making. One of the best ways to keep a close eye on these influences is to put computers in common areas, making it more difficult for teens to secretly visit sites that might negatively influence their choices or even put them in danger.

Connecting
Loving
Growing
SERVING

Ushers needed!
Are you willing to help usher on a Sunday morning?
Is your family willing to help get you there on time?
Talk to Dana or Wilma Sanders for more information.

PRAYER CHAIN

To start a prayer, call Pat Kohler or Lois Trausch-Wolfe.

Daytime Prayer Chain

- Pat Kohler
583-8978
- Gerry Vandenberg
583-5338
- Ramona Hennings
583-8739
- Edie Ege
583-1974
- Wilma Sanders
582-7346
- Mable Boelk
557-9166
- Sue Lemon
583-4454
- Lois Trausch-Wolfe
583-0534
- (Lois starts the evening chain.)**
- Evening Prayer Chain**
- Sharon Baker
588-2115
- Glenda Temple
582-0464
- Pam Hillary
556-5846
- Karen Storlie
556-7548
- Kim or Jerry Bell
582-4956

SERVANTS OF THE LORD

Traditions (8:45am)

- Ushers (December)** Lorene Hynes, Bob Boelk
- Greeters (December)** Pat Kohler, Ray Wlochal
- Communion Preparers** Verna Davis, Betty Carlson
- Communion Servers** (Communion was served Nov 28th)

Prayers of the People

Prayer Team Ministry

- | | | |
|--------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| Dec 5 | Tim Walsh | Pauline Brimeyer, Pam Hillary |
| Dec 12 | Tim Walsh | Paul and Sharon Jensen |
| Dec 19 | Dan Baker | Gerry Vandenberg, Elaine Boettner |
| Dec 26 | Dan Baker | Dixie Shaffer, Lois Trausch-Wolfe |

Horizons (11:00am)

- Ushers (December)** Terry Thompson
Ben Cernek
- Greeters (December)** Beverly VanDerZyl
Pauline Brimeyer

Child Care

Infant

Preschool

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| Dec 5 | Glenda Temple | Dan Brimeyer |
| Dec 12 | Sue Lemon | Rachel Lemon |
| Dec 19 | Paulette Kress | Suz Birch |
| Dec 26 | | Steve Lemon |

Thank You

Pauline and Dan Brimeyer would like to thank all of you for your cards, food, and kind words at the passing of Dan's father. It is really a blessing to be part of such a loving and caring church family.

BECAUSE WE CARE

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY REGIONAL BLOOD DRIVE

Our next blood drive will be held on January 12th. It's hard to believe — 40% of the population is medically eligible to donate, but only 5% do. Following is a summary of the requirements to donate blood. To be eligible for this blood drive, you may not donate blood after November 17th. Please prayerfully consider donating. Help GracePoint continue to serve Dubuque and the world.

Age – Must be 17, or 16 with parental consent form. No upper age limit.

Weight – At least 110 lbs.

Cancer – Acceptable 2 years after treatment is completed with no recurrence. Most skin cancers (basal or squamous cell) are acceptable. Leukemia and lymphomas are not acceptable.

Colds, Flu, Sore Throat – Acceptable if symptoms are gone.

Diabetes – Acceptable, even if insulin-dependent.

Epilepsy – Acceptable if seizure-free for 6 months.

Herpes Simplex I or II – Acceptable unless on antiviral medications for active infection.

HIV – Not acceptable

Pregnancy – Acceptable 6 weeks after delivery. Breast-feeding acceptable.

Syphilis and Gonorrhea – Acceptable one year after diagnosis and treatment.

Stomach Ulcers – Acceptable if feeling well.

Travel – Based on location of travel.

Viral Hepatitis – Not acceptable if contracted after 11th birthday or if there has been a previous positive hepatitis test.

Acupuncture – Acceptable if performed with sterile or single use needles.

Allergy Shots – Acceptable.

Antibiotics – 48 hours after final dose.

Blood Transfusion – Acceptable 12 months after receiving blood product.

Medications – Most are acceptable.

Unacceptable Medications – Tegison or Soriatane in the past 3 years.

Avodart in the past 6 months.

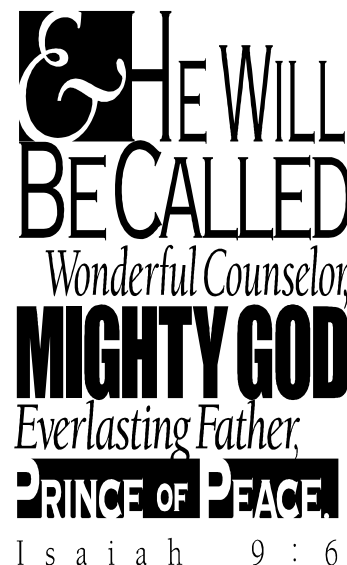
Proscar, Propecia, Accutane or Arthrotec in past month.

Surger – Most are acceptable after release from doctor's care if no blood transfusions were received.

Tattoos and Body Piercing – Acceptable if procedure was done in Ia., Missouri, or Wisconsin at a licensed facility.

Vaccinations – Flu, pneumonia, and tetanus shots are acceptable.

For more information contact Pam De Meester


**HE WILL
BE CALLED**
Wonderful Counselor,
MIGHTY GOD,
Everlasting Father,
PRINCE OF PEACE
 I s a i a h 9 : 6



3100 Windsor Avenue
Dubuque IA 52001-8154

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Return Service Requested

GLORIFYING GOD BY

CONNECTING people to God

LOVING God and each other

GROWING in grace and truth

SERVING Dubuque and the world

Deacons Christmas Caroling



Sunday

December 19, 3:00pm

Start in the Fellowship Center

Everyone is encouraged to join us in the Fellowship Center, where we will split up and travel to our shut-ins at various nursing homes. After caroling, we will meet back at the Fellowship Center for soup, sandwiches, and hot chocolate. Please sign up at the Connect Center. If you have questions, contact Bob Boelk, 557-9166.