



# Herald

JANUARY 2012

## REV'S RAMBLIN'S

### Three Tenses of Christmas

In *The First Christmas* by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan, they opine that Charles Dickens got it right! Christmas has a spirit of the past, present, and future.

From scripture, we read and remember the “stories long, long ago” of Christmas past. We struggle to relate to Israel over 2,000 years ago and tales of virgin births, no vacancy inns, and birth of a Christ child in a barn.

Yet Advent and Christmas are also about a new world. It is not about some mass immigration from a doomed world to a blessed heaven. Rather, it is about the end of this era of war and violence, injustice, and oppression. It is about the earth's transformation, not about its devastation. It is about a world of justice and peace.

How will such a transformation of the world come about? To say the obvious, it has not yet happened, despite the passage of 2,000 years. It is not yet accomplished. Does that mean that the Christmas stories are a pipe dream? That they (and the New Testament as a whole) are another example of failed eschatology, of hope become hopeless?

It depends upon how we think the new world is to come about. We find two very different understandings, two different eschatologies in the history of Christianity and modern scholarship. The first is “supernatural or interventionist eschatology.” Within this understanding, only God can bring about the new world. It can happen only through a dramatic divine intervention. All we can do is wait and pray for it.

The second understanding we call “participatory or collaborative eschatology.” Put simply, we are expected to participate with God in bringing about the world promised by Christmas. As St. Augustine stated, “God without us will not; we without God cannot!”

Borg and Crossan reject the first option and embrace the second. They affirm that we who have seen the star and heard the angels sing are called to participate in the new birth and new world proclaimed by the Christmas story. What we see revealed in Jesus and the Gospel he taught, is the way; the way to a different kind of life and a different future. Both personal and corporal transformation, both the eschatology of rebirth and the eschatology of a new world, require our participation.

Let us prepare room in our hearts for Jesus this Christmas!

*Pastor Ross*

# Get Involved

Looking for a new way to get involved during worship in 2012? If so, SOP would like to invite you to come and lead worship on Sunday mornings during God’s Spot. If God has blessed you with the ability to sing or play an instrument, this is YOUR opportunity to use those gifts! Please contact Denise Jacobson, Amy LaGrange, or Karen Evans for more information! We’d love to have you!

## CALL FOR THE ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Pursuant to the By-Laws of St. John’s United Church of Christ of Indianapolis, the call is issued for the annual congregational meeting of the membership, which has been scheduled for Sunday, January 22, 2012, immediately following the 10:30 AM service.



Dear Friends,

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for your \$250.00 gift to The Julian Center. Your assistance means so much to me—but even more to the 56 women and 43 children sleeping safely in our Shelter tonight. Your donation guarantees that our agency will remain a beacon of hope for survivors and their families as they begin new, self-sufficient lives. Thank you for choosing to be part of the solution!

Sincerely,  
Melissa A. Pershing, JD, Executive Director

Dear Friends in Christ:

Your contribution of \$3,375 (through Sept.) to Chicago, United, and Eden Seminaries (CUE) is truly an investment in the current and future leadership of the United Church of Christ. Your gifts support emerging leaders as they become equipped to lead our denomination into the future. I offer my prayers for your church and your ministry in the coming days of Advent and Christmas. May you be blessed during this time of anticipation and receiving of the wondrous gift that is Christ among us.

With Gratitude,  
Kiely Todd Roska, Director, CUE Seminaries

We want to thank each and everyone who planned, executed and attended the open house celebration of our 70th wedding anniversary. To Sheryl and Tom and her associate hostesses. To Kay and her dedicated ringers for a surprised special ringing of beautiful music. To Pastor Don for his heartfelt words and prayers.

The life cycle is like the sea. We have dark and rough seas. We also have sunshine and calm waters. It is only Faith in the Lord to carry us thru the rough times to enjoy His creations and its people.

We praise the almighty God for allowing us to get to this milestone together and celebrate with you, our church family and friends to make it a perfect day. God bless each and everyone.

Yours in Christ with Christian love,  
John & Lolly Rieck

Thank you for your Gift!

Karen and I thank all of you at St. John’s for the very generous Christmas gift this year! Your faithful stewardship and steadfast ministry with us is both humbling and challenging. We pray that as we continue to discover what God is doing through St. John’s with you, the reality of our congregation being a transforming presence in Indianapolis will be fulfilled. May God bless you all this Christmas.

Karen & Pastor Ross



**Megan Hauser & John Cogswell**

December 10, 2011



**Patricia Stroud**

March 7, 1927—Nov. 14, 2011

**Robert Hodder**

Dec. 24, 1957—Nov. 23, 2011

**Rebecca Brothers**

July 26, 1956—Dec. 1, 2011



*Memorial Gifts*

**Becky Brothers**—M/M Dave Rueherschneck, Dick & Pat Schneider, M/M Lynn Wehner and M/M Mike Hayes

**Patricia Stroud**—Ken & Doris Dobbs, Margie Potter, M/M Ronald Brothers, Smitty & Bonnie Smith, Kathy Guignard, Lynn & Jean Wehner, Mike & Carolyn Hayes, Mike & Scott Casalino-Kauffman

**George Oberle**—M/M Ronald Brothers

**Maureen Reed's mother**—Mike & Scott Casalino-Kauffman

**Rev. Del Kauffman**—Mike & Scott Casalino-Kauffman

**Address Changes**

**Rosemary Crocker**

7525 Rosegate Drive #152  
Indianapolis, IN 46237  
317-881-6379

**David Reed**

1030 4th Street, Apt. A  
Santa Monica, CA 90403

**Ruth Enerson**

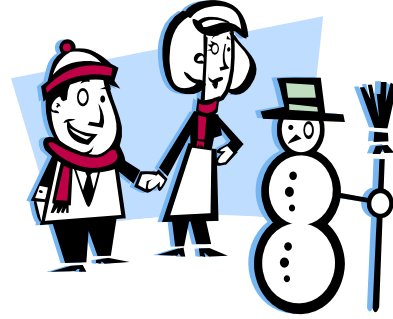
The Arms at Greenwood Village  
295 Village Lane Rm# 228  
Greenwood, IN 46143



The Men's Breakfast for January has been rescheduled to January 14th from the 7th. Please mark your calendars!



**Community Movie Night at St. John's** – First and foremost to all of those who attended and donated items to the December Community Movie Night (CMN) at St. John's presentation of "Elf," we thank you! About 30 people from St. John's and the community joined us for the fun and festivities. Considering the competition of Christmas shopping, Christmas parties, the IU and Kentucky basketball game and cable television's love of the same movie, we were quite pleased with the turnout. We are, however, even more excited about the potential for the January 14<sup>th</sup> presentation of a John Wayne classic, "Rooster Cogburn." So once again, we invite you to bring a comfortable chair from home and join us for CMN at St. John's. From 6:00pm to 6:30pm we will have western themed activities for everyone who is interested...maybe even a little target practice! Just like those "other" theaters, popcorn, candy and soda are served during CMN at St. John's—except that our evening is completely free of charge. As always, the CMN Planning Committee will handle the popcorn. However, since this is a free evening of fun for all, we would greatly appreciate donations of canned soda and fun-size candy. Feel free to bring any donations to the church office and we'll take it from there! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to let me know. Thanks again...Peace...Shawn



Notes from Jenny—

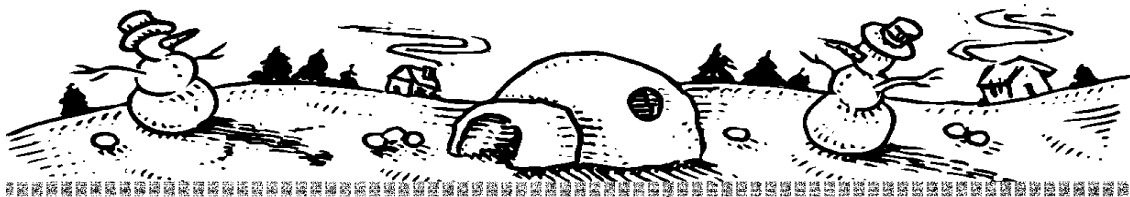


Attention all youth and families: First off I want to thank everyone for the prayers. As many of you know, I rolled my knee this past weekend. After a dr. visit they believe that I will need surgery. I will find out more after a few tests. Because of this, I did not include a Youth and Family News section in this Herald. Please watch Facebook and E-mail about upcoming events for January. If you have any questions in the meantime please feel free to send me a message via e-mail, Facebook or my cell phone. Thanks!!

Hope you all have a very Merry Christmas! Jenny Zotz



I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone involved in the Prayer Shawl Ministry. The lap blanket that you provided for my mom after her recent surgery was gorgeous. I wish you could have seen her smile and the joy that it gave her. A special thank you to Carol Emhardt for wrapping it so beautiful and the heartfelt card. This ministry truly is a blessing to all that it touches. Thank you for sharing your gifts to brighten someone's day! Jenny Zotz





## Preschool News

Happy New Year and Warm Greetings from the Preschool! We started back to school after a restful Christmas break on Thursday, January 5. We are geared up to continue to learn more letters of the alphabet, numbers, and the food groups this month. We will also be concentrating on learning the stories about the early beginnings of the wonderful ministry of our Best Friend, Jesus!

We will be starting our evaluations of our preschool students to see how far they come and what areas we still need to work on. The teaching staff will be conducting Parent-Teacher conferences at the end of the month. We hope to have all of our families participating in these conferences.

We will be planning our Nursery Rhyme Olympics for the children to enjoy. Watch out for children jumping over candlesticks, putting Humpty Dumpty back together, and many other fun activities.

We are in the process of setting up a field trip to The Dance Refinery. We are planning to burn some of our energy up on TDR's gym floor, using their gym equipment.

Winter is here! In case of inclement weather, St. John's Preschool follows Perry Township's lead in the decision to close our school or not. We will be closed whenever Perry closes or if the township has a 2-hour delay. Hopefully, we won't have a repeat of the ice storm of last year!

The Preschool Staff would like to thank everyone for their continued support, prayers, and generous donations to our program. It really means a lot to us and the children. We really appreciated the gift bag full of goodies from the Women's Board! All of you are a Blessing to us!

Please check out our Giving Tree for some donation ideas that we could use. We use many different items to create some fun and exciting crafts for the children. Currently, we do not need for you to save paper towel tubes for us. We now have a nice, big supply of them. Thanks! We still need the metal lids from juice cans, cardboard egg cartons, and Pringle canisters. Any donated items may be placed in our drop-off box, located in the hallway by our classrooms! Bigger items needed include tricycles, and riding toys, and shopping carts. With more children enrolled in the Preschool, we do not have enough riding toys for all the children to enjoy at the same time.

We hope that Jesus' Love continues to warm your hearts during this winter season.

# St. John's UCC      November 2011

## Contributions compared to Annual Budget

