

CHRIST THE REDEEMER CHURCH



FROM PAULA: I really enjoy being several-months **pregnant** during Christmas-time. (Yes, this is an **announcement** ☺.) It gives me an opportunity to think about the Christmas story from a slightly different perspective, imagining what Mary was thinking as she felt Jesus growing in her womb, squirming and kicking as she tried to fall asleep at night – or did He sleep through the night even in the womb? Why on earth did she go to Bethlehem with Joseph so close to her due date? Didn't she know that riding several days on a donkey was bound to put her into labor? Did they collect their birth sup-

plies back in Nazareth and cart them along or find a Beth-le-Mart to pick up the needed items on their way into town? Was it a typical first-labor, or was she blessed with a pain-free birth? Did Joseph have the honor of catching baby Jesus, was there a local midwife, did the hostess of the inn come out to help – or was Mary the first to lay her hands on His soft, wet head as she eased His shoulders into the world? Did He look around peacefully, or did He cry heartily, perhaps knowing exactly where He was and why He was there? In her postpartum euphoria, did Mary have any idea what had just happened?

FROM NATE: Thank God for the many good things that have happened since our last newsletter! If you have the patience to read this list, praise God with me:

- **for good health:** I was sick for a month and got pretty depressed about it, but am feeling well now!
- **for special holiday church events:** including a good turnout to the Reformation Day Party (50 people – mostly different from last year), a grand Thanksgiving dinner for 30 people at our house, a walk-through nativity where I got to preach a gospel message to 150 people at a local farm, a choral performance by our family (and others) to benefit Manhattan Life Choice Ministries, and (in a week) a Messiah sing-and-play-along. (**Pray for this!**)
- **for successful home renovations:** a shed roof that (after three rebuilds!) doesn't leak anymore, insulated walls for my office, and a wood stove to warm the house when storms take the power out! (We still need to replace siding on the house. Want to help with a work team?)
- **for special gifts:** The wife of a leader at a local Baptist church saw that their wedding china was the same design as ours, so they gave us theirs, then also sold us their 2000 Dodge Caravan for the cost of some minimal repairs!
- **for the joy of a church that prioritizes teaching:** Our weeknight Apologetics study has been going great, I'm continuing to teach Greek to a few select students, and I'm continuing to preach on Sunday mornings through First Corinthians.
- **for lots of delightful pastoral visits** with church visitors and members: including a K-State student and a soldier from Ft. Riley who have asked me for regular accountability meetings, and a federal judge from Brazil on educational leave!
- **for discipleship time with my children:** coaching Josh & Beni in how to lead family devotions, teaching Hermetics to Amos & Peter, discussing the *Daughterhood by Design* website with Grace & Irene, and studying Proverbs with Hope & Lilly. Also my first backyard campout with my girls, birthdays for Peter and Hope, and decorating for Christmas and eating homemade Christmas goodies!
- **for new developments in the church:** We began the process of receiving two new members (bringing to 24 the number of communicant members) and finished the examination and qualification for our first elder candidate! (**Pray for more!**)

KID'S CORNER FROM AMOS: Our family just got to act in a 3-day event called Bethlehem Revisited, where lots of people walk through a series of scenes that show the story of Jesus' birth and the prophesies concerning it. My dad and my brother Josh got to lead groups through the scenes; Peter and my sisters Grace and Irene were Prophetic Children – meaning that they sat by a prophet or witness of Jesus' life and said, "He is coming!" or "He has come!" or "His is coming Back!" I got to be a lantern runner – meaning that I would sit at the end of the trail and take lanterns that guides, such as my Dad, dropped off and carry them back to the beginning of the trail. Even though it was a bit tiring, I still can't wait 'till next year! In other news this year, I have finished writing and editing a book entitled *The Revolt from Raindrop Forest!* I am hoping that I can have it published by July 2009. Also, debate season has started up again, and our first tournament will be on Dec. 12! Another highlight is that I am almost through with my second read through the Bible! **Please pray** that I will grow up to be a Godly, mature man of God. (You can hear Amos play his bagpipes at the *Song of the Month* link on our website!)



**Amos, our 3rd-born,
with a lantern**