Christmas all year round

Mike Royko wrote for the Chicago Daily News. I read every word whenever our paper would carry his columns. His sense of humor and use of satire always proved entertaining. In the rush of Christmas shopping and parties, I often think of his article which was first published on December 28, 1976. It’s one of my favorites. Here is the gist of the story with a few direct quotes:

The owner of a downtown Chicago restaurant called with a problem that frequently comes up at Christmas. He had planned a party for 100 needy children, but he only had half that number coming. He was frantically searching for more. “Do you know where I can get 50 needy children?” Mike offered suggestions. The man called around and called back saying he had no luck, “They’re already taken.” A similar thing had happened before: “Last year, on Christmas Eve afternoon, a very angry young woman called. She and some friends had just rounded up old clothes and old toys to give away, but they couldn’t find anyone to give them to. They had called several social agencies but they had closed for the day. Knowing how upsetting such disappointment could be, I tried to be helpful and suggested that they wait until after Christmas when the social agencies reopened.” “But Christmas will be over then,” the woman said, “and it won’t be the same.”

Mike wrote: “That’s the trouble with supply and demand. Right after Christmas, there are all kinds of needy people available. But by then, most of us are already planning New Year’s Eve activities and that’s not the kind of thing you’d have an orphan for.” So he suggested that people plan their “Good Christmas Deed” weeks, or months in advance, so they could choose from a variety of needs, “That way, there wouldn’t be any disappointment. Christmas comes but once a year, and everybody should get a chance to do good. It’s such a long wait until next time.”

As a congregation, I’m thrilled at the way we respond to needs 24/7. On your behalf, your church staff responds to neighbors every day who are looking for help with groceries, medicine and other living expenses. Together we support “In As Much” and other agencies locally. Beginning in January, we will highlight a different outreach ministry each month with opportunities to learn, to give and to volunteer throughout the year.

And just as a reminder: Our Food Hub will be open on December 28. You won’t have to wait till next December to do something good. I think Mike would be pleased.

Grace and Peace,

Alan
**BUDGET REPORT**

Budget Needs Per Week $4,065.00

Received December 8, 2013 0

Received December 15, 2013 $6,876.00

Received Year to Date $212,772.67

Actual Expenses Year to Date $218,546.20

Income Over (Under) Expenses -$5,773.53

**Attendance Report**

Sunday, December 8, 2013 Sunday School 0

Ice storm Worship 0

Sunday, December 15, 2013 Sunday School 43

Worship 146

Average Year to Date Sunday School 39

Worship 96

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

Susan

Reminder:
The Church Office will be closed on December 25 and 26, 2013
And January 1, 2014

---

**Recycle Reminder**

Cans—Aluminum ONLY & rinsed

No Styrofoam containers

Thanks!

---

**December 22, 2013**

Worship Leader Anne Cummings

Table Nancy Robbins

Bread Elder Mark Hiles

Wine Elder Chris Piercy

First Greeter Linda Clark

Second Greeter Kale Sweet

Deacon Steven Hightower

Deacon Joe Bob Porter

Jr. Deacon Brandon Piercy

Acolyte Isabella Piercy

Children’s Moment Alan Lobaugh

Children’s Church Matthew Hudman

Visitation Serving Deacons

Home Communion Mark Hiles/Steven Hightower

---

**December 29, 2013**

Worship Leader Diane Weger

Table Will Ryan

Bread Elder Sondra Williams

Wine Elder Nancy Robbins

First Greeter Cat Schlueter

Second Greeter Linda Clark

Deacon Harry Dekin

Deacon Eddie Weger

Jr. Deacon Lindsay Schlueter

Acolyte Madison Howell

Children’s Moment Will Ryan

Children’s Church NONE

Visitation Serving Deacons

Home Communion Rick Seeds/Harry Dekin
Christmas time is almost upon us. For the youth that means that there will be no more youth group meetings on Wednesday nights until January 15th.

This past Sunday the youth sold candles at the Christmas dinner at church. They will continue to sell candles in the Fellowship Hall to help raise money for their mission trips this next summer to Austin, TX and Albuquerque, NM.

Mid-Winter Retreats are not that far away (I know crazy right). Each Youth Group has their own retreat in Athens, TX. Young Adult, 18-15 year olds, retreat is January 10th-12, JYF (grades 3-5) is January 24th-26th, Chi-Rho (grades 6-8) is January 31st-February 2nd, and CYF (grades 9-12) is February 21-23. Will will be contacting the parents of those youth who have expressed interest in the retreats before to get you forms. Each retreat costs $90. Azle Christian Church offers scholarships for up to half of the retreat/camp cost. I hope that this retreat season will be the best yet, I am directing Chi-Rho Midwinter too!

I will not be in worship until December 29th as I will be in Iowa on vacation. After the 29th, I fly to Turkey for class. I will be there 10 days and will be blogging about my experience. You can follow along at www.willministry.blogspot.com.

And last but not least, MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Will

Azle Christian Church Food Hub

The next Food Hub will be Saturday, December 28, 2013. We will start sorting produce at 8:15 a.m. and open the doors at 9:00 a.m. Plan now to be a part of this event on December 28 and, again, thanks to everyone who helps.

Matthew Hudman

SAVE THE DATES

April 26 through May 3, 2014.
Schedule now for the ADULT MISSION TRIP.

Start thinking and praying and wishing and hoping.

More later.
COATS AND BLANKETS
Nights are colder. Needs increasing.

We are still collecting coats and blankets for the Union Gospel Mission. Jerry Miller picks them up and delivers them for the glory of God.

You may leave your donations on the PB&J table at the back of the sanctuary on Sunday or bring them by the office Mondays through Thursdays.

Thank you.

PS: Don’t forget your PB & J foodstuffs. Thanks!

Christmas Eve
December 24, 2013
At Azle Christian Church

5 PM
Family Christmas Program
Carols and Pageant
(see description below-right)

11:00 PM
Lessons and Carols
Candlelight and Communion

Thank you so much to everyone who took part in making our Christmas dinner the most fun ever. We enjoyed every inch of the wonderful space God has given us to cook, eat and listen to the Bell Choir plus piano music. It was wonderful seeing so many taking part in helping get the food to the table and a special thanks to John Pastre for extending the table at the last minute so all the food could be displayed. Thanks to so many helping after the meal. The kitchen was clean and ready for us to leave by 2:00 pm which is very good timing.

We will all of you a very blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Dollene, Sandra and Linda.

Christmas Eve, 5:00 p.m.
This year, our service at 5:00 will include a semi rehearsed telling of the Christmas story. Our children, when they enter the sanctuary, will be given the opportunity to choose one of four costumes: Animals (who are the first to see Jesus), Angels (complete with wings and halo’s), Shepherds (who search for Jesus), or Magi (wise girls and wise boys who follow the star). Each group will have an adult leader to guide them on their journey to Bethlehem, where they will prompt the children as they tell the good news of Christ’s birth.

We will sing Christmas carols and receive the gift of light (have you ever held a star?) . We’ll finish with singing together “Silent night, holy night.”

Bring your friends for this fun, informal, special service celebrating the love of God, born to us.
Jerry, our son
Viness and Florence Linton, parents
Shine Bates, Father
Marvin Sorrel, uncle
Erika Null, Henry and Luella Burks, parents
Henry Burks and our children
Kennedy Brackin, son
Dick Seeds, cherished friend
Joe Butrym and Jos. S. Padilla, parents
George Morrow, brother
Joe Boy Cudd and Jimmie Lynn Quincy-James, cousins
Frank and Louise Gassaway, parents
Kenneth Foster, husband
Jason Owen, grandson
Milton Forsythe, Susie’s dad
John Hiles, Mark’s dad
Chester and Aileen Hufstedler, parents
Herman and Doris Newby, parents
Larry Jones, son
Mary Pendery, Doris Sears, Al Sears, grandparents
Ed Mote (father), Joe Smith (brother in law),
                    Michael Norton (brother)
Ruby and Wyatt Porter, parents
J.K. and Nan Daniels, parents
Jim and Mary Savage, parents
Buddy Snipes, husband
Pat, Dee and Zack Buzbee, friends
Richard and Bernice Buzbee, Dutch and Pauline Stults, parents
Patsy Stults Steward, sister of Dick Stults
Victor and Luke, therapy horse and dog
Alvis and Dalphia, Lewis and Maude, parents
Fred, Wayne and Gary, brothers
Laverne and Janet, sisters

George and Ruth Addington
Donna Bates
Jill Breshears
Jill Breshears
Diana and Henry Burks
Diana and Henry Burks
Nell Brackin
Nell Brackin
Tony and Dawn Butrym
James and Carole Cudd
James and Carole Cudd
Dale and Jan Flavin
Marie Foster
Linda Foster
Mark and Susie Hiles
Mark and Susie Hiles
Don and Kathy Hufstedler
Don and Kathy Hufstedler
E.L. and Betty Jones
Lisa, Brian, Jr., and Tricia Lingo
Mike and Joni Mote
Joe Bo and Laurel Porter
Nancy Robbins
Becky and Brian Savage
Cathy Snipes
Becky and Dick Stults

Poiseettias in Honor Of:

Vic and Tina, Samantha, Emma and Will, children and grandchildren
Dale and Jan Flavin
Diana Leslie Watson and Pat Guest, parents and grandparents to Lisa, Brian, Jr., and Tricia Lingo
Barbara and Bob Upchurch
Friends in the Sunday School class
Barbara and Bob Upchurch
Laurie and Brian
Barbara and Bob Upchurch

Azle Christian Church
December 203
New Prayer Requests

Family & friends of Ted Jones
Family & friends of Vicki Padilla’s father
Family & friends of Dr. John Myers
Debbie Paris
Lynn
Jan
Carma Bowyer
Lisa Sebastian
Stevie Linn
Robert Knoblock

*George & Ruthie Addington
*Chuck and Gloria Harrison
*Paul Van Dorn
*Leslie Bales
*Gay & Harry Dekin
*Julia Gardom
*Raymond Smith
*Vancil Trammell
*Russell Eagleton
*Jack Cowan

*Jim & Lori Van Leeuwen
*Dick Stults
*Lodema Botts
*Sandra Bishnoi
*Georgia Lamb

Family & friends of John Tipton
Family & friends of Keith Bramlett
Peggy Grogan
Dick Stults
Brianna
Cothelle Dodson
Jared Vick
Kent Clark
Diane Weger

Family & friends of Janelle Bizdock
Family & friends of Emma Lee Lavender
Family & friends of Roger Meredith
Debra Hudman
Nell Brackin
Mary Margaret Walker
Scott Witlow
Thomas Hicks
Bill Allen
Marian Benton

On-going Prayers Requested

Debt Reduction Campaign

Homeless Persons

Notice:

We will list family and friends for one month, unless notified otherwise. If you feel they should be listed longer than that, please let us know.

Serving in the military:

Chad Tidwell, Colorado; Spruill’s grandson, David Collins, San Diego; Brandon Carroll, Persian Gulf Iraq; Matt Huddleston, Korea; Jonathan Hendricks, Afghanistan; Jared Curry, Afghanistan; Shirley Brown and Lita Tidwell Roby serving with military contractor in Afghanistan; Brandon Franklin, Japan; Jonathan Davis, N. Carolina; Justin Clubb, Afghanistan; Patricia Lingo, TX.
“We are a Christian community that loves God and our neighbor, where everyone is welcome at Christ’s table. God accepts you just as you are and so do we.”

Lectionary 12.22.2013; Advent 2
Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-25

Lectionary 12.29.2013; Advent 3
Isaiah 63:7-9
Psalm 148
Hebrews 2:10-18
Matthew 2:13-23

Lectionary 01.05.2014
Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:(1-9), 10-18

December 28, 2013 (Saturday)
Food Hub Program
Volunteers arrive at 8:15 am
Distribution begins at 9:00 am
Prayers anytime.

Christmas Eve Services
December 24, 2013

5 pm Family Service of Carols and Pageant

11 pm Service of Lessons and Carols
Candlelight and Communion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| New Year's Day  
Office Closed |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 5 Epiphany  
9:00 Chancel Choir  
10:00 Sunday School  
11:00 Worship/Commission  
New leaders  
AC — undecorate church  
4:00 ASCA MUB | 6 Newsletter Info Due  
9-3 Parents Day Out  
6 pm MUB Scouts | 7     | 8   | 9   | 10  | 11  |
|     |     | Joe McCreary | 9-3 Parents Day Out  
9:30 Prayer Group  
6-8 pm Youth  
6:30 pm Meal  
7:30 pm Elders  
Dallene Price | Jim Van Leeuwen |     |     |
| 6 Epiphany  
9:00 Chancel Choir  
10:00 Sunday School  
11:00 Worship  
4:00 ASCA MUB  
Chris & Jana Howell | 13    | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  | 18  |
|     | 9-3 Parents Day Out  
6 pm MUB Scouts |     |     |     |     |     |
|     |     | Samantha Bell  
Tim Nickerson |     |     |     |     |
| 12    | 9:00 Chancel Choir  
10:00 Sunday School  
11:00 Worship  
4:00 ASCA MUB  
Chris & Jana Howell | 20    | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25  |
|     | Newsletter Info Due  
9-3 Parents Day Out |     |     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 19    | 9:00 Chancel Choir  
10:00 Sunday School  
11:00 Worship  
4:00 ASCA MUB |     | 23  | 24  | 25  |     |     |
|     | Newsletter Info Due  
9-3 Parents Day Out |     |     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 26    | 9:00 Chancel Choir  
10:00 Sunday School  
11:00 Worship  
4:00 ASCA MUB  
Helen Womack | 27    | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31  |     |
|     | 9-3 Parents Day Out |     |     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 30th Anniversary Celebration  
Clark, L & K  1 pm  
9 am Food Hub  
Linda & Kent Clark  
Don & Kathy Hufstedler  
Katrina Wilson |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |