



Pastor's Perspective — Drawn to Christ at Christmas



A few years ago, one of our younger children was especially attracted to the Nativity display in the foyer. While waiting for Mom and Dad after services she would sit and look at the scene with dreamy, wide-eyed wonder. She was completely taken in by what she saw and unfazed by all the commotion around her. In her mind, she was in that stable seven time zones and 2000 years away. And like the figures in that scene, she was content to stay there in a state of perpetual awe beholding her Lord clothed in human flesh, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a feeding trough.

If you are distracted by the din of the holiday season, let me encourage you to take a few minutes to step into that Nativity scene and be drawn to the Christ of Christmas. Close your eyes and imagine yourself there. What would you say to Jesus to thank Him for His miraculous and sacrificial appearance as a man? What would you do to honor His generous act? Whatever it is, say it and do it as an act of awe-filled, life-long worship.

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich...Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"

2 Corinthians 8:9; 9:15

Remembering Our Missionaries

Christmas Missionary Offering: Each year we receive a love offering for our missionaries throughout the month of December for the purpose of providing each family a gift equal to their monthly support provided by Fellowship. This year our goal is \$2,775. Please plan to participate in this expression of appreciation for the ministries of our missionaries.

...those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.
1 Corinthians 9:14

Financial Shortfalls: Six of our ten missionary families have significant shortfalls in financial support. The Missions Committee is proposing a \$2,000 increase in the missions budget for 2005 in order to help address these needs. Please pray that God would eliminate all of the shortfalls so that our missionaries' work will not be hindered in any way.

A Look at Youth Ministries *(Part two of a two-part series)*

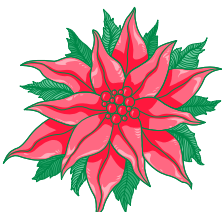
Have you seen announcements about the Youth 5th Quarters, and wondered what they are? Well, in short, they are an outreach activity held at the church after some West Springfield High School football games. Young people are invited to come and enjoy a time of games and socializing. Pizza and sodas are provided, and the games are competitive with prizes awarded. There is also a gospel presentation that presents both the message of salvation to the lost, and a challenge of growth to those who are saved. The young people who have come to these events have really enjoyed them, and many have been open to the gospel.

Fellowship's young people are serving the church in many ways, including as ushers, Awana leaders-in-training, Junior Church helpers, substitute Sunday school teachers, nursery workers, and worship service musicians. It's great to see them minister to their church family in these ways.

How can you help with our Youth Ministries? Pastor Odom is always in need of drivers for the various offsite

activities. It would be great if he had a pool of willing drivers upon whom he could call. Also, *PRIMETIME* generally involves a light dinner, so you could volunteer to provide food and drink. Finally, encourage our teens to fully participate in Youth Ministries. This is an important time in their lives—a time that will never come again. Nothing can take the place of Christian friendships that are established, and memories built.

Please pray for our young people as they face the daily challenges of junior and senior high. These include how to balance extra-curricular activities with homework, managing time for family and friends, and (most important) making time daily for the Lord. Pray that our teens will grow in their personal walk with Him. We live in a society that increasingly blurs the distinction between right and wrong, and the pressures young people face are intensified because of that. Pray also for our teens' parents and for Pastor Odom, that they would have God's wisdom as they partner together in training our young people in godliness.



Getting to Know Our Church Family

Alan and Wendy Marshall

Alan was born in Tuscon, AZ and grew up in Omaha, NE; Champaign, IL; and Arlington, VA. His father was in the Air Force and he has one older brother. Wendy was born in Albany, GA and grew up in Indian Head, MD; Okinawa; Hawaii; Camp LeJeune, NC; and Chattanooga, TN. She has 2 younger sisters and one younger brother. Wendy's dad was in the Marines until she was 15 years old. He retired and went to Bible school. Then her parents became missionaries.

As a child, Alan wanted to grow up to be an Apache Indian, then a Dallas Cowboys quarterback. He enjoyed making models, burning things, and shooting. Wendy liked to ride her bike, roller skate, play outside and play games.

After high school Alan attended Bob Jones University for 4 years, majoring in physics with a minor in math. He graduated in 1985. Wendy attended Chattanooga State University where she majored in Nursing. She became a registered nurse in 1993.

After college, Alan took a job with the FBI, working at the Crime Lab in Washington, DC before moving to the

*...if we love one another,
God lives in us and His love
is made complete in us.
1 John 4:12*

Ballistic Research Facility in Quantico, VA. Wendy worked as a nurse at a hospital in Meridian, MS, then at Pensacola Christian College, then back again in Meridian before coming to work at Fairfax Family Practice. She is now a stay-at-home mom.

Alan came to Northern VA in 1971 when his father was transferred to the Pentagon. The couple met when they were "set up" by members of Alan's family while Wendy was in Northern VA visiting her former boss. After Wendy returned to Mississippi they began communicating. After a few visits back and forth Wendy decided to move to VA in November 1997. She says, "We were not engaged until March 1998, but I was pretty sure we would be getting married or I wouldn't have moved here." Alan and Wendy were married at Fellowship in August 1998. They have one child, Andrew who will be 2½ in January.

Alan accepted Christ as Savior when he was 7 years old, after hearing an evangelist at his church speak about the Rapture. Wendy received the Lord when she was 9 years old, during Vacation Bible School.

Alan began attending Fellowship in 1996, and Wendy joined him in 1997. Alan serves as our deacon for finance and ESL Sunday school teacher. Wendy is church hostess, plays the piano, and directs SMAK. They also help with church cleaning.

These days, Alan enjoys shooting and woodworking. Wendy's interests include cake decorating, stamping, cross-stitching, scrapbooking and traveling. They ask us to pray for wisdom in raising their son.



Calendar

Dec. 8	December Annual Meeting (7:30 PM)
Dec. 10	Youth Christmas Party (7:30 PM)
Dec. 11	Awana Christmas Party (10:00 AM)
Dec. 14	Nursing Home Ministry (2:00 PM)
Dec. 16	ESL Christmas Party (8:00 PM)
Dec. 19	Christmas Music Program (6:00 PM)
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Service (7:00 PM)
Dec. 31	Church-wide Progressive Dinner

Welcome New Members!

Sid and Dee Teaford became members of Fellowship on November 7. We hope to see many others take this important step in the days ahead.

Money Matters

The Thanksgiving offering totaled \$2,331. These monies will be used to reduce the principal on the church's mortgage. When added to our 50@1 giving these monies will enable our total principal pay-down for 2004 to exceed \$11,000, resulting in a much larger savings in interest payments. Praise the Lord for such good progress on our mortgage!

November Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$4,639
Weekly Need	\$4,590
Year-to-Date Giving (General Fund)	\$230,352
Year-to-Date Need	\$220,320
Year-to-Date 50@1 Giving	\$8,600