

Kenai
Christian
Church

NEWS

John 11:25

December 20, 2011

Vol. 11 No.12

Our Services

Sunday

Sunday School 9:45 AM
Worship 11:00 AM
Evening 6:30 PM

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:00 PM

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Merry Christmas

from KCC

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
December 24th
5:30 pm

Worship Christmas Morning
11 am

Family and Friends always welcome!

Remembering Christmas

My wife, Sheila, mentioned that she had recently listened to a radio commentator speaking about the Christmas memories of his boyhood days and youth. She appreciated what he had to say.

I do not know all that Sheila heard, but it made me reflect on the Christmases of years gone by. Of the seventy-one Christmases I have experienced, I can think of only one that carried a quiet despair and unsettling sadness--and it was in my adult years, not as a young lad or a youth. Otherwise, every Christmas season has been a period of grand blessing.

Memories of Christmases past do not seem include the gifts my parents surely sacrificed to give to my sisters, brothers and myself. I can remember relatively few of these gifts. What I remember most and appreciate most was the joy that encompassed the whole family.

We lived on a farm which at that time was owned by my grandpa and grandma. Following their deaths, Dad and Mom bought the farm from his brothers and sisters. At Christmas time every year my aunts and uncles and cousins all came to our house for a portion of Christmas Eve. It was a glorious evening, not because of the presents, but because the whole family gathered together. Sometimes, Santa Claus came, who was either George Wickham or Vernon White. As small children, we were afraid of him, yet were sure he was someone we knew. Years later, after Sheila and I were married and had moved to Alaska, the rest of the family continued the tradition. There were times when nearly thirty relatives came to the farm and camped out in almost every room in the house. The tradition stopped a few years ago after Mother died and the farm was sold.

Though Sheila and I and our own children never got to spend one Christmas with our families over the past forty-four years, still the memories of boyhood and youth have never been lost. During most of those Christmas Eves and later in the evening, we all went to the church building to participate in either a candlelight service or a Christmas Cantata. The starting time was generally 11:00 p.m. There was a certain serenity about gathering at the end of the day to remember and honor the birth of Christ with brothers and sisters in Christ.

To this day at Christmas Sheila's mother faithfully sends us a basket of candy from Bloomer Candy Company in Zanesville, Ohio. We have not missed receiving one basket in forty-four years. One is on its way as I write. How blessed we are through her thoughtfulness and abiding love for us.

As we are about to enter into a new year may we appreciate the birth of our Lord and Saviour and commit ourselves to serving Him fully.

--Robert

A Wronged Reaction

One thing I love about God's Word is that there is always something new to learn when you sit down and study it. It never ceases to amaze me how a simple undiscovered truth can leap out at me from a passage that I have read several times before. As I sat this last month preparing my Christmas message, it happened to me once again.

As I studied the gospel accounts of Jesus' birth, my goal was to try and personalize the passages as much as possible. I came up with questions like, "How would you have felt if you were Mary?...How would you explain to Joseph how you became pregnant?...How would you react if you were Joseph?" As I considered the last question, it suddenly occurred to me...how would I have reacted if I were Joseph?

If Veronica had come home from college while we were engaged and announced to me that she was pregnant...I think I would have had some pretty serious problems with that. You see...like Joseph, I had figured the baby equation out a long time ago. If you are not familiar with this equation, please take careful note....man + woman + sex = baby. Joseph and I would have both been innocent of adding one important variable to that equation. So...how would I have reacted? Chances are I would have been quite upset with my soon to be wife, to say the least! In fact, I probably would have given much consideration to whether or not I would've continued on with our plans to marry.

So...I considered...how exactly did Joseph react to Mary's news? To find my answer I turned to Matthew's account of the birth of Jesus. I must say, I was taken back by what I read. Matthew 1:19 says, "...he had in mind to divorce her..." What...Mary and Joseph get a divorce! I had read these words many times before, but had never really considered their implications. In the past, I just read on to the next few verses where God solves the problem through a special revelation to Joseph. According to verse 19 though, Joseph didn't take the news too well. Can we blame the guy? One must admit that Mary's miraculous conception would be a little hard for any man to swallow.

Joseph was indeed bound to Mary through their engagement. In their day, the only way such an engagement could be broken was through death or an act of divorce. In the Old Testament, the penalty for unchastity before marriage was stoning the guilty woman. By the time of Jesus' birth, the penalty had lessened to that of divorce. Joseph could have and perhaps should have (in the eyes of others), drug Mary before the courts and demanded a divorce based upon the evidence of her "unfaithfulness". Scripture tells us that, "Joseph...was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace...he had in mind to divorce her quietly." Instead of exposing her to a public trial, Joseph was going to pursue the divorce as privately as possible. Even in what seemed like an unquestionably guilty state, Joseph was still willing to extend such a form of grace to Mary. His actions speak volumes as to the kind of man that Joseph was.

What about us? If our names were to appear in Scripture, would the word righteous be used to describe us? Is our righteousness evident in the way that we treat others when we "know" we are wronged? Do we still extend grace to the undeserving guilty party? We must! After all, it was that very pregnancy that lead to the birth of the greatest act of grace ever demonstrated toward mankind.

-Bryan

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
from the Missions Team**

This past year has been one of transitions, treading on new ground, seeing new faces, experiencing difficulties and failures, enjoying successes, and dreaming big dreams. On behalf of the Missions Team and the missionaries and ministries we support around the world, I want to say thank you.

Over \$100,000 has left this church and been sent to those fulfilling the great commission all over the globe this year. To some, that might have meant the difference between having a warm meal or going hungry. To some that money might have given hope for a future that included Christian education and entering into the ministry. To others that money may have meant reading a book that explains the truths of Jesus in their own language. Still others have heard the gospel, been given Bibles, and now share in the grace of Jesus and are part of the family of God.

As this is a great accomplishment for the church here at KCC, we don't want to stop there. Jesus says in Matthew 28 to 'Go and make disciples of ALL nations...' As we look at the locations our dollars have made a difference in; Kenai, Joplin Missouri, China, Haiti, Poland and elsewhere, we can see that we still have a lot to do.

In 2012, we want to DREAM BIG. We are looking at new and exciting possibilities of ways that we can be missional right here in Kenai Alaska, as well as overseas. We are excited to see new changes come to the team. Be looking for these new ways to serve throughout this next year.

We would also appreciate your feedback. If you have any comments or suggestions for the Missions Team, or ideas of things that are going on here or elsewhere that we could be a part of, let us know. You can email the church at kcc@gci.net, and put Missions in the subject line.

Let us look forward to a missional 2012, by God's grace.

The Missions Team

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**2ND FRIDAYS  
@ THE FRIENDSHIP MISSION**

Let's put our **love** and effort together to help **serve** Skipper & Mary Anne at the Friendship Mission the 2nd Fridays of every month!

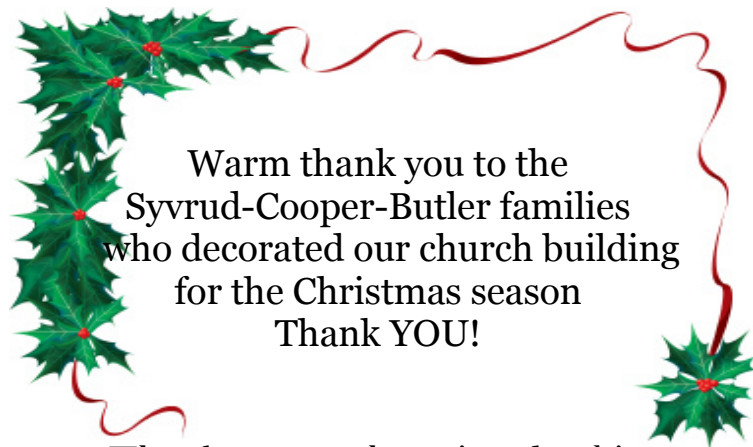
Sign up to help put together a delicious dinner, then **GO** and fellowship with our brothers!

**Friday, Jan 13th @ 4:30pm**

*featuring*

**CROCKPOT CREATIONS**

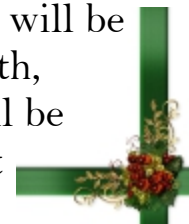
*Sign-Up Sheet is on the board by the door*



Warm thank you to the  
Syvrud-Cooper-Butler families  
who decorated our church building  
for the Christmas season  
Thank YOU!

Thank you to those involved in  
Cookie Theatre,  
what a wonderful night!  
Miss Tana and Miss Susie,  
thank you for organizing this grand event,  
and to the children, parents and families  
who participated,  
THANK YOU!

Reminder,  
Soul Café and Bible Studies will be  
dismissed December 28th,  
and Evening Services will be  
dismissed January 1st



A special Thank You to  
Geneva Stasek!  
KCC sent out over 85 shoeboxes  
and  
they all included a Geneva hat!

**Our Sympathies**

To the Efta Family,  
Mike's mother  
Ramona Efta  
passed from this earth on  
December 5, 2011





# KCC Women

*Ministering to the Women of  
Kenai Christian Church since June 1999*

*Jesus is the Reason for the Season!*



## *Christmas Eve Candle Light Service*

**Friday, December 24th**

**5:30 pm**

**KCC Family Life Center**

***Family & Friends Welcome***

**Christmas** falls on a Sunday this year, Sunday school and Evening services are dismissed. Come Worship with us at 11 am, family and friends always welcome!

**Evening services** dismissed Sunday, January 1st

**Soul Café & Evening services** will be dismissed during Christmas break, December 28th

## **Happy New Year**

*Will you be making a resolution this year?*

After months and months of testing to develop an electric light bulb, Thomas Edison was interviewed by a reporter who asked Edison if he felt like a failure and if he thought he should just give up. Edison replied, "Young man, why would I feel like a failure? And why would I ever give up? I now know definitively over 9,000 ways that an electric light bulb will not work. Success is almost in my grasp." After over 10,000 attempts, Edison successfully invented the light bulb. The point is, don't quit! If it's a worthy goal, it's worth sticking to, even if it means starting over a few times.

**\*\*Be sure to check out the KCC website for info, [kenaichristianchurch.net](http://kenaichristianchurch.net)\*\***

## Book Review

Submitted by Veronica Copenhaver

I remember when my family went to the Philippines for a mission trip the summer before my freshmen year of college. We were at a local food court (buffet style) getting lunch after church. Every time each server offered me a selection he (they were all men) raised his eye brows at me a few times. What does that mean to you? I'll admit it, I thought they were hitting on me. I soon found out that meant "yes" so each time the food was offered, the server was essentially asking "yes? You want this?" I also got some food I didn't verbally say yes to because I unknowingly raised my eye brows. Just having that little bit of cultural information changed how I saw people (they weren't all hitting on me) and made me more aware of what I was "saying" with my eyes.

Has it ever occurred to you that the Bible was written in a different culture than ours? Are we missing out on any little cultural information that would add to our understanding? YES!!! I am reading the book, *Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus: How the Jewishness of Jesus can Transform Your Faith*. This book is amazing at the depth it adds to my understanding of Scripture.

This is not a sit down and read the entire book all at once. This is a book where you read a chapter and then grab your Bible to write some notes in the margin so you remember what you learned. It's so exciting to turn the page because with each new page comes a new discovery of truth.

Now here me on this, I am not saying this book adds words or different meanings to the Scripture. For example, the book offers this insight on the Lord's Prayer: Notice, however, that while Jesus taught his disciples to address God as "our Father," he himself spoke to God as "my Father," in the singular. In Jewish prayer, God was sometimes called "our Father," but "my Father" was daring, almost unheard of. Many would have marked this as evidence that he was the Messiah because several prophecies describe the Messiah as someone who would be in an especially close relationship with God. Every time Jesus referred to God as "my" Father, his listeners would have heard it as a bold claim (page 83).

If you want to see what else you can glean from understanding Jewish culture, I recommend this book by Ann Spangler and Lois Tverberg.



### JAMES: MERCY TRIUMPHS BY BETH MOORE

James, Jesus' own brother, started out as a skeptic. See how one glimpse of the resurrected Savior turned an unbeliever into a disciple with Beth Moore's 8-session study *James: Mercy Triumphs*. And, in the process, learn how you can put your own faith into action.

Visit the Women's Table in the foyer on January 1st & 8th for Women's Bible Study sign up.

We will be studying Beth Moore's, *James: Mercy Triumphs*, beginning Thursday, January 12th at 9:30 -11:30 am and 6:30-8:30 pm

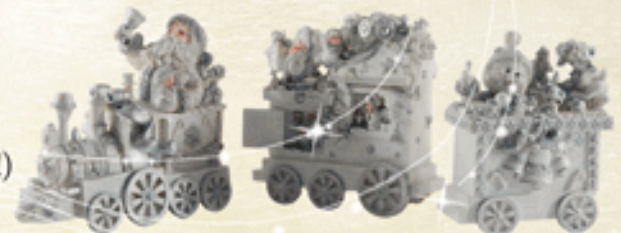
*\*Gospel Garden is expanding its childcare for the Thursday morning studies only. This will include children birth thru 5th grade. However, childcare will no longer be available Thursday evenings or Saturdays. Children must be pre-registered by January 1, 2011. Register online or at the Women's Table on January 1st.*

## Save the Date

Women's Dinner Party January 6, 2012 6:30 pm at Paradisos.

In lieu of a Christmas party, come help us kick off 2012!

Tickets are \$20.00 (non refundable) & will be available for purchase on November 27th. Purchase a ticket from Lori Spinka, Chantel Taylor or the church office by January 1st (Men, this would make a great stocking stuffer for your wife!)



### Vision Statement

The purpose of the Kenai Christian Church Women's Ministry is to enhance the spiritual growth of women and to provide opportunities of ministry and service through fellowship, love, and encouragement.



# Alien Youth Alert! January 2012

## Verse of the month.

Matthew 24:35-37— Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man

### Important Dates!

Dec 27th— Extreme Sledding  
1pm-4pm @ home of The Gibbons  
Longmere Lake Lodge

Jan 2nd— Bowling Challenge  
1pm-4pm Alaska Lanes  
Approx \$15 per person.  
For all Alien Youth & their Families.  
Please sign up by Jan 1st

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02-07-2011

OH, IT'S YOU GUYS ... I THOUGHT I HEARD THUNDER OVER HERE

### Mayans & Calendars & Fears, Oh My!!!

Well, we've made it to one of the most recently feared years in our millennium: 2012. Ever since the buzz began to stir back in the day about how the Mayan calendar was basically predicting the end of our world, I have been rather amused and bothered. Let me give you some of my own personal thoughts about 2012, though I hope you remember that my opinion doesn't count for a whole lot in this universe.

The part that amuses me about the 2012 conspiracy is that there are so many people with little or no faith in God (because there's "no evidence" for Him to exist) that have totally bought into the 2012 Armageddon theory. Oddly enough, it takes greater faith to believe in a Mayan calendar that predicts the end of the world than it does in God (who's evidence for existence is overwhelming!). It sort of reminds me of the Y2K scare that hit back in the day. People were bugging out and doing all kinds of crazy stuff, just as they are now.

The part that bothers me is that if the world did end in 2012, I wouldn't feel as if I have done enough to help those who still do not know Jesus Christ. Instead, I spend a great deal of time thinking about activities for the youth group, what I will have for dinner, if I wore the right belt with the right shoes, and how I will ever save enough for a vacation. I think it is necessary for Christians to consider each new day our last. The 2012 scare gives us an opportunity to ask, "Well, what if the world ended today?" I guarantee my list of priorities would change significantly if I knew this would be my last day on earth. I would set aside the truly unimportant things and do my best to show God's love to the unbeliever.

-Adam

## ***2011 Tax Info***

Donations and offerings must be postmarked or placed in a KCC offering box

**By December 31st**

In order to be credited on your 2011 offering statement.

THANK YOU for your faithfulness!

Every man shall give as he is able,  
according to the blessing of the Lord your God  
which He has given you.

Deuteronomy 16:17