

# INDIANA SOUTH WESLEYAN



December 2004



Dr. & Mrs. Eckart  
Josh, Krystal, & Brooklyn

Merry  
Christmas



Rev. & Mrs. Bob England

## *The Christ in Christmas*

By Mark Eckart

Another year is past and Christmas time is upon us again. The world will soon celebrate the birth of Christ. It is important that society remembers what this season really means.

### **Hustle and Bustle**

What does Christmas mean? Must it involve buying gifts, going to see family, or having a holiday off from work? Is the true meaning of Christmas going to see which house has the prettiest decorations, or to see which kid on the block can build the biggest snowman? Thankfully, Christmas includes all of these things, but there is still a more significant purpose to this memorable time of year.

American society has capitalized on the commercialization of Christmas. It is common in America to see Christmas shops opening for business as early as August. Shopping malls and stores stock their Christmas merchandise months in advance, in order to entice the early shopper. *USA Today* recently commented, "For retailers, Christmas is always crucial—they pick up about a third of their yearly revenues and half or more of their yearly profits during the Christmas season." Obviously, merchants are happy to see Christmas come, but is making money the true meaning of Christmas?

Many Americans spend hours waiting in lay away lines. Millions of dollars are spent and credit card limits are filled to capacity. Some people even start the day after

Christmas to shop for the next year's season.

So what is the true meaning of Christmas? Is it to see which person can get the most gifts or spend the most money? The commercialization of Christmas is summed up in a bumper sticker I saw recently, "He with the most toys at death wins."

### **Symbolism**

There are many wonderful memories made at Christmas. Most people remember Christmas in the past with nostalgic feelings. Some of these cherished memories stem from those symbolic parts of Christmas.

Those childhood memories will always linger with me when I think of Christmas—like going with Dad to find the Christmas tree. We would head out across the snow-covered field with an ax over our shoulder. We would look on our farm until we found just the right cedar. Then the whole family would join in decorating the tree, with Christmas music playing in the background. Oh what joy it was as a child to crawl under the tree and dream of what was in those packages as the Christmas lights blinked in the darkness.

Santa is another symbolic part of Christmas. Some people have seemingly elevated this tradition to be the most important part of this sacred season. In some families a jolly ole man with a white, fuzzy beard has become the definition of Christmas.

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So what is the true meaning of Christmas? Is it symbolic items such as the Christmas tree, Santa Claus, or other such customs?

**True Meaning**

Christ! He is the true meaning of Christmas. Semantically if you take the word "Christ" out of Christmas you no longer have a word. One man has said, "Take Christ out of Christmas, and December becomes the bleakest and most colorless month of the year."

Since about 98 A.D. the world has been celebrating the birth of Christ. Because Christ came to this earth, the whole atmosphere is charged with a new love and compassion during the Christmas season. Nearly everyone gets caught up in the spirit of giving.

**Sharing With Others**

The Bible says, "It is more blessed to give than it is to receive." This philosophy is solidified at Christmas. Even those who have been scrooges all year long will give a gift to someone at Christmas.

**Superintendent's Schedule**

**December 2004**

- 3 Annual Pastors Christmas Dinner 7:00  
P.M. Orleans Family Life Center
- 5 A.M. English  
P.M. Columbus Central
- 12 A.M. Orleans  
P.M. Washington Vincennes
- 13 A.M. Zones 5 & 6-Meal with Dr. & Mrs. Eckart
- 25 Merry Christmas
- 26 A.M. Corydon  
P.M. Clear Fork

**January 2005**

- 8 DBA
- 9 A.M. Bedford
- 9-12 Florida /G.S.-D.S. Meeting
- 16 A.M. Shelbyville Grace  
P.M. Concord
- 23 A.M. North Vernon  
P.M. Austin
- 30 A.M. Terre Haute Faith  
P.M. Petersburg

A prime example of giving is a gentleman that now lives in New York City. *Reader's Digest* printed an article about this man awhile back. He does a remarkable deed every year at Christmas.

This man was raised in a large family during the depression. His parents did not have the money to buy proper clothing for the family. Consequently, his hands and fingers would nearly freeze during the winter because he had no gloves to wear as a boy.

Now this man is wealthy. All year he collects as many gloves as possible and then stores them until Christmas. On Christmas morning he takes the gloves to a busy street corner in New York City and distributes them until his supply is gone.

Many more examples could be given of those who do special acts of kindness during Christmas. Why do so many people become so charitable during this season? Because, the true meaning of Christmas is—Christ.

God gave us the ultimate example of giving. The Gospel of John says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

If we can look beyond the hustle and bustle, commercialization, and symbolism, there is a true meaning to Christmas. That true meaning is Christ, because He gave Himself for us!

The poet said it well:

As we celebrate His birth  
The coming of Christ to earth  
May we, amid our joyous mirth,  
Keep Jesus first in Christmas!

As chiming bells ring out their lay,  
And hearts are merry, light, and gay,  
Remember it is His birthday—  
Keep Jesus first in Christmas!

Let's sing of Him in carols sweet  
Let's lay our best gifts at His feet  
And make the season's joy  
complete—

With Jesus first at Christmas!

**Condolences**

Our Deepest Sympathy goes to Rev. John Moffatt in the loss of his father **Clarence Eugene Moffatt**, who passed away on Wednesday, November 10, 2004. Our thoughts and prayers are with you!

**Reminder**

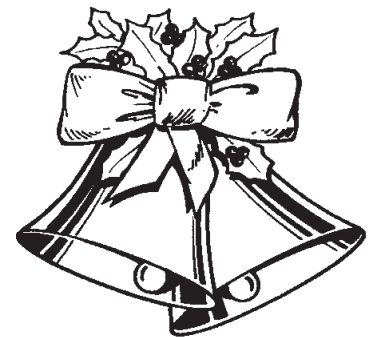
**Wednesday's—Day of Prayer & Fasting**

We have designated Wednesday as a day of Prayer and Fasting across the District. This is not just for pastors, but for any layperson that would like to participate as well. We encourage everyone to pray and fast on this day in their own respective home and church. **PRAYER DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

**Special Thanks From Dr. Mark**

I would like to say a special *thank you* for the many cards that were sent to me for Pastor Appreciation. Your thoughtfulness and prayers mean so much to my family and me as we serve this great District.

Again—*thank you!*



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## The Hilda Tilley Family Center

In connection with the Pastor's Appreciation Sunday on October 17, 2004, the Bedford Church LBA and congregation named the new fellowship hall "The Hilda Tilley Family Center."

A very beautiful plaque was presented to Pastor Tilley for display in the Family Center in memory of his wife. Hilda had invested so much in the building with time and talents, that the church felt this would be an appropriate manner to show their appreciation for her.

We had a very nice crowd and many visitors of family and friends for the occasion. Rev. Herman Noll was the speaker for the services.

Meals at noon and after the evening service were enjoyed by everyone to celebrate this very special day for the pastor and church family.



## Two-Day Ministerial Seminar



Pictured above are the students who attended classes on the Pentateuch, taught by Dr. Eckart. This class met on two Saturdays in October at the Paoli Wesleyan Church.

## Women's Institute for Leadership Development

Specialized Tracks:

Women Clergy • Pastors' Wives • Women's Ministries

February 25-27, 2005

Wesleyan World Headquarters

Noblesville, IN

317-774-7974

E-mail: [ww@wesleyan.org](mailto:ww@wesleyan.org)

## Ministerial Class Book of Romans

February 5th & 19th, 2005

Paoli Wesleyan Church

Professor: Dr. Mark Eckart

For more information please contact:

Rev. Bob L. England

RR 6 Box 840

Bloomfield, IN 47424

812-825-5917

## Junior High Lock-in

Friday, February 18, 2005

11:00 P.M.

Walnut Street Baptist Church  
Activity Center

Louisville, KY

\$15.00 per person

Activities:

Skating, Bowling, Ping Pong,  
Racquetball, Air Hockey,  
Basketball Tournament  
and Volleyball

For more information, contact:

Rev. Chuck Morgan

812-966-2664

## District Ministerial Convention

March 7-9, 2005

University Plaza Hotel, Bloomington,  
IN

Guest Speaker:  
Rev. Wayne Schmidt

Guest Singers:  
Don & Sheryl Gessner

Pastor and Wives' Banquet:  
Tuesday Evening

Dismissal:  
Noon Wednesday

# CHURCH GROWTH REPORT

Church	Pastor	Oct. '04	Oct. '03	Variation	% Gain	AM	PM	Wk Day
Austin	K. Wingham	13	15	2	0%	16	16	13
Bedford	G. Tilley	24	31	7	0%	39	22	16
Bicknell First	M. Reed	51	56	5	0%	68	23	108
Birdseye	D. Murphy	NR						
Bloomfield Mt. Calvary	F. Collings	NR						
Bloomfield Mt. Zion	TBS	35	49	14	0%	35	10	6
Bloomfield Southside	D. Dustin	14	16	2	0%	14	15	0
Bloomington Central	E. Hayes	43	50	7	0%	48	29	23
Bloomington Shepherd	B. Colburn	0	0	0	0%	19	13	17
Blue River	A. Marshall	20	NR	0	0%	33	12	0
Boonville	E. Ames	25	29	4	0%	45	23	18
Brazil Jackson Street	E. Stewart	36	37	1	0%	41	18	16
Carthage New Life	H. Smith	7	9	2	0%	18	12	21
Clear Fork	R. Hotle	14	18	4	0%	22	16	12
Columbus Bethel	B. Carpenter	0	0	0	0%	18	14	0
Columbus Central	B. Miller	25	29	4	0%	25	10	0
Columbus Flintwood	W. Jones	44	50	6	0%	79	45	63
Columbus Ohio Street	J. Vandervort	NR						
Concord	T. Whitham	28	28	0	0%	32	24	30
Connersville Grandview	R. Wallace	7	10	3	0%	8	6	5
Corydon New Hope	T. Bye	17	20	3	0%	48	23	0
E. Enterprise	R. Albring	21	16	5	31%	32	27	24
Edinburgh	L. Biddle	NR						
English	P. Jones	88	67	21	31%	92	56	69
Evansville Forest Hills	M. Stoelting	131	138	7	0%	242	106	120
Evansville North Park	M. Linville	43	52	9	0%	68	18	36
Evansville Trinity	E. Freels	51	64	13	0%	80	27	86
Fort Branch	M. Hughes	18	23	5	0%	26	17	18
Franklin	D. Neal	32	39	7	0%	40	32	20
French Lick S.V.	J. Moffatt	72	65	7	11%	115	52	38
Gnaw Bone	G. Armstrong	20	16	4	25%	28	16	16
Greenfield	J. Anderson	NR						
Greensburg	W. Thompson III	34	39	5	0%	65	21	20
Greenwood	J. Hughes	NR						
Helmsburg	D. Pfaff	8	0	0	0%	8	0	0
Holton	W. Vandervort	21	22	1	0%	23	9	8
Hope First	E. Boston	34	19	15	79%	35	19	40
Lawrenceburg	M. Kessen	NR						
Lewisville Trinity	C. Stroud	34	0	0	0%	0	0	6
Lewis Creek	D. Gates	13	NR	0	0%	21	0	12
Loogootee Mt. Zion	J. Simmons	NR						
Madison Calvary	M. Mahoney	36	38	2	0%	48	39	40
Marengo Valley	S. Lock	67	68	1	0%	109	50	52
Martinsville	K. Kearby	NR						
Martinsville Bethel	J. Irvin	NR						
Mecca New Life	C. Todd	56	NR	0	0%	78	47	129
Medora	C. Morgan	35	44	9	0%	41	27	19
Milan	L. Brown	26	22	4	18%	37	27	0

Church	Pastor	Oct. '04	Oct. '03	Variation	% Gain	AM	PM	Wk Day
Mitchell	S. Jones	117	115	2	2%	234	129	204
Mooresville New Life	M. Linville	18	24	6	0%	33	21	14
Morgantown Emmaus	S. Yager	NR						
New Albany Community DBA		NR						
New Albany Spring Ave. N. Watters		NR						
North Vernon	J. Terry	48	49	1	0%	66	31	
Orleans	H. Carr	48	26	22	85%	57	34	18
Otwell	H. Leehe	NR						
Paoli	L. Manship	131	217	86	0%	310	126	121
Petersburg	L. Lamar	9	12	3	0%	9	0	0
Poplar Grove	J. Downs	13	21	8	0%	31	15	9
Prairie Creek	T. Fennell	NR						
Princeton	D. Reed	40	47	7	0%	52	28	40
Rising Sun	J. Kelly	6	NR	0	0%	7	0	5
Rodney	M. Miller	18	16	2	13%	22	18	16
Rushville	H. Baker	NR						
Salem	C. Johnson	11	9	2	22%	19	14	15
Sandford	C. Hedden	13	10	3	30%	14	5	9
Scott City	D. Ault	NR						
Scottsburg	P. Mills	11	10	1	10%	13	10	11
Seelyville	F. Burk, Jr.	21	23	2	0%	15	0	
Seymour	I. Holt	25	26	1	0%	36	33	28
Shelburn	D. Ault	NR						
Shelbyville Grace	H. Weaver(S)	NR						
Shelbyville Westside	W. Seymour	29	24	5	21%	39	23	11
Simpson Chapel	R. Brown	8	NR	0	0%	9	0	0
Somerville	D. Brandon	48	49	1	0%	52	51	28
Spearsville	C. Bell	36	30	6	20%	36	25	21
Spencer - Emanuel	J. Knight	No Report		0	0%			
Sullivan	G. Larimer	34	33	1	3%	35	24	25
Sylvania	B. England	69	0	0	0%	114	62	49
Terre Haute Faith	D. Gormong	126	153	27	0%	219	151	143
Terre Haute Hulman	D. Willis	73	81	8	0%	107	63	52
Terre Haute North	V. Reed	NR						
Trafalgar	C. Hilton	6	6	0	0%	6	4	5
Valeene	D. Manship	NR						
Versailles	D. Jewell	37	32	5	16%	0	16	10
Walker Chapel	R. Hendershot	14	17	3	0%	41	0	9
Washington Main St.	P. Kessen	32	46	14	0%	52	44	15
Washington Vincennes	J. Gilley	NR						
Wesley Chapel	P. Kirk	NR						
Westport	E. Wakefield	82	66	16	24%	84	46	28
West Terre Haute 6th	R. Weeks	40	20	20	100%	39	10	11
West Terre Haute 8th	P. Shelton	68	68	0	0%	71	47	43
Wheatland	K. Mitchell	NR						
Whitehall	D. Campbell	21	26	5	0%	20	15	17
Wilmington Hills	D. Meriwether	27	25	2	8%	27	25	11
TOTALS		2522	2487	35	0%	3665	1991	2069

\*NR-No Report

## Top Ten Churches for Numerical Gain for Oct. 2004

Church	Pastor	Gain	Church	Pastor	Gain
Orleans	(H. Carr)	22	French Lick	(J. Moffatt)	7
English	(P. Jones)	21	Spearsville	(C. Bell)	6
West Terre Haute 6th	(R. Weeks)	20	E. Enterprise	(R. Albring)	5
Westport	(E. Wakefield)	16	Shelbyville Westside	(W. Seymour)	5
Hope First	(E. Boston)	15	Versailles	(D. Jewell)	5

## Top Ten Percentage Gain for Oct. 2004

Church	Pastor	Percentage Gain
West Terre Haute 6th	(R. Weeks)	100%
Orleans	(H. Carr)	85%
Hope First	(E. Boston)	79%
English	(P. Jones)	31%
E. Enterprise	(R. Albring)	31%
Sandford	(C. Hedden)	30%
Gnaw Bone	(G. Armstrong)	25%
Westport	(E. Wakefield)	24%
Salem	(C. Johnson)	22%
Shelbyville Westside	(W. Seymour)	21%

Happy Holidays!

