

THE AGAPIAN

December 2012 — Agape Church of the Brethren

Neither Accidental nor Erroneous

I'm writing from Atlanta where Connie and I are visiting our son Charles and his family. Several years ago, when we were staying with them over New Years, Atlanta had an unexpected freeze in the city and the water fountains of Atlanta froze over. They were fascinating to observe, looking like carefully crafted delicate sculptures, when actually they were accidents of nature and failed human foresight.

Sometimes the convergence of accident and error produce beauty and mystery such as that, also like the leaning tower of Pisa. But the beauty and mystery of the Christmas story, which we will celebrate this Advent Season, were not accidental or erroneous. The Scriptures bear witness to the intent and the providence of God in this story's unfolding.

Hundreds of years before the birth of Christ the prophet Isaiah wrote: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace," (Isaiah 9:6/NIV). Closer to Christ's birth, yet still long before it, the prophet Malachi declared, "the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his Temple. The messenger of the covenant, whom you look for so eagerly, is surely coming," says the Lord," (Malachi 3:1/NLT).

The Scriptures declare powerfully that God did not leave to accident or luck the promise of our salvation. This promise was never going to hang on the roll of the dice, or the fallible works of man. John would later report, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life," (John 3:16/NIV). God's love for those whom He creates is so great that the means of their salvation is never going to be left to accident. God's intent is God's plan; and a plan of God is a future to unfold. The birth of Christ revealed that fact, to our blessing, if we will believe it, and accept it.

Beauty and mystery can sometimes unfold from accident and error, like the one-time frozen water fountains of Atlanta, but aren't we glad that God did not leave our salvation to similar mechanisms of random chance? God loved us too much for that. As we progress this year through Advent to Christmas, may we rejoice in the loving providence of God, which delivered to us the divine promise of salvation.



A photo of the frozen water fountain in Atlanta, GA.



Think about it!

-Pastor Jeff

Christmas Eve at Agape

getting to share a beautiful service with family and friends, old and new.

- * **Gathering time and refreshments will commence at 6:30 PM, with the service beginning at 7:00.**
- * Jacob and Peter Klopfenstein's rendition of "O, Holy Night" will set the tone for the evening, followed by the Agape Choir presentation of Joseph Martin's cantata, "The Winter Rose."
- * There will be a children's story and meditation by Pastor Copp, culminating with our traditional candle lighting service and singing of "Silent Night." If you've never experienced Christmas Eve at Agape, you've missed something beautiful.

**Come - all ye faithful - joyful - to Bethlehem - to behold Him
Come let us adore Him - Christ the Lord!**

Christmas Eve at Agape is very special, and this year is no exception. The best part is

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Agape Juniors

Agape Juniors will meet on **December 2** at Hall's Guest House for lunch following worship. **Sign up will be available in the narthex so reservations can be made.**



Chocolate Covered Caramel Apples



Again this year, Women's Fellowship is making Chocolate Covered Caramel Apples on **Saturday, December 1 at 9 a.m.** The cost of supplies will be approx. **\$3 per apple.**

* This has been a fun activity for our church family as well as guests. Please feel free to invite a friend.

* The caramel, choc. coating, sticks and bags will be furnished, but you will need to **bring your own Granny Smith apples**, washed and stemmed.

If you are interested in making delicious decorated apples, **sign-up in the narthex!** If you have any questions, see Vicki Welch.

Nurture Groups

Join one of the Nurture Groups meeting in December - opportunities include:

Friday night #1 - **December 7** at Ray and Becky Imhoff's home, carry-in meal beginning at 6:30 P.M.

Friday night #2 - **December 14** at Darwin and Joan Sievers home, carry-in meal beginning at 6:30

Daytime Group - **December 19** at the church beginning at 10:00 A.M. and adjourning to a restaurant for lunch

Crafty Group will be participating in the cookie walk and **probably not** meeting on a Tuesday night in December.

All groups welcome new faces: But **please sign-up** if you plan to come, so we can contact you in case of a change of plans.

Caroling Party

Spread joy to shut-ins and nursing home residents by adding your voice to fellow Agapians on **Sunday, December 9.** We will gather for a quick lunch right after worship service. Hot turkey sandwiches and hot chocolate will be provided; **please bring a side dish to share.**

* We'll hand out goodie bags full of cookies from the cookie walk, candy, fruit, individually packaged snacks, or **whatever other little items you contribute!**

This is a joint effort of the nurture commission, deacons, and women's fellowship. If you have questions, please contact Becky Morris, Rick Flickinger, or Kara Morris.

Cookie Walk & Craft Sale

Agape's Annual Cookie Walk & Craft Sale is on **December 8, from 9-12.** It's a great opportunity to support the Women's Fellowship's Ministries and finish up (or start!) your Christmas shopping. Get there early for the best selection!

- * We'll have plenty of cookies and other goodies for sale, at **\$6 per pound, unless otherwise noted.** (Ingredients are always listed on recipe cards.)
- * Various members of Agape have made crafts for sale as well, including the Crafty Nurture Group and Chuck Morris, master woodcrafter.

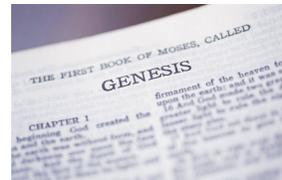
Bring your cash and/or checkbook to Agape on December 8!



A couple examples of the great ornaments Chuck Morris made this year that will be for sale at the Cookie Walk!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Thanks to all who make the 9:00 hour on Sunday morning a priority. Much work goes into preparing for Sunday School classes by teachers, and we thank Gene, Char, Beth, Becky M, Diana, Vicki, and Joan for leading in November.



Children and Youth will be studying Jesus' birth during the 4 weeks of Advent in December using the "gather 'ROUND" materials from Brethren Press. Beth Green is leading the right-side class in a study of "Women in the Life of Jesus" by Jill Briscoe. The left-side class is studying articles in the Messenger magazine, and it will be led by various people.

HIGH-FIVES to the following people who attended at least 80% of the classes during the last quarter (July - September): Joyce, T.J, Gene, Mary Jo, Chuck, Becky M, Dean, and Dan were there at least 11 of the 14 weeks.

COOK'S CORNER

By: Joyce Musser

Peggy Renee Burroughs is one of four daughters (Cheryl, Judy, & Karen) born to Janis and Russ (deceased) and was raised in the Church of the Brethren. Peggy earned a degree in accounting from Manchester College, and she has worked for Kimball Co. for 11 years: 5 years in Auburn before moving to Jasper in southern Indiana 6 years ago. In addition to her "real" job, she has started a small booth business near Jasper selling spinning wheels and accessories, wool fibers, and yarn while also teaching spinning and tatting.

Hobbies include knitting, spinning, tatting, beading, reading (favorite authors are Mary Higgins Clark and Nicholas Sparks) and collecting sheep items. For her work, Peggy has traveled several times to Thailand, Poland, China, and Mexico. She has also made many trips to vacation in Florida as a van driver for a group of bicycle riders. Her favorite movie is Don Knott's "The Ghost and Mr. Chicken," favorite vegetable is broccoli, and favorite hymns are "Have Thine Own Way" and "Who Will Satisfy My Soul?"

Family is a top priority for Peggy: She loves spending time with her 6 nephews, 3 nieces, and she also enjoys watching the growth of her 3 great nephews and 5 great nieces. Peggy is the official family photographer, and she is always on the lookout for unique gifts (most recently Slinkys and Koosh balls) for her favorite people. She also tatted over 20 ornaments and knitted large personalized Christmas stockings for family and friends.

Holiday meals include at least 28 family members plus guests. The get-togethers never happen on the main holiday so that each family can be at home. Peggy does not mind this arrangement as she considers it a gift to share the special days alone with her parents; she treasures those special times. Peggy enjoys helping Janis prepare the big meals which always include homemade yeast rolls, cookies, home canned peaches, and frozen applesauce.

No matter where Peggy's travels take her, her favorite destination is with family on Cook Road!

Christmas is a time to reflect
On all that God has done.
It's not a matter of what we get,
But the birth of the Holy one.
It's not about gifts
With ribbons and bows,
Or Christmas trees,
Tinsel and mistletoe.
The Christmas gift given to us,
Is Jesus Christ's
Gift of love.

By M.S.Lowndes

Peggy Burroughs's Family- Requested Salad Recipe

Salad

Shredded cabbage
Diced onion (optional)
8 slices bacon, crumbled (or bacon bits)
3/4 cup cashews

Dressing

1 1/2 cups mayo
1/3 cup parmesan cheese
1/3 cup sugar

Combine, serve, & enjoy!

Ladies Secret Gal Pal Revealing Party

Shhhhhh! Oh wait, it won't be a secret after **Saturday, December 15!** The ladies who participated in the Secret Gal Pal program this year will be meeting at Hall's Guesthouse for brunch at **9:30 a.m.** We'll enjoy the food and fellowship, bring final Christmas gifts for our secret pal, and discover who has been treating us to goodies all year long!

Annual Agape Soup-Off

Agape's Annual Soup-Off will be **Saturday, January 19** at **5:00** in the fellowship hall. More details to come, but get those crock pots ready and find your favorite soup recipe. Gerry and Sandy Charvat are in charge, and it's bound to be a yummy meal!

Agape Youth News

Thank you, to all those that stayed for the Council Meeting Luncheon on November 4th. It was a GREAT day. We increased money towards our goal by about **\$516**. These monies were from the luncheon, a work project, aluminum recycling, ink cartridge recycling AND the “Bake Sale” (thanks to Beth Green).

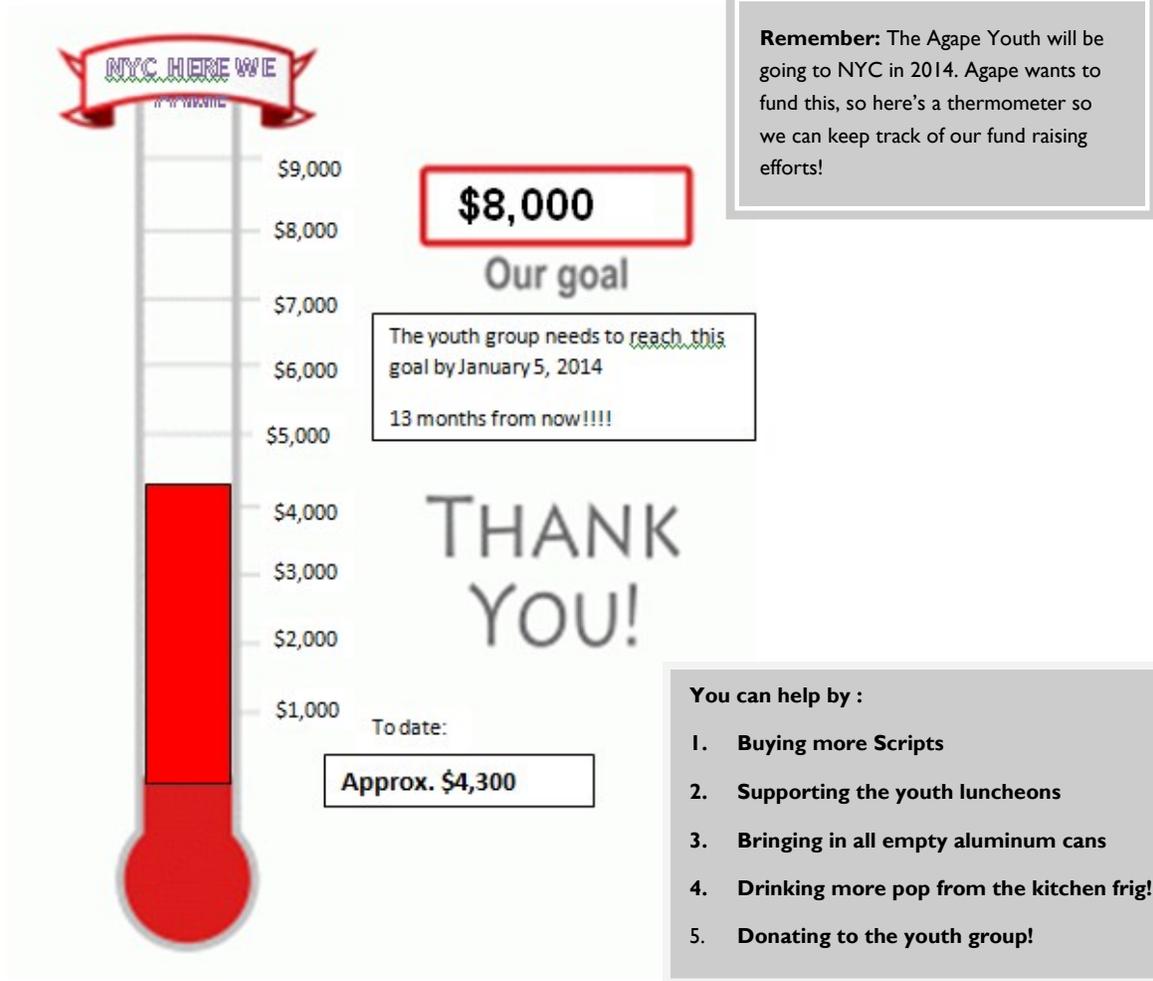
If you have a few odd jobs you think the youth group could handle....please let Rick Flickinger know about them.

The discussion topics for the months of November and December were selected by Maura Furry, Dee Ford, and Nick Fox. A few of the topics are “Afraid of Death?” “Gossip.” “Sex & the Media.” “Stress.” & “Money.”

The Youth kicked off a Fund-raising project the week of November 12th. They are selling Rada Cutlery and products. These will make wonderful Christmas gifts for family and friends. Ask one of the youth to look over their catalog to make your selections. These products are all made in Iowa. We think you will really like them.

Thank you to Joyce Musser and Charlotte Schafer for providing some of the treats for the youth group meetings.

Thank you so much for supporting the youth group.



DECEMBER 2012

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 9:00 Caramel Apples Dave Shipe
2 Deacon Call 11:45 Agape Juniors* Jim & Rene Kart	3 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 4:30 Piano 6:30 Aerobics Bill & Kathy Barnhart	4 12:00 Agape Seniors 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:28 Youth; 6:30 Scouts Tyler Cavins	5 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 6:00 Building Mtg. 7:30 Choir Mary Hauptert	6 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:30 B4G; 6:30 Aerobics	7 6:30 Friday NG*	8 9:00 Cookie Walk Lynn Shipe
9 Agape Caroling Party, immediately after ser- vice*	10 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 4:30 Piano 6:30 Aerobics Kendra Morris	11 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:28 Youth; 6:30 Scouts 6:30 Crafty NG*	12 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 7:30 Choir Daniel Cavins	13 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:30 B4G; 6:30 Aerobics	14 6:30 Friday NG*	15 9:30 Secret Gal Pal Par- ty* 1-6 Andy Shipe FH
16	17 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 4:30 Piano 6:30 Aerobics	18 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:28 Youth; 6:30 Scouts Tim Race	19 10:00 Daytime NG 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 6:00 Building Reorg. 7:30 Choir Stephanie Eastes	20 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:30 B4G; 6:30 Aerobics	21 Brayden Shipe Jeff Welch	22
23	24 6:30 Christmas Eve Ser- vice	25 CHRISTMAS	26	27 Rick & Becky Flickinger Jodi Warner	28	29 Tim & Debi Race Don Trump
30	31 Eli & Trasin McCoy					



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Continuing the Word of Jesus—Peacefully. Simply. Together.

Agape Seniors

- * The next Agape Seniors meeting is on **Tuesday, Dec. 4 at 12:00 noon**. Lunch will be catered, so there is no need to bring food.
- * However, make sure you bring a \$1.00 gift to play a Christmas game. Hope to see you there!

Witness Commission

- * We are collecting for our **Christmas Season** by sponsoring the **Baby's Closet**. Look for details in our church bulletins and during worship service. Contact Becky F. if you have questions.



Agape's Website

- * Don't forget that you can check out all of Agape's upcoming events on our website. Becky M. does a fantastic job of maintaining that page, so don't let her work fall on the empty web! Check it out at **www.agapechurchfw.org**: Hover over the "Calendar of Events" item, and click on "Upcoming Events." Don't forget to let us know what you think!