



Who's in the CE Office?

Date	9:30	11:15	6:00
Jan 6	Karlene & Carole	Karlene & Carole	Carole
Jan 13	Karlene & Carole	Karlene & Carole	Karlene
Jan 20	Karlene & Carole	Karlene & Carole	Carole
Jan 27	Karlene	Karlene	Karlene



Karlene
Archambeault

Carole Lantz

Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, February 5th: This year our **Lenten workshop** will be a Strove Tuesday celebration. Join us for Lenten crafts, pancake races, and fun and fellowship.

Congratulations to
Dan Gabree

The winner of November's
on-line training drawing.

The prize was a
\$5.00 Starbucks gift certificate.

Safe Church Reminders:

Some safe church reminders for you:

- ≈ Our goal is to have at least 2 volunteers in each room (classrooms & nursery). Even if there are only one or two kids, please don't let all the other people go (especially the confirmation kids – they need to work for their service hours) And please try to plan your schedules to include the two worker rule.
- ≈ If you completed safe church training prior to August 2007, you have been given an additional part of form B (yellow form) and a new copy of the policy with some refresher questions to answer. If you have not already turned these in, please give them to Carole. Also see her if you can't find your copies.

**Thank you for helping us
keep the kids safe!**

Workshops

The January 30th workshop is cancelled

We are looking at your survey responses and revamping our youth ministries training. So far we've only had 10 responses; please turn in your surveys and let us know what you want. The results of the survey will be shown in the February newsletter.

In case you are interested in attending a workshop in January, our church is sponsoring two Partners in Education (PIE) Youth Ministry Workshops:

January 24 – Mission Trips

January 31 – Media & Music (experience youth culture)

Dinner provided at 6:00 & the workshop begins at 6:45. Fee is \$12.00 per person; we have funding to pay for the first five people who sign up. Contact Karlene or Carole for more information.

Step Program

A reminder to be working on the Step Memory program for your class. Each class folder has a copy of the step program and the Resource Room has a section with envelopes with additional information about each step.

Note to 6th grade teachers: The February 3rd lesson is the Beatitudes, which is your step. Remember we also have the Beatitudes Game. Copies are in the CE Office.

Karlene's Korner



“Help Your Kids Carry on a Conversation With God!”

It's hard to have a relationship with someone when you never talk – or listen. Children need to learn how to bring God into their lives more often than before meals or at bedtime.

Throughout the Bible, people are always screwing up and then praying to God to forgive them. In your fall curriculum, you taught the kids all about David and about some of the bad decisions he made. (Remember Bathsheba & Uriah?) One of his prayers after that incident is Psalm 51, where he provides us with a model for asking for God's forgiveness:

“Create in me a clean heart, O God. Don't cast me away from your presence.....” It shows us that we can talk it out with God – ask for forgiveness and try to lead a better life and make better decisions.

Why not ask the kids to share some of their mistakes, brainstorming together how they might have acted differently and then asking God's forgiveness and help in making changes. You would help our children name their mistakes and let them find a better way so that they can all learn from each other's example.

You could also create a guided meditation for the kids – have them relax first (ha! Ha! – actually they will get into this!) Tell them to imagine they are walking on a beach – listen to the waves, feel the spray, smell the fresh air, etc, etc. They meet Jesus sitting at the edge of the water – what will you say to him? What will you ask him? He asks how you are, about your life, what you like to do – what do you tell him? What will you ask him? He tells you to write any problems you have in the sand and he holds your hand as the waves wash it away. He holds you and blesses you and you slowly walk away from the beach and return here when you're ready. When the kids open their eyes, ask if they want to share their experience.

Or perhaps you could create a prayer wall in your room – one side for prayer requests and the other side for answered prayers. Don't forget to include your own prayers, and share how you feel when you're forgiven when you screw up – teachers sometimes make mistakes too! Although the kids think you're perfect!

Thanks for being there for our kids.

*Love,
Karlene*

Epiphany

Matthew 2:1-12

Epiphany (e PIF ah nee), celebrated each year on January 6th, is one of the oldest festivals in the Christian church. In fact, Christians celebrated Epiphany long before they celebrated Christmas. The word "epiphany" is a Greek word, meaning "to show, to reveal, to make manifest" On the day of Epiphany, we celebrate God's "epiphany" God's manifestation, God's revelation, in Jesus Christ, God's Word made flesh.

The season of Epiphany lasts until Ash Wednesday. It is a time to remember God's revelation in the past. This helps us continue to wonder and marvel at God's revelation today.

In the Western church, Epiphany became associated with the visitation of the Magi, or Wise Men to the Child Jesus. Since the Magi were Gentiles, not Jews, it celebrates the revelation of the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ, to the whole world.

Who were the Wise Men? Not mentioned by Luke, but reported by Matthew, these men did not come to the stable like our nativity scenes portray, but came later to a home in Bethlehem where Joseph & Mary went to stay after Jesus was born. The Magi from the East probably traveled from Babylon. The exact number of esteemed visitors is not known (the number 3 comes from the number of gifts mentioned in the biblical account), but those that came "honored" Jesus as King – as one already a king and not merely destined to become one. The Magi's visit is prompted by a star, variously identified as a comet, a supernova, a planetary conjunction, or a unique supernatural phenomenon.

The Wise Men brought gifts to Jesus, beginning the custom of gift-giving. They brought myrrh, representing the mysteries of the East, health & medicine, a gum-resin from a shrub of the same name, used in embalming the ancient Egyptians that today is used in perfume, incense, and medicine. They brought frankincense, sweet fragrance from the resin tree, a native of Central & Southern India; at the time of Jesus' birth it was the custom to express adoration of a king by presenting him with frankincense. They brought gold, the splendor of kings. Each had a spiritual significance: gold is the power of the king, incense is used in sacrifice, and myrrh is used in burial.

King Herod had been placed on the Judean throne through plotting with Mark Anthony. Although he tried earnestly to win over the Jewish people, only the Roman legions kept him in power. He killed some of his ten wives and fourteen children when it seemed they might become rivals. It was to this paranoid king that the Wise Men announced the birth of a new and possibly competing king! No wonder Herod felt that direct action was needed to safeguard his throne; he ordered all the Jewish boy babies under age two murdered in an attempt to kill the infant Jesus. It is interesting to note that the gift the Magi brought probably helped support the family as they fled from Herod on their journey into exile in Egypt.

Your lessons on January 6 are "Foreign Visitors Worship Jesus" and Joseph Takes His Family to Safety". In addition to all the activities suggested in the curriculum, you may want to do the following:

Make an Epiphany star:

Have the children make stars of all sizes from different materials; construction paper, colored cardboard, foil, Styrofoam™, etc. Star templates are available in the Resource Room. Print scripture verses on the stars. Let the children hang them on your classroom walls, from the ceiling, and in the windows as a reminder that the light of the Epiphany star must be followed by Christians today. Or the stars can be taken to shut-ins or given to friends to emphasize the church's call to spread the light of the good news to others.

Epiphany prayer

Dear Lord, please help us still give you the blessings the Wise Men gave. These presents will be yours and we love you while you love us. In Jesus' Name. Amen

And more.....

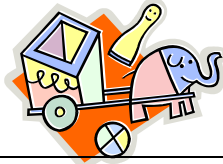
More items will be available on the table in the Resource Room.



Nursery Notes:

Our goal for the New Year is to make our nursery the best it can be. Please take time after each service to straighten up the room; if the changing table has been used make sure that it's cleaned and has a new paper sheet on it, and empty the trash into the dumpster (outside Memorial Hall). There are new garbage bags in one of the drawers. We have a cleaning spray to keep the surfaces clean, please use it – especially since we're entering cold & flu season. And after the 6:00 pm service, please make a fresh batch of the bleach solution and use that on all surfaces. (directions are on the door of the white wall cabinet next to the changing table, and all supplies are in the at cabinet.)

Thank you for making our nursery a place where parents want to bring their children!



Sharing Classroom Ideas:

Our creative 11:15 am Jr. High teachers came up with a rather unique idea to keep kids coming to class. A few weeks ago, Brian Bradshaw mentioned a neat experiment using Diet Coke™ & adding a Menthos™ candy, which causes quite a reaction! The kids said it sounded neat & wanted to try it right away, but Dave Wendt said they should work this into the curriculum since we were entering Advent, a time of waiting and anticipation. The kids would need to find a way to make the experiment connect to the lessons, "John preparing the way for Jesus", "the anticipation and waiting for Jesus to come", "preparing ourselves for Jesus' arrival" – sounds easy, right? The teachers made the kids wait a couple of weeks and after the lesson last week, took the kids outside to try the experiment. As the kids' excitement soared, the Menthos™ was added to the Diet Coke™, an explosion occurred! (Of course, they persuaded Brian to try filling his mouth with Coke and popping in a candy, which sent Coke™ up his nose – to the delight of the kids!) When the laughing subsided, Kim Palmer, Dave, and Brian brought the kids inside to discuss how this all connected to the lesson. According to the kids, the teachers were like John the Baptist, telling them what was going to happen. Advent was like them all waiting and getting ready for the experiment. The Diet Coke™ was our lives, filled with sin and when the candy (Jesus) enters our lives, the sins are pushed out (the explosion). Hey, this came from the kids – who are we to question their analogy? The best part is that all of the kids were speaking up, entering into the discussion, and connecting the Bible to life. Can't get better than that!

CPR Training

Do you want to take CPR training?

Do you need to renew your training?

Want to learn how to use an AED (automated electronic defibrillator)?

We are providing **FREE** training in January.

Renewal training: January 16

Full training: January 23

Both sessions are at 7:00 pm in room 201/202

Please sign up by Pat's office – we need to know how many will attend



If you planted hope today in any hopeless heart,



If someone's burden was lighter because you did your part,



If you caused a laugh that chased a tear away,



If tonight your name is mentioned when someone kneels to pray,

Then your day was well spent!