



YPBC NEWS

December 2009

CHRISTMAS COME AGAIN

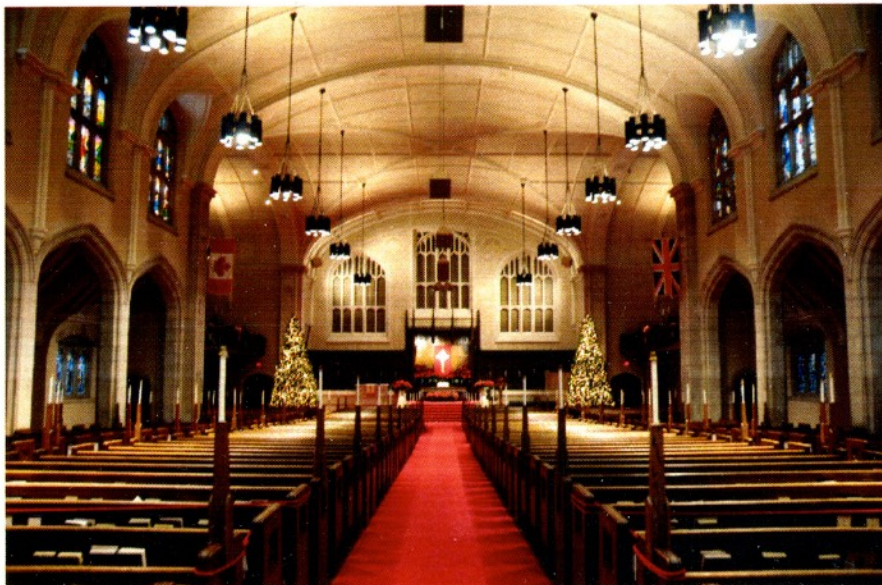
We celebrate Advent, Christmas and Epiphany with word and music, and with decoration and stained glass. Sometimes poetry is used, as it was at Carols by Candlelight, many, many years ago; the poem by the Canadian poet Bliss Carmen.

CHRISTMAS SONG

Above the weary waiting world,
Asleep in chill despair,
There breaks a sound of joyous bells
upon the frosted air.
And o'er the humblest rooftree lo,
A star is dancing on the snow.



What makes the yellow star to dance
Upon the brink of night?
What makes the breaking dawn to glow
So magically bright, -
And all the earth to be renewed
With infinite beatitude?



The singing bells, the throbbing star,
The sunbeams on the snow,
And the awakening heart that leaps
New ecstasy to know, -
They all are dancing in the morn
Because a little child is born.

Published by:

Yorkminster Park Baptist Church

1585 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON M4T 1Z9

Phone: (416) 922-1167

Fax: (416) 922 1807

www.yorkminsterpark.com

The Rev. Dr. J. Peter Holmes

Minister of the Congregation

The Rev. Carolyn King

Associate Minister – Pastoral Care

The Rev. Cheryle Hanna

Associate Minister – Discipleship

Mr. William Maddox, B.Mus.

FTCL—Director of Music

Sam Lee

Director of Youth Ministry and Community Outreach

Miriam Little

Director of Children’s Ministries

Heather Hetherington

Parish Nurse

The Rev. Dr. William Sturgess

Minister Emeritus – Pastoral Care

For the past several years Dr. William Sturgess has been the editor of the YPBC News. We are grateful for his dedication to this and other tasks at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.

This issue of the YPBC News has a new format and the next issue, in March, will be available in electronic format as well as in print. Funding permitting we will also print a colour edition.

Please send along any ideas, articles and suggestions to pilgrim.h@sympatico.ca or drop them off in the YPBC News box.

Paul R. Hill, Editor YPBC News

Upcoming Events

January 6 – 7 p.m. *Ancient Future Worship with an Epiphany theme*

January 17 – *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins with the Churches-on-the-Hill Pulpit Exchange at which time the Rev. Cannon Peter Walker, Rector of Grace Church-on-the-Hill will be preaching at YPBC and Peter Holmes will be preaching at Our Lady of Perpetual Help.*

January 24 – 4 p.m. – *Week of Prayer concludes with an ecumenical service to be held at Timothy Eaton.*

January 24 – *also marks the beginning of two new classes at YPBC both at 9:45 a.m. and lasting for six weeks - Discipleship 101 and Discipleship 200.*

February 16 – *Yorkminster Park Day of Prayer and Pastor’s Pancake Supper.*

February 26 – 28 – *Mission Expo TO 10 with CBM, Toronto Association of Churches and David Coffey, President of the Baptist World Alliance. The weekend will include plenary sessions, workshop sessions, a banquet, and worship.*

March 28 – *Palm Sunday – YP Choir and Orpheus Choir to combine in the presentation of Stainer’s Crucifixion.*

Yorkminster Park Gallery

January 8 – Les Tibbles, veteran watercolorist presents a retrospective of his florals.

February 12 – Nancy Oaks – ink drawings and portraits

March 19 – Judith Livingstone

May – photography show for CONTACT photo festival , entire month.

In this Issue:	
	Page
Baptist, 400th Anniversary	2
Christmas Greetings	3
A Chrismon Tree	4
Book Review	5
Serving God, Middle East	6
Lester Randall P. F.	7
Transitions	7
Not an Unplanned Surprise	8
Ancient-Future Worship	8

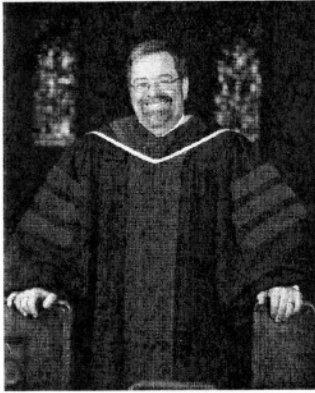
CELEBRATING BAPTIST 400th ANNIVERSARY

On January 31, 2010 we will be gathering with other Baptists in the city to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of our Baptist beginnings here at Yorkminster Park at 4 p.m.

401 years ago in 1608 a small Puritan Separatist congregation in Gainesborough, England fled from persecution under King James and lived as exiles in Amsterdam. Led by John Smyth and Thomas Helwys the small congregation was trying to live faithfully by the model of the early church. While in Amsterdam they met in a Mennonite Bakery where it seems a relationship was established with the Mennonites through which each group was influenced by the thinking and practice of the other.

From the Mennonites came the notion of Believer’s Baptism, and the convictions of absolute religious liberty and the separation of church and state. Sometime in 1609 John Smyth submitted himself to believer’s baptism, though not initially by emersion. He and his flock soon joined the Mennonite church, but in 1611, Helwys and members of the Amsterdam congregation returned to England

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



*In the bleak midwinter, frosty
wind made moan,*

*Earth stood hard as iron, water
like a stone;*

*Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
snow on snow,*

In the bleak midwinter, long ago

These familiar words written by Christina Rossetti in 1872 serve each year to remind us that Christmas is a marvelous celebration, which invades our lives each December just as the shortest day has come upon us, and the world, as we know it, has fallen under winter's spell. Temperatures plummet, the earth hardens, the air thins, and all of our instincts say get indoors and hunker down like the hibernating bear, the nesting squirrel and the spring bulb buried deep within the earth. But somewhere in the cold world beyond, under darkened skies, when there was no room left round the warm hearth of the inn where everyone else had hunkered down, Christ was born in a stable bare. The first cries of the child were to comfort those left out in the cold, but also to call us from our comfortable places to discover that in an unlikely place and an unfamiliar face God has offered his grace through the birth of his Son, Jesus Christ. The best Christmas comes when we open our hearts to receive the grace fully and keep them open until the gift is freely

shared and the world is truly warmed. May such response mark our celebration of Christmas at Yorkminster Park.

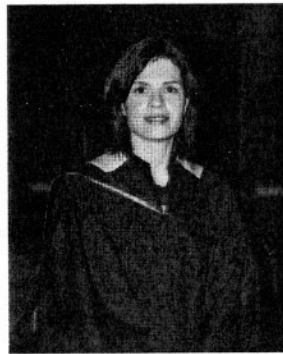
*What can I give him, poor
as I am?*

*If I were a shepherd, I
would bring a lamb;*

*If I were a Wise Man, I
would do my part;*

*Yet what I can I give
him: give my heart
Have a wonderful Christ-
mas!*

In Christ, Peter Holmes



Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

The Christmas Season is a time to celebrate and rejoice. In Tom Wright's book *Simply Christian*, Wright speaks of heaven and earth "overlapping and interlocking". This description of Christ in our midst becomes even more significant as we prepare our hearts for the gift of Christmas. God came to earth and lived among us. What an incredible reason to celebrate. All of us are reminded to share the good news of heaven coming to earth.

Let us celebrate what God has done: "the finding, the saving, the giving of new life – in Jesus. He has done it". Tom Wright.

Thanks be to God!



Followers of the Way at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, At this time of year I am reminded of the 'Peanuts Christmas Special' where Charlie Brown completely frustrated about Christmas shouts, "Doesn't anyone know what Christmas is all about!" and Linus answers "I know what Christmas is all about Charlie Brown." The words of that small boy from the middle of the stage are my words of greeting.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,, good will toward men.

Luke 2:8-14

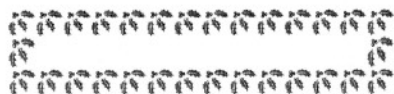
Merry Christmas

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Sam Lee

Director of Youth Ministry & Community Outreach

Seasons Greetings. We thank all of you for your warmth and hospitality during our first year at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. We truly feel blessed to be part of this community. As we look to the advent season, let us remember that Jesus is already with us and is walking by our side even when it doesn't seem like it. "Unto us a child is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."



Miriam Little

Director of Children's Ministries

At this wonderful time of year I would like to express my thankfulness for God's goodness to us as a congregation in giving us young children to worship with us. We are blessed by their joy and transparency as they share their observations of Jesus' coming. In turn, I also give thanks for Christian parents, for Sunday School teachers and caregivers for our children, each desiring to see them walk faithfully. Thank you for your support for Children's Ministries. Have a blessed Christmas!



Heather Hetherington

Parish Nurse

It is a great joy for me to be part of the Ministerial Team here at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church and to have the opportunity to serve as Parish Nurse. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of God's son, Harold joins me in wishing you a most joyous Christmas and praying that the New Year will be filled with peace, health and many blessings.



A CHRISMON TREE

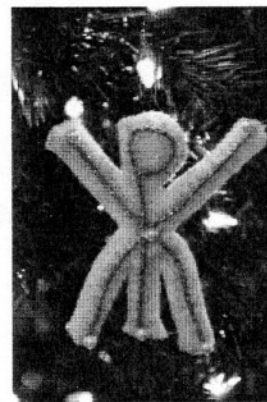


Have you seen it? Our Chrismon Tree, quietly splendid in its array of beautifully and lovingly crafted, white and gold beaded Chrismon ornaments, created many years ago, by some very thoughtful women at Yorkminster Park.

In 1957, Frances Kipps Spencer in Danville Virginia, began to think of a way to decorate the Christmas tree of her church in a way that would be suitable for the sanctuary. She wanted something that would be a reflection of the Christian faith. Imagining herself in the shoes of Jesus' mother, Mary, she wondered how Mary might cele-

brate Jesus' birthday and so she created the idea of Chrismons when she placed the name of Jesus and the title, Christ, on a Christmas tree. Frances used Greek monograms instead of English and thus the letters in Greek, "Chi Rho", became one of the earliest Chrismons as they are monograms for Christos, the Greek word for Christ. The word chrismon itself is a combination of the words "Christ" and monogram.

Simple monograms of Jesus Christ, as well as a few crosses, decorated the first Chrismon tree. As the beauty and meaning of Chrismon attracted people, Frances added other designs and symbols used by the earliest Christians often as secret symbols of Christianity but which gained popularity in C4 when the Roman emperor, Constantine, after his conversion to Christianity, adapted the "Chi Rho" monogram as his military design.



These emblems of the Christian faith could be found carved and drawn on jewelry, utensils, in catacombs and on doors and buildings and were designed by the early Christians to show their faith to the world. Like parables, they are earthly symbols of heavenly meanings always pointing beyond themselves to God. They represent aspects of the Person, life or

ministry or history of the Christian church through a single image.

Each design must proclaim some truth about God as seen in Jesus and must always be made in gold and white to symbolize majesty and glory – perfection and purity. Each time Christmorns are displayed, there should be a guide with explanations for the viewers.

Look for this under the tree. Can you find ten different symbols, including the “Chi Rho” monogram? Some others included are:

A Fish – The first letter of the Greek of several titles of Jesus
A Shepards’ Crook – The symbol for Jesus as the Good Shepherd
A Crown – The symbol for royal power and authority and for Jesus as King of the Jews

A Five Pointed Star – The symbol of the star of Bethlehem or Epiphany when the wisemen visited Jesus

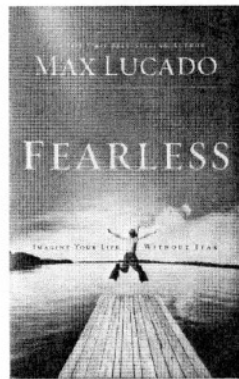
The Orb and Cross – The orb, symbol of earth, has a cross over it. We are reminded that the world needs Christ



The Cross – Jesus died on the cross for everyone – for us. Be sure to take a few minutes this Advent season to see this lovely tree and to reflect on these remarkable ornaments that continue to remind us of God’s greatest gift to us all, Jesus Christ

submitted by Jonanne Fenton

BOOK REVIEW



Fearless: Imagine Your Life Without Fear, Max Lucado, Thomas Nelson, 2009

The newest offering from Max Lucado is a wonderfully written and delightfully human look at the things we fear and why we should not. The primary hallmark of this author is his readability, anyone and everyone leaves his books with something; a thought to ponder, a sermon illustration or simply hurt feet from the toes he has stepped on. In *Fearless*, Lucado uses the comforting words of Christ to contradict the current culture of fear. He writes “Fear may fill our world, but it doesn’t have to fill our hearts. It will always knock on the door. Just don’t invite it in for dinner, and for heaven’s sake don’t offer it a bed for the night;” (p.13) great advice that Lucado follows with reasonable and practical ways to live fearlessly.

The paperback edition also includes a discussion guide to be used by groups or individuals and for each chapter the author includes three parts: Examining Fear, Exposing Fear and Battling Fear. The guide is ideal for use with book clubs or small groups.

Each chapter begins with a scripture related to living a fearless life and the related assure from God to

do it. Late in the text is the Chapter entitled ‘Caffeinated Life’ and the story found there is worth the price of the book. It seems that a mom of young Timmy is worried about him walking to school without her. Each day she read him Psalm 23: “surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life . . .” She also asked a neighbor to follow Timmy to school as she took her own toddler for walks each day. Timmy’s friend notices the lady and the child.

“Do you know who that woman is who follows us to school?”
“Sure,” Timmy answered, “That’s Shirley Goodness and her daughter Marcy.” “My Mom reads about them every day in the Twenty-third Psalm”. She says, “Shirley Goodness and Marcy shall follow me all the days of my life. Guess I’ll have to get used to them.” (pg. 131)

This book is a great read. I recommend it highly.

submitted by Cherlye Hanna

**COMING SOON TO A
SCREEN NEAR YOU—
WEBCASTING OF OUR
SUNDAY MORNING**

Missed church? Know a shut-in?

Forward to family and friends near and far.

Our morning service will be on-line Sunday afternoons starting later this month.

Check out our website at www.yorkminsterpark.com

Services will be archived.

submitted by Ellie Pattillo

SERVING GOD IN THE MIDDLE EAST



photo by Donna Willett

Since Rupen and Mamta Das moved to Beirut, Lebanon to serve the Lord with Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM) in October 2009, their understanding of mission has changed.

"I'm beginning to see that missions is not about me reaching or changing the world," wrote Rupen in an email. "It's really about what God is already doing and our willingness to be instruments that He can use."

Rupen and Mamta, members of Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, were recently appointed as CBM Global Field Staff. Rupen is the Deputy Director of The Sharing Way, CBM's relief and development department.

While God has called Rupen and Mamta to Lebanon to labour for His glory, He calls all of His people to pursue a mission-minded worldview as ambassadors for Christ in their local neighbourhood. To that end, the Mission Expo Steering Committee continues to prepare for Mission Expo in February 2010 to help equip Toronto Baptists with a renewed sense of engaging in mission, Whether it is in the hustle and bustle of Yonge Street or in the

majestic splendour of the Middle East landscape.

Rupen says that despite the physical beauty of mountains, the blue Mediterranean Sea and rich historical ruins, Lebanon is deeply scarred by war and division. "It's a country of contrast – incredible wealth alongside poverty and discrimination," he said.

Rupen said the challenge of transitioning into a new culture has been for difficult, so to familiarize themselves with the people and culture, they have been alternating between an English speaking church and an Arabic speaking church. "In a new culture where language is a limitation, I consciously allow my spirit to sense His Presence," he said. "There have been some very deeply moving times for me in worship." Rupen added he is grateful for the prayers and support from the Yorkminster Park community.

"We cannot even begin to describe how supported and valued we have felt - starting with membership, being commissioned, being supported in prayer and having people be in regular contact. For urgent prayer needs we know that there

are people and a community that care enough to pray for us and encourage us."

God is answering these prayers, and using the many obstacles they've grappled with over the last few weeks to draw them ever closer to the cross of Christ.

"We consciously acknowledge our total dependence on God in prayer and in our attitudes," he said. "For me this has been one of the richest seasons in God's Word and in my relationship with Him. I have started reading the Bible through again from within a new culture and context."

This is a message that, Lord-willing, Rupen and Mamta will share at Mission Expo in February at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.

"The lost, the poor and the vulnerable are very close to God's heart. My hope and desire is that people would come away from Mission Expo realizing that missions is not just another activity of the church but is actually right at the heart of what God has called His people in community to do - bringing the Good News that God cares to those in one's own community and also to those across the world."

submitted by Trevor Sinker

The **Dorcas Group** sends stamps to the Canadian Bible Society. They are sold and the proceeds are used to supply more Bibles.

As the Christmas cards arrive, please save the stamps and then deposit them in the box on the talent case in the North Hall
submitted by Joyce Wood

LESTER RANDALL PREACHING FELLOWSHIP

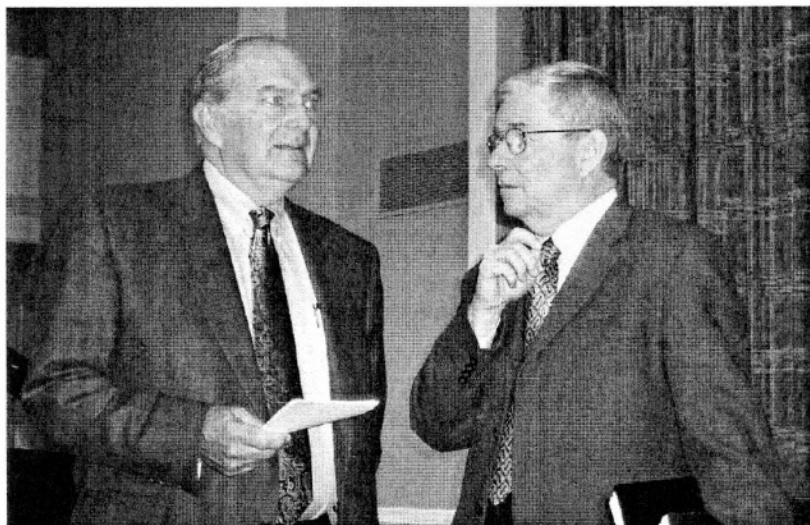


photo by Donna Willett

The congregation and guests of YPBC recently experienced a week-end in celebration of the knowledge, dedication, energy and commitment to excellence of those who preach the Word with power and effectiveness. You will recall that The Preaching Fellowship was a wish of Dr. John Gladstone that was generously endowed by a faithful layman, Gerrard Collins, and named after Lester C. Randall, a dedicated Church worker. Our guest, Reverend Darrell Johnson, is the newly called Preaching Pastor of First Baptist Church in Vancouver; previously he was Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at Regent College. He presented an insightful lecture Saturday morning on the topic **“So, what is supposed to happen when we preach?”** Asking two questions: “why something happens when the Gospel is preached?” and “what is that something?” he concluded “that the result of that something is that the world is slowly but surely changed”. He prefaced his remarks with the proposition that the preacher must find and lift the meaning of his text from scripture, using all of the tools available to

him relative to the translation and understanding of the context of the message as it has been preserved for us.

Following lunch on Saturday, Darrell conducted a workshop for seminary students and clergy, offering them the chance to learn something of his approach to the preparation of sermons.

On Sunday, we experienced the kind of preaching that he had propositioned to us on Saturday. Two memorable sermons explaining God’s love for humankind, entitled “Scandalous Love, Parts I and II”, both based on the parable found in the Luke 15.

The lecture and the sermons were recorded and are available on disc from the desk in the Narthex – highly recommended listening! Or, you might want to read one of Darrell’s books: *“The Glory of Preaching: Participating in God’s Transformation of the World”*, *“Experiencing The Trinity”*, *“Fifty-seven Words That Changed the World; A Journey Through The Lord’s Prayer”*, and *“Discipleship on the Edge: An Expository Journey Through the Book of Revelation”*.

submitted by Norm Hubley

TRANSITIONS

Since the last Newsletter there have been several milestones in the life of the church.

Dedication

Marlowe Addison Grace Andrews, born 06 Jan. 2009 to Heather and Will Andrew

Baptisms

Lorraine Beach
Raymond Wang

New Members

Francesco de Paolo
Kaisa Myers
Helena Tiggert
Ricardo Burton
Marion Craig
Gerry Doerksen
Lisa Doerksen
Patricia Hemming
Felicia Hewitt
Marjorie Sugden
Raymond Wang

Deaths

Jean Curtis
George McLaughlin
Dorothy Adams
Timothy Hemming

Be faithful even to the point of death, and I will give you a crown of life. Rev. 2:10 NIV

YPBC Bus Trips

Advance Notice

Mon. May 31

Stratford to see “Peter Pan”, visit to 10,000 Villages, lunch at “Waterlot” in New Hamburg, cost \$ 138

Thur. Sept. 30

Drayton to see “Guys and Dolls”, lunch at Marion’s Country Cupboard, cost \$ 120.

submitted by Judy MacDonald

CELEBRATING BAPTIST 400th ANNIVERSARY cont'd

and established the First Baptist Church in England at Spitalfields, near London. It was a small group of women and men who developed and embraced new convictions about the Christian faith for which they were willing to live and die. From these humble beginnings has grown a great movement in the life of the church universal.

Sadly Baptist life has from the earliest days been marked not only by a great sense of freedom, but also by division. Baptists in Ontario and Quebec suffered such a schism in our life in 1927 when a number of congregations left our family to forge a new Baptist family which eventually became known as the Fellowship Baptists. While many of the differences that once kept us apart have been diminished, January 31 will represent the first time these groups have formally come together to worship in our city since 1927. We pray that this occasion will mark a new beginning as we enter the 5th century of our Baptist history.

submitted by Peter Holmes

NOT AN UNPLANNED SURPRISE

The birth of Jesus Christ was a miracle. But it was not a surprise? Have you ever thought about the history of Immanuel's promise? Here are just a few of the prophecies about the coming of Christ. One goes all the way back to the first book of the Bible. These are but a few of the prophecies peppered throughout the Bible.

Genesis 3:15 - The seed of a woman would destroy the serpent.
Isaiah 7:14 - The Messiah would be born of a virgin.
Micah 5:2 - Jesus would be born in Bethlehem of the family of David.
Hosea 11:1 - God's Son would live in Egypt for a time.
Judges 13:5 - The Messiah would be called a Nazarene.

Each and every fulfilled prophecy is meant to strengthen our faith as we realize that Jesus is who He claimed to be. It is clear evidence that Jesus was not an afterthought or an accident. From the beginning, God's plan was to redeem mankind through a Savior. His name is Jesus Christ!

Matthew 1:22 - All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet.

submitted by Suzanne Wilkinson

ANCIENT-FUTURE WORSHIP

Ancient-Future Worship is a movement with the larger church, which seeks to integrate ancient principles and practices in current times. Based on the belief that "the road to the future runs through the past", Ancient-Future Worship uses ancient, traditional, and contemporary resources in worship that is inherently Trinitarian and Christocentric. It is both celebratory and contemplative. Come and observe Epiphany, a church festival in commemoration of the coming of the Magi as the first manifestation of Christ to the gentiles, in a service that may simultaneously seem quite familiar and yet quite different. An Ancient-Future Worship Epiphany Service at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, Cameron Hall, 7:00 PM, Wednesday, 06 January 2010.

submitted by Alan Brisco

a Sunday in Winter

☆☆

☆☆ A CHRISTMAS PRAYER ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ Loving Father, help us to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ the worship of the wise men. ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ greeting. ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ teach us to be merry with clear hearts. ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆ thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen! ☆☆☆☆
 ☆☆☆☆☆

Robert Louis Stevenson

☆☆

