

The C R O S S T I E



The November 9, 2007
Newsletter of the
Smoke Rise Baptist Church

Ladies Christmas Event: "A Simple Christmas"

Our annual Christmas dinner is Tuesday, November 27, at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Guest speaker is Nancy Burgess, founder of Heart and Soul Connection. Her topic, "A Simple Christmas" will encourage women to prepare their hearts and homes for a stress-free Christmas that focuses on family, friends, and Christ throughout the season. Tickets are \$15 per person. To host and decorate a table, please contact MaryLynn Manley.



Help A Child Experience A Night in Bethlehem!

On Sunday, December 9 from 5:00-7:00 pm Smoke Rise Baptist will transform into Bethlehem Village...where the Christmas Story will truly come to life! On this date we will invite families from our community and provide a place for them to get a better understanding of the incredible sacrifice God made in sending Jesus. We need prime timers, senior adults, youth and interested families.... people of all ages to be shopkeepers, craftsmen, shepherds and local merchants and musicians. Help with set-up and take-down is also appreciated! Please contact Kellie Denton, Amanda Burton or Kara Blankenship to be a part of this wonderful outreach at 770-469-5856 or kdenton@smokerisebaptist.org.

Thanksgiving Dinner & Program

November 18 at 6 p.m.

(No reservations needed.)

Immediately following, the bus will leave
for the Lights at Lake Lanier!

Tickets are \$6

Casting Crowns Concert

(Contemporary Christian Band)

Gwinnett Civic Center

November 23 -Ticket on sale now!

\$20 per ticket

SRBC Christmas Tour of Homes

December 6

Tickets \$5

Proceeds go to our toy drive.

Tickets are available on Wednesdays and Sundays
and during the week in the church office.

Minister Called and Deacons Elected

On October 28, the congregation voted overwhelmingly to call Mrs. Kellie Denton as our Minister to Families with Children. Kellie has served as Interim Minister to Children since July 2006. We warmly welcome Kellie to our ministerial staff.

We also elected by ballot to serve a 2-year term as deacons: Judy Batchelor, David Bishop, Crystal Blackwell, Bob Burkett, Don Durrett, Mark Gaines, Gerri Hankla, Colin Harris, Georgianne Harrison, Carl Hart, John Holley, Jim Howard, Wylene Ivie, Lois Jernigan, Johnny Kirkland, Anne McClearn, Joel McLendon, John Mench, Doris Nelms, Terry Shields, Jim Still, Dorothy Swindle, Pat Thomas, and Roy Vreeland.

Estimate of Giving Cards

"The opportunity continues." To date, 364 estimate of giving cards for 2008 have been returned and members have pledged \$1,621,187.60. This is an excellent start to our stewardship campaign. If you have not turned in your card, please do so by mailing it to the office or dropping it in the offering plate. Cards are available at the church if you have misplaced yours.

How does Micah's Challenge speak to the way we should earn and spend our money? See the Pastor's article for an answer to this question and pray about your response to Micah's Challenge. Take advantage of this opportunity to be a faithful steward.

Associate Pastor Search Committee Appointed

The Search Committee for the Associate Pastor has been appointed. Remember them in your prayers as they begin their work. The members of the committee are:

- Jody Jones (Chairperson)
- Tom Raines
- Larry Holmes
- Carole Harrison
- Graham Felton
- Charles Hancock

Faith & Issues

Sundays at 9:45 am; Room A125

November Schedule

- 11 Difficult Topics for Christians: Immigration
18 Difficult Topics for Christians: Hate Crimes Legislation
25 Open Discussion

Advent Bible Study

Wednesday at 6:30 in Fellowship Hall

Led by Dr. Larry L. McSwain,

Professor of Ethics and Leadership at McAfee School of Theology

- 11/14 *The Weakness of a King: Living Unjustly, Matt. 2:13-23*

Brooklyn Toy Drive

Toy collections centers are ready but **EMPTY!!!** The Children's Mission project is collecting new, unwrapped toys for our Brooklyn, NY ministries. Youth and teenager gifts are also needed! (CD's, sports items, DVD's, etc). Please help give a Christmas gift to those less fortunate. Collection center is upstairs in the Breezeway area across from sanctuary. For more info contact Kellie Denton at 770-469-5856. Toys will be collected up until November 20th (no used toys and no clothing please).

Russia Mission Opportunity

Global Aid Network is in need of several volunteers to travel to Krasnoyarsk, Russia, in January 2008. Registration deadline is November 16. If you are interested in this extraordinary mission opportunity to help orphaned children in Siberia, please contact Jim Palmer at 770-985-4191 or 770-922-9502.

Senior Adult Christmas Outing

The Senior Adult Christmas outing is Sunday, December 2 to the Aurora Theater. Afterwards dinner will be at the Waterside Restaurant at Evergreen Conference Center. Cost is \$50. Limited tickets are available...so don't delay. Your reservation can be made with your check.

Worship in November

8:30 (Chapel) and 11:00 (Sanctuary)
Each Sunday Morning in November

11: Season of Thanks — The Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost: Children Choristers, The Festival Singers and The Sanctuary Handbell Choir

18: Season of Thanks — The Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost: The Sanctuary Choir and The Smoke Rise Brass & UPS in the Fellowship Hall

25: Christ the King Sunday — The Last Sunday of the Church Year: The Sanctuary Choir and Soloist, Heather Huff

Sadies Ladies Circle Will Meet November 12

at 6:30 at the home of Elizabeth Wells. We welcome visitors.

The Multi Focus WMU Will Meet

Tuesday, November 13, in Room 218 at 10:00 a.m. All are welcome.

Letter of Appreciation

Dear Ladies of Smoke Rise,

Thank you for your help in making the baby shower for Amy Browning Cowan such a lovely success. All I had to do was to ask, and you were happy to set up, pour punch, bake cookies, make sandwiches and clean up. Thank you for showering these babies with love and precious things to welcome them to our world. As always, Lou Tankersly and her very talented staff made the day absolutely perfect.

Thanks,
Jeannie Duvall

Uganda Mission Opportunity

Wilson Echols is enlisting a Uganda Mission Team for May 31 – June 16, 2008. Mission Opportunities will be Construction, Teaching Children, Sports and Games, Nurturing, Preaching (men only), School Visitation, Evangelism/Tract Ministry, and more.

Travel arrangements must be made by January 31, 2008. For more information, please contact Wilson Echols at wechols@bellsouth.net or 404-771-5215. Mission Manuals are available in the Missions Office.

Sunday, November 18
UPS - Special Speaker is Preston Jones
Bring your friends . . .

Births

Congratulations to these new parents!

Madilyn Ivie was born to Laurie and Brent Redmon on October 13; brother is Hunter.

Grant Hamilton and Blake Joseph were born to Christi and Vann Riley on October 30. Big brother is Brayden and grandparents are Sheryl and Bill Riley.

Deaths

We extend our deepest sympathy to these who have lost loved ones: Mike and Janis Holcomb whose son-in-law died; Keith Durso whose brother died; Bob Browning whose aunt died; Debbie Adcox whose mother died; and to the family of Roma Evans (Vicki King's mother). She had been a member since 1997.

Called Church Conference
to vote on the 2008 Ministry Plan

Sunday, November 25

You will receive information in the mail before that date.
If you will be out of town, an absentee ballot will be included.

Notes from the Pastor

“Micah and Money”

Micah 6:6-8

Our culture is fascinated with money. It would be hard to walk into a bookstore or turn on the radio or television and deny this. Bookshelves and the airways are filled with financial gurus giving advice about how to earn and manage money. Suze Orman, Dave Ramsey, Clark Howard and Jim Cramer are some of today's most popular authors and talk show hosts.

This morning, I would like to add Micah's voice to the mix. **How does Micah's challenge speak to the way we should earn and spend our money?**

Who was Micah? He was an eighth century Old Testament prophet that delivered powerful messages to the religious leaders in Jerusalem. He boldly spoke truth to power and encouraged them to turn away from the culture's values that had made them greedy, power hungry and complacent. These values had created a world characterized by injustice, hostility, violence and arrogance and God was expecting them to change that.

What did he challenge them to do? He challenged them to “do justly, love kindness and walk humbly with their God” Micah 6:8. I'm sure you recognize his challenge to these leaders because we have adopted it as our theme this year. All our publications, including each Sunday's bulletin, have this challenge printed on them.

How does Micah's challenge speak to the way I should earn and spend my money? This is a question we need to consider on Consecration Sunday, the culmination of our annual stewardship campaign. Let me begin the discussion this morning.

To do justly means that I will earn and spend my money in honorable ways. If I own a business, I will be honest and fair in my dealings with others, including customers and employees. If I work for someone else, I'll work hard, be dependable, loyal and trustworthy.

To do justly means that I will live within my means and pay people what I owe them. I will draft a budget and stick to it. I will curb my appetite for things so that spending does not spiral out of control.

To do justly means that I will purchase goods and services from those that are good to their employees. I will patronize those that pay decent wages and provide safe working conditions for their employees.

Whenever possible, I will purchase Fair Trade Certified products because this is one way I can put my faith in practice. Every person deserves a life of dignity with adequate food, education and good health. Fair Trade helps make this possible for farmers, farm workers and their families in many parts of the world through a dynamic system of direct trade relationships, access to global markets and fair prices for their products. Fair Trade is a model that works because it strengthens families and communities, empowers people to take care of themselves, promotes human rights and supports responsible stewardship of the earth.

On the table in the breezeway you can get more information about Fair Trade, including a list of products you can purchase. Pick one up on your way out today and put your faith into practice this week.

To love kindness means that I am not going to spend all my money on me or my family. In addition to taking care of my family, I am going to be sensitive to the needs of those that are struggling and share generously with them.

Prophets like Micah never missed an opportunity to remind

Israel's leaders of the importance of compassion. They believed, as Rabbi Harold Kushner has reminded us that the purpose of religion was to create community, making sure that everyone had a seat at the table where their voice was heard and their needs met. This was the noblest goal of Judaism.

This is the loftiest goal of every faith tradition I have studied and this was affirmed again last week in our own city. Did you read the article by the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet, in last Wednesday's edition of the *AJC*? It was titled, “Embrace World with Compassion.” He highlighted the importance of relationships and community when he wrote, “A deep sense of caring for others, based upon a profound sense of interconnection, is the essence of the teachings of all great religions of the world. In my travels, I always consider my foremost mission to be the promotion of basic human qualities of goodness—the need for and appreciation of the value of love, our natural capacity for compassion and the need for genuine fellow feeling.”

Our Christian tradition certainly accentuates the value of compassion. One of the boldest statements Jesus ever made came soon after he fed the five thousand. In John 6:35, Jesus said, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.”

How could he make such an outlandish claim? How could he be so confident? He believed no one would go hungry because his followers would never allow it to happen! They would be too kindhearted, compassionate and unselfish to let one person go without the necessities of life. They would hear the cries of the poor and not turn a deaf ear. They would share their resources, not hoard them. They would simplify their lifestyles rather than ignoring the plight of the hungry. They would become advocates for the oppressed, creating a world built upon economic and social justice.

Was he right? Are you helping to keep his dream alive and fulfill his vision? Do your spending habits reflect your unselfish and compassionate spirit? Perhaps you need to ask God what He thinks. This is what the third part of Micah's challenge encourages us to do.

To walk humbly with God means that I am going to talk to Him about how I earn and spend my money. What comes naturally when two people walk together? They talk. Micah encouraged his readers, and now us, to have a conversation with God about money.

Why should I do this? I should do it because stewardship is not a financial matter, it is a spiritual matter. I am a steward entrusted by God to take care of His world, so it is only natural that I seek divine wisdom to determine how to use the resources He has entrusted to my care to take care of His world. I need to leave the world better than I found it, which means I must have guidance to make wise decisions and strength to overcome the temptation to do otherwise.

Who is your role model for good stewardship? Who do you know that takes Micah's challenge seriously? What have you learned from them? What is different about them than those that ignore Micah's challenge?

Who is looking to you to set an example for them? Who needs you to add Micah's voice to the voices of our consumer driven culture? What changes do you need to make to be that faithful role model? Why not talk to God about this right now.

Until Sunday,
Bob

Wedding

Congratulations to Andy Salvadore and Sara Gonzalez who were married November 3; Andy is the son of Bob and Clydie Salvadore.

2007-2008 Basketball Season

League	Cost	Start Date	No. of Weeks
5-6 Year Old Coed	\$90	Saturday, January 5	6
7-8 Year Old Coed	\$95	Saturday, January 5	8
9-11 Year Old Boys/Girls	\$95	Saturday, December 8	9
12-14 Year Old Boys/Girls	\$95	Saturday, December 8	9
High School Boys/Girls	\$95	Mon. & Tues. Dec. 10/11	10
Men's Open & Men's 35+	\$75	Friday, January 4	10

Reversible Mesh Jersey provided

Skills assessment for 7-14 yr teams - Early November

Practices 1 hour per week beginning - Mid-November

Weekday practices for 5-14 year olds on Smoke Rise teams

On-line sign-up only at impactbasketballleague.com

Co-op Christmas Cards on Sale

Christmas cards to raise money for the co-ops will be on sale on Wednesday nights from 5:30-6:30 p.m. by the fellowship hall and Sunday mornings from 10:40-11 a.m. and 12:00-12:15 p.m. in the upper breezeway. A donation of \$5.00 or more will purchase a card.

What a great way to honor the special people in your life and support the Co-ops at the same time.

Prayer Retreat Scheduled

Do you value prayer? Would you like to deepen your understanding of prayer? Would you like to help us develop a dynamic prayer ministry in our congregation? Come to a Prayer Retreat sponsored by Best Practices for Ministry Network

Led by Dr. Loyd Allen, Professor of Spiritual Formation
at McAfee School of Theology

February 15-16, at Simpsonwood Conference Center in Atlanta

\$99.00 per person for double occupancy room

Deadline is November 15, 2007 with a \$50.00 deposit

Pick up a registration form in the Sanctuary Breezeway

FINANCIAL STATISTICS

As of October 31, 2007

Three hundred seventy families have pledged \$1,875,654.40 to date for the 2007 Budget.

	YEAR TO DATE (THIS YEAR)	BUDGET TO DATE
INCOME		
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$1,841,390.69	\$2,104,170.00
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	46,269.49	0.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,887,660.18	\$2,104,170.00
EXPENSES		
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$1,569,349.18	\$1,662,330.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – WORSHIP	37,828.35	34,950.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – EDUCATION	94,981.55	124,092.00
TOTAL MISSIONS	173,322.13	181,952.00
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	55,242.20	57,000.00
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	4,818.26	15,330.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,935,541.67	\$2,075,654.00
MORTGAGE BALANCE:	\$ 279,692.83	
FAITH, FAMILY & FUTURE CAMPAIGN:		
Four hundred forty-nine families have pledged \$2,689,784.00 to the Faith, Family & Future Campaign.		
Funds designated by Finance Comm	\$ 30,000.00	
Add'l Funds from Finance Comm	+ 163,972.14	
Contributions	+2,591,535.41	
Expenses	-2,779,552.45	
Cash Balance	\$ 5,955.10	



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OUR STAFF

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Linda Cummings	Interim Church Administrator/Senior Adults
Kathy Dobbins	Minister of Spiritual Formation
Danny Vancil	Minister of Worship & Music
E. Ernest Forrester, Jr.	Minister of Families with Youth
Kellie Denton	Minister to Families with Children
Tim W. Adcox	Minister of Missions/Recreation
Amanda Burton	Nursery Director
Truett Gannon, D. Min.	Pastor Emeritus

Smoke Rise Counseling Center

**Affiliate of Care and Counseling Center of Georgia
770-469-6547**

Gloria White, M. Div., LCSW	Counselor
Rene Ely, M. Div., LMFT	Counselor
Gina Campbell, M. Div., LCSW	Counselor

Chrismon Time!

Christmas will be here soon! We need folks willing to help out with our 2007 Children's Chrismons for the Family Christmas Eve service. Contact Kellie Denton, Amanda Burton or Cathy Decuir. Helping hands needed, crafty skills not necessary!