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NEEDS AND WANTS...

The gift-giving season makes us answer the question, "What would you like for Christmas?" It can be easy to answer if you've been thinking of something you really need, but it can be difficult if you are the kind of person that buys what you need when you need it. Some of us just CANNOT postpone gratification; it makes gift-giving really hard. So maybe you don't need

anything, but there are a few things you would like to have – wants. Wants are not bad. In fact, sometimes a gift is more precious not because it is needed, but because it is wanted, desired.

We have so many needs: food, clothes, love, significance, purpose; not the kinds of things that can be wrapped and put under the tree, but needs. In the face of all we need, it is impressive that the One who meets all the needs has no needs. He did not create because he had a need, He did not set free because He had a need, He did not come because He had a need – He came because we have a need. God never needs anything – theologically we call this self-sustaining. What is more, even in all His giving, He never suffers loss. The infinity of His nature means that no matter how much He gives, He cannot be depleted.

So why? If He did not have a need anywhere along the line, why would He give so much? You know the answer, but it is worth saying out loud this time of year: LOVE. God so loved, that he gave... (John 3:16) It is a more powerful motivator than need. It can feel every bit as urgent, as important, as life-saving. Everything God does for you He does because He wants to. Remember, He does not need anything! Every part of your connection with God is given to us because of love. When it comes down to needs or wants, remember God's love and the deep desire He has to show you His love, not because He needs to, but just because He wants to. And that reality makes it mean more, doesn't it?

~ Pastor Gregg Borror



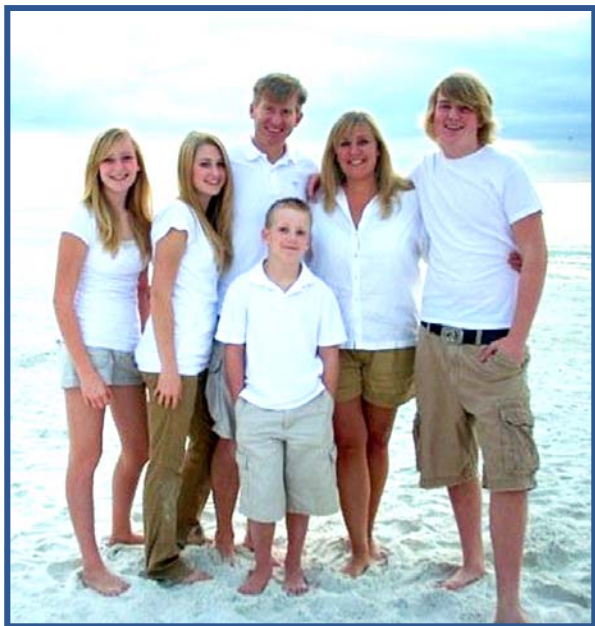
The MPC offices and facilities will be closed December 24-25 in observance of Christmas.

We will reopen at 12 noon On Monday, December 28



The MPC offices and facilities will be closed on January 1 in observance of New Year's Day

VERY IMPORTANT VOLUNTEERS: Steve & Karen Cowden



“A sense of humor gets you through a lot!” Karen should know – her family includes four kids, an artist husband, two cats and a dog. With a degree in Elementary Education from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, Karen was well trained for motherhood. She and Steve met in college. He had received a B.S. in Applied Art and Design in 1986 and was working as an artist for the Orange County Register when they married in 1987, the year she graduated. Her mother, lone, had been fighting breast cancer for four years, but expressed a desire to “dance at their wedding.” Steve and Karen got married on her parents’ 28th wedding anniversary, in Fallbrook, CA. lone did get to dance at their wedding, but died a year later.

Steve was raised Catholic, until his parents divorced when he was in 6th grade. He and his twin brother, Scott, had attended catechism classes, but following their mother’s spiritual searching, both brothers became Christians. They attended Peninsula Bible Church, pastored by Ray Stedman. Steve also has an older brother and older sister.

Karen was raised in a Presbyterian home, but feels she made her faith her own at the age of 20 when she attended a college briefing, where Tony Campolo spoke. After graduation, Karen taught Kindergarten and she and Steve were part of a Young Marrieds group at Mariners Church in Newport Beach, CA. They looked forward to raising a family, but felt they would not be able to afford to do so in California. So they prayed and asked God for a change. Within 6 weeks, Steve had been offered a job as an artist at the Oregonian. (He is still employed by the Oregonian, and also does freelance work...most notably for National Geographic and Solar World. He also does commissioned portrait work.)

In 1990, Karen finished teaching and sold their condominium while Steve left for Portland. He found MPC in the yellow pages! During his first visit, he met John McCroskey and Doug Anderson, who were very friendly to him and invited him over to watch the Blazers, who were in the play-offs that year. When Karen joined Steve in Portland, they got involved in Dorothy Ritzmann’s Young Marrieds class, where they met the Kincaids, the Mircovichs, the Grimbergs, the Adrians, and the McDonald’s – in addition to the Anderson’s and McCroskey’s. These friends were all the family they had here in Oregon, so they were happy to serve on the social committee and help with Meals for Moms when the group experienced its very own baby boom.

Karen and Steve have both served in the Nursery, worked with 3 year olds with Mary Jane Bowling, and were involved in Awana for 8 years, as Cubbies Directors. Steve went on to teach Sunday School to 3rd-6th graders and now helps out with the Youth Group. Steve thinks Pastor Chris Henderson is “awesome,” and enjoyed his first trip to Esperanza B.C. last summer. Karen has served on the Women’s Ministry Team for about 7 years, in the capacity of registration for both the Women’s Christmas Brunch and the annual retreat and she is a barista in the Mountain Perk Café. She and Steve would like to serve in ministry together in the future.

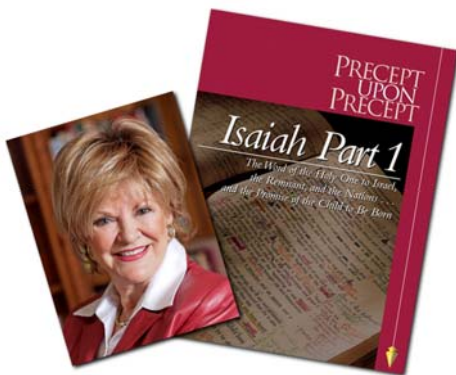
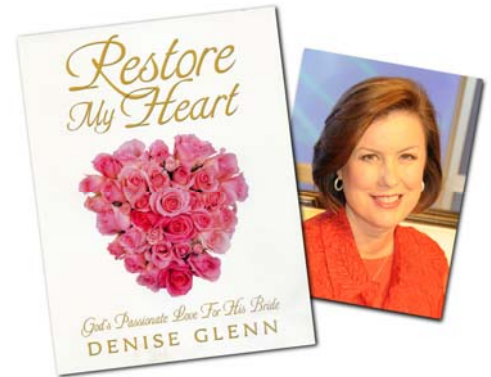
Karen has applied to graduate school to get her endorsement in Special Education and has been substitute teaching for the last 6 years, which has been perfect for a family with 4 kids—Reed, 18; Abby, 16; Sophie, 14 and Trent, 11. Mountain Park Church is so blessed to have the Cowdens as part of our family!

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

WINTER & SPRING BIBLE STUDIES

Women's Bible study is offering two 7 week studies this winter and spring. As a change of pace, our first study will be Denise Glenn's, "Restore My Heart, God's Passionate Love For His Bride," and the second study will be Beth Moore's, "Stepping Up." Our Precept study with Kay Arthur is the continuation of "Isaiah Part 1." Join us January 5 at 9:15 a.m. in the Family Center Fireside Room for brunch, and the opportunity to hear Karen Dye as she shares her love of restoring antique dolls and their stories. Or join the Wednesday evening Bible study January 6, at 7 p.m. in the Café for a Potluck and the opportunity to join in Denise Glenn's study "Restore My Heart" and Beth Moore's study "Stepping Up." Childcare is provided for our Tuesday morning study only.

Denise Glenn's study, "Restore My Heart," brings us eternal truths for today's women in the ancient Jewish customs and wedding traditions. We will learn how a toothbrush, a pickle, and heavenly sandpaper can illuminate God's Word. Join the wedding celebration and learn how to have your heart restored to its original design, transporting God's love to you, through you, and to others. Cost for these studies will be \$25 each or \$43 for both. To register, sign up December 27, January 3 or at the brunch or potluck. If you have any questions, contact Gloria Bremner at 503-635-3319.



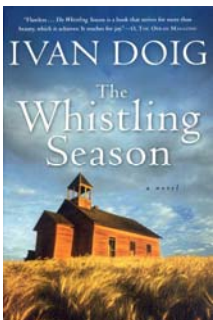
While **Kay Arthur's Precept study of "Isaiah Part 1"** is a continuation, it isn't too late to join. In this study written by the prophet Isaiah, you will be blessed by the Lord's word to Israel, to the remnant and to the nations, as well as His promise of the Child to be born. You will learn, as Kay Arthur teaches, how God "deals with those who claim Him as God, but do not honor Him in the way that they live. And we'll find the destiny of nations, the future of all mankind... including ours." Cost is \$25. Call Becky Hunting at 503- 636-6339 to register.

LOVE CHANGES EVERYTHING

Ladies, tickets are still available for the Women's Christmas Brunch to be held on Saturday, December 5, 9:30-11:30 AM. If you haven't yet bought yours, stop by the Women's Ministries table in the lobby on Sundays. This annual event is something you don't want to miss. Tickets are \$12 each.

Music will be provided by the Oregon Children's Choir and the featured speaker is Katrina Cummins. There will also be a "Rescued Fashions" show with the clothes being donated to Shepherd's Door – a ministry which provides support to abused and homeless women and their children.

LIBRARY NEWS



LO READS: *The Whistling Season*

The novel for the 2010 Lake Oswego Reads is now available for \$6 in the church library. The author, Ivan Doig, will be speaking Wednesday, February 17 at 7 PM in the LOHS auditorium. Tickets are required. A discussion will be held at the Mountain Perk Café Thursday, February 25, at 10 AM and on other days at other locations. Sign-up is necessary for the discussions. For more information, follow the LO Reads link on the Lake Oswego library website at www.ci.oswego.or.us/library.

DECEMBER Events Calendar

Thursday, December 3

Awana, Christmas Celebration,
bring Adopt A Club ornaments,
6:30 PM, Gym

Saturday, December 5

Awana packs & delivers food
to Rivergate Church

Thursday, December 10

Awana, Store Night #1, 6:30 PM, Gym

Tuesday, December 15

Upward Basketball Evaluations,
6 to 8 PM, Gym

Thursday, December 17

No Awana

Deadline to turn in shoeboxes for
House of Zion

Sonshine Express Preschool
Christmas program, 7 PM

Thursday, December 24

MPC Christmas Eve service, 5 PM

Friday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

Thursday, December 31

No Awana
Happy New Year!

OPERATION SHOE BOX

Please support the annual community outreach sponsored by Sonshine Express Preschool and the Children's Ministry as we partner together to provide a special Christmas season for the children of migrant families in Woodburn. Shoe boxes filled with useful and festive items will be distributed by the House of Zion to boys and girls ages 2-11 during Christmas week. We need your help to meet an ever-growing need to help spread the hope, joy, and true meaning of the season. A list of suggested items along with instructions will be available on December 6 in the lobby and the Children's wing, along with all of our available shoeboxes. Pick up one or more from our supply or provide your own. Filled and wrapped boxes (lids separately, please) can be placed under the lobby Christmas tree prior to December 17.

BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JESUS

The most anticipated birthday party of the year will be Sunday, December 20! Friends are welcome to join us as we celebrate the birth of baby Jesus during the 11:00 a.m. service hour. Join us in the Children's wing as we anticipate the joy of Christmas morning with a cake, candles, and a special tribute to the Lamb of God.

Last year, I wrote about the beautiful carved lamb which traveled far from the Holy Land and still rests on top of my computer, privy to many a knee mail sent from my heart to His ears. Unique and one-of-a-kind, I imagine the pleasure he brought to the carver who crafted him out of an inanimate piece of wood. So too, I see His face as he gazes upon each of our special children fashioned in His image and given to our spiritual care and nurturing, both individually and as a church body. This year, even more so than last, I have so many people to thank and call by name for the lending of their spiritual gifts and valuable time to our thriving Children's Ministries, and I hope to grow in relationship with even more of you as time passes. As we all wait with held breath for the birth of the Messiah, I pray for the myriad blessings of the season to be with all of you. "Like a shepherd He will tend His flock. In His arms He will gather the lambs and carry them in His bosom." Isaiah 40:11 (NIV)

PARENTS: NEED A SHOPPING BREAK?

We are thinking of hosting an afternoon viewing of *The Polar Express* complete with fuzzy slippers, and snacks to give parents an opportunity to do some Christmas shopping knowing their children are safe and having fun at the same time. Saturday, December 19, 1-4 PM has been scheduled on the gym's mega screen depending upon the level of interest expressed. Please call Mary Adams at the church, 503-635-3443 or send her an e-mail : MaryA@mtnparkchurch.org by December 13 to sign up or offer to help.

*O come, O come
Emmanuel*



AWANA



AWANA - 24/7 MINISTRIES

Each week, over 1.2 million boys and girls in our country and around the world gather to hear God's message of salvation through Awana clubs. Every Thursday night dozens gather at Mountain Park. I am happy to be a part of this very important program at our Church.

I had attended a couple of Awana meetings at Lake Bible with two of my grandsons a few years ago, and it looked like this could be a good place for me to serve.

So, shortly after my retirement in April, I mentioned to our Awana Commander, Cynthia Kenyon, that I would be interested in helping out if she needed me.

I had no idea what a big impact that brief conversation would have on my walk with the Lord. After a few more discussions with Cynthia, she asked me to become the Director of the "Trek" program. Trek is the name of the club for sixth, seventh and eighth grade students.

Since then, our team has grown to include a Secretary, and 6 Leaders. This is a group of very dedicated, loving, individuals focused on setting a good example, and teaching the word of God to our children. We currently have 13 members plus guests. We are positioned to give each of them close attention and I believe we are ready for some aggressive recruiting.

For the "clubbers," it is all about fun, games, friends, and learning the word of God. When the 09-10 school year ends, most of our members will have memorized well over 50 Bible verses and will have participated in 24 different lessons. No doubt the light will shine in them even brighter.

For me, it means that I am deeper in the Word than ever before. There really is no better way to learn than to teach. Being involved has brought me closer to many other members of our church, and has given me a feeling of serving the Lord in a very important, meaningful way. One of our veteran leaders, Harmon Sommer, said it best when he told me he believed he was impacting future generations that he will never meet. What a great thought. If you are looking for a way to serve, I would highly recommend considering working with our children, the future of Christianity.

Blessings and Merry Christmas to All,
Michael Huber

UPWARD BASKETBALL



The Upward Basketball cheerleading squad is growing by leaps and bounds heading into its second season. To accommodate that growth, we need more adults and high school girls to help. All materials are provided, easy to do, and fun to execute, and require a commitment of Saturdays and a light practice schedule to be arranged after the holiday season. If you are interested in coaching and/or cheering, please contact Michelle Dolan at 503-313-2959 or by e-mail at cmcdolan@yahoo.com. A sign up option will be at the evaluation clinic on Tuesday, December 15, 6-8 PM. Go team!



THE SEASON OF THANKSGIVING

'Tis the season for Thanksgiving, and I'm feeling it! It's been just a little over a year since my wife, Celia, and I started coming to and serving at Mountain Park Church. Everyone talked about how much people loved Jesus and one another within the church body. I have sensed this throughout the past year, and after our Thanksgiving service on November 22, this was further reinforced in my mind. I so deeply appreciated the personal openness that was evident on that morning, and was moved by the depth with which so many spoke while relaying story upon story of both hardship and praise, pain and joy. But what was most apparent and inspiring to me was that the

praise and joy accompanied the hardship and pain; they were not mutually exclusive!

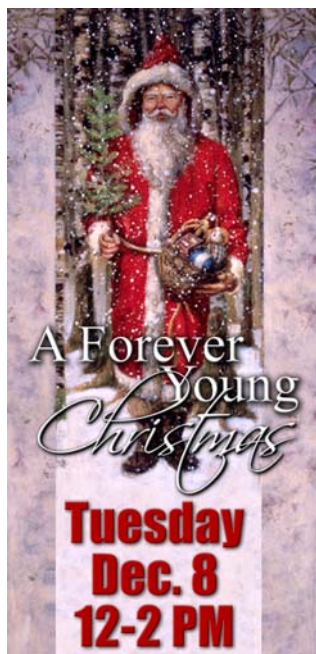
What a testimony of how God's people at Mountain Park love Jesus, and rely upon Him for sustenance and life. It is no small thing when one bypasses the visible "sirens" in life, the things that are readily available that claim to provide comfort and refuge, and opts for the abiding kind of relationship with Jesus that is more slowly fostered and sometimes coupled with crucibles of refinement and seasons of perseverance. The former is like a life of folly, the latter a life of wisdom. Folly beckons loudly and provides quick friendship and deliverance, but abandons in the end. Wisdom is a calm assurance that leads to ever deepening trust, and gradually a marriage that lasts.

What I saw on that Sunday was Wisdom exemplified; people loving other people, rooting for the lost, hanging in there through tough, tough lives, serving the sick, cherishing the journey, no matter the cost. What a beautiful display of faith, and picture of the love of Jesus... in no better way can a person's love for Jesus be made manifest than through how they love the ones put in the paths of their lives. I see this happening within the body of Mountain Park Church. And of this I am thankful to be a part.

Steve West

Pastor of Adult Ministries & Worship

FOREVER YOUNG



Join us on Tuesday, December 8, from 12 to 2 PM for an old fashioned, Forever Young Christmas party with caroling, stories and games. Music will be provided by a string quartet. And let's not forget all the delicious food! Those with last names beginning with A - P are asked to bring a salad or vegetable dish. Those with last names beginning with Q - Z are asked to bring a dessert. The main dish will be provided by the committee. There will be a \$3 charge for the party. For reservations or information, call Walt or Barb Gabler at 503-636-0285.

There will also be an opportunity for you to bless children from low income families. We ask that you bring a gift valued at no more than \$10 and to label it for a girl or boy.

MUSLIMS COMING TO CHRIST

For over 1400 years there has been unease between the great religions of the world: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Wars have been fought between surrogates of the great faiths and they have historically remained ethnically distinct, with few exceptions. That is now changing.

"More Muslims have come to Christ in the past two decades than in any other time in history," David Garrison writes in *Church Planting Movements*. We rarely hear about this in the news or in the churches of the West or East. This is a big untold story that is really good news.

World Christian Encyclopedia 2001 edition reports that in Africa the number of Christians had jumped from 9.9 million in 1900 to 360 million in 2000. This was an enormous growth and a significant percentage of it was from Muslim converts.

In Iran the Islamic Revolution promised so much but delivered so little. The theocratic tyranny of the ayatollahs has proven more cruel and corrupt than the system it replaced in 1979. "In the last 20 years more Iranians have come to Christ than in the last 14 centuries" according to Lazarus Yeghmezar, an Iranian-born evangelist. At the time of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, there were about 500 known Muslim Background Believers (MBBs).

By the year 2000, a survey of Christian demographics trends reported 220,000 Christians inside Iran, of which between 4,000 and 20,000 were MBBs. (*Operation World 2001*, Johnstone) Today the number of MBBs in Iran is unknown, but some political dissidents estimate between 4 to 7 million. It seems most Iranian MBBs are not coming to Christ primarily through *The Passion of the Christ* or *JESUS* film, but through dreams and visions of Jesus.

*"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, our old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions." Joel 2:28 (NKJV)*

One of the most prominent Muslims to convert to Christianity is Mosab Hassan Yousef, the son of a leader of the Hamas terrorist organization. Yousef, while not reporting any dreams or visions, was troubled by many aspects of the Islamic religion. When he spent time in an Israeli prison, he became disillusioned by the harsh treatment and torture that Hamas members inflicted on their own Palestinian people. Yousef studied the Bible and became convinced that it was the Word of God.

Although dreams and visions play a role in the conversion of about 25% of MBBs, love convinces the other 75% that Jesus (Isa) is the Christ. An extensive study at Fuller Theological Seminary's School of World Mission shows that love in action and lifestyle of Christians is most compelling for many Muslims.

There is still a lot of work to be done. An international network of 20 Christian organizations has compiled data on unreached Muslim people groups. They found that there are approximately 247 'unengaged' Muslim people groups with population of 100,000 or more. 'Unengaged' means no church planting work is being done. Worldwide there are about 3 Christian workers per million Muslims.

"Look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest." John 4:35 (NKJV)

Ron Boys, Mountain Park Church Missions Committee

IN MEMORIAM

Stan Olsen

(Former MPC member)
November 4

Dorothy Ritzman

(Former MPC member)
November 8

THANK YOU

Barbara Dennis

What a blessing to have such a precious group praying for me, sending me their good wishes, and the very nice bouquet of flowers. Prayer does wonders in the healing of body and soul. Thank you so much.

Jamie Agidius

What a great day of pine wood derby racing at the Awana Grand Prix. From what I could tell, all the kids had a great time watching their car ZOOM down the track. I want to express my sincere gratitude for all the wonderful volunteers. Without you, willing to take time out of your busy schedule, none of this can take place. The entire day was seamless. Again, thank you very much and have a happy holiday season.



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