

Southwest

Church of the Nazarene

CHURCH NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 23, 2020 – VOLUME 40

SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR CHRISTMAS

Sometimes, God just does something special for us at this time of the year. I recognized this after our service Sunday. There is always a joyful spirit the Sunday before Christmas, it seems; the laughter, fellowship, and the holy presence of the Lord, however, were especially sweet this last week.

As the service began, the church was full. The fourth Advent reading and the lighting of the candles were done. Then, we worshipped with Christmas songs by our "younger" praise team. We prayed for many who are going through difficult times and thanked God He is with us. We dedicated a sweet baby, William, born of his parents Kado and Elizabeth Kapinga, new members of our church. Following this, we celebrated Dave and Dana Metcalf by giving them both Distinguished Service Awards for their commitment and service to the church and the youth. Their surprised looks were priceless! We then enjoyed an acapella rendition from the Broce and Fox families and their friend of the song "Mary Did You Know." The message for the day centered on "Unexpected Worship" when the Wise Men followed the star to the door of Joseph's and Mary's home. They found Jesus with His mother Mary, and they fell down and worshipped Him. After closing with a beautiful song, "The King of My Heart," we were dismissed to Christmas treats awaiting us at the exit doors!

It may sound like a normal Christmas Sunday, but this one seemed different. God did something special for us. Amid a spreading virus that has shut down many churches, caused some congregants to be sick and others to stay at home for safety concerns, this pastor wasn't sure this day was going to happen! Sometimes, I feel the Lord simply smiles down upon us and blesses us.

On Monday, December 21st, God again did "something special." They call it the "great conjunction" where Saturn and Jupiter draw close together in the sky. NASA writer, Bill Ingalls, tells us "the two giant planets will appear a tenth of a degree apart." He goes on to explain, "The planets regularly appear to pass each other in the solar system, with the positions of Jupiter and Saturn being aligned in the sky about once every 20 years. What makes this year's spectacle so rare, then? It's been nearly 400 years since the planets passed *this* close to each other in the sky, and nearly 800 years since the alignment of Saturn and Jupiter occurred at night, as it will for 2020, allowing nearly everyone around the world to witness this 'great conjunction.'" (Bill Ingalls, Editor: Bill Keeter, www.nasa.gov/feature/the-great-conjunction-of-jupiter-and-saturn).

NASA calls this a mere coincidence in timing due to it being during the winter solstice, the longest night of the year. I merely think God wanted as many people in the world to see it as possible.

My prayer this Christmas is that the Lord will do "something special" for you, to reveal His power and love for you. As the angel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. ³⁷ ***For nothing is impossible with God***" (Luke 1:35-37).

Merry Christmas!

Pastor and Cindy

Praises:

- Praise the Lord for a beautiful service Sunday! We even had to put out extra chairs! God is doing something special in our midst.
- Praise the Lord for Dave and Dana Metcalf! We appreciate the Metcalfs and their love for the church and the youth. Their ministry has touched many lives!
- Praise the Lord for many getting over the virus! So thankful for God's healing touch on so many. God is good!
- Praise the Lord for Mason Cook's successful surgery! Jewell hopes he will be home for Christmas. Praise the Lord!

Prayer Needs:

- Church Prayer Needs can be found in the emailed and mailed versions of the newsletter.

We Three Kings (Kings of Orient)

We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain moor and mountain
Following yonder star

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain
Gold I bring to crown Him again
King forever ceasing never
Over us all to reign

Glorious now behold Him arise
King and God and sacrifice
Alleluia alleluia
Peals through the earth and skies

Chorus

O star of wonder star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading still proceeding
Guide us to Thy perfect light

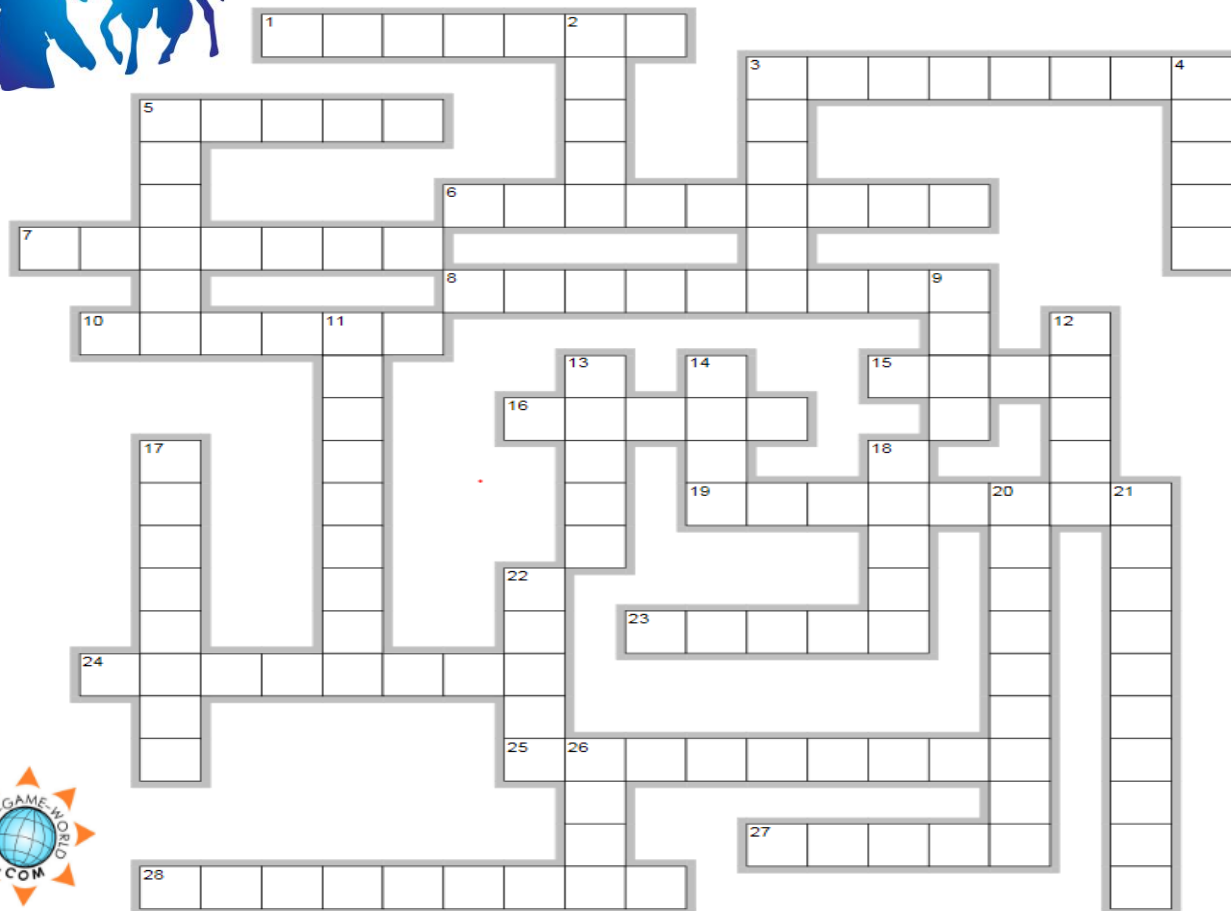
*John Henry Hopkins Jr.,
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"Thanks be unto
God for his
unspeakable gift."

2 Corinthians 9:15



The Birth of Christ Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

1. Angel who told Mary that she'd have a Son
3. "The holy one to be born will be called the ____."
5. Old Testament prophet who said a ruler over Israel would be born in Bethlehem.
6. Where Joseph and Mary went to register for census
7. "Glory to God in the ____"
8. Governor of Syria when census was taken
10. Occupation of Elizabeth's husband
15. Wise men from the east
16. The angel told Mary she had found ____ with God.
19. Town in which Mary was living before the birth
23. The king of Judea at the time of Christ's birth
24. Name of the Caesar who called for a census
25. What Mary and Joseph offered at the Temple
27. The Wise Men brought gold, incense and ____ to Jesus.
28. Elizabeth's husband

DOWN

2. An angel told Joseph to flee to this country to keep the Baby safe
3. Devout man who waited at the Temple to see the Christ
4. God warned the Wise Men in a ____ to take a different route home.
5. Where Mary laid Jesus after wrapping him in cloths
9. What led the Wise Men from the east to Jesus
11. They were tending flocks when an angel told them of Christ's birth
12. Number of days after his birth when Jesus was presented at the Temple
13. "He will be great...and he will reign over the house of ____ forever..."
14. Name of Elizabeth's baby
17. Name for Jesus that means, "God with us."
18. Jesus would be given the throne of this father
20. Mary's relative who was also expecting a child
21. Elizabeth was filled with the ____ when Mary visited her.
22. Name that was to be given to Mary's son
26. Prophetess at the Temple who gave thanks for the Child

** If you get stumped, you can find the answers in Matthew, Chapters 1-2 and Luke, Chapters 1-2 in the New International Version.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, December 23rd – No Evening Prayer Meeting

Thursday, December 24th – 6:30pm Christmas Eve
Communion & Candlelight
Service

Sunday, December 27th – 10:40am Worship Service &
Children's Church (Jesus'
Birthday party for children)
– No Teen Quizzing
– No R!OT Youth Group

Wednesday, December 30th – No Evening Prayer Meeting

Friday, January 1st – 7pm R!OT Youth Lock-In (will stay
from Friday at 7pm to Saturday at 7am)

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Thanks to Nadine Fafard (See Luke 2:1-16) 12-24-2001
**THAT'S THE BEST ONE-STAR HOTEL THAT
I'VE EVER SEEN**

Christmas Eve
Communion and
Candlelight
6:30pm Service



Tuesday,
January 12, 2021
Board Meeting
6:30pm. Have
reports to Katrina
by January 8th.

MERRY
CHRISTMAS!

Celebrate the Savior



R!OT Youth
Lock-In

*from 7pm Friday, January 1st
to 7am Saturday, January 2nd*

Teens: invite your friends for a fun night of unlimited pizza, games, skating, and fun! The cost is \$20 per person. Complete the form found on the Facebook page. Forms and money are due Sunday, Dec. 27th. See Dave or Dana Metcalf for details.