



Christmas Eve
SERVICE

Christmas Eve Services

On Friday, December 24th we will hold
Christmas Eve services at:

5:00 PM

Children and Family Service

7:00 & 9:00 PM

Contemporary Services

11:00 PM Traditional Service

The Sacrament of communion will be celebrated at all four services.
Individual candles will be lit at the latter three services only.
There will be no service on December 25th.

On Sunday, December 26th we will have one combined service at 9:15 AM.



Merry Christmas from the Roberts Family

*And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."
Luke 2:10 (ESV)*

It's hard to believe that Christmas time is already here. Last year Jami, Emily, Mark, Ben and I wanted each of you to know that we appreciated you and the opportunity to share in your lives so we sent you Christmas cards to mark the occasion. This year we won't be able to send out cards but we wanted to take the time to let each of you to know how much we appreciate you and the opportunity to serve you together in ministry. When a Church calls a pastor, they also call their entire family to the ministry. Jami, Emily, Mark and Ben each help me to serve as your pastor by supporting and loving me as well as supporting and loving you as our own extended family. We truly want the best for you and especially wanted to share this sentiment with you at this Christmas season. Our hope is that the great joy pronounced by the angels will be yours in abundance. Merry Christmas to you all!

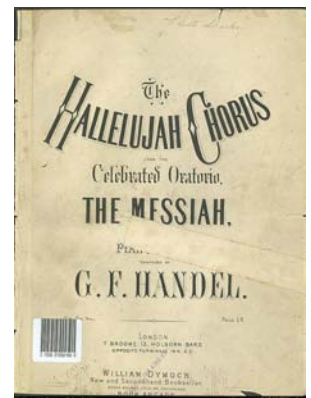
Love, John, Jami, Emily, Mark & Ben Roberts

Music Notes and Quotes

by Emily Ottwein

The Praise Choir and the Chancel Choir invite YOU to join them as they sing the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *Messiah*. This will be sung at the one Worship Service on December 26th at 9:15 AM. Rehearsals will be on Wednesday, December 15th and Wednesday, December 22th at 8:15 PM in the Sanctuary. Please contact Emily at eottwein@eden-ucc.org or 656-4330 with any questions.

The Eden Brass Quintet will be providing a pre-service Christmas concert on December 26th starting at 8:45 AM in the Sanctuary. Please come to worship early that day to hear their beautiful music.



"The devil does not stay where music is."
Martin Luther



Youth News

by Erin Swank

Summer Trip Deposits

It is hard to believe that we are already asking you to commit to being with us this summer on the youth trips, but the time has come! Remember, the high school youth are going to Centrifuge in North Carolina from Sunday, June 26 – Sunday, July 3. We will spend our time connecting with God through worship, speakers, Bible study, outdoor activities, meeting kids from around the country and connect with one another as we travel and live together. Your non-refundable trip deposit is \$50 and due on January 23rd. The middle school group will be heading back to Jonathan Creek Camp on Kentucky Lake from Sunday, June 5 – Friday, June 10. At the camp you will hear some amazing speakers and music, which will help draw you closer to God. You will also get to meet kids from all over the country, and participate in some amazing outdoor activities like skiing, climbing walls and towers, mud pits, mountain biking, Frisbee and other games or seminars. Your non-refundable deposit is \$75 and also due on February 6th. I really hope that many of you sign up to go with us, and I guarantee that it will be a trip that you won't forget!

Christmas Party

We hope all the youth will join us for a night of fun games, activities, food, devotional and the gift exchange. The party will be on Sunday, December 12 from 6:00-8:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. If you want to participate in the gift exchange, bring a wrapped, uni-sex gift that is \$5 and under with you to the party. Don't tell anyone what it is- it will ruin the fun! Sign up with Erin by Wednesday, December 8 at eswank@eden-ucc.org or 656-4330.

Youth Pizza, Cookie, & Pie Pick-Up

If you supported the youth group summer trips by purchasing a pizza kit, please read the following information carefully. The kits must be picked up during the following time: **Tuesday, December 15 in the Fellowship Lobby from 5:00 – 6:30 PM.**

The 30 Hour Famine

The youth will be participating in the nationwide 30 Hour Famine. This important event will raise funds for World Vision, a Christian relief organization. They provide food, water, shelter, medicine and child sponsorship for countries all over the world. The youth will be going without food for 30 hours in order to identify with the poor. We will be hosting a lock-in at the church from 7:00 PM on Friday, January 14 till 3:00 PM, Saturday, January 15. During the lock-in we will support one another in our efforts, do activities that teach us about hunger related issues, and participate in a service project. As church members, you can support the youth in two ways: First, pray that being a part of this event will change the participants. Secondly, you can make a donation to the church, which will be sent to World Vision and their efforts to combat issues of global poverty. If you have any questions, or you are a youth who wishes to sign-up (no later than January 12), please contact Erin at 656-4330 or eswank@eden-ucc.org

Middle School Girl's Bible Study

If you are a middle school girl, don't forget that we are meeting to explore the Bible and see what it says about being a young woman of God. The group meets from 4:00-5:00 PM on Mondays in the Fellowship Lounge. Contact Erin at 656-4330 or eswank@eden-ucc.org with questions and we hope to see you there!

NO Youth Group & Confirmation

There will be no youth group on Wednesday the 29th or Confirmation on Tuesday the 28th & Wednesday 29th due to the Christmas holiday.

A Season Of Worship Or A Lifestyle Of Worship

by Seth Bush



We are now into one of the holiest seasons on our Christian calendars. It is a season marked by preparation, excitement, anticipation, gatherings, and promises fulfilled. It is a chance for us to stand in wonder that the Creator of the Universe, our Heavenly Father, loved us enough to send Jesus to us who was no less divine than the Father yet was fully human as well. It gives me the chills as I think about the love that causes God the Father to take on our feeble skin and existence in order to come dwell with us.

Yet, this season will end and for many so will their devotion and worship of Jesus Christ until the Easter Season is upon us or maybe even until next Christmas. Or maybe it is that we turn off our worship when we leave the church doors after a worship service, prayer meeting, etc. We have very strange habits that speak to our inability to live a consistent life of worship to the One whose entrance into this world we celebrate during this Advent Season. The Better Business Bureau reported that last year on Black Friday, Americans spent an estimated **\$10.5 BILLION!!!** I am all about saving money and taking advantage of deals, but if we're honest, are we putting more effort into picking out the perfect gift for our friend, spouse, children, parents, etc. than we do into letting the meaning of Christmas affect not only our lives during this season, but throughout the year?

We allow our lives to be run by routines: shopping, gatherings, cooking the Christmas meal, getting to the church building, office party, etc. Our worship or reflection upon Christmas is confined to hearing the Christmas story at church. Jesus said in John 5, "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life...you refuse to come to ME that you may have life." Would Jesus say this about your life with him?

The Young Adult Sunday School Class and the Wednesday evening Bible Study are going through the book *Advent Conspiracy* to examine, how our use of time, energy and money communicate what we worship? We encourage you to join us in examining Christmas for what it is: the Holy, Triune God taking on flesh to dwell with us through Jesus Christ in order that we finally grasp his desire to have a relationship with us not just for this Christmas but for the rest of our lives here on Earth and for eternity. He wants this to sink in so we quit worrying about which color bow to buy for the gift, but we start worrying about whether our friends, neighbors, kids, parents, co-workers, fellow grocery shoppers, etc. know Christ! So will you worship Christ for this season and go back to life as normal on Dec. 26th, or will you worship Christ with your words (telling people about Christ), energy (volunteering at Church/shelter), and money (giving to Salvation Army/Angel Tree/World Vision/etc.)?

Joy and Peace to all this Advent Season!

by Joyce Gusewelle

Advent begins a new liturgical year. It is the coming of Jesus. It also is the time of Christmas celebration. It is the time of coming home. Coming means arriving, appearing, happening, occurring and meeting, to name a few. This time is used in anticipation and hope of Christ's coming.



Although there is much commercialism and secularism during this holy time, Christians have high hopes and expectations at this joyous season. Some positive points for all to take care of themselves are to reduce the stress of buying the perfect gift, eat healthy food, consume less alcohol, reduce role overload and increase exercise. Coping at Christmas can be more positive by planning ahead, keeping quiet time to pray, attending church, buying gifts within your financial means, staying healthy by eating and sleeping regularly and limiting exposure to colds and flu. For gifts for children, buy safe toys by reading and studying labels. Let's all pray for peace of mind, body and soul. A Blessed Christmas to all!

Angel Tree

The Angel Tree is here for the fourth year in the Fellowship Lobby. We are again working jointly with staff members at Eden Village to secure modest gifts for their residents. Please take an angel with a gift suggestion on the back and place the gift in gift bag with the angel attached. Please have your gift under the tree by Sunday, December 12th. We thank everyone for their generosity in advance.



Mitten Tree



The Outreach Committee will have the Annual Mitten Tree set up in Fellowship Lobby through December 12th. This year we are asking Eden members to help fill the tree

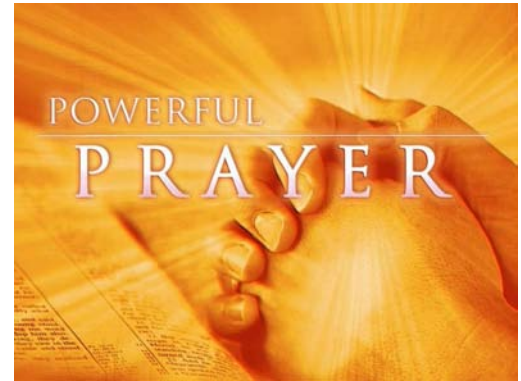
with items of clothing for the Edwardsville School Nurse's Fund. This organization is acutely aware of the need for additional clothing for children ages 5 through 10 who attend our elementary schools. Your donations will be distributed by the school nurses directly to the children needing them. We thank everyone for their generosity in advance.

Prayer

by Pastor Michael J. Marx, Sr.

Prayer: entreaty, appeal, plea, request, desire, hope, wish.

When we pray we implore, plead, beg, ask, entreat, request, urge and call upon God. We are motivated to pray when we hope, wish, yearn and crave. Our prayers include praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition and supplication. We may pray spontaneous prayers, memorized prayers or written prayers. Forms of prayer include silent, verbal, meditative and contemplative prayer. Prayer may be experienced in any place and at any time. We can pray in any position, standing, sitting or lying down.



For Christians, prayer is our response to God's gracious initiative for communication in a personal relationship initiated by God. God calls us to an intimate relationship wherein our deepest thoughts, feelings and intentions are offered to God, and wherein God offers his deepest blessings to us. In faith we pour out our hearts to the one who loves us without condition or reservation.

Jesus gives us the example for prayer in his own relationship with his heavenly Father. Jesus regularly practiced prayer, not as a studied discipline, but as a natural way of communing with God. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, both by precept and example. Hebrews 5:7 tells us that during his life on earth, Jesus offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. "Pray" or another form of the word is used 367 times in the NIV Bible. Prayer is a central practice of the Christian faith.

Eden Church wants you to share in the blessings of prayer. Prayer is a vital part of our worshiping together, of our Bible study and fellowship times and of other gatherings of the church. The Eden staff members gather each Monday at noon for a time of praying for people in our church, including those ill or hospitalized. We also pray for the written prayer requests received the previous day in our worship services. Email communication is used throughout the week to share prayer concerns among the pastoral and program staff of the church.

Each Monday evening at 6:00 PM is a special time when we gather together to pray for the ministry of the church and for one another. We teach about prayer and we practice prayer. Everyone is invited to attend. As your associate pastor, I am available to pray with you at any time. Please feel free to come to my office, to call me (656-4330), send me an email or a Facebook message. We can pray over the phone or meet together for a time of prayer. If you would like to learn more about prayer, individually or as a part of an existing small or large group, I will be glad to assist. The Eden web site has a Prayer page where you can request prayer or offer prayers for others. It can be found at www.eden-ucc.org/prayer.

Thank You

To all the Prayer Minutemen and especially Eunice Highlander for keeping me on the prayer list. Also Joyce Gusewelle for all the phone calls. I am finishing up my cancer treatments this week. To say I am thankful for my church family just doesn't seem like enough but God bless you all.

Janet J.

Thank you to everyone for the cards and best wishes for our 60th wedding anniversary. Also thank you to our family and Eden Women Guild for the flowers. You made our anniversary a happy one.

Chester and Ruth H.

Thank you to Pastors John and Mike and the Prayer Minutemen for their prayers, phone calls and visit during my recent surgery. Also thanks to all who sent cards.

Mildred K.

Thank you for your cards, prayers and loving concern during my recent illness and hospitalization. A special thanks to the Prayer, Minutemen, Pastors John and Mike and my family. I feel very blessed.

Harry N.

Thank you for your recent donation to Faith in Action. Your gift will be used to support the independence and well-being of seniors, people with disabilities and their families in our community.

Dawn S. and Marcia G.

Executive Co-Directors

Thank you for your recent generous donation. Your donation will help families right here in our community.

Judy M., Pantry Director

On behalf of the children and families that we serve daily, thank you for your recent donation. Your donation will help us live out our ministry to serve the most vulnerable members of our human family. Together we are making a world of difference.

Doni D.

Vice President Hoyleton Children's Home

Thanks to your support, our dedicated armed forces members in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan continue to enjoy a place to share the fellowship of friends, as well as the care-giving of our military chaplains. Your continued support to Holy Joe's Coffee House is truly appreciated.

Dean W., Senior Minister

NATIVITY SCENE POTS

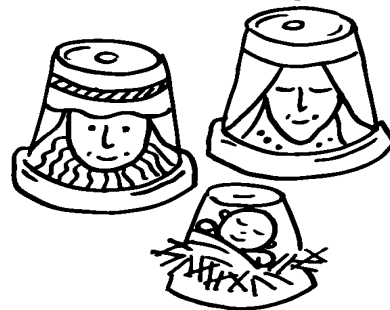
Celebrate the joy of Christmas — and remember Jesus' birth — by making this craft to decorate your home or to give as a gift.

What you need:

- 3 terra cotta pots (any size)
- Acrylic paints (including one for skin color)
- Paintbrush
- Craft glue (or a glue gun, with an adult to help)
- Brown yarn
- Material swatches
- Straw-colored raffia

What you do:

1. Decide which pot will be Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus. Turn each pot upside-down and paint a face on each one.
2. Decorate the pots by painting hair and clothes or by using yarn and material as hair and head coverings.
3. For baby Jesus, glue raffia along the bottom to look like straw in a manger.



Monthly Church Calendar

Since the Eden Leaflet is now being mailed every other month, the monthly church calendar will no longer be mailed with the newsletter. You will now find the calendar in the Narthex and Annex the last Sunday of the month. If you know of someone who is unable to attend church and who would like a calendar, please take one to them or have them call the office and we will mail one to them.



United Church of Christ

903 N. Second Street
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Periodical
Paid at
Edwardsville, IL

Worship Services
8:00 AM Traditional
9:15 & 10:30 AM
Contemporary
Sunday School
9:15 AM
Classes for all ages

Church Office 656-4330
Hours M-Th 8:00 AM-4:00 PM
Friday 8:00 AM-3:00 PM
Fax 656-4384
www.eden-ucc.org

When we feed the hungry, we serve Christ.

Thank you for contributions to the Glen Carbon-Edwardsville Food Pantry which serves those in need in our Community. For more information call the Pantry at 656-7506, 656-2963 or 656-8965.

Suggested Donations:
Shampoo, Dish Detergent and Person Hygiene Items
Containers are found in the Annex and Narthex of the Church

Going Green: Starting January 2011 we will be offering you the option to receive your newsletter by email only. If you are interested send an email to Sue at ssperduto@eden-ucc.org and let her know you would like to receive your newsletter electronically .

The *Eden Leaflet* will be published on January 25, 2010
All submissions must include a name and phone number, and be received in the office by January 13, 2011. We reserve the right to edit submissions for publication.

Next Deadline: 1/13/2011
Next Issue: 1/25/2011

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