

Youth Newsletter

January 2004

Alphas, Omegas Help Restock Food Pantry

When it was announced in November that the Bethlehem Food Pantry was in need of food items to help the needy during the upcoming holiday season, the church's Alpha Youth and Omega Youth Groups sprang into action.

First the Alpha Youth, then the Omega Youth, held a food scavenger hunt. The youth broke up into teams and went to our local Food Lion with \$20 each and a list of items to look for. After nearly 30 minutes, the teams returned to the church with their purchases to tally their scores. Points were awarded for each item purchased with the \$20 given, and bonus points were awarded to the team who purchased the most items and the team whose total purchase weighed the most. Also, bonus points were awarded for each item purchased that was on the team's scavenger list.

In the end, over \$175 of food items, weighing over 150 pounds, were purchased using the groups' missions money and donated to the Bethlehem Food Pantry.

Special thanks to all the leaders, parents, and youth that helped make this activity happen and helped make someone's holiday season a little brighter.



UNICEF NEWS

On Sunday, October 26, the Alpha Youth collected \$156 during their annual Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF campaign.

Thanks to the congregation and the community for your support!

Children Present Christmas Play

On Sunday, December 14, the children of Bethlehem Christian Church presented their annual Christmas Play.

Titled "What Would You Give the Baby Jesus?", the play focused on a Sunday School class discussion of what gift they would give the baby Jesus if he were born today, and one student's struggle with that question.

Many in the class said they would give gifts such as CD players, video games, clothes, etc., which did not seem right to Michelle, one of the students in the class and the play's lead character. After seeking the advice of others and searching deeply within her heart, she came to the conclusion that the best present she could give baby Jesus was herself.

Over 30 children, youth, and adults participated in the play, which was directed by Mike Barber and Terese Neblett, and over 100 proud parents and family members were in attendance.

A reception in Graham Hall followed the play, and the children enjoyed a special visit from Santa Claus.

Special thanks to all who helped produce the Christmas Play and the reception with Santa.

YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULES

SCOOTERS

January 4 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 11 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 18 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 25 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 February 1 Regular Meeting, **12:15pm-2:00pm**
Souper Bowl Sunday • please bring a non-perishable food item for the Food Pantry

VOYAGERS

January 4 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 11 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 18 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 25 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 February 1 Regular Meeting, **12:15pm-2:00pm**
Souper Bowl Sunday • please bring a non-perishable food item for the Food Pantry

PATHFINDERS

January 4 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 11 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 18 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 25 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 February 1 Regular Meeting, **12:15pm-2:00pm**
Souper Bowl Sunday • please bring a non-perishable food item for the Food Pantry

ALPHAS

January 4 Ice Skating Trip, 3:30pm-9:30pm
 January 11 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 18 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 24-27 SnowBlast 2K4, time, details, and specific trip dates within this range
 TBA
 January 30-31 Acquire the Fire, time and details
 TBA
 February 1 Regular Meeting, **12:15pm-2:00pm**
Souper Bowl Sunday • please bring a non-perishable food item for the Food Pantry

OMEGAS

January 2-3 Overnight Lock-In, 7:00pm-7:00am
 January 4 Ice Skating Trip, 3:30pm-9:30pm
 January 11 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 18 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 January 24-27 SnowBlast 2K4, time, details, and specific trip dates within this range
 TBA
 January 30-31 Acquire the Fire, time and details
 TBA
 February 1 Regular Meeting, **12:15pm-2:00pm**
Souper Bowl Sunday • please bring a non-perishable food item for the Food Pantry

For more detailed information about your group's schedule, please contact your group's leaders.

Alphas, Omegas Hold Fundraising Dinner, Thank Congregation for Support

On Sunday, December 7, the church's junior and senior high youth sponsored a Baked Chicken Luncheon following the Morning Worship service.

The menu consisted of boneless baked chicken breast, parsleyed potatoes, peas and carrots, salad, roll, drink, and dessert.

All proceeds will be used for the groups' various mission projects throughout the year. Some of the proceeds have already been used to buy food items to help restock Bethlehem's Food Pantry.

Special thanks to those who came out and supported the Alpha and Omega Youth!

Scooters Visit Coleman's Nursery

On Sunday, December 7, the Scooters group visited the Winter Wonderland at Coleman's Nursery.

Over fifteen two- through five-year-olds, leaders, and parents visited the holiday landmark for what is scheduled to be its last year of operation.

The children enjoyed the display of figurines and Christmas decorations, the elegant nativity scene, the kiddie rides, and much more.

Congratulations to those who participated in Youth Sunday on Sunday, November 2, and helped to make it a tremendous success!

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1 IS
SOUPER BOWL
SUNDAY!**

**SPECIAL REGULAR MEETING TIME
12:15PM-2:00PM
(FOLLOWING MORNING WORSHIP)
LUNCH PROVIDED**

**PLEASE BRING A NON-PERISHABLE
FOOD ITEM TO HELP RESTOCK
BETHLEHEM'S FOOD PANTRY FOR
THE NEEDY IN OUR COMMUNITY**

**Omegas Celebrate Christmas with
Progressive Dinner, Old-Fashioned
Christmas Caroling**

On Tuesday, December 23, fifteen high school youth and leaders celebrated Christmas with a Progressive Dinner and Christmas caroling.

The dinner began at about 5:00pm with hors d'ouvers at the home of Danny and Leigh Ann Graham.

The group then went Christmas caroling door-to-door in the Oak Ridge community as they made their way to the home of Johnny and Becke West, where they enjoyed dinner.

After dinner, the group indulged in dessert, provided by Russell and Terese Neblett.

**Youth Coordinator's Corner
by David Salerno**

Welcome to the new, improved Youth Newsletter!

Over the past several months, many have missed the regular information about the youth groups that had been appearing in the church newsletter.

As we begin the new year, we have rededicated ourselves to making sure that an informative youth newsletter is published each month during the youth group season.

Some suggestions have been made for improvements we could implement to make the Youth Newsletter as informative and useful as possible. But one of the most suggested improvements was to include a monthly column written by the Youth Coordinator, to provide more detailed and in-depth information about the youth group program.

Much information about the youth group program, including our mission, purpose, and

goals, can be found on the Youth Group Web Site at <http://www.bccyouth.org>. If you have internet access, I would encourage you to regularly visit the web site for the latest schedule updates, club news, a photo scrapbook, downloadable flyers and permission slips, and much, much more. However, I understand that many do not have internet access, and therefore rely on more conventional means, such as the church newsletter, for the latest information about the youth group program.

Over the past several months, there have been a number of questions asked and various concerns expressed about The Youth Groups at Bethlehem. This is good, and welcome, because it shows that many are interested in our youth program and are concerned about making it the best youth program possible. That is a concern I think we all share.

This is an area in which I hope the Youth Coordinator's Corner can be of help--to share with you detailed, in-depth information about the youth group program so that you, too, can share in the vision we have for our youth here at Bethlehem.

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The Youth Groups at Bethlehem is a well-organized, spiritually-focused youth program, complete with a mission statement, a purpose, and a clear set of goals.

The mission statement, purpose, and goals presented in the box below were established in 2000, my first year as Youth Coordinator, because I felt it important from the start to have clear written guidance and direction for our youth program.

Each year, as youth leaders are selected for the upcoming youth group season, we meet to review, discuss, and, if necessary, refine our mission and goals, and to insure that each and every one of us shares in the vision we have for our youth group program here at Bethlehem.

Our mission statement defines who we are and why we exist, and is written to be as straightforward as possible. However, the four goals and the order in which they are presented probably need a bit of explanation.

Although there are many worthwhile goals that we could have established for The Youth Groups at Bethlehem, these are the four goals that we deemed essential to meet in order to fulfil our purpose.

The first of the four essential goals is to build relationships. Some may question why that goal is first, and why the goal to provide practical Christian instruction is last.

We do feel that it is important to provide spiritual instruction. It is our primary reason for existence, and what sets us apart from other youth clubs. It is simply that the first three goals are a means to the final goal of providing Christian instruction.

It has been our experience and firm belief that spiritual instruction becomes much more effective in a fun, friendly environment where children have meaningful social interaction with other children and caring adults, and are given opportunities to discover and make a difference in the world around them.

A simple exercise will help us to understand this concept better. Take a minute or two and write down the 5 sermons or devotions that have had the biggest impact on your life. Done? Now take a minute or two and write down the 5 people that have had the biggest impact on your life. Finished? Wasn't that easier? If you're like most, it was much easier to compile a list of people who had an impact on your life than it was to compile a list of influential sermons or devotions. That's because relationships have a deeper and longer lasting impact on our lives than any sermon or devotion ever could.

Over the next few months, I will go a bit deeper into my philosophy of youth ministry, what happens during a typical club meeting, our youth group curriculum, and other topics of interest. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with me at any time, either by talking with me at church, by calling me at home at 539-1966, or by e-mailing me at david@bccyouth.org.

The Youth Groups at Bethlehem Christian Church

Mission Statement

"The purpose of The Youth Groups at Bethlehem is to help children and youth make Christ Lord in every aspect of life, form healthy relationships, and develop positive feeling about themselves and who they are in Christ."

Goals

- ☞ Build relationships. ☞*
- ☞ Create a safe, enjoyable environment. ☞*
- ☞ Encourage church and community involvement. ☞*
- ☞ Provide practical Christian instruction. ☞*