



The Wooster Window

Newsletter of the Wooster Mennonite Church

Volume 8, Number 1

November/December 2006



*And Mary said: "My
soul glorifies the Lord and
my spirit rejoices in God
my Savior ..."*

LUKE 1:46-47. NIV

As Advent Approaches

Submitted on behalf of the Worship Committee

The journey from Advent to Epiphany unfolds as all good stories should, step by step, perhaps so we don't get *too* stunned by the awesome truth it bears. The advent of God's coming to earth is a cosmic event. It has forever changed the world. *Continued on next page.*

As Advent Approaches

Continued.

Advent is a season of preparation, as is Lent, but Advent is a different kind of preparation. In Lent, each of us prepares for what happened on Good Friday and Easter. Lent is very adult and serious, because it leads to a death. Originally, Lent readied new Christians for baptism. In Advent, we thank God for Christ's first coming, prepare ourselves for his final coming at the end of time and celebrate Christ's presence among us today through the Spirit. We need to remember how much God loves the world and wants to share that love.

For this Advent season the worship committee has chosen to use the theme, *Love's Revelations*. *Love's Revelations* invites us to see anew that it is God's love that is revealed in the season of Christmas, not some new gadget that promises to enhance our quality of life. It is God's love that is at the center of our worship and celebration.

It is our hope that our maker, lover, and keeper will be revealed to each person through some aspect of His love and that we may experience it anew this Christmas season. We will focus on various facets of love; love that lights the

darkness, love that invites repentance, love which frees us from fear, love that promises the kingdom, love which produces growth, and love which reveals the way. These are the gifts revealed by our Holy Father. These are the gifts that Christ reveals to the world. These are the gifts the Holy Spirit makes active in our lives.

Advent begins Sunday, December 3rd and ends on Sunday, December 24th, followed by Epiphany. Begin praying now for a renewed experience and come prepared to see Love's Revelations.



A TRIBUTE TO LEE

by Carol Miller

Another good friend has completed his time on this earth and is now with his Lord. We shall miss him, at the same time remember our ties of friendship.

We'll miss him in our small group at Wooster Mennonite Church. He and Frances often loaned us videos of various Bible history locations in the Holy Lands some of which they had visited. He'll be missed at Sunday morning worship services shaking hands and greeting everyone. Lee always had encouraging, complimentary words for any of the rest of us who participated in the service. He especially enjoyed greeting Lee Matsos, his "namesake", so he said, and Bruce Headings who shared his birthdate, although a much later year.



One of Lee's favorite quotes when referring to a sermon or speech that seemed a bit lengthy was: "The mind can absorb only as much as the seat can endure." One of his requested hymns was number 20 in the older brown Mennonite Hymnal "Praise thou the Lord, O My Soul, Sing Praises," I tried leading that song at Little Eden one year during chapel services because Lee and Frances were among the group. By

the end of the first verse I felt as though I were singing solo, but I determined to finish the song for Lee's sake. The fact that there were only 2 verses proved helpful. He often quoted these words, "If you will seek Him with all your heart you will surely find Him", which is also a song title.

Lee loved the Lord and was not afraid or ashamed to express it. I heard him emphatically inform a team of doctors at the Cleveland Clinic one time that he had enough of these mechanical devices installed to keep him alive. He was a Christian and ready to meet the Lord, unafraid whenever that time arrived. I think he then proceeded to outlive their time predictions.

Continued on next page.

Tribute to Lee *Continued.*

Gerald and I will personally miss Lee at our periodic meetings with him and Frances at a local restaurant. Their daughter, Janice, came along when she was home – she knew her dad would pay the bill. We’ll always remember his two favorite requests: “plenty of de-café coffee with real cream or half-and-half and extra napkins, please.” Another of our friends said jokingly one time, “Lee, if you weren’t so messy, you wouldn’t need all those napkins,” but let me tell you, if ever there was a “neatnik” gentleman, Lee was that Man!

Lee Moser

by Ray Noblit

Lee was so many things to me
First of all he was a special friend.
An inspiration in daily living.
An encourager for right.
An example.
Someone who was fun to be with.
A smile to brighten your day.
What a memory!

LIBRARY NOTES

from Kim Weaver

Colder weather is in the air. Always an excellent time to curl up with a good book. So as winter approaches, don’t forget your church library. You can check out books, music, and/or movies. If you have any suggestions on books or media to add to the library, please let Kim Weaver know. A new book added is:

Preparing Sunday Dinner by June Alliman Yoder, Marlene Kropf and Rebecca Slough. It is a collaborative approach to worship and preaching.

Lee had lots of friends and knew so many people. Every time we met at any of the area restaurants, he found somebody to talk to, and most of the time it would be several some bodies. We could be finished with our meal and while waiting at the door to leave, discover Lee had found another friend he had to converse with. I was always amazed at his ability to draw others into a conversation by asking a few questions about their interests, not his.

Lee loved his church and faithfully supported it even through unstable times.

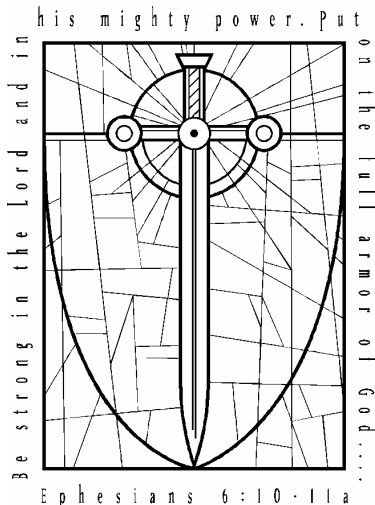
He called us his friends and we are honored to have known him.

Put on God’s Armor

By Mary Hull Naumoff

Orrville, Ohio

When our young men choose to become conscientious objectors, what is our church doing to back them up? Eph. 6:11 says to “put on all the armor that God gives you, so that you will be able to stand up against the devil’s evil tricks.”



Mennonite publications say much about loving your enemies and praying for those you persecute you, but I have not heard any explanation about how to put on

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God’s armor. The fighting is not “against human beings, but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rules, authorities and cosmic powers of this dark age” (Eph. 6:12). How do we go about marshalling the forces of prayer against these spiritual forces?

We need instruction from our pulpits and writers about how to pray for the enemy. Are we to pray for the salvation of Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden? Who are our enemies? How do we pray for reconciliation? How do we pray for the military? During these dark ages, are weekly Bible studies better attended and Sunday school lessons taken more seriously so we can be sure of what is true and righteous? Is our faith deepening as we put our trust in God and pray fervently in the Spirit to bring peace within our nation and with other nations? Are sermons more evangelical as we help persons to put on the helmet of salvation?

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Frances Moser recently enjoyed a sisters' get together. Two sisters came to visit from Arizona and one from Cleveland. They toured Holmes County, Kidron and places they lived as a family growing up. One "exciting" event was a day at a sister-in-law's house making and canning mixed pickle! What a buzzing time that must have been with those five ladies in one kitchen!

John and Carolyn Reed journeyed to Turkey on a Mennonite tour the last 10 days of September. They visited the cities of the seven churches mentioned in the book of Revelation. The Island of Palamos where the apostle John received his revelation and recorded it was also on their tour as well as the city of Rome. A particularly interesting site in Rome was the city dump composed of broken pottery dating back hundreds of years. Tour leader, Nelson Kraybil, who had done extensive research and was very knowledgeable on 1st century Christianity, explained the history of this hill in Rome as well as other sites.



REPORT FROM JACOB DODSON

Two weeks away from family and the WMC community was challenging for me but the benefits of my periodic trips to Virginia have been worth enduring it. As some of you know, three times a year I am required to travel to Regent University for course work. The academic program that I am pursuing is in the field of Renewal Theology. The emphasis of Renewal Theology is centered on understanding the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church and world. As we all have learned from reading scripture, the Holy Spirit renews us (Ps. 104:30; Tit. 5:5), fills us with power (Mic. 3:8), moves us to follow God's decrees (Ezek. 36:26-27), inspires us (Joel 2:28-29), gives us gifts (Isa. 11:2-3; 1 Cor. 12:8-10), produces spiritual fruits in our lives (Gal. 5:22-23), convicts us of sin (Jn. 16:8-10), acts as our guarantee of redemption (Eph. 4:30), and sanctifies us (1 Pet. 1:2).

As I reflect on the work of the Holy Spirit in our own church I am struck by the Spirit's message to David in 1 Chron. 12:18, "Peace, peace to you, and peace to him who helps you; indeed, your God helps you!" The Hebrew word for peace used in this passage is *shalom* which has multiple meanings including: completeness, soundness, welfare, health, prosperity, quietness, tranquility, contentment, and

Brian Yoder has traveled again to China on a business trip. His wife, **Cathy**, accompanied him this time, leaving their sons with grandparents. We're not sure who is having the most fun, parents, grandparents or **Reed** and **Sam**!

There have been two more flying trips:

One by **Brenda Troyer** to Iowa to visit her mother. (The mother's request). The other by **Liz Martin** to Colorado to visit daughter, Kristi and husband and Molly, the Martin's only grandchild.

Virginia Henry is back again at The Wayne County Care Center after spending some time at Brenn-Field Care Center in Orrville. We wish her continuing improvement in the health issues she faces.

Our church family was saddened with the death of **Stanford Ressler** on October 10. **Stanford** was a resident of The Wayne County Care Center and attended WMC quite regularly when his health permitted. The **Baurs** were his faithful transporters.

friendship. As Mennonites, we are committed to the values of *shalom*. This type of peace is not just the absence of conflict but rather a way of living that permeate every aspect of our existence in this world. In my view, the Holy Spirit desires to give us *shalom* and use us as His vessels of *shalom* for others with the ultimate goal that we will experience the peace of God, which passes all understanding (Phil. 4:7).

As I think about my most recent courses, which addressed the Holy Spirit's work in the early Church and in Christian encounters with non-Christian faiths, I see the need to pray to God for the Holy Spirit to help us live out the Anabaptist commitment to peace to its fullest expression (i.e., spiritual and moral transformation). In the early centuries of Church history, some of the darkest moments are attributed to violent conflicts between Christians. Historically, this also has been true for conflicts between Christians and non-Christians. Since every human is made in the image of God and we are called through the Holy Spirit's empowerment to be witnesses to the end of the earth (Act 1:8) we will need to seek His help in breaking dividing walls between peoples, nations, and cultures. May the Holy Spirit continue to transform us and use us as servants of peace.

Hands for Jesus

by Joann Hershberger

Our August meeting was a wrap-up of our year. All the projects we have worked on the past year have been distributed to the relief sale, Adriel School or Chicago Mennonite Learning Center. Our quilt was sold at the relief sale for \$1000.00. We want to congratulate and thank our very talented and hard working quilters for this wonderful effort. We also gave cash donations to Every Women's House and Chicago Mennonite Learning Center. Carolyn was in charge of our final lesson entitled "Wardrobe of the Messiah, a Closing Celebration".

On September 12th, there were 10 of us and our new President, Carol Yoder was in charge. Our new

quilt top was donated by Ida and Denver Welty. It is pieced with vintage fabrics in lots of colors. Carol Yoder added a blue border, which frames it nicely. There were also 4 prayer blankets brought in by Mary Hershberger.

For our project, we chose to give a cash donation to People to People. Our new series of devotionals is about time. This lesson was "Time from God". It was the creation story with emphasis on the gift of time. We talked about managing our time and valuing and caring for God's creation. After prayer, we ate lunch, brought by Vickie Hershberger.



WEDNESDAY EVENING FELLOWSHIP MEAL

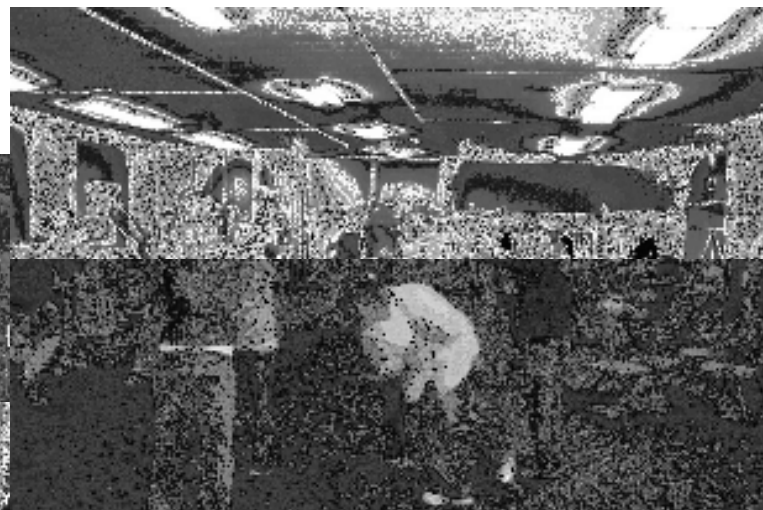
by Jacob Dodson

Over the past two Wednesday evening fellowship meals, we have witnessed unprecedented displays of innovative entertainment. During the Oct. 11th W.E.F meal, Pastor Ralph competed with Andre and Natasha Lorenz in a "Pastor Ralph look-a-like contest." Interestingly, Pastor Ralph and Natasha lost to Andre, who most resembled Pastor Ralph due to his beard. We'll let you decide, which of the three pictured below is most convincing.

rich culture of music and dancing animates many social gatherings. Eileen and John Ramsay led our group in many wonderful dances. October 2006 is definitely a month of Wednesday evening fellowship meals that will not soon be forgotten.



Andre, Natasha, and Pastor Ralph wear "Pastor Ralph look-a-like" beards.



Jen Yoder rushes to avoid being trapped in the middle during a dancing game.



During Oct. 25th W.E.F. meal our fellowship was transported to rural Appalachian Kentucky, where the

Strengthening our Worship

by Ralph Reinford

Recently from a resource packet for equipping Mennonite pastors and leaders there has been a three part article, entitled, *Strengthening our worship: seven ways to enhance our worship*. It follows closing with my recent sermon on worship. Therefore, I thought it worthwhile to pass along for everyone to read. -----Ralph

Worship is a multi-dimensional experience of God's people which includes a **vertical dimension** (an encounter with God), **horizontal dimensions** (engagement of the body of Christ with one another), and an **outwardly flowing dimensions** (empowerment for love and witness in the world). For worship to be vibrant and healthy, each dimension must be strong. Here are some tips to help strengthen our worship.

Vertical Dimension

1) Proclaim the Word visually. Look for people with gifts for creating simple, uncluttered visual worship centers that suggest the day's focus from scripture. As people enter, their eyes and hearts will be drawn towards God.

2) Choose the opening words of worship carefully. When we say, "Good Morning" we immediately suggest that worship is a social gathering. Words from scripture such as, "Worship the Lord with gladness, come into God's presence with singing," invites worshippers to seek God together.

3) Let the focus of the service unfold rather than telling people "this is the theme." Let them discover it in the song texts, a visual center, the scripture or

prayers and let the sermon lead them deeper and deeper into the chosen focus for the day.

4) Sing more. Mennonites pray best and usually encounter God most fully when we sing. Rather than sing one or two songs at a time, sing a cluster of three or four songs, inviting people to open their minds and hearts to the moving of God's Spirit.

5) Pray more. Invite worshippers into a wide array of prayer, praise, adoration, thanks-giving, lament, confession, petition, intercession and blessing.

6) Present the scripture imaginatively. Because God speaks powerfully in the words of scripture, take care that these words are spoken clearly and in fresh ways. Sometimes this means framing the reading in silence or using different voices or as a drama.

7) Select one clear message for the sermon. Though preachers traditionally hang their sermon on three points, it can be more effective to choose one message, developing and amplifying it so it will come to dwell in the people's hearts. In our over-stimulated environment, less is more.

Horizontal Dimension

1) Extend a warm welcome. Because the body of Christ becomes visible when the believers gather for worship each week, let the love of Christ be seen and felt as people arrive. Instead of last minute details before worship, pastors and elders can greet people in the foyer informally and strength bonds of connection.

2) Pay attention to each person. No one should leave worship without having been touched or spoken to by another person. Each young and old, rich and poor weak or strong is a beloved child of God. "Passing the peace of Christ," can be one way of assuring those connections.

3) Be earthy, human. Because God loves us just as we are, don't need to pretend to be super-pious in worship. We honor our Creator when we honor our humanity. Down-to-earth language, appropriate humor, relevant examples and respect for all personality types help people feel included.

4) Make space for confession. Part of being human is to acknowledging our weakness, failures, and sin. Worship is a place to be truthful about who we are and to receive God's cleansing grace. Let the liberating practice of confession bring freedom and joy.

5) Sing the heart songs of the congregation. Though most vibrant worship includes a wide variety of music, it's important to sing the songs that touch their hearts. Ask people what songs new or old move them most deeply and find ways to include them regularly in worship.

6) Pray for each other. Bring joys and concerns before God in fervent prayer. Give thanks for God's sustaining grace; offer laments in times of grief; intercede on behalf of the world's needs.

7) Celebrate the times and season of people's lives. Though worship is first of all about God and not about us, our faith deepens

when we open our life's experiences to God. Rejoice when a child is born. Gives thanks when a marriage endures for 50 years or more. The Sunday after a death, pause to remember the person's life, to give thanks and to comfort the grieving. Make a big deal of baptisms.

8) Let scripture come alive. The word of God is Spirit-breathed, it has power to change us and our world. Pray the scriptures as part of the sermon preparation. Memorize key passages together as a congregation.

Outward Looking Dimension

1) Preach the word with conviction that it will transform. Commit your sermon to God and deliver it with joy.

2) Be clear about whose kingdom receives our allegiance.

Make connections between the world beyond the church and what happens in the sanctuary. Call worshippers to examine their loyalties and be alert to distractions to faithful living or substitutes for God's loving, liberating reign.

3) Sing songs that inspire the congregation to action. Find engaging texts and compelling tunes to awaken people to God's call.

4) Lament the brokenness of the world. Honestly name the injustice, violence and greed that surround us. Bring before God the pain and despair or questions that plague people. In prayers of petition and intercession, call upon God to bless, comfort, heal, and renew the world.

5) Design thoughtful rituals of response. People should not leave

worship without catching a glimpse of how they might follow Christ more faithfully in the coming week. Include prayers of healing on a regular basis.

6) Deliver the offering from "Dullsville" Make the offering an encounter with God's mission. Tell brief stories of ways the congregation's offering will participate in renewing, transforming work in the world. Find ways to include children and youth in receiving offerings.

7) Celebrate baptisms. Nothing reinvigorates the people of God so much as seeing new Christians make their commitment to follow Christ and become a part of the church. Our hope is renewed as we see God's reign expand. We are strengthened to be faithful until the end.



A LITTLE PUSH

Submitted by Lindsay Beyer

YOU ARE IMPORTANT

Submitted by Lindsay Beyer

I was sitting in my car the other day when an old clunker stalled nearby. The driver was unable to start the old car, and traffic quickly started backing up behind him. Horns sounded and angry drivers shouted their unpleasant words at the embarrassed man. After a while, cars began to pull around the old car. Finally, one person drove up behind the stalled vehicle and gave it a push. Soon it began moving under its own power and traffic got underway again.

How like life that is! Someone is halted by circumstances. Most people shout their disgust at the unfortunate person and leave him to his fate. All he really needs is a little push to get started again.

Just as in any church, we have a few "stalled vehicles" who need a little push to get on the move again. If you know of someone who is losing interest in the church, or someone who is mired up to his axles in personal problems, offer him a little encouragement.

Xvxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works quitx wxll xxxcpt for onx thx kxys. I'vx wishxd many timxs that it workxd prfxctly. Trux, thxrx arx forty-two kxys functioning wxll xnough, but just onx kxy not working makxs thx diffxrxncx.

Somxtimxs, it sxxms to mx that our church is somxwhat likx my typxwritxr – not all thx kxy pxoplsx arx working proprly. You may say, "Wxll, I'm only onx pxrson. It won't makx much diffxrxncx." But thx church, to bx xfficixnt, nxxds thx activx participation of vxvry pxrson.

Thx nxxt timx you think your xfforts arxn't nxxdxd, rxmxxbxx my typxwritxr, and say to yoursxlf, "I'm a kxy pxrson and I'm nxxdxd vxry much."



FIVE OLD TEACHERS

Sitting on the side of the highway, waiting to catch speeders, a state policeman scans a car pattering along at 22 mph. He thinks to himself, "This driver is just as dangerous as a speeder!"

So he turns on his light and pulls over the driver. Approaching the car, he notices five old ladies...two in the front seat and three in the back seat... wide-eyed and white as ghosts. The driver is obviously confused and says to him, "Officer, I don't understand. I was going the exact speed limit! What seems to be the problem?"

"Ma'm," the officer replies, "you weren't speeding, but you need to know that driving slower than the speed limit can also be a danger to other drivers."

"Slower than the speed limit? No sir, I was doing the speed limit exactly---twenty-two mph," the old woman said proudly. The officer, trying to hide his smile, explains to her that "22" is the route number, not the speed limit.

A bit embarrassed, the woman grinned and thanked the officer for pointing out her error.

"But before I let you go Ma'am," the officer says, "I have to ask... Is everyone in this car OK? These women seem awfully shaken and they haven't said a word the whole time."

"Oh, they'll be alright in a minute, officer. We just got off Route 119!"

A PRAYER FOR THANKSGIVING

Almighty God, our Creator, Redeemer and Eternal Companion, we come to you overwhelmed by the goodness you bestow on us without limits.

On this special day, we recall how you blessed our forefathers who came to this wonderful land seeking freedom to worship without restraint or hindrance.

We are immeasurably grateful for our heritage. We pray that our faith may be as fervent as the faith of those who left everything for a land strange to them and where they were strangers to the natives.

Therefore, we gather as grateful benefactors of your pilgrim servants who paid a costly price to glorify you and serve you faithfully. For them, we give you our deepest gratitude mindful of that first Thanksgiving meal shared by newcomers and natives. We gather around our tables as family and friends.

We come to you in love and great appreciation for your constant grace and gifts bestowed upon us. The

BORDER CROSSERS

A retired minister often relaxed by sitting on his deck and letting his mind roam while he fed peanuts to squirrels. He named one particular squirrel Squeak because it often squeaked as if to say, "Bring out the nuts!"

Although there were many squirrels that came for the picnic, Squeak was the only one courageous enough to reach out for a nut held between the man's fingers. The pastor realized that it took bravery for Squeak to cross the unseen border between the yard and the hand holding the nut. Squeak was willing to do what other squirrels would not — take a risk to gain a reward. Squeak was a brave border crosser.

The preacher thought, "Shouldn't Christians be daring border crossers as well?"

He thought about the Christians throughout history who had put their lives on the line for the cause of Christ: the apostles — most of whom were martyred; the countless missionaries who established churches, schools and hospitals in lands where the name of Christ was unknown. Church history is full of stories about Christians who crossed borders to tell the "old, old story of Jesus and his love."

Are you willing to be a border crosser for Christ's sake?



abundant and beautiful food before us is the most lovely and present evidence.

Ever-giving and ever-loving God, we humbly thank you for all your benefits. We wish only one thing more. May we have the honor of your presence? Be our Guest that we may know that we have had fellowship with you and with one another.

In the name of your greatest gift to us, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Community Thanksgiving Service will be held November 22, 2006, 7:00 p.m. at Wooster High School.

WMC's Thanksgiving Service will be held November 19, 2006. The focus will be Thankfulness in all seasons of our lives.

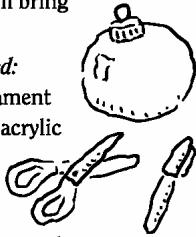
"Peace on Earth" Ornament



Make this Earth ornament as a reminder to pray for the peace Jesus will bring when he returns.

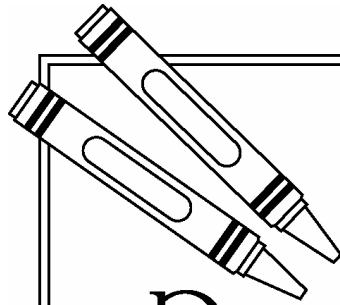
What you will need:

1. Clear glass ornament
2. Blue and green acrylic craft paint
3. Sponge
4. Scissors
5. Black permanent marker (Sharpie) or black puffy craft paint
6. Paper plate
7. Glitter (optional)



What you need to do:

1. Cut the sponge into 2 rectangles, about the size of your tallest finger.
2. Pour a little paint onto a plate. (Add glitter if you want your ornament to sparkle.)
3. Use one sponge for blue and one for green.
4. Dab the paint onto your glass ornament one color at a time. Use green for land and blue for ocean to make the ornament look like our planet Earth.
5. When the paint is dry, use the marker or puffy paint to write PEACE on the ornament.
6. Use your ornament as a Christmas decoration or give it as a present.



Just for KIDS

Peace on Earth

Do you remember what King Herod did when he heard about the birth of Jesus? He was so troubled that he issued a decree ordering the death of all male children younger than 2 years old. Jesus was not born in a time of peace, but we can look forward to His return and believe what the heavenly host proclaimed.

Follow the maze through the verse.



START

	And	suddenly		
			there	
	was with the angel			
	a multitude	of the		
heavenly host	praising	God,		
	and saying,	"Glory to God		
in the highest,		and on earth		
	peace,	good will		
toward men."	Luke 2:13-14, KJV	FINISH		



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A publication of Wooster Mennonite Church
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Sunday School: 9:30 am
Worship: 10:30 am
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Newsletter Committee and Editors: Miles
Russell, Carol Miller
Deadline for Jan/Feb issue: 1st week of
December

Address Correction Requested

Wooster Mennonite Church
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