

MANNA

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Newsletter of the
McDonald Road Seventh-day Adventist Church

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“The King will reply,
‘I tell you the truth,
whatever you did for
one of the least of
these brothers of
mine, you did for
me.’”

- Matthew 25:40

McDonald Road Gives Gifts for Jesus

Last month, McDonald Road Church rose to the challenge of helping provide Christmas toys and much needed items for families in eastern Hamilton County by participating in “Gifts for Jesus.” Church members brought gifts to the church on Dec. 8 in the spirit of Matthew 25:40, which says, “...Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”

“We want to give something for Him, and the way we can do that is by giving to those who are less fortunate than we are,” said Janice Parker as she explained the project during a church service at the beginning of the campaign. Jack and Janice Parker later delivered the gifts to The Samaritan Center so they could be distributed to the families who need them most.

The Samaritan Center sent this letter of thanks to share with the members of the McDonald Road Church:

“Thank you so much for your enthusiastic generosity in the Gifts for Jesus drive that you recently conducted for the Samaritan Center. I can’t describe our delight and surprise as we unloaded the gifts into carts on our front walk, filling cart after cart after cart. Your toys, personal care products, and other items will help us fill our Christmas “Toy Store” (where parents in need choose gifts for free that they know their children will enjoy) and will also fill individuals’ and families’ arms with provisions as they struggle in the year to come. You are making a difference, and we appreciate you!”

The McDonald Road Church also thanks each of you for your generosity and spirit of selflessness, during the holiday season and throughout the year.

- Rebecca Brooks



Jack and Janice Parker deliver the “Gifts for Jesus” to the Samaritan Center.

MANNA

The Manna is the official newsletter of the McDonald Road Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is published monthly and distributed to members and friends of the church.

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Associate Pastor Paul Carlson
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The church office is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., unless otherwise announced.

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Submissions Deadline: The third Thursday of each month, unless otherwise specified. Submit items in writing at the church office; by fax (396-3433); by e-mail manna@mcdonaldroad.org; or by mail at 5440 McDonald Road, McDonald, TN 37353. Submissions by phone are not accepted.

Electronic Submissions: Submissions may be made via e-mail with the following attachment formatting: Word or WordPerfect documents, text files, and graphics or photos saved as jpeg, bmp, or gif files. Please submit electronic files by e-mailing them to: manna@mcdonaldroad.org.

"Uplifting Jesus"
McDonald Road
Seventh-day Adventist Church



Pastor's Challenge

Christmas Blues



Pastor David Cook

Now that Christmas is over, I think I'll take the opportunity for a little reality check.

But first let me say that I love Christmas. I love the smell of pine, the memories, the gifts, the music, the lights, and the food. In fact, I may be the most traditional Christmas observer in my family. "What? No stuffing for Christmas dinner? Open presents on the twenty-sixth? Never!"

And yet, deep down inside I am frustrated with this holiday. Often, my favorite carols are "Silent Guilt" and "As with Sadness Men of Old." Why? Let me explain.

First, Christmas never lives up to its mystique. There is often a family fight or kids crying, toys broken, messes to clean up.

Secondly, I feel like I never live up to the season. My gifts are cheap, I send them late, my wife shops for *my family*, I send thank-you's in October.

Thirdly, I'm weary of our culture's Yule-tide naval-gazing. We complain about materialism, mourn the X in X-mas, decry political correctness and notice the spike in suicides.

Here is where I'm supposed to remind you what Christmas is all about. So hold on, I'm going to try to do just that.

Amazingly, I think I just learned what it is all about from the History Channel¹ ...or at least its website. Here I discovered some things that are helping me deal with Christmas blues.

It will come as no shock to you that Christmas has pagan origins. Not that we should banish Christmas (though some would). No, I don't think Christmas is equal to Sunday. The issue with Sunday is that it replaces the Lord's day. Christmas replaces nothing.

In fact, early Christians didn't celebrate Christ's birth for nearly 400 years.

However, Christmas was invented in order to attract pagans. Like Sunday, it was a "baptized" feast day. In fact, many of our "Christmas" traditions predate Christ. And yet, most of us feel that the holiday the Church created is mostly good.

- continued on page 3 -

Sermon Schedule

- "The Weight of Prayer" Sabbath, January 5
- by Don Gettys
- "Trumpeting the Three Angels" Sabbath, January 12
- by Bob Folkenberg, Jr.
- "Religious Liberty" Sabbath, January 19
- by Amireh Al-Haddad
- Southern Union Religious Liberty Director
- "Jesus Our Ark" Sabbath, January 26
- by Don Gettys

Church Business

Christmas Blues - continued from page 2 -

Yet the Christmas of those days is not what we know today. In fact, according to the History Channel, Christmas was more like a combo of Mardi gras and Halloween. It was a time of debauchery, drunkenness, and yes, "trick or treating".

It got so bad that, during the Reformation, Christmas was outlawed by Protestants. Which means that our pilgrim Fathers had Thanksgiving but not Christmas. In New England one could be fined for displaying Christmas spirit. In fact, our first Congress was in session on Christmas day.

The truth is, Christmas as we know it was invented in the mid 1800's. The History channel credits it to the work of one man—maybe two. It says that Washington Irving invented Christmas! He, along with Charles Dickens wrote books that helped recreate and revive Christmas. The Victorian age took Christmas and turned it into a nostalgic time of family and good cheer.

So, that's what Christmas is all about. It's about keeping up a Victorian tradition; nothing more, nothing less. This means we should challenge Christmas guilt. Guilt should come as a response to sin. Not from failing the traditions of men.

Don't feel guilty when you send your presents late. You're not letting Jesus down. Don't feel blue when your kids hate your presents. Christ is merry even when Christmas isn't. Who cares if we don't open our gifts on the 25th? Not Jesus.

Should we throw away Christmas? No. We should just put it into perspective. We should keep it as it really is: a quaint American holiday for the family. We can even remember Christ's birth. Why not? It's never wrong to do that.

This also means that we shouldn't be so hard on our secular culture. Our culture invented Christmas, it can reinvent it. Actually, the worse Christmas gets, the more it looks like the original.

I suppose that's why it's been so easy to take Christ out of Christmas. Was He ever there in the first place? Besides, he belongs in our heart, not in a holiday.

- Pastor David Cook

¹ http://www.history.com/minisite.do?content_type=mini_home&mini_id=1290

Samaritan Center Needs:

Women's deoderant, baby wash (different from baby shampoo), conditioner, liquid dishwashing detergent, laundry detergent, diaper rash cream, paper towels, toilet paper, household cleaners, women's shave gel, children's toys. If you can help with these items, bring them to drop-box in the church lobby.

Offering Schedule

Jan. 5	Local Church Budget
Jan. 12	Georgia-Cumberland Ministries
Jan. 19	Local Church Budget
Jan. 26	Religious Liberty (NAD)

The Building Fund and Financial Updates are not available in the online Manna Highlights. If you would like to know this information, please contact the McDonald Road Church office.

Reaching In

No More Goodbyes

By Adrian Boyer

How priceless are the Hours we spend
In Fellowship with bosom Friends -
A Foretaste of the Joys in store
To bless our Hearts forevermore.
However oft our Visits are,
They're always much to Brief by far,
And tho we tarry for a Spell,
Too soon it's Time to say "Farewell."

But in this Life of Strife and Stress,
Such Interims of Happiness
Are volatile and fade Away
Like Morning Mists at break of Day.
And as the Seasons wax and wane,
Oft-times we'll meet old Friends again.
At some appointed Rendezvous.
And make a Memory or Two.

But one Day in the Earth made new,
We'll never have to say, "Adieu,"
For there will be no parting there,
No timid Tear or taxing Care
As now when Friends too oft must part,
With longing Sigh and yearning Heart.
What Joy there'll be when you and I
Will never have to say, "Good-bye!"

New Focus for Collegiate Sabbath School

The Collegiate Sabbath School has faced a number of challenges in the past. Since college students tend to "church hop," visiting a different church each week, it has been difficult to keep a steady core group of attendees. Recently, the leaders decided to try a new approach.

"The hallmark of this group is that we do go over the adult Sabbath School lesson, and we tend to take it pretty deep...We hit the lesson straight out and we go for an hour," says Austin Brooks, one of the four teachers of the Collegiate Sabbath School. "The fascinating thing is that at the end of it, people say 'Oh, we ran out of time.' Nobody is bored. We intentionally keep it very open. It's not a lecture. Everybody has a chance to talk and to chip in and it's kind of round table discussion style on the lesson. Plus, there is a broad spectrum of experience in the group, so we get quite a range of ideas that you're going to find useful in your own life. This is a group that wants to know the best way to tackle life, and you're going to find those answers here."

So far, the new focus seems to be working. The class size has been growing and, according to Brooks, the visitors have an "unusually high rate of sticking with the class." They have started a Friday night vespers by request of the group and now that there are more people attending, plans for outreach projects are in the works.

If you are interested in attending the Collegiate Sabbath School or happen to see a visiting college student looking unsure of where to go, the class meets down the hallway to the right as you face the Sanctuary, across from the Quiet Library and the Tape Ministry booth.

- Rebecca Brooks



Photo by Rebecca Brooks

The Collegiate Sabbath School offers in-depth study of the adult Sabbath School lesson and encourages round table discussion amongst the group.

Reaching Out

Women's Ministries Spreads Christmas Cheer

The McDonald Road Women's Ministries department hosted a Winter Wonderland reception following the Cantata held by the McDonald Road Choir on Dec. 1. The reception had the Family Center filled with lights, Christmas trees, and beautifully decorated tables for the nearly 300 people who attended. Each table was decorated differently by women of the church who volunteered to help.

Not only did the reception provide a lovely reception for those who attended, it also helped provide families in the Ooltewah and Chattanooga areas with a special Christmas treat. The trees at the reception were sold to provide Christmas presents, decorated Christmas trees, and dinners for several families. One of the families that received presents was from Rockwood, Tenn., where the Earliteen Sabbath School has recently been ministering. Lighted trees with stands were presented to 23 families including ten families in our area through the Samaritan Center, four families in downtown Chattanooga, three families in our area through the Pathfinder Club, and the Pathfinders who helped serve the meal at the Winter Wonderland reception.



Photo by Rebecca Brooks

The Family Center was filled with lights, trees, and individually decorated tables for the Winter Wonderland reception on Dec. 1.



Photo by Rebecca Brooks

The trees that decorated the Family Center were sold to provide gifts and food for needy families in the Chattanooga and Ooltewah communities.

The McDonald Road Women's Ministries team has been busy all year with a variety of outreach projects for needy families in the Chattanooga and programs allowing the women of McDonald Road Church to fellowship together. During the year, Women's Ministries collected and distributed gifts for hospitalized children in Chattanooga as well as items from the wish list of Chattanooga's Room In The Inn, a women's and children's homeless shelter. As an ongoing project, women from McDonald Road take time on the third Thursday of each month to prepare and deliver full meals to families at Room In The Inn.

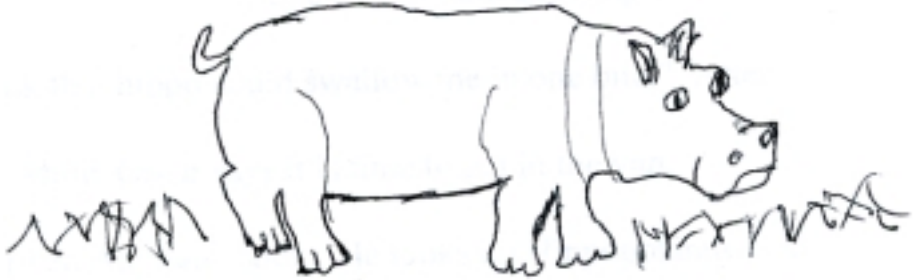
If you're interested in participating in any upcoming Women's Ministries activities, keep your eyes open for more information about the Ladies Night Out Pajama Party on Jan. 19, the Heart Spa Seminar Day on Feb. 3, and a 6-week Bible study course running from Feb. 5 through March 11. To learn more about Women's Ministries events at McDonald Road Church, contact Sheryl Baker at 987-6882 or 396-4220.

- Rebecca Brooks

Kids' Corner

Jungle Jaunts with Jack and Jerry

Jack and Jerry have just left the burned fields and the gazelles. "Our next stop will be at the water hole," remarks Oscar. "When we get there, we will all get out of the van. You all must stay together and follow the rules of the park. This way the animals won't become confused. If you are running around the water hole it will make the animals nervous. Even though hippopotamuses are large, they can move quickly and can be dangerous if they charge you."



Soon the van stops. "Remember these are wild animals, if I say get in the van fast, you must go there immediately," says Oscar.

"We will," Jack and Jerry reply.

"Just look at how big that hippo is," explains Jerry. Just then, one of the hippos opens its mouth showing its teeth.

"Wow!" says Jack. "I think that hippo could swallow me in one bite."

After watching the hippos for a while, Oscar says it is time to get in the van. Jerry gets out the Wild African Animals book. He looks up Hippopotamus and reads:

"The hippopotamus is a large short-legged mammal. It is found mainly in Africa. Brown or slate-grey is its skin color. Hippos stand about 5 feet tall and weigh about three to four tons. Hippos are social animals and live in groups of up to 20 animals. They spend their days under water with only their eyes, ears, and nostrils showing. Because they dehydrate rapidly, they must stay close to the water. When completely under the water, they need to come up for air about every five minutes. Baby calves are born under water. They are very buoyant and can swim as soon as they are born. They surface at birth to take their first breath.

"Hippos come out of the water at dusk to feed on the grass. They consume about 80-100 pounds of grass each night. If they are out of the water during the day, their skin produces an oily red fluid that protects them from the ultraviolet rays of the sun.

"Hippos are very helpful to their surroundings. Their wallowing in the mud stirs up nutrients that feed other creatures. Large amounts of dung from the hippos enrich the water and helps plants and micro-organisms grow. Those, in turn, provide food for fish, reptiles, and birds. When they feed on the grass, they stomp it down making paths to help other animals have a way to the water.

"There are only about 160,000 hippos in Africa, making them an endangered species. They are under threat from hunters who value the hippos for meat, hides, and their large canine teeth, which are a substitute for ivory."

Jack takes out the animal list notepad and writes, "Hippopotamus."

"Well, boys, can you guess who we might see next?" asks Oscar.

- Janice Parker

Who Am I?

I stay under the water most of the day and come out to feed at night. Who am I?

1	2	3	3	4	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{0}{4}$	$\frac{S}{9}$	$\frac{T}{5}$	$\frac{H}{1}$	$\frac{U}{8}$	$\frac{P}{3}$	$\frac{A}{6}$	$\frac{M}{7}$			

Connecting



*Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year from
your McDonald Road
Church family!*

New Member Spotlights are not available in the online Manna Highlights. If you would like to know this information, please contact the McDonald Road Church office.

What's Happening

Online Giving: is now available by clicking on a link on our church website. 100% of the tithes and offerings donated in this way will still be handled by our own church; you will receive a receipt from McDonald Road church for all of your giving, whether online or in our offering plate. Just click on the *Online Giving* link at <http://mcdonaldroad.org> to get started.

Don't Forget To Register: Heart Spa will be on Sunday, February 3rd Sign-up soon! Contact Sheryl Baker 987-6882 or 396-4220.

Children's & Family Ministries Convention: Sign up by Jan. 30 for the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Children's & Family Ministries Convention. It will be held Feb. 22-24, 2008 at the Cohutta Springs Conference Center. To learn more, visit www.gccsda.com and click on the link under Feb. 22, 2008 on the Conference Calendar.

High School Retreat: Questions come at an alarming rate: What's my life going to count for? Where am I going? What matters most to me? The world tries to answer these questions for you with solutions of it's own, but what do you really believe? Come experience the outdoors, new friends and activities. Take this opportunity to step out of your day to day routine and listen to God's voice, relax and be refreshed! Sign up for the Georgia-Cumberland Conference High School Retreat (for Adventist students not attending Adventist schools) by Jan. 28, 2008. Learn more at www.gccsda.com.

Health Summit Orlando: Learn how to make a difference in your church, community, and home. Attend the NAD Health Summit February 1-9, 2008. Obtain certification in three workshops of your choice. Early bird deadline is: January 8. To register, call 1-800-732-7587.

Regular Programs

Weekly Worship Services

First Service
Saturdays at 8:50 a.m.

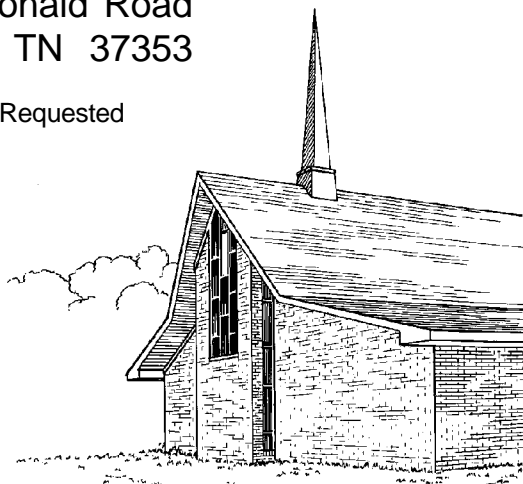
Second Service
Saturdays at 11:25 a.m.

Sabbath School
Saturdays at
10:00-11:20 a.m.

Prayer Meeting
Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

McDonald Road
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5440 McDonald Road
McDonald, TN 37353

Return Service Requested



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