



MAKING VISIBLE GOD'S INVISIBLE KINGDOM

Decatur Presbyterian Church, PCA
Women's Ministry

Volume 1, Issue 2

November/December

A Women's Winter Retreat!

DPC Ladies,
We are very excited to extend an invitation to you to join us for a Women's Winter Retreat at the Maranatha Conference Center in Scottsboro, AL. We are planning this event for the last weekend of January 2007, the 26th and 27th.

if you'd like to make it a day trip and come only for the lectures and meals but not spend the night that's ok too.

Please consider joining us for this special event. We're praying that it will be a great time of fellowship, learning and rest.

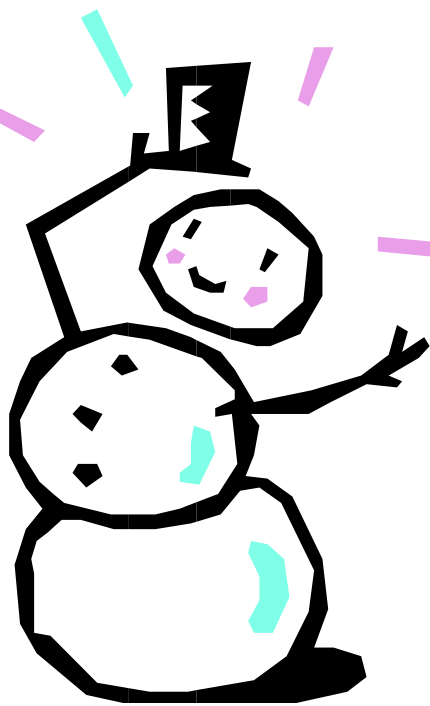
Cost:
\$70—2 per room, includes meals
\$50—4 per room, includes meals
\$30—sessions and meals only

We would like to encourage you to register early! We may need to reserve more rooms and it will be a huge help if we know how many women to expect. A retreat brochure and registration form will be available at church this week.

If you signed up at the Ministry Fair to assist with the retreat, you'll be contacted soon!

Sue Cortese, author of Under His Smile will be joining us! She'll be doing two lectures (one on Friday night and one on Saturday morning) and a Q&A session.

We have currently reserved a block of rooms. Each room has two queen beds. You will have the option of having one roommate (and your own bed) or three roommates (requiring you to share a bed). The location is also close enough that



**Learning to Live Under His Smile
January 26-27, 2007**

A Merry January

By Kimberly Eddy

Only October, and it's already starting: the Christmas shopping season! What starts slowly in September and October comes to a pinnacle in December, then crashes down with a thud come January. Many people are so focused on having a Merry Christmas that they don't plan for a Merry January, too.

A Merry January?

Yes! That is an old-fashioned phenomenon where the Christmas Credit Card bills don't come rolling in one January afternoon with the rest of the mail. A merry January is the sort of celebration one has when her children are not over-stimulated from excessive amounts of expen-

sive and fancy gifts, yet still not content. A merry January comes when families learn that contentment in Christ—not the quest for more—is the source of Joy that lasts past the dead Christmas tree and biodegrading garlands.

You can have a merry January when your focus is on the right things and you don't

So You Know...

- *Christmas Party & Ornamant Swap on December 5th. Information in this newsletter.*
- *Suppers of Six will begin in January! Look for more information after the holidays.*
- *Tuesday Bible Study at the church from 9:30–11:30. Childcare Provided.*
- *Women's Prayer Team meets Tuesdays at the church from 8:30–9:30. Please join us! Contact Margie Thompson.*
- *The children will be performing a Christmas Musical on Sunday night, December 10th. Thanks to Kathryn & Laurin for all your work with our children.*

November/December

Birthdays:

- Natalie Harbin 11/8
- Leigh Anne Swindell 11/11
- Debbie Smith 11/13
- Kendal Moores 11/18
- Hope Schmidt 11/18
- Connie Hilton 11/19
- Lisa Eyster 11/30
- Leigh Littrell 12/1
- Holly Griess 12/5
- Dale Moore 12/5
- Rachel Smith 12/5
- Laura Johnston 12/7
- Irma Rush 12/11
- Kay Olsen 12/12
- Teresa Quinn 12/16
- Donna Mayo 12/21
- Holley Wingard 12/29



Women's Jail Ministry

In September, DPC began ministering to women in the Morgan County Jail. Every 2nd and 4th Sunday from 8-9 am, we are sharing the gospel with these ladies through Bible study and prayer, and worshipping God in song. Every Sunday has been a blessing; the ladies are very responsive to love and encouragement, and they desperately need the Word of God in their lives.

If you are interested in getting involved in this ministry, there are several areas in which you can help!

"Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to me."

Matthew 25:40

1) Pray! Pray for these ladies to receive Christ as Savior, for their addictions, for the children they are separated from, and many other prayer needs. Also if you feel led to pray for this ministry regularly, pray that we would always follow God's leading in all that we do, that He would protect us, that He will send others to join in this mission. 2) Consider teaching in the Sunday morning service, or 3) discipling ladies when they are released. 4) You may purchase Bibles for

the inmates (\$14.95 each), or 5) send cards and letters to inmates here and also to those who move on to Tutwiler to serve longer time. This is a very simple way to share God's love and mail means so much to them. 6) We would also appreciate help from someone who may feel led to come in and lead songs a capella. The ladies love to sing and the acoustics are great there!

For more information or to get involved, please contact Robin Ladner by phone 552-0909 or email Roboftnr@aol.com

Have You Met?

Full Name: Meredith Ann Kuipers Yates

Job Title and Description: at home Mom

I have been at DPC: June 2005

My family includes: Shawn, Abby (4), Ella (1), Camden (8 months) and Me.

My hobbies include: What hobbies! Who has time! Ok, seriously... reading. I really do like reading.

A fact most people don't know about me: I love light houses

My biggest challenge right now is: parenting

My favorite hymn is: It is Well with My Soul

My perfect dream vacation spot: Anywhere on Lake Superior

If I could go anywhere in the world I would choose: Ireland, England

The greatest spiritual advice I've ever received was: Really it's been the teaching here at DPC... just a true understanding of grace.

My favorite food: Anything Italian

If I could change one thing in life,

it would be: I would add more time into a day

One of my favorite memories: Being snow-bound on the farm. Dad was in and we'd play games and do puzzles. Playing outside and coming in for hot chocolate and mom's homemade goodies.

My idea of a romantic evening would be: Reliving our first date. We went to Cheeseburger, Cheeseburger and out to see an independent film. It was fun.

Growing up my nickname was: I didn't really have one. Dad called me squirt and half-pint.



L to R: Alisa Poole, Meredith Yates, Renee Little, Rachel Smith, Abbie Blevins

Christmas Party & Ornament Swap

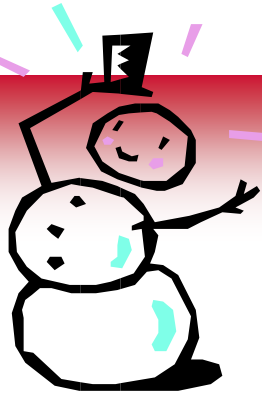
Ready or not... it's that time again! The Women's Christmas Party and Ornament Swap is scheduled for Tuesday night, December 5th at 6:00pm. Once again, it will not be held at Lisa Eyster's house as originally planned! Thanks so much to Elena Suggs for volunteering her home. Elena lives at 3116 Constitution Drive SW. Decatur, AL

To get to her house from the church turn right off of Modaus Rd. onto Danville Rd. Turn left on Stone River Dr. Turn right on Constitution Dr. 3116 is at the end of the cul-de-sac on the left hand side. If you get turned around, her phone number is 280-3033.



**Tuesday Night
December 5th
6:00 pm**

This year, if your last name begins with A-M bring a dessert and if your last name begins with N-Z bring an appetizer/hors d'oeuvre. And don't forget your ornament! This event always promises lots of fun fellowship and laughter. You won't want to miss out.



A Merry January Continued...

...swim in guilt over gift you bought or didn't buy, who was left off your Christmas card list, and all the things you were planning on doing

but got too busy to actually do. A merry January can be had when we don't rush around so much in December that we could practically sleep through the entire month of January, if only we could.

I have found that this phenomenon is not just related to how we spend money during the holiday shopping season, but also how we spend our time. The holidays, even when we don't intend them to, can become so frantic and busy that meaningful family time is cut to a minimum. Instead of reflecting on the past year and thanking God for all He has brought to our family during that year, we barely have time to eat together, pray together, or even see each other because of all of the busy activities that pull each member of the family in different directions.

I know that last year, without realizing it, we had become busy through activities our children were each involved in. Most of December was a blur of driving different children to different rehearsals, parties, caroling expeditions, and piano practice. When all was said and done, one of my children looked at me and said, "Let's not ever do it this way again!" (Amen!) The problem wasn't that caroling, Christmas plays, and concerts are somehow wrong, because they aren't. The problem was with what it did to our family at that time. Every family has its own level of "busyness" that is comfortable with, and we apparently exceeded our limit last year.

Whether or not you believe that the Birth of Christ occurred on December 25th, what we are celebrating is the best Gift He ever gave to man: The miraculous Incarnation! He gave the gift of Himself, clothed in flesh—God with us, Emmanuel. I firmly believe this is the best gift we can give to our children as well: the gift of

time with mom and dad and pointing our children to Christ, rather than hustle bustle and too many gifts.

One solution that has worked well for our family is introducing traditions that bring the family closer together and closer to the Lord. Please listen carefully. I am not talking about family traditions that just add more to mom's never ending to-do list, leaving you frazzled and panicked at the thought of not having things just so. Many times, even if we slow down on our outside activities, we get bogged down with "traditions" that focus more on the external staging of it all than they do on the whole purpose: enjoyable family time. Don't just lengthen your to-do list, stay up late with your many preparations, and then get testy over the messy house and imperfect decor. That is not what I mean by a meaningful family tradition.

I have incorporated many European traditions into our holiday celebrations, such as celebrating Advent. We have an Advent

Wreath on the table, an Advent Calendar that I make each year containing small, fun gifts for the children hanging on our staircase, and we have family devotions relating to Christ's first coming and the promise of His return throughout the four weeks before Christmas. This has been helpful in keeping our eyes on Jesus

and thanking Him that He did come to Earth, leaving His Father and the glories of Heaven just for us! When we are too busy fussing over buying some of that "holiday spirit," we too often miss out on that simple yet awe-inspiring truth.

A friend of mine introduced me to another wonderful tradition. Each Christmas morning, using a box and wrapping paper, each member of the family writes down what he is giving to the Lord this year. Usually it is some goal, such as to read the entire Bible, or maybe the New Testament for a newer reader. Often my husband and I offer gifts such as, "Father, this year I want to grow in such and such an area. Increase my faith!" Then we put them in the box, wrap the box, and label it to not be opened until Christmas of next year. On Christmas morning, we open our box and see how we did, and many times we discuss this as a family—areas of growth

and of struggle and all of the amazing things that the Lord has done!

Apart from the 30 or so very small gifts on the Advent Calendar, my children receive only one gift each Christmas from us. In the days before our income had been cut dramatically back, we used to buy many gifts for each child, but we have found that they actually enjoy Christmas more when the gifts are fewer—and when quality time with their family is greater. Relatives don't always honor our wishes about fewer and more meaningful gifts, but the children have come to realize through this situation that love is not something that can be purchased. A young child may be pleased for a few moments with the lure of many presents, but over the long haul, they prefer *presence* over presents.

Last Christmas, my oldest daughter and I took a rare trip out to the mall a week before the holidays to pick up something up for my mother. As I spoke to the cashier, I noticed an odd look come across my daughter's face as she stared out at the crowds of people swarming in the lower level of the mall.

"Ruth, what's wrong?" I asked.

"I don't understand it, Mom," she answered. "Why do they do that to themselves? None of these people even look happy!"

In fact, that reality was borne out to us as we wandered through the mall, casually enjoying some of the decorations and window shopping once our errand was finished. As we laughed and talked and seemed to be enjoying ourselves, we had numerous comments from others about our joy level. How could we be so calm and happy with only six shopping days left? That day, we used up every tract we had on us, as we shared the good news with those asked for "the hope that is in [us]" (1 Peter 3:15). You can take the time to do that this Christmas, too, but you are going to need to slow down and check your focus. Have a Jesus-Filled Christmas and a Merry January!

Mrs. Eddy is a wife of almost 14 years and the mother of five. Her website, [Joyful Mama](#), has many resources for encouraging mothers.

**Decatur Presbyterian Church, PCA
Women's Ministry**

2306 Modaus Road SW
Decatur, AL 35603

Phone: 256-351-6010
Fax: 256-351-6099
Email: acblevins@bellsouth.net



Pumpkin Bread with Warm Caramel Sauce

Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
 - 3/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 - 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
 - 1 teaspoon nutmeg
 - 1 1/2 cups sugar
 - 2 eggs
 - 1/2 cup (1 stick) melted butter
 - 1 cup unsweetened pumpkin puree
 - 1/3 cup water
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
 - 1 cup mini chocolate chips
1. Preheat oven to 350°.
 2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the all-purpose flour, wheat flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Set aside.
 3. In a separate bowl, beat the eggs. Add the sugar and beat until light and fluffy.
 4. Add the melted butter, pumpkin puree, water, and vanilla. Mix well.
 5. Add the dry ingredients and stir until blended.
 6. Add the chocolate chips.
 7. Pour into floured and greased loaf pans.
 8. For mini loaf pans, bake 35-40 minutes. For a standard sized loaf pan, bake 45-60 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
 9. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream and caramel sauce.

Yields 12 servings