

Our Record

Sunday Bible Study
 Morning Assembly 83
 Contribution \$1502
 Evening Assembly 30
 Wednesday Class

In Search of the Lord's Way is shown on Charter Cable Channel 12 at 10:00 AM, Wednesday, and at 6:00 PM Sunday, and on Dish Network Channel 259 and Charter Cable Channel 60.1 at 6:30 AM Sundays. Both Charter Cable & Dish Network now provide the "Inspirational Channel."

Ministry Leaders: Everett Hinton—Worship Ministry
 Brad Bailey—Missions
 Jim Fielder —Youth
 Bryan Jurrens—Buildings/Grounds
 Gaylin Prior—Music/Treasurer
 Dick Witt—Education/Benevolence

Minister: Russ Dudrey e-mail: r u s s d u d r e y @ g m a i l . c o m
 phone: 402-834-0096 (home)

Bulletin: Sharon Hachtel—463-4997
 e-mail: sh95736@windstream.net

Deadline for bulletin announcements is 9:00 PM Friday evening

THOSE TO SERVE

This Sunday, December 22 Next Sunday, December 29

	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
Announcements	D Witt	D Witt	E Hinton	E Hinton
Song Leader	G Prior	R Dudrey	A Adams	E Hinton
Opening Prayer	E Hinton	C Fielder	D Corman	D Brennfrdr
Closing Prayer	D Hachtel	B Bailey	B Shearer	M Fielder
Usher	D Wright		G Prior	
Greeters	Grissoms		Fielders	
Preside Lord's Supper	D Brennfrdr		K Lockling	
Serve	N Towell		D Wright	
Serve	M Fielder		C Fielder	
Serve	S Dinkler		D Hachtel	
Coordinator	R Munsell		B Bailey	
Prepare Lord's Supper	L Prior		D Hayes	
Children's Church	Meeting Today		Meeting Today	
Wednesday LTC	Volunteer Needed		Volunteer Needed	
Change Message Sign	Jim Fielder Family		Jim Fielder Family	
Lawn Care	---		---	

Family Focus

Number 51

December 22, 2013

Upcoming Events

- NYC Contribution—December 22
- Youth Group—Packing Food for the Hungry Program, 2-4 PM—December 22
- Christmas Eve Open House, Witts', 6:00 PM—December 24
- Eternal Threads Project Contribution Deadline—Dec 31
- Fifth Sunday Singing—North Platte—Jan 5

Enrichment Opportunities

Sunday Bible Study	9:30
College Class	9:30
Sunday Assembly	10:30
Sunday Evening	6:00
Wednesday Class	7:00
Ladies Class Thursday	9:30

- **Russ's Sermon** today is "Mary's song: Reflections on the Christmas Story." Tonight Russ plans a discussion-style devotional on the ways we celebrate the holidays. This will include discussing conscientious objections we may have to some of our holidays.
- **Wednesday Evening Classes:** A decision will be made on Sunday about whether we will have Wednesday Bible classes on December 25th and January 1st.
- **Annual Open House:** Everyone is invited to the Witts' home at 614 W. 10th for food and fellowship on Christmas Eve, starting at 6:00 PM. Soup, sandwiches and snack foods are on the menu.
- **Judy Melvin Surgery:** Judy will have total knee replacement surgery at Mary Lanning Hospital on December 27th, and then will be undergoing rehab for a few days. She is staying at daughter Rhonda Hoselton's home at 503 S. Lexington Ave in Hastings for the time being.
- **Victor Jou Sympathy:** Victor's father passed away recently. The funeral is in Salina, Kansas, on December 28th. Condolences can be sent to Victor and Mei at 538 Dundee Lane, Salina, KS 67401.
- **Thank You** for the generous basket of goodies and caroling. It was so good to see everyone. All is very much appreciated.

—Judy Melvin
- **Food for the Hungry:** We will be packing food to send overseas to people suffering hardship today at the Hastings Middle School, 2-4 PM. See Gaylin or Jim if you would like to participate in this group.
- **Robert and Susan Grissom** have gone to Texas to see what they can do for the welfare of their son Joel, who is undergoing trying times. Please pray for all of them.
- **The Walker Road Church of Christ in North Platte** is holding its area-wide fifth-Sunday singing on Sunday, January 5, from 3:30 onward. They will provide the evening meal. The announcement is posted on the bulletin board. We encourage any of our members who can to go to this, and thus to join in fellowship with the churches west of us.

Our Church Sign:

- Jesus is the reason for . . . Everything!
- Born to die. . . for you.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER: **Our Country; High School & College Students; Our Veterans; Bill Ashmore**—health; **Brad Bailey’s Sister—Linda Breuggeman**, cancer surgery recovery & treatment; **Bohne Family**—personal issues; **DudLee Brennfoerder’s Father, Gary**—cancer treatment; **Tom & Peggy Dill**—health; **Ned & Neva Cooper**—health; **Scott Dinkler’s Grandfather, John Schiefelbein & John’s two brothers**—cancer treatment; **Felice Dudrey’s mother’s health; Monica Fielder’s Brother**—military deployment to Afghanistan; **Nick Valle’s little brother, Gavin**—injury; **Shelley German**—cancer treatment; **Robert & Susan Grissom**—travelling; **Robert & Susan Grissom’s Son, Jaime**, spiritual concerns; **Joel Grissom**—transitioning from military to private sector; **Danelle Hayes**—health; **Cassidy Jurrens**—health; **Ileen Lenhart’s sisters**—health; **Ken Lockling**—health, his daughter Carolyn; **Ann Luke**—recovering from back surgery; **Bill & Judy Melvin**—health; **Joseph Morrow’s Brother**—lupus; **Johnny Meyers**—health; **Louise Nealeigh**—fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue; **Seth Ostrander**—brain tumor; **Alvin & Doris Reichert’ Son**—car accident injuries; **Shirley Steen’s grandson, Adam; Sudanese Brethren**—persecution; **Kamryn Towell’s Grandfather**—Injury & surgery; **Jo Wright’s son (Joe)**—heart condition, medical tests & family; **Gary & Norma Werner**—Norma’s health; **Dick Witt’s Mother**—eye issues; **Tina Witt; Dick & Detta Wright’s Great Grandson, Cole Wright**, hip surgery; body cast.

PRAY FOR OUR MISSIONARIES: **Russel Bell** (mission work in India & Romania).

PRAY FOR THOSE SERVING OUR COUNTRY: Jeffery Hergenreder.

Happy December Birthday To:

Jeremy Voorhees	- 1	Eloise Lockling	- 2	Elizabeth Montemayor	- 4
Brooke Bailey	- 5	Benjamin Bohne	- 8	Doris Reichert	- 9
Bill Melvin	- 13	David Moore	- 17	Brittany Bailey	- 17
Lorinda Bailey	- 28	Marina Fielder	- 31		

Happy December Anniversary To:

William & Alice Wells	- 1	Dick & Paula Witt	- 16	Andy & Erica Adams	- 22
Ken & Eloise Lockling	- 29				

- **Krotz Newsletter**—On the east bulletin board is a copy of the last report from the Krotz family as they complete their schooling and graduate from the Bear Valley Bible School in Denver and concerning their move to Troy, Ohio, for their first full-time work. Our prayers and concerns go with this good family as they begin their full-time work for the Lord, and we are happy to have had part in supporting them the last two years.
- **Our Thanks** to those who came Wednesday evening to sing carols to us, and leave the basket of goodies. We love our church family, and pray for the church in the new year of 2014. —Reed & Betty Munsell
- **Eternal Threads Project** in Afghanistan and India donation deadline is December 31, 2013. Please make checks payable to Eternal Threads. Our goal is to collect \$3,175 by December 31, 2013. If you have any questions, please contact Paula Witt or Janelle Corman.
- **Nebraska Youth Camp Contribution** will be taken today.
- **Wednesday Evening Treats**—Volunteer needed.
- **Alvin & Doris Reichert’s Son** was injured in a car accident about a week ago. Please keep him in your prayers for a full recovery.

“BEHOLD THE HANDMAIDEN OF THE LORD”

Protestants have given Mary, the mother of Jesus, less attention than she deserves. This for obvious reasons: We think the other side has mythologized its doctrine of Mary into far more than it should and made her into an idol. Mariolatry, we have called it, and have steered clear of that.

The Mary of the New Testament was a humble Jewish maiden probably still in her young teens who, when she reached marriageability and was betrothed to Joseph, was visited by the angel Gabriel to announce that God had chosen her as the vessel of the virgin birth of the Messiah of Israel. From then on her life was caught up into a whirlwind of wonders, and trials, and hardships. How could she foresee all the griefs? But when Gabriel announced the coming birth, she said, “Behold, the handmaiden of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word” (Lk. 1:38). She was humble and obedient. She let the Lord do his will in her, at whatever the price.

She did indeed pay some heavy prices. When Joseph and Mary presented baby Jesus in the Temple, the prophet Simeon held Jesus in his arms and forewarned Mary: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against . . . And a sword will pierce your own soul too” (Lk. 2:34-45).

There were the rumors. How could she tell the world that this was indeed a virgin birth? Joseph planned to divorce her when he heard she was pregnant, but God told him in a dream-vision that the child was conceived not through a man, but through the Holy Spirit (Mt. 1:18-25). So Joseph believed her—but few others would have. Jesus' enemies circulated the story that he was born from Mary's illicit union with a Roman soldier named Panthera, so they called him “Jesus ben Panthera” and said that he was “born from fornication” (Jn. 8:39-47).

There were the ways Jesus did his Father's will that were beyond Mary's grasp. When he was twelve, Mary and Joseph left Jesus in Jerusalem at Passover by mistake. After searching for three days, they found him in the Temple. Mary chided him: “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.” Jesus said, “Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know that I had to be in my Father's house?” Was he saying that if it came down to a choice, he must do the will of his Father above the will of his parents? This would add weight to Luke's note that Jesus went home to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them (Lk. 2:41-51).

There was the episode in Jesus' full-blown ministry when Jesus did not submit himself to his mother's will. Mary and the brothers of Jesus tried to pull him away from the crowds he was teaching because they thought “He is out of his mind”—he didn't realize the danger the public clamor after the Messiah brought down upon him. Jesus was told that they were outside wanting to see him. He responded, publicly, “Who are my mother and my brothers? Here are my mother and brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother” (Mk. 3:21-35). He would do his ministry despite the warnings of his mother and brothers.

And there was the cross. Jesus' ministry led inevitably down to the day that Mary stood at the foot of the cross and watched him die. What agonies did she suffer seeing the crucifixion?

We shouldn't pray to Mary or elevate her beyond her place as the humble handmaiden of the Lord. Some call her “Mother of God” or “Queen of Heaven,” giving her divine status. Some reverence her as “Co-Redemptrix” and “Mediatrice,” thinking she shares the role of Jesus in redeeming us and mediating for us. No: Jesus is our one and only Redeemer and Mediator. Mary herself needed redemption and mediation with God through Jesus.

But we shouldn't disparage Mary just because others idolize her. We should be grateful for the humble and obedient “handmaiden of the Lord” whom God chose for the mother of our Redeemer.