

*“God of all time and space, two thousand years ago you entered our world in the blood and tears of labour; from a woman’s arms you saw the stars you had made.*

*Open our eyes to your presence now, so we may worship you.*

*God of all power and majesty, you came to us in the body of a child;  
Totally vulnerable, your life was nurtured by human care.*

*Open our ears to your word now, so we may worship you.*

*God of all history, you came to turn our judgements inside out;  
You showed us that love beats at the heart of the universe.*

*Open our hearts to your love now, so that we may worship you, in the name of Christ. Amen.”* (Source: Netword.za. p11.)

*Mike*

Ruth and our children join me in wishing you all a very blessed Christmas.

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## WHAT IS THE SEASON OF ADVENT ALL ABOUT???

The season of Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas. This year it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> December. The word “Advent” is derived from the Latin word “Adventus” which means “coming”. It is a time of self-examination as we prepare for the coming of Christ in three different ways:

1. The celebration of the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem.
2. The second coming of Christ in glory at the end of the world.
3. The coming of Jesus as our personal Lord and saviour.

So Advent is a time each year when the people of God wait once again in darkness for the coming of the King: his historical coming in the mystery of Bethlehem; his final coming at the end of time and his special coming in every moment of grace.

Advent is the time of silence. Christmas is the time for joy.

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## THE FILM “THE GOLDEN COMPASS”

This film is due to be released in early December. From what I can see it seems to be a fantasy story in a genre similar to films like “The Chronicles of Nania” and the Harry Potter movies.

The concern that has been expressed in Christian circles about this film is that it is based on a book by Phillip Pullman who is an atheist and propagates a clear anti – God, Christianity theme in his writing. The film has apparently cut out or at least watered down the anti Christian bias.

There are several e-mails with attached articles on the film going around. I looked up “Golden Compass” on Google and found the Wikipedia article to be objective. See the link entitled “Controversies” – it gives an unemotional overview of the issues involved.

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## Thoughts From

Our Favourite Things

L ... Love & Laughter

I ... Inspiration & Insight

F ... Fellowship & Forgiveness

E ... Encouragement & Eats

G ... God & Growth

R ... Revival & Relaxation

O ... Others & Outreach

U ... Unhurried moments of worship

P ... Prayer & Praise

These are some of the things we experience every time our Life Group meets - and we love it. Our small group has grown in love and into a deeper understanding of our Lord, His saving Grace and what He expects of us. It is a joy to be on this journey together and we look forward to travelling the road ahead together.

We wish all who read this letter a wonderfully, blessed Christmas. May we all experience the Divine Love of God as we unwrap the Greatest Gift of all time - our Saviour, Jesus Christ.  
Mary White.

Some of our Monday morning Life Group members have been meeting together for Bible Study for very many years. Joan van Wyk and Lynette Duckitt are among those stalwarts. This tells you that most of us are the more senior members of the community, but though we may be “feeble of foot and rheumatic of shoulder” - our average age is over seventy - we are young at heart and are very involved in the life of the church.

We have found the Life Group teachings stimulating and have learned a lot about each other and ourselves.

Jock Barlow



**Monday  
Morning Life  
Group**

The picture on the left was taken at the old church in “Van Staden” Street and on the right the members in 1995.



We are a medium sized, varied group of men and ladies who vary in age from 46 - 60-something. Each of our members have been committed to the church series and we have gained and grown through these studies.

We are a fun loving group who enjoy wonderful fellowship on Tuesday evenings. The highlight of our evenings is the tea and cake after the study where we can get together and laugh and cry over the past week.

We thank God for a wonderful year and wish all other Life Groups a very Merry Christmas and a God-filled New Year.

Sydney De Wet

Our Life Group meets on a Tuesday morning. We have enjoyed sharing, getting to know one another, praising, thanking our loving God. Mike’s Bible Study notes have structured our Bible study and personal Bible reading. We would like to thank him for mobilising us for Christ. All has not been plain sailing, but because of the pledge of confidentiality we have really been able to face trials and heartaches together and been able to grow together and become stronger in our faith.

We have been blessed abundantly through Life Group.

Wishing you all a happy Christmas.

Alta Hahn



# Services December

Carol Service - 16th December 8.00 a.m. and 9.30 a.m.

Readings and singing of all your favourite Carols presented by the Choir.

Christmas Day - 25th December - 8.00 a.m.

Watch Night Service - 31st December - 11.30 p.m.

Rev. Mike Durrant will be conducting both services.



Dear Friends of RMC,

As our first year with you draws to a close, thank for the support, love and friendship that you have given us during this period. It has helped us settle and feel that Rustenburg is indeed home for us.

In hymn 142 there is a line which says "our God contracted to span, incomprehensibly made man." It captures the miracle we celebrate at Christmas time - that God whose presence fills the universe became a human being in Jesus.

Consider this – if our galaxy was the size of Africa south of the equator, then earth would be the size of a grain of sugar. God whose presence encompasses this galaxy is born a baby on the earth. He does this so that we might share in his divine life.

This says something about God's awesome power. Not only does he make stars but he condenses himself into a tiny speck of life – a human baby.

This says something of his awesome love. In the huge expanse of the universe he loves so much that he personally comes to reconcile to himself these sinful, rebellious specks of life, which we call humans. John 3:16; and Romans 5:8 speak of this love.

I enjoy Christmas as much as the next person does – I love the shopping for gifts and the decorations and the Christmas trees and the carols and the stories of the wise men, the angels, the shepherds, Joseph Mary and baby Jesus in the stable. I love the good food, the mince pies and fruit cake.

But thoughts such as I have expressed above challenge me to take time to reflect on the awesome nature of God's power and love demonstrated in this event. In the middle of the rush and business and holidays of this season, how do we do that?

May I suggest using this prayer through the season of Advent. Try to see if you pray it every day between 2<sup>nd</sup> December (the first Sunday in Advent) and Christmas morning.

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## SOCIETY Stewards

Congratulations to our new Society Stewards:

Barbara Beets, Charmaine du Plessis,

### SERVICES AND MEETINGS IN NEW YEAR

**Baptism service :**

6th January 2008

**Annual Covenant Services:**

27th January 2008 - 8.00 a.m., 9.30 a.m.

**Leaders Meeting:**

Tuesday 29th January 2008 - 6.00 p.m.

Some Carolling around the country

If you are visiting these towns maybe you would like to join in the Christmas celebrations with the locals.

8-10 December

George Christmas Lights Festival - The official start of the region's holiday season.



13, 14, 15 & 16 December

Kirstenbosch Carols by Candlelight

If you are visiting the Mother City, you can spend an unbelievable evening in one of our country's most beautiful settings for an evening of carolling.

17 December

Durban Botanical Gardens, Carols by Candlelight  
Carols performed by the KZN Philharmonic Orchestra and guest soloists - pack a picnic basket and enjoy a wonderful evening in these stunning gardens. Adults - R60, Seniors and children aged 13-18 - R40, and children 6-12 years - R20. Phone 0861

### Say it with flowers!

In the 1800s flowers were used to convey messages. Each flower had a meaning and when given carried the appropriate message.

- azalea - passion
- calla lily - beauty
- cornflower - hope
- carnation - woman's love (white-pure love, red-admiration)
- forget-me-not - true love
- gerbera - sunshine of my life
- iris - faith; hope; passion
- lilac - humility
- lily of the valley - sweetness; return to happiness
- tulips - (cream) will love you forever
- peony - a happy marriage
- sweet pea - delicate pleasures
- tiger lily - wealth, pride
- orchid - love, beauty



## GALILEAN BOOKSHOP

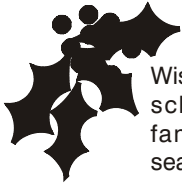
WA diaries are available from the bookshop at R15,00.

10)	Ahinoam
9)	Hannah
8)	She was a Hebrew orphan.
7)	Jochebed (She bore Moses, Aaron and Miriam)
6)	Bathsheba (She is in Jesus' family tree)
5)	Mary of Nazareth
4)	Sarah
3)	Eve (mother of all the living)
2)	Elizabeth (Descendant of priestly line of Aaron)
1)	Naomi

### ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUIZ

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We saw the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of

# CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS



Wishing Chett & all the Sunday school teachers and their families a blessed festive season. Veronica



A very Merry Christmas and a big thank you to all members of the healing team. Your prayers during the year have meant a great deal. Veronica



To our Life Group and Special Friends. Thanks so much for all your love and prayers over the last few months, we really appreciate it! A verse in Philippians became very real in our lives and this past Sunday the next verse just jumped out as well (with good reason, me thinks!!).

Phil. 4: 13 & 14

“For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need. But even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty.”

Our prayer is that the power of God, the love of Jesus & the presence of the Holy Spirit will be with you all during this Festive Season and in the year to come.

With much love, appreciation and all the Glory to God!!!

Bernie, Barbara, Rozanne, Brendon & Melissa



Merry Christmas Rene thank you for teaching the Little Lambs of Jesus.

Wish you and you family all the best for the festive season.

Veronica

Christmas Greetings.

Happy Summer Christmas to all my special friends, old, from long ago and new ones. Love you and God loves us.  
Alta Hahn



Thank you Aunty Joan and all the ladies that help. Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.  
Veronica

## BANNER GROUP

**Our Banner Group will be starting up again in the new year. If you are interested in designing and sewing beautiful banners for our church contact Jenni on 083 285 9175.**

## BIBLE QUIZ



*(Mothers of the Bible) Answers on page 8*

- 1) Who was Ruth's mother in law?
- 2) Who was John the Baptist's mother?
- 3) Who was Cain's mother?
- 4) Abraham is called the father of the Jewish nation. Who would be the mother?
- 5) What famous mother is known for her answer to Gabriel. 'I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me, as you have said!
- 6) Who was the mother of Solomon the wisest mortal who ever lived?
- 7) What was Moses' mothers name?
- 8) Who was Esther's mother?
- 9) Who was Samuel's mother?
- 10) Who was Jonathan's mother?

## CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS

In an article I read on [www.christmas.com](http://www.christmas.com), I discovered that the celebration of Christmas has its origins in the Roman celebration of Saturnalia. This celebration featured good food and the giving of presents and was held in December of each year in celebration of the Winter solstice. It was in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD that, after a period of controversy, Pope Julius I made the announcement that Christ's official birthday would be the 25<sup>th</sup> December. Although this date is most certainly wrong – it has stuck. (Pretoria News Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2003).

The article from the Pretoria News referred to in the previous paragraph, explains the origins of so many of our Christmas traditions such as mince pies, eating turkey, Christmas trees, giving presents, sending Christmas cards and Father Christmas. Some have a pagan origin; others are developments of Christian traditions (like mince pies); while others were born out of commercial schemes such as the Christmas card and the colours of Father Christmas' clothes.

Today Christmas is a big commercial thing – consider that shops advertise “Christmas specials” and start adorning their shelves with decorations from as early as October.

So how do we keep the focus on what this is truly about?

I would suggest, by seeing Christmas day in the broader context of the Christian season of Advent; by making Advent a time of spiritual reflection and repentance.

In our church we will take care to celebrate Advent. The coming of Jesus and the significance of this will be dealt with in the sermons. Each service will begin with the lighting of an Advent candle with a reflection on an aspect of Advent.

I think it is up to us to fill this season with our faith and belief as Christian people. (Mike)

## So .... What Happened At Plant 2008?

We agreed that people need a community where:

- They can feel they belong, can experience care and meaningfully interact with others.
- They can experience healing from their wounds.
- Receive support in the issues they have to deal with in their daily living.

Consequently, we are looking at ways people can be more effectively integrated into the church; the sense of community in the church can be built up; our pastoral care can be improved; and our communication with our members improved

Thanks to all who attended the day and contributed to the discussions.

# Women's Auxiliary

We have had some interesting events during the first two months of this quarter.

Rev. Mike Durrant gave us an outstanding talk on Spiritual Leadership at our October meeting.

Sherry Dwyer visited us during November and talked about the work of Hospice.

We are all looking forward to our last meeting this year, which will be our Christmas lunch at Steakout Grill.

We have had our quota of catering for funerals. Sadly some of our members have gone to higher service. We miss Sally Bishop, Betty Grobler, Hilmary Hodgson and our sympathies go out to their families.

During October we were involved in Saturday morning making of pancakes for school galas and we shall be continuing this also in November.

As you see our outreach is not only to the older folks, but also to the younger ones as well.

We have been able to allocate the funds for this year through our fund raising to organisations, not only in our Church, but also to various other organisations in our community.

Ladies, come and join our happy band, have stax of fun and enjoy the blessing received as we work for Christ in His Church and amongst His people.

We take this opportunity of wishing all our church leaders, the congregation, the W.A. members and especially Mike & Ruth Durrant and their family and Tim and his family, a blessed Christmas and pray it will be filled with the love of God which will flow over into the New Year.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A FANTASTIC NEW YEAR.

Yvonne Huxtable, Public Relations Co-ordinator.

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## RMC EARTH CARE GROUP

In August we established this mission group in the church. It has had a number of meetings and we are getting going on some good stuff.

One project is to get a notice board dedicated to earth care. We hope to give advertising opportunities for the local Bird club, Wild Life Society and gardening club to advertise events of general interest. Often these groups arrange speakers on important environmental topics which are both informative and challenging.

A second project we are considering is to start a recycling depot at the church. One of the ways we can reduce our negative impact on the earth is reduce the amount

Cont. on page 5

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of rubbish we throw away. We hope to promote the ethic of recycle and re-use and to offer people a facility where they can take their re-usable "rubbish".

A third project we envisage is to encourage the development of "Earthworm Farms." We are busy researching this and hope to have a pilot project going next year. This is linked to recycling but also helps people to develop their own organic compost and fertilizer.

I realize that several people in the congregation are involved in various environmental care related projects and jobs. Please feel free to use the board mentioned in the beginning of this article to tell us about what you are doing and to advertise for help needed. (Mike)

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## CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Hi Guys & Girls

I greet you all in the Wonderful Name of our Lord Jesus.

This is our last term and this makes me both happy and sad.

I am happy that we will be celebrating the birth of our Saviour, but I'm sad that there will be some of you leaving our congregation to go to other towns. I'm also sad that the Grade 7's will be stepping up a level in their Christian walk by going to Teen Church or YOUTH.

I wish everyone in our Children's Church all the best. Each one of you has a special place in my heart and I hope you all have a Merry CHRISTmas and a Blessed New Year.

I would like to welcome Samatha and Nicole as our new Grade 1 and 2 leaders. Hope you both will really be blessed in this ministry. I wish to thank Aunty Joyce for all her help. Aunty Joyce is very much a part of this Body of Christ. To all the other leaders Natalie, Gerrit, Aunty Paulice, Keryn in Children's Church and Veronica and Rene in Little Lambs, you have all been absolutely supportive and may God bless you.

To all of OUR KIDS, YOU are ALL very IMPORTANT and a part of the BODY OF CHRIST in the Rustenburg Methodist Church. You all keep me as well as all of the other leaders going.

We will be having a very interesting programme in 2008. The programme includes "I Am" a Hamburger, The Kid's ALPHA, the ARMOUR of GOD and at the end of the year our CHRISTmas Carol.

Should there be anyone thinking of joining our Children's Christian Ministry, please pray about it during the holidays and come and join us if you feel called.

To all of you wonderful people, don't forget to PRAY AND ASK, AND YOU WILL BE BLESSED AND RECEIVE. Remember what I said, you ARE not alone the HOLY SPIRIT is ALWAYS with YOU, TALK TO HIM AND TRUST HIM he is always there for YOU 24 hours a day every day.

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