



Lighthouse of Iowa

Keeping in touch with Iowa's Churches of Christ

December 2023

The boy Jesus amazes the scholars

It says in Luke 2:39-40 that Joseph and Mary returned to Nazareth, the town where Jesus will grow up. It says Jesus became "strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him."

I know it seems to go against our human understanding to consider that the Divine Son of God had to "grow" in anything, especially spiritually, but remember, He was also human. He was born as a human baby and grew into a child and later a man. This growth, especially the spiritual growth, is what led to the next event in Jesus' young life.

Where's Jesus?

Because Joseph and Mary had very strong faith they went to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. Of course, they took their Son. On the way back to Nazareth, their home, they both thought Jesus was with them among the company of, probably, fellow Jewish travelers. After a day's journey they discovered Jesus was NOT with them! What panic that may have ensued! (I know how I might have responded - "We lost God's Son!")

If you have trouble comprehending how this could have happened consider this short story. When my wife, Becky, was a young child, she was traveling with her family. After stopping at a rest stop they got back into the car, and her parents asked, "Is everybody in? To which her brothers and sisters all said, "yes," and they went on their way. Only to realize sometime later that Becky was not in the car! They hurriedly return to the rest area and found her sobbing. They comforted her and put her back in the vehicle and went on their way. It ended well, fortunately.

Teaching the teachers

Joseph and Mary returned to Jerusalem and discovered their Son was in good hands, for He was at the Temple in the midst of the Jewish teachers, listening to them and asking questions. All those who heard Him were astonished with His understanding and answers. At what point did Jesus gain such understanding and answers?

He learned while growing up in Jerusalem. Yes, Jesus certainly had revelation from His Father, probably when His physical heart and mind were mature enough to comprehend such Truths to help Him understand these spiritual matters of importance. Jesus said a number of ways and times-- John 8:28-29
28 Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. 29 And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."

There is no doubt in my mind that Joseph and Mary taught Him what they could. And they certainly saw that He received instruction through their local synagogue as noted in Luke 4:16-17. Note that "as was His custom" He was handed the Old Testament scrolls, which He began to read out loud. This passage was written as if this was a normal and regular routine for Jesus to perform, probably as a young man.

I am convinced Jesus most assuredly became well acquainted with these same Scriptures, which were able to make Him "wise unto salvation" as the apostle Paul writes in 2 Tim 3:15. Paul goes on to write that these same Scriptures would help Him (and us) understand doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may

be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. It is my conviction Jesus received these blessings as a result of reading, studying and meditating these Old Testament Scriptures.

How well did Jesus know these Scriptures? At least by the time He was a grown Man. Consider how He answered Satan at His Temptation as noted in Matt 4:1-11. He quoted the Scriptures! Where do you suppose He learned to answer in such a manner? He probably spent hours and hours, days and years, studying. It is this process growing up while in Nazareth that most certainly helped lead to His growing in spirit, wisdom and grace. This is why He was able to question and answer the Scribes in such a manner that amazed them!

This paragraph concludes with Jesus’ parents asking Him why He had done this. Jesus answered - Luke 2:49 And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” In my mind this is a clear reference to Jesus knowing His identity by this time, for He was not referring to His earthly father’s business as a carpenter.

In Lk 2:51-52, we are told Jesus continued under the authority of Joseph and Mary. He continued to grow in wisdom, stature, and in favor in both God and man.

Jay H. Graham

Chariton

Meeting times: Sundays: 10:00 a.m. (no evening services)

Location: Call for information.

For information call: Albert Schreck (641) 535-2381 or Brian Schreck (641) 203-2137

- Quiet month in Chariton.



December Birthdays

- None

December Anniversaries

- None

Dean Avenue

Meeting times: Sundays: 9:30 a.m. ♦ Wednesdays: 6:30 p.m.

Location: 2907 Dean Ave., Des Moines, Iowa / P.O. Box 57398, Pleasant Hill, IA 50327

For information call: John McNeece (515) 263-9428

- Trent and Leah Fiorentin met with us on a Sunday. Trent gave us a good lesson.
- Wade Stanley met with us on a Sunday and gave us two edifying lessons.
- Jessica (Strable) Higgins came forward, admitted sin, asked for forgiveness and wanted to be a member in good standing. We joyfully accepted her!
- Donna McNeece had surgery to remove a toe that was very painful to her. She is recovering well.

Visitors this month:

- Misti Hayes, Dani Strable, Shawn Whitlatch, Piper, Parker and Payton Whitlatch, Elsie and Maxine Higgins, Charlie Kelsey Head

On the sick list this month:

- Cathy Meek
- Debbie Wilkins
- Frank Meek
- Jim and Candy Meek
- Bill and Shirley McNeece

December Birthdays:

- ☆ 18 Travis Head
- ☆ 28 Risa Schamel

December Anniversaries:

Fairview

Meeting times: Sundays: 10:00 a.m

Location: 1001 S. 22nd St, Clarinda, Iowa 51632

For information call: Richard Negley (712)695-9001 or Marvin Negley (712)303-7106

- Dave Walls from Indiana was here deer hunting and worshiped with us for two Sundays and gave us good lesson on the 12th of November.

December Birthdays

- None

December Anniversary

- None

Martensdale

Meeting Times: Sundays: 10:00 a.m. & Wednesdays: 7:00 p.m.

Location: 10985 44th Lane, Prole, Iowa (1.5 miles east of Martensdale, IA on Hwy. 92)

Website: martensdalechurchofchrist.com

For information call: Duane Proudfit (515) 961-4470 or Mike Penick (515) 681-0279

Visitors:

- Steve Proudfit
- Doug Bown
- Gerry, Ashley, Aella, Felix and Rowan Fenton
- Kirk, Bethany and Killian Ford
- Adam, Cassidy, Judah, and Ezra Purdy
- Please continue to keep Duane and Mary Proudfit in your prayers. Mary's address is listed here:

Good Samaritan Society

Room 107
708 S. Jefferson Way
Indianola, IA 50125.

December Birthdays

- ☆ Mary Proudfit - December 10
- ☆ Teresa Bown - December 12
- ☆ Drew Teghtmeyer - December 29
- ☆ Hannah Hounsom - December 30

December Anniversaries

- None

Pleasant Hill

Meeting Times: Sundays: 9:30 a.m. ♦ Wednesdays: 6:30 p.m.

Location: 5091 E. University, Pleasant Hill, Iowa

Website: pleasanthillchurchofchrist.org

Contacts: Mike Warner 515-967-4529 / Marty Williamson 515-556-2394 / Marc Hermon 515- 554-3567

Announcements: ♥ Heartfelt Love & Prayers:

- **Bud Fillman** has been dealing with facial skin cancer. He's had reactions to treatments. Thank you for lifting him up in prayer.
- **Carson George** moved to Arizona this month. Carson plans to live there for the next year and go into business

with cousins Justin Pappan and Clay Felice. He will be missed by Kelly, Allison and Sophia as well as his church family.

- **Dave & Joyce Ingle** have sold their home in Mitchellville. Their closing date is Nov. 30. Although they are excited to build a home at the Ingle farm in Swan this upcoming year it's emotional to leave a home full of memories.

- **Marilyn McClurg** was in Mercy Hospital battling stomach pains and dehydration for a few weeks. She has been moved to skilled care facility as she continues to recover.
- **Marty Williamson's** brother passed away this month after battling COVID pneumonia. Earnest love and prayers for the entire Williamson family during this very sad and difficult time.
- **Stephen Thompson** has been suffering side effects from past radiation treatments. Please keep him in your prayers.
- **Steve Thompson** suffered a fall and has dealt with UTI's. Please encourage him however you can this winter.

Announcements:

- **Praise God! Genevieve Elsie Twaddell** was welcomed on Thursday, November 2, at 10:55 a.m. by Ayden and Madison Twaddell. "Ginny" weighs in at 7 lbs., 18 inches long, and has lots of curly brown hair! Big brother Theo thinks she's SO cute! Congratulations to the family, including Great Grandparents Bruce & Suzanne Harvey, Ladeanna Twaddell and Judy Dunn, Grandparents Doug & Jill Twaddell and Marc & Ginger Hermon, as well as many aunts, uncles, and cousins. Genevieve is truly loved! ❤️



- **Sam Pritchard** obeyed the gospel call and was baptized on Tuesday, November 7. Praise God for this brother who we all love dearly! Our prayer is that God will bless Sam as he grows in knowledge and truth as he strives to attain eternal salvation. We also pray the sincere love and fruits of the spirit that can be offered by brethren at Pleasant Hill will be a source of encouragement. May we ALL continue to let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly, be devoted in brotherly love, and always give ourselves fully to the work of the Lord!



- **Hallelujah! We are rejoicing with the angels that Ava and Eden Brady came forward on Wednesday evening.**

Each confessed Jesus as the Son of God and was baptized by their grandfathers for the remission of their sins! This is what the Lord desires from His children and what a glory it is when that goal is accomplished! We are especially happy over these decisions and are eternally grateful for the joy that Ava and Eden have spread to their family and all the brethren. Let's encourage these girls as they continue to grow in the grace, knowledge, and truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!



Iowa Traveling Bible Study:



Praise God for a wonderful Iowa Traveling Bible Study in November. We are grateful for the Wood family's Christian hospitality, Alan's edifying lesson on Salt & Light, and a room full of zealous Bible students! *ITBS will resume in January 2024. Plan to attend the youth rally in December.*

December Birthdays

- ☆ Jed Wood – 12/3
- ☆ Steve Brady – 12/4
- ☆ Gabriel Hermon – 12/7
- ☆ Leah Anguiano – 12/8
- ☆ Paul Zinnel, Jason Brady – 12/18
- ☆ William Conner – 12/29

December Anniversaries

- ☆ Susan & Nick Conner - 12/30

Vandalia

Meeting Times: Sunday: 9:30 a.m. and Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.
Location: 2.5 miles east of Runnells, Iowa on F70, then 1 mile north on 131st St.
For information call: Greg Ingle (515) 994-2824 or Charles Ingle (515) 238-3316
Website: <https://vandaliacoc.com>

- Shonya, Kiana, and Aryana Klein, Briana and Rachel Heartsill, Sharon Cummings, Lynnette, Brittney and Lillian Dowdy, Angela Ingle, Charity Klein, Nancy and Sarah Clark attended the Woman’s Day Meeting held at Excelsior Springs, Mo. on Saturday, November 4. A delightful day of fellowship!
- On November 15, we rejoiced with and for Abigail Ingle for her decision to be baptized into Christ. We are so thankful for our new sister-in-Christ.
- Nathan Fiorentin and Erica Belcher announced their engagement. They are planning a wedding in April.
- Sunday evening, Nov. 12, the group sang for Richard and Mary Ellen Goode at their home in Indianola in honor of their 60th wedding anniversary.
- Brighton Ingle had a part in the PCM high school play held the second weekend of November.
- Trent Fiorentin is planning a VBS to be held the second weekend of April. More details coming later.

- Thanksgiving dinners were held with family and friends as we gathered to celebrate our love for God and one another, giving thanks to God for our many blessings throughout the year.
- Visitors this month were: Albert and Jeanette Schreck, Mason Burright, Matt and Dawn Mikus and children Cora and Austin.



December Birthdays

- ☆ 2 Bonnie Harkins
- ☆ 3 Kelsey Fiorentin
- ☆ 3 Carson Dowdy
- ☆ 8 Leah Fiorentin
- ☆ 27 Melody Burkman
- ☆ 27 Jason Henle
- ☆ 29 Staci Miller

December Anniversaries

- None

Winter Solstice

Thursday, December 21st, 2023, 9:27 PM
Central Time



The word 'solstice' comes from the Latin solstitium meaning 'Sun stands still', because the apparent movement of the Sun's path north or south stops before changing direction.

The Winter Solstice marks the first day of winter in the Northern Hemisphere.

This day has the fewest hours of sunlight in the entire year having about 7 hours and 14 minutes of daylight.

The Pagan celebration of Winter Solstice (also known as Yule) is one of the oldest winter celebrations in the world.

Some cultures saw the solstice as an opportunity to create light, or goodness, in the face of darkness, or evil.

In Egyptian lore, it's believed the Great Mother Goddess Isis gave birth to her son Horus, the Sun God on the Winter Solstice.

In Greek mythology, the Goddess Leto gave birth to the bright, shining Apollo. Mithra, the Persian God of Light and guardian against dark evil, was born on the solstice.

Romans celebrated winter solstice on December 25th.