

# The Magothy Deaf Messenger

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## Hope, Love, Joy and Peace - The Advent Wreath

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The meaning of the word advent is "coming" or "arrival." What is coming? The birth of Jesus!

The season of Advent, which begins four Sundays before Christmas, is a time of prayer and anticipation, preparing for the arrival of our King. We use the advent wreath as a calendar of sorts, to count down the Sundays until the holy birth.

The advent wreath is a tradition that started in the Lutheran Church and then spread to other denominations. The circle of the advent wreath symbolizes God, who has no beginning and no end. The evergreen branches that are

woven into that circle are a symbol of the new life that Christ brings us. The candles on the wreath stand for the light of God that Christ will bring into the world.

The outer candles were originally all purple, the color of royalty, signifying that the baby Jesus, born in a humble stable, was nonetheless a King. However, somewhere along the way, one of the purple candles was replaced with a rose-colored candle due to the tradition the Catholic Pope had of giving out a rose on the third Sunday of Advent. (Isn't it



Love funny that we Methodists put a pink candle on a Lutheran wreath because a Catholic

Pope had a tradition of handing out roses?)

The center candle is known as the Christ Candle, and is white to signify Christ's perfection and purity. This candle is lit on Christmas Eve.

Each candle on the wreath reminds us of a different facet of the season to think about. The first Sunday is for Hope, the second is for Love, the third is for Joy, and the fourth is for Peace.

Since Advent is the four Sundays before Christmas, in years like this year where December 24 falls on a Sunday, it is considered to be the fourth Sunday of Advent until sundown, and then it is Christmas Eve.

Many people make and use an Advent wreath at home. All you have to do is tie some evergreen branches in a circle and put in three purple candles and a pink candle on the rim of the circle, and a white candle in the center. On the first Sunday, light one of the purple candles. Have a family member sign a Bible passage



Joy

about hope, and then say a prayer to thank God that Jesus will be bringing hope into the world. Don't forget to snuff out the candle!

On the second Sunday, light the candle you already lit the previous Sunday and then light another purple candle. Sign a Bible passage about love and say a prayer that love will spread over all the world.

On the third Sunday, light both purple candles from the previous two weeks, and then light the pink candle. Sign a Bible passage about joy, and offer a prayer that the whole world will someday come to know the joy of having Christ as the King.

On the fourth Sunday, light the candles from the previous weeks and then light the last purple candle and read a Bible passage about peace. Pray that the peace of God will continue throughout the coming year to all people.

On Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, light all four of the outer candles that have been lit before, and then light the Christ candle. You should now have a stair-step effect with the Christ candle being higher than all the others. Sign the Christmas story and pray that all people come to know Christ.

Peace



- 1—Sign Dinner @
- 3—First Sunday of Advent
- 4—UMW @ 6:30 p.m.
- 7—Bible Study @ 7:00 p.m.
- 8—UMM @ 6:00 p.m.
- 9—Sign Choir practice @ 9:30 a.m.
- 10—Second Sunday of Advent
- 10—Holy Communion Worship Service
- 14—Bible Study @ 7:00 p.m.
- 17—Third Sunday of Advent
- 21—First day of Winter
- 21—Bible Study @ 7 p.m.
- 23—Sign Choir practice @ 9:30 a.m.
- 24—Fourth Sunday of Advent
- 24—Christmas Eve Worship Service @ 7 p.m.
- 25—Christmas Day
- 28—Bible Study @ 7 p.m.
- 31—New Year's Eve
- 31—Pot luck lunch @ 11:30

CHRISMONS



## New MISSIONS Committee

Beginning in January 2007, Magothy United Methodist Church for the Deaf will establish its first-ever Missions Committee. We are currently looking for volunteers to join this committee. Missions are an important part of any ministry! We are called as Christians to do mission work. Examples of our past missionary work include: Door Step Mission, clothes and books for deaf students in Zimbabwe, and supporting deaf children who wish to go to deaf summer camp at West River. There is so much more we need to do! The members of this committee will help lead Magothy in missionary

work. Part of the missionary committee's work will be to decide which missions we can support. That's why we need you! If you are interested in serving on this important committee, please contact Sarah Yates, the Missions Committee Chairperson, at [slyncb@aol.com](mailto:slyncb@aol.com). If you are unable to volunteer on a regular basis, but would like to help out whenever possible, we still need you! Once we establish the committee, there will be plenty of work that each member can contribute.

Thank you and God bless!

## Join the Choir!

You don't have to be deaf to join the choir!

Magothy's sign choir meets on the first and third Saturday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the church library to practice the songs they will be performing for the worship service. Please join us!



Sign choir performing "All Through the Night"

## Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

- The committee should meet once each quarter.
- Counsel with the pastor on matters pertaining to his/her relationship with the congregation, including use of time and skills in reaching the goals of the congregation.
- Annually evaluate the pastor and submit the evaluation to the Board of Diaconal Ministry.
- Consult with the pastor on: supplies for the pulpit, compensation and other matters affecting his family.
- Make sure pastor has time to

himself for down-time.

- Make sure he has time and money for his own professional and spiritual growth.
- Handle any problems that the parish and pastor have with each other.
- Make sure that both the pastor and parish know what is expected of each other.
- Continue to pray for both the congregation and pastor.
- Send annual evaluation of the pastor to the DS.

- Work with the DS at the time the pastor is changed.

PPR:

2007 –Carolyn and Barb

2008 –Horatio and Julia

2009 – Alma and ?

We still need one person on PPR committee. If you are interested or know someone you think would be interested in serving on this board, please let the pastor know.

## Family Services Foundation

It is a blessing that members of Magothy Deaf Church provide lunch twice per week for the people at Family Service Foundation. Thanks to a generous donor, we have some funds available to help reimburse our volunteers for the money they spend purchasing the food

to prepare.

We are still looking for volunteers to assist in this ministry. If you are able to help prepare lunch for 20 people once per month, please contact Darlene Koontz.

*"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you?'"*

*"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'" Matthew 25:37, 40.*

## The Fern and the Bamboo

*One day I decided to quit. I quit my job, my relationship, my spirituality...I wanted to quit my life. I went to the woods to have one last talk with God.*

"God," I said, "can you give me one good reason not to quit?"

His answer surprised me.

**"Look around," He said. "Do you see the fern and the bamboo?"**

"Yes," I replied.

**"When I planted the fern and the bamboo seeds, I took very good care of them. I gave them light. I gave them water. The fern quickly grew from the earth. Its brilliant green covered the floor. Yet nothing came from the bamboo seed. But I did not quit on the bamboo.**

**In the second year, the fern grew more vibrant and plentiful. And again, nothing came from the bamboo seed. But I did not quit on the bamboo.**

**In year three, there was still nothing from the bamboo seed, but I would not quit. The same in year four.**

**Then in the fifth year, a tiny sprout emerged from the earth. Compared to the fern, it was seemingly small and insignificant.**

**But just six months later, the bamboo rose to over 100 feet tall. It had spent the five years growing roots. Those roots made it strong and gave it what it needed to survive. I would not give any of my creations a challenge it could not handle.**

**Did you know, my child, that all this time you have been struggling, you have actually been growing roots? I would not quit on the bamboo. I will never quit on you.**

**Don't compare yourself to others. The bamboo had a different purpose than the fern. Yet they both make the forest beautiful.**

**Your time will come. You will rise high."**

"How high should I rise?" I asked.

**"How high will the bamboo rise?" He asked in return.**

"As high as it can?" I questioned.



**"Yes," He said, "Give me glory by rising as high as you can."**

*I left the forest, realizing that God will never give up on me.*

*And he will never give up on you.*



*From the  
Pastor's pen...*



### **What Jesus Really Wanted Is.....**

I was excited at an announcement that a drama would be presented about Nativity on the Eve of Christmas at the church. I went to the church and waited for actors who would play roles as baby Jesus and his mother Mary and Joseph. They did not show up. I was puzzled and wondering why the drama would not be presented. Somehow I began to think that perhaps real baby Jesus and Mary and Joseph themselves could visit and greet us. I waited patiently to meet with them until 9:30pm. I began to doze and fell into sleep. When I woke up at one in the morning, I found out that the church was empty. I was left alone. I was not sure if baby Jesus and Mary and Joseph had come. I began to demoralize myself with a thought that perhaps they could have been to the church while I was asleep. I began weeping bitterly for failing to see the Holy Family. Then I woke up and it was a dream. I dreamed this dream when I was a fifth grader. I could never forget this dream.

Whenever the Christmas season returned, I recalled this dream and wondered what it meant. Does this dream indicate that God was displeased with my lukewarm faith? Why did I fail to get the honor of seeing the Holy Family? Perhaps I missed the blessing of meeting baby Jesus because He found me unworthy?

I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior when I was a middle school student after listening to a sermon delivered by my pastor at the worship service. The Christmas season that year came again. As usual, I recalled the dream that I missed an opportunity to see the Holy Family at the church and I realized that Jesus wanted to come into my heart. I thought I would be satisfied only if I could see baby Jesus and Mary. No, I was wrong. Jesus wanted more than that. He wanted me to invite him into my heart. Before that time, I was hesitating when the pastor preached to us to accept Jesus as the Lord. I thought my heart was so filthy with sins that it would be an insult to Him to let Him in. Again, I was wrong. He was born in a manger. The manger is a box to hold fodder for horses or cattle to eat. It would be very dirty and smell stinky. Jesus was born in a stinking manger and lay there when the Magi and the shepherds visited and bowed down to worship Him. I could understand that Jesus would be willing to come in my unclean heart since He did not complain about being born in the manger.

What Jesus wanted me to do was just to invite Him in my heart. I did it five years later after I dreamed that dream.

Yes, Jesus Christ still wants to enter into your heart and life to be your Lord. Let's welcome Him. Let's sing, "Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room."

*"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."  
(Revelation 3:20)*

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Postmaster, please deliver to:

Send e-mail with your name and  
address to  
*webmaster@magothydeafchurch.org*  
to be added to our newsletter list!

**We're on the Web!**  
[www.magothydeafchurch.org](http://www.magothydeafchurch.org)

## How to be a Member of Magothy UMCD?

When Jesus was resurrected on that glorious Easter morning, he later appeared to his disciples. Jesus assured them he is with them, and that they are to go out and make disciples.

You see, Jesus doesn't want just believers, **HE WANTS FOLLOWERS.**

For some, it takes a long time before finding a church to visit; and others attend church their whole life, but don't make a commitment to be followers.

There is a difference between being a Christian (a believer) and a disciple (a follower).

Being a follower of Christ is making a commitment to God and His church.

When we become followers, we are accepting our responsibility to be part of God's church.

Sometimes we forget that it is God's church. God wants His disciples to be in a relationship with Him, to be his people. It is a gift that we often overlook. Grace is poured into our church, and into our lives. Each of us is given spiritual gifts to share and serve others.

Becoming a church member begins the commitment as a disciple of Christ. Are you holding back? Have you been neglecting your spiritual obligation, or don't know what's expected?

If you're not yet a disciple, consider making a step in the right direction by becoming a church member.

Rev. Kang is happy to sit down and talk with you. Take this time and pray to know where God is leading you.

## UMW News

Our UMW group received a special award for going above and beyond and exceeding our missions goal for 2006.

We would like to welcome our new UMW officers for 2007:

President: Alma Andrews  
Vice-President: Nina Gilbert  
Secretary: Kathy Russo  
Treasurer: Barb Sully  
Trustee: Ginny Zink  
Devotional: Darlene Koontz

Meetings are on the first Monday evening of each month.

