



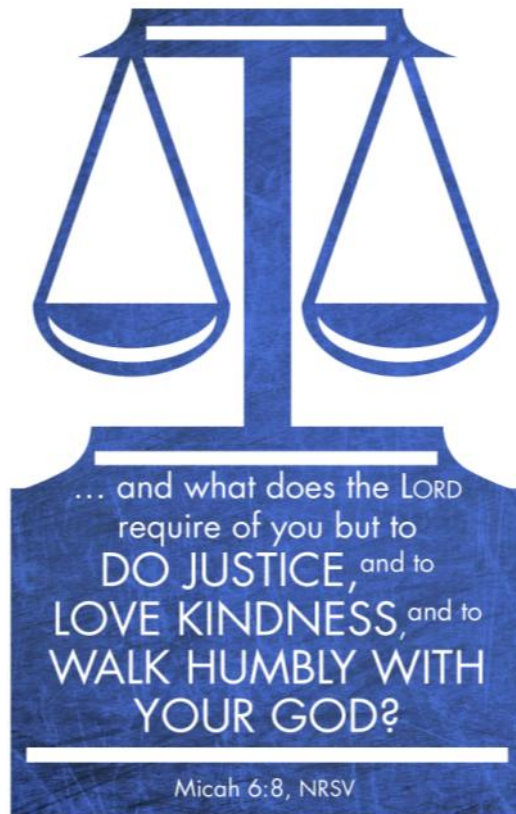
# The False Confidence of the Proud

by Pastor Glenn Huebel

He says in his heart, "I shall not be moved; throughout all generations I shall not meet adversity." —Psalm 10:6

Solomon, in his wisdom, warns "when pride comes, then comes disgrace" (Proverbs 11:2). Jesus affirms that those who exalt themselves shall be humbled (Luke 18:14), and James adds that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). Pride is one of the most dangerous vices of the sinful flesh because it deceives us to put our confidence in foolish things, in the strength and wisdom of man rather than in the mercy and wisdom of God. History reveals that when nations and their rulers begin to think they are invincible, their fall into disgrace is probably not far away.

The proud kings of Israel thought that they were safe behind the walls of Jerusalem because their God would not allow the holy city and the Temple to be defiled. They learned that God's judgment begins with those of His own household as they saw the walls fall, the Temple destroyed and sacred vessels stolen, and the people of Israel led away in chains to Babylon. The fact that they were not as wicked as Babylon did not spare them. The proud Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, also discovered very quickly that power, wealth, glory, and honor can be taken away in a moment of time. He spent seven years in the open fields, eating grass like oxen, until he realized that the most High God ruled the kingdom of men and appointed it to whomsoever He willed (Daniel 5:21). The Psalmist David observed, *As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved." By your favor, O LORD, you made my mountain stand strong; you hid your face; I was dismayed.* (Psalm 30:6-7)



Perhaps we are coming to such a realization today as we look upon a world that appears to be coming apart at the seams. The recent murder of twelve people in Paris by vicious and cruel fanatics of a radical religion that has destabilized governments and committed dozens of unbelievable atrocities across the globe is now awakening millions to the threat of impending social chaos or worse. Many of us are amazed at the speed by which basic security is deteriorating in our own country, especially considering recent ethnic strife and violence as well as school shootings. Though this instability is attributed to a variety of human causes such as bad government policies, the root

*(Continued on page 2)*

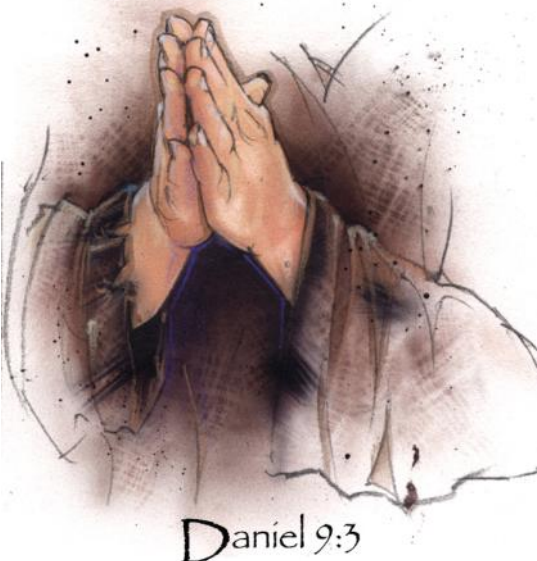
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*That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. —John 20:31*

cause is much deeper. Like David we also once thought “I shall never be moved” without realizing that our mountain once stood strong only by the Lord’s favor. When, however, the Lord turns His face away from us, we are no longer secure. No army, however powerful, will save us. It is also vain to put our trust in princes (Psalm 146:3). When any nation turns away from God and His precepts summarized in the Ten Commandments, it places itself under His wrath, which eventually brings temporal judgments. This was the warning Moses gave to the people of Israel before they entered the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 28:15ff), and it applies to us today as well. Our Catechism asks: **What does God threaten to do to all who hate Him and break His commandments? Answer: God threatens earthly punishment, physical death, and eternal damnation.**

I turned to the Lord God and  
pleaded with him in prayer  
and petition, in fasting,  
and in sackcloth and ashes.



But some may want to argue for the relative righteousness of our country, especially our protection of freedom and human rights – even the rights of animals and terrorists! But the cry of the blood of more than 55 million babies slaughtered by abortion drowns out our claim to righteousness in regard to human rights. We have ignored God’s question, “Where is your brother?” for about 42 years (since the Supreme Court decision, Roe v. Wade, on Jan. 22, 1973). We have despised the sacred institution of marriage and trampled upon sacred vows, leaving millions of our children to wander aimlessly in spiritual darkness. We have become lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. The sacred Word of God has been despised and neglected, not only by those outside the Church, but also by multitudes within the walls of Christendom who no longer gladly hear and learn the

Scriptures or hold them sacred. We should not be surprised that God would “hide His face” from us and allow the natural consequences of the law to discipline us. We are not going to escape these consequences by merely electing new leaders, tweaking policy, or building bigger armies. Christians understand the present times as God’s warning of final judgment and His urgent call for repentance.

Stubborn pride will surely resist this call for repentance, also in our own hearts. When we see these things happen Jesus teaches us to first look into our own hearts saying, “Unless you

repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). When Daniel interceded for his sinful and broken people he included himself in the confession: “Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy ... saying, WE have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled turning aside from your commandments and rules” (Daniel 9:3-5). Daniel’s confessional intercession (Daniel 9:3-19) is a good pattern for us to follow as we fulfill our priestly vocation in these perilous times. As priests, anointed in our baptism, we also have the privilege and responsibility to speak God’s word of warning to those in our social circles. It has been given us to know the signs which call us to prepare for final judgment. It is an act of kindness and love to interpret the signs of the times for those who feel the anxiety of our age, but do not know what it all means.

Most importantly, it is time for all of us to flee for refuge to God’s provision for sinners, our Lord, Jesus Christ, whose atoning death and glorious resurrection has delivered us from the wrath to come – and to hide under the shade of the benediction God commanded Aaron to speak to His people:

*The Lord bless you  
and keep you,*

*The Lord make his face to  
shine upon you and  
be gracious to you,*

*The Lord lift up his  
countenance upon you  
and give you peace.*

Blessings in Christ,  
Pastor Huebel

# Sing a new song . . . . . by Vicki L. Main, Kantor

Our first Hymn of the Month in this new year is *O Living Bread from Heaven* – LSB 642 – found in “The Lord’s Supper” section of our hymnal. As you read through the stanzas below, I encourage you to also take the opportunity to read the scriptural references listed with the hymn – 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 6:35, 48-58 and 1 Peter 1:18-19. These will be very familiar to you in the Words of Institution (1 Corinthians passage) from our communion liturgy and also the John verses – “I am the bread of life. . . .”

- 1 O living Bread from heaven,  
How well You feed your guest!  
The gifts that You have given  
Have filled my heart with rest.  
Oh, wondrous food of blessing,  
Oh, cup that heals our woes!  
My heart, this gift possessing,  
With praises overflows.
- 2 My Lord, You here have led me  
To this most holy place  
And with Yourself have fed me  
The treasures of Your grace;  
For You have freely given  
What earth could never buy,  
The bread of life from heaven,  
That now I shall not die.
- 3 You gave me all I wanted;  
This food can death destroy.  
And You have freely granted  
The cup of endless joy.  
My Lord, I do not merit  
The favor You have shown,  
And all my soul and spirit  
Bow down before Your throne.
- 4 Lord, grant me then, thus strengthened  
With heav’nly food, while here  
My course on earth is lengthened,  
To serve with holy fear.  
And when You call my spirit  
To leave this world below,  
I enter, through Your merit,  
Where joys unmingled flow.

**Johann Rist**, 1607-67, is the author of this hymn. He was born in Germany near Hamburg. He was the son of a pastor, and from his birth was dedicated to the ministry as well. I found a paragraph on the Hymnary.org website about him and felt it worthy of your reading to get a better understanding of his life and hymn writing. . . . *As a hymn-writer Rist takes*

*high rank. He wrote some 680 hymns, intended to cover the whole ground of Theology, and to be used by all ranks and classes, and on all the occasions of life. Rist meant them rather for private use than for public worship, and during his lifetime they were never used in the church. But they were eagerly caught up, set to melodies by the best musicians of the day, and speedily passed into congregational use all over Germany, while even the Roman Catholics read them with delight after his death. Over 200 may be said to have been in common use in Germany, and a large number still hold their place. Unfortunately many are very long. But speaking of Rist’s better productions, we may say that their noble and classical style, their objective Christian faith, their scripturalness, their power to console, to encourage, and to strengthen in trust upon God’s Fatherly love, and their fervent love to the Saviour (especially seen in the best of his hymns for Advent, and for the Holy Communion), sufficiently justify the esteem in which they were, and are, held in Germany. Long after his death, at age 50, **Catherine Winkworth** (1827-78) translated his German hymn into English. This particular hymn has been published in thirty hymnals.*

The tune for this hymn was in a large work by **Michael Praetorius** (1571 – 1621), a German composer, organist, and music theorist. – *Musae Sioniae*, vol. 7. He edited it for ease in singing.

Learning this tune will allow us to also sing LSB 514 – *The Bridegroom Soon Will Call Us* in the End Times part of the church year and as we enter into Advent once more.

May we all be blessed in learning it!  
Vicki L. Main, Kantor



# Messiah Call Committee January Update

by Luis Muñoz

The Call Committee is happy to announce that the interview process has begun! Interviews are scheduled and will be held between the week of January 5<sup>th</sup> and January 12<sup>th</sup>. Once the interviews are complete, the Call Committee will meet once again to finalize the list of candidates, and will then release our recommended list to the congregation. In accordance with our constitution; a special Voters Assembly Meeting will then be called.

As a reminder, once a Special Voters Assembly Meeting is announced and scheduled, please keep in mind that this assembly meeting will be open to ANY member of the congregation and ANY member of the congregation may speak at this meeting, but only members of the Voter's Assembly are allowed to vote during the election. We kindly ask that you familiarize yourself with the constitution prior to this meeting. A copy of our constitution and Bylaws is posted on the Bulletin Board on the entrance of the Pre-school hallway.

Below are some important items taken directly from our Constitution and Bylaws, these detail important

steps in the Call Process that we should adhere to.

## **Constitution and Bylaws as amended 06/29/2014**

### **BYLAW, Section III: Calling a Pastor**

#### **3.2 Call of Pastor:**

**3.2.1 Nominations:** *The Voters' Assembly shall elect a Call Committee of at least seven (7) Members from the members of the congregation recommend to the Voters' Assembly whether to call from the field or from seminary within one calendar month of its establishment. The Board of Elders shall elect the Chairman and Co-chairman of the Call Committee from the members of the Board of Elders.*

**3.2.2 Call from Field:** *If the Voters' Assembly elects to call from the field, the Call Committee shall gather a list of candidates and their qualifications from the District President and members of the congregation and vet the candidates through the pastor(s) and Board of Elders to determine their suitability for the needs of the congregation. At a properly convened meeting of the Voters'*

*Assembly, the Call Committee shall present names that have been received with the recommendations of the Committee. The Voters' Assembly shall decide which names are to be included on the Call List.*

**3.2.4 Election:** *The Call List shall be publicly announced to the congregation on two (2) successive Sundays before the Call Meeting. The election shall be by ballot. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members of the Voters' Assembly shall be required to elect. The election shall, if possible, be made unanimous.*

For updated information, please check the Call Committee Bulletin Board located in the Pre-school hallway. Please continue your prayers that the Holy Spirit will bless and guide our efforts.

#### **—Messiah Call Committee**

*Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:2-3.*

## Check Out the Library!

by Marcia Huebel, Librarian

Our church and school library, located upstairs in the academy wing, is open all the time for your use. If you haven't been up there yet, make a resolution to visit this month. It offers a peaceful place to read or study and a great view. There are books and DVDs for all ages on a wide variety of topics.

Many new books were added last year and continue to be added this year. New adult books are displayed on the adult fiction and non-fiction shelves, and new picture books and early readers are on display in those sections. New juvenile books can be found on the shorter shelves by the

windows or on the shelves behind the early readers.

To check out an item, fill out the card in the front pocket and place it in the black box on the circulation desk. Items can be returned in the library itself or in the box on the ground floor by the elevator.

# Dinner for Six

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**Good food, good fun and fellowship!**

**Reintroducing... Dinner for Six!**

It's back! This program is a great way to get to know your fellow Messiah members in a quieter setting! Groups of three couples meet three times for dinner in a three to six month period, with each couple hosting one dinner. So, everyone is a host once and a guest twice.

## Dinner for Six Q & A

*How does it work?*

Couples sign up on the sheet posted on the copy room door. At the end of the month, the names will be randomly drawn to form the small groups. Group members get together to decide on dinner times and dates.

*I'm single, can I still participate?*

**Absolutely!** You can sign up on your own, to form a "Dinner for Five," or partner with friend. We really want you to join us!

*Can I bring my children?*

This event is really designed for our adult members to fellowship together. If everyone in your group has small children and you all agree to host a larger, family dinner, then by all means, do it.

*Can I choose who's in my group?*

Sorry, no. You can do that on your own. One of the purposes of Dinner for Six is to offer an opportunity for you to get to know someone new.

**BUT...I'm not really a great cook—I don't do fancy meals.**

The point of these evenings is fellowship! We do have some gourmet cooks in the congregation, and that has been a great treat for those in their small groups. However, many of the meals offered have been much simpler: soup and bread, backyard bar-be-ques, even take-out, etc. You can even choose to treat the group at a restaurant if you prefer.

*I'm so busy, I don't need one more thing on my schedule.*

Most everyone is busy, so we understand, but this does not take as much time as you may think. You will need to have three mealtimes free between now and May. Groups have met at many different times—both weekdays and weekends for lunch or supper. A group could even decide to have a "Breakfast for Six." Each group chooses its own schedule. Plus, you only have to provide a meal one time. All you have to do the other two times is show up hungry!

*I live too far away.*

Although you will have to drive the distance for two meals—and you are probably used to the drive, your guests will only have to do it once!

**It's time to sign up for the winter/spring Dinner for Six! Couples' names will be randomly drawn to form the small groups on February 1.** The dinners are to be held anytime before the end of May.

If you have any more questions, contact Marcia Huebel.

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## 2015 Altar Flowers by Carol Hibbs, Altar Guild Chairman

The 2015 Altar Flower Chart is posted in the Preschool hallway outside the copy room. As you may know, the flowers that adorn the altar each Sunday are donated by congregation members. The Chart serves as the means for members to choose the date that they would like to contribute flowers. Simply write your name next to the Sunday date that you desire. An occasion may be designated such as a birthday, baptism or wedding anniversary, or in memory of a family member or friend...or to the glory of God! The

donor and occasion are noted each week in the bulletin. Each Sunday's flowers (2 vases) cost \$50. You may write a check to Messiah and designate "flowers" on the memo line and put it in the collection plate on Sunday morning. If you choose to pay in cash, please be sure it is in a sealed envelope with your name and "flowers" on the outside. Donors may take the flowers home after the 2<sup>nd</sup> service on Sunday. If you choose not to take them, they will be delivered to members who are hospitalized, ill, shut-ins, or

may stay at the altar to be enjoyed by MLCA students during daily chapel. Please note: If flowers are taken home for personal use, that donation cannot legally be claimed as a tax deduction.

We appreciate and thank all those who have so generously contributed to the beautification of the altar with flowers in the past, and hope and encourage everyone to consider participating in this means of sharing God's wonderful creations in our worship services.



# The Unassuming Epiphany by Rev. Dr. James I Lamb

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Happy New Year and happy Epiphany season! Epiphany slips in a bit more quietly than Christmas or Easter, but it offers great opportunities for life-affirming folks like you. Epiphany means “to reveal or make known.” Specifically, the focus is on making Jesus known to others as God.

*The Treasury of Daily Prayer*, published by CPH, said the following in the devotion for Epiphany, January 6: “The idea of Epiphany is that the Christ who was born in Bethlehem is recognized by the world as God. At Christmas, God appears as man, and at Epiphany, this man appears before the world as God” (1094). I suppose I could launch into an attack on this God-less world and decry its ever-increasing anti-Christian propaganda and propagandist behavior. This might make me feel better, but I doubt anyone would be listen or care if they were. “They know not what they do.”

We, on the other hand, do know what we do, or at least we’re supposed to do! Before revealing Jesus as God to the world, it might be good to remind our own hearts and minds of this fact. Because

God became human, it becomes an easy trap to humanize Him and in the process de-Deitize Him. We try to figure out the infinite God with our finite human capacity. Luther once said that if you can comprehend God, then he is not God. And it was God who once said, **“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts”** (Isaiah 55:9).

Our attempts to comprehend God do not materialize in some theological treatise. Rather more like, “Why is this happening to me?” or “Why would God allow her to suffer?” You know the questions. Maybe you have asked the questions. A good *person* with godly power would certainly intervene. Why not a good God with godly power? We equate divine goodness with human goodness and end up questioning and even despairing.

But divine goodness is not revealed in human circumstances. God reveals it in His Word and through His Word made flesh. Divine goodness is more about future

holiness than present circumstances.

**“[H]e disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness”** (Hebrews 12:10). God’s goodness was epitomized in the suffering and forsakenness of a cross on a *Good Friday*. God’s goodness works in and through our suffering to bring about what we could never see or imagine.

God in a manger! God on a cross! God our Savior who works through suffering for our eternal good. Do not strive to comprehend it. Believe it and trust in it. And then share it! That brings us back to Epiphany’s focus. The life issues that you are passionate about provide an opportunity, not just to speak up for the vulnerable, but also, to speak to the vulnerable about this God-baby and God-man who loves them and is at work in their lives for good.

Thank you for sharing this message. Thank you for supporting LFL as we share the message and equip others to do so.

—Taken from the January 2015 Life News published by Lutherans For Life

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## Speaking Up For Life from Lutherans For Life

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“What work has God prepared for you? (Ephesians 2:10) Is it helping a woman who is pregnant and alone? Is it ministering to someone who has had an abortion and can’t believe that God would forgive her? Is it feeding the hungry? ... Whatever God has called you to do, do it with joy.” *Kay L. Meyer, former director of development for Lutherans For Life*

“From a pagan perspective, that which is in the womb is something. From a moral perspective, it is someone. But from a Christian perspective, it raises that which is in the womb to someone created by God, someone for whom Jesus died, and someone the Spirit desires to call into eternity. The same could be said of the embryo in the Petri dish or the elderly in the nursing home.” *Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, executive director of LFL*

“Pro-life parents should never compromise on the truth, but we should never neglect compassion, either. I believe it is very important to bring our children along and involve them in pro-life work. In the end, if pro-life parents are truthful, passionate, creative, caring, prayerful, and active, I believe we will go a long way in leading our children to life.” *Kristi Burton Brown,*

## MLCA Update by Erika Mildred, Headmaster

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Happy New Year to everyone at Messiah! One of my new year's resolutions is to do a better job of getting updates and information to our wonderful church body each month in this newsletter. J

MLCA swung back into full gear on Monday, January 5. We have a busy start to 2015, and here are a few of the things about which we are most excited:

National Lutheran Schools Week is at the end of this month (January 25 – February 1). It will be a very special week filled with choir and hand bell performances, guest speakers and presentations, and several service and outreach projects. During the week, various MLCA scholars will...

- Make valentines for shut-ins
- Make beaded crosses for hospital patients
- Sing for our JOY Bible Study Group
- Serve in Messiah's Braille Center
- Load all the food we've collected so far into a truck for the Community Storehouse
- Kick-off our Pennies for Patients Project for childhood Leukemia and Lymphoma
- Sing for chapel
- Provide special hand bells and choir music for Sunday worship at Messiah

We will also welcome 3<sup>rd</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade scholars from Faith Lutheran Academy in Plano, TX, for our first-annual Latin Day, enjoy a presentation from Brian Burns: Texas History through Music, and enjoy ice cream treats on Friday afternoon!

Our cover feature magazine article in *Society Life* will be published the week of January 19! Look for your copy soon!

We are now enrolling for the 2015-2016 academic year! Classes are already beginning to fill, and space is limited to the first 18 scholars per class. This year, our program includes 2-year-olds through 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

God's blessings to all of you in 2015! Thank you for all you do for YOUR Lutheran day school with your prayers and support. MLCA truly is a mission about which we can all be excited here at Messiah!

Rejoicing in the Lord,

Erika Mildred  
Headmaster



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*The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod*

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Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Early Childhood Center: (817) 431-6139

Classical Academy (K-8): (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Steven Cholak, Assistant Pastor

Mrs. Erika Mildred, MLCA Headmaster

Mrs. Vicki Main, Kantor

Mrs. Shirleen Simek, Financial Director

[www.messiahkeller.org](http://www.messiahkeller.org)

# Angel Tree 2014 Update

by Laralynn Conaway, Angel Tree Coordinator



THANK YOU to everyone that supported the Angel Tree program by showing the love of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, through this awesome ministry! Due to your generous support, we delivered 166 gifts to 83 children in Argyle, Justin and the surrounding Keller/Fort Worth areas. We had a wonderful opportunity to partner with Holy Shepherd this year which allowed us to serve even more children than last year! When the gifts were delivered, each family was presented with a gift from Messiah; the beautifully written and illustrated book, "The Story of Christmas".

The gifts brought hope, joy and smiles to the children, their caregivers and incarcerated parents this Christmas

season. A simple Thank You is not sufficient for the time our congregation members spent shopping for and wrapping the gifts, the generous monetary donations, the countless hours dedicated volunteers spent calling families, delivering gifts to the children and writing Christmas cards to the prisoners. Your support and generosity is amazing and so very much appreciated.

We owe a very special thank you of gratitude and appreciation to Thrivent Financial for providing monetary support to our Angel Tree program this year. With their generous gift, we were able to purchase tree decorations, supplies and the refreshments for Angel Tree Sunday, as well as pastries and juice for the drivers on the gift delivery day.

Please continue to keep these children, caregivers and incarcerated parents in your prayers throughout the entire year, not just during the Christmas season. Thank you for being faithful servants and showing the love of Jesus Christ through the Angel Tree program.



## Sock and Underwear Drive



A special THANK YOU to those that participated in the Undie Sunday Giving Drive! Your generous donation of new socks and underwear will be distributed to children in our area who are in need of these basic supplies.

The Keller Community Storehouse will continue to accept donations of these items, as they are in need year round. The Storehouse is located at 4640 Keller Hicks Road, Keller TX 76244. Donations can be taken directly there, or brought in with your non-perishable food donations and left in the baskets in the narthex.