



## preacher's podium

“... it has been demonstrated again and again that Kingsway is a caring place, a generous place, a grace place.”

I love it when Kingsway people are caught “being Jesus.” I can’t give all the details, but a family that attends Kingsway had been urging their daughter to come with them. On her way to work, she recently slid off into the ditch. A stranger stopped and stayed with her until her dad could get there. The stranger encouraged the daughter and gave her a significant financial gift, saying that “God told me to give this to you.” Yes, the stranger was a lady from Kingsway. The money enabled the young woman to buy two badly needed tires. To say this act of kindness made an impact would be an understatement. Stay tuned for “the rest of that story.”

Indeed, I’ve heard so many stories of generosity especially this Christmas season. Whether through the Share the Gift program, the Coat Tree, or money that our staff has been asked to personally deliver to people in need, it has been demonstrated again and again that Kingsway is a caring place, a generous place, a grace place.

I’m also glad the “Christmas wars” of the last few years seem to have abated this year. Retailers that avoided the “C” word in the past have embraced it this year even if only for mercenary reasons. I’ve been greeted with “Merry Christmas” more this year than I can remember in recent years; and when I’ve initiated that greeting, I’ve always had it returned. You know Kingsway’s presentation of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* was allowed to be presented to a combined school assembly of Avon’s Intermediate Schools East and West. I’ve even heard of actual Christmas carols being sung in some of our area schools once again.

Then I heard about Hamilton Southeastern schools in Fishers where children at the Lantern Road Elementary School were preparing their December Christmas Program that wasn’t a Christmas program. Nowhere in the program was there a song that mentioned the word, Savior or Jesus. But even more disturbing was the fact that one of the songs to be sung was, “Allah Is God.” Certain students were instructed to kneel in a prayer stance during the song. Here are the words to the song: “Allah is God, we recall at dawn/ Praying ‘til night during Ramadan. / At this joyful time we pray happiness for you, / Allah be with you all your life through.”

If you read *The Star* you know that sufficient objection was raised that the song was removed from the program at the last moment. However, the newspaper article basically defended use of the song as teaching inclusiveness. Yes, that’s the same sort of inclusiveness that excluded Jesus, who is the reason for the season from that same program. It’s the same sort of inclusiveness

in the federal court decision, since reversed, that forbade praying in Jesus’ name before the state legislature, while at the same time specifically allowing prayer to Allah. Perhaps most disappointing was the comment of the mother of one of the students who said, “I’m a Christian, and I was in no way offended by the program at Lantern Road.” And we wonder why the church in America is so impotent.

The Rutherford Institute has published “The Twelve Rules of Christmas” that outlines that which is permitted according to the law in regard to the celebration of Christmas in public schools or in public forums such as government buildings or parks. I don’t have the room to print the whole article, but you can access it at [rutherford.org/resources/legal-12rules.asp](http://rutherford.org/resources/legal-12rules.asp).

One thing is for sure, we’re completely into celebrating the birth of Jesus here at Kingsway. The Christmas concert by *Denver & the Mile High Orchestra* was outstanding. The orchestra concert and the production of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* were super. Worship over the weekend was powerful. Life Groups and ministry groups are getting together to celebrate in many different ways. Share the Gift is in full swing. Don’t miss next weekend’s installment of the series, *The Gift*, as the sermon theme is “Angels and Shepherds – The Gift of Praise.” Christmas Eve will once again be a high point of the season with music by the chamber ensemble from 6 to 6:30 p.m., with the 6:30 devotional service also centering on *The Gift*, specifically, “Jesus – He Gave Himself.”

We know with Christmas Eve on Thursday and Christmas Day on Friday the weekend will be one in which many of our regulars will be gone. Couple that with pastoral staff vacations and difficulties with volunteer staffing, it was decided it would be best to have two quality services that weekend rather than four poorly attended services. So, for that one weekend only, there will be no Saturday night service and no 8 a.m. Chapel service on Sunday, December 26 and 27. We want to encourage everyone who can, including all of your out-of-town guests, to join us for either the 9 a.m. service or the 10:30 a.m. service. Preparations are underway to make these last services of 2009 very special. We’ll conclude our series on *The Gift*, with the final message being, “You Can Give Yourself.”

Christmas! It is the most wonderful time of the year, especially here at Kingsway.

Yours for a soul-winning church,

John



**kingsway**

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## ***decisions for Christ***

- Jose Garibay was baptized this past weekend.
- Kelsey Dornfeld was baptized and placed membership.

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## ***glimpse of growth***

Preaching and Praise	2,065	<u>General Offering</u>	
Bible School	650	Weekly Budget	\$98,731
Decisions	2	Given this Week	\$102,494
New Members YTD	226		
Surge	67		
QUEST	56		

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