

Christmas Eve Outreach

A Gift Idea for Christmas that Blesses

Christmas Tree Milestone Moment

Facebook Party

A Faith Formation Story



## Wishing you a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year

We, at Milestones Ministry, have been using Taking Faith Home in our homes with family and friends. As we light a candle on the Advent wreath each week, we are reminded of the hope, joy, peace, and love that Jesus shows us through our devotions. We enjoy caring conversations, praying together, and the many opportunities we have to serve others in our community at this time of year.

We wish you many blessings in the year to come and look forward to our continued networking and partnership in ministry as we work together to grow the church by growing people in faith.

*David and Gloria Anderson, Burt and Debbie Streicher*



### Christmas Tree Milestone Moment

Milestones Ministry brings an awareness of the presence of God to individuals of all generations by recognizing the home as church. Our Milestones Ministry provides a clear and usable model for congregations, homes, and communities to connect faith formation resources with daily life experiences. The rich variety of life experiences represented in Milestones Ministry does the essential ministry of the church: providing Christian faith formation with family, friends, and others with whom we can reach. The season of Advent signals the beginning of the church year and gives a wonderful opportunity for the congregation to help families establish rituals and traditions to be handed from one generation to the next. An Advent wreath provides a visual reminder in the home of Jesus' birth and His coming again. It is a good time to introduce faith practices in the home through reading scriptures, prayers, and lighting a candle each week. The Christmas tree is another visual reminder. The custom of the Christmas tree was introduced in Germany in the 16th century. Legend tells that the evergreen was chosen and decorated with candles to represent God's creation and the gift of God's Son as the Light of the World. This tradition is continued today as we use evergreen trees, strings of lights, and ornaments to decorate the tree in our homes. Milestones incorporates a simple structure that includes naming, enjoying, meaning, giving, and reflecting so that the Milestones Ministry Moment has a greater chance to take deeper root in lifelong faith formation.



© Copyright 2015 Milestones Ministry, LLC. All rights reserved.

## Christmas Eve Outreach

### A time to reach out to a larger worshipping community.

DECEMBER 24-25, 2015  
CHRISTMAS EVE,  
CHRISTMAS DAY



Born for you today is Christ the Lord!

#### CHRISTMAS BIBLE READINGS

Take time to read and reflect upon these Bible passages as part of your Christmas celebrations.

Thursday	Isaiah 52:7-10	The Lord comforts his people
Friday	Matthew 1:18-24	Immanuel, God is with us
Friday	Luke 2:1-20	The birth of Jesus
	John 1:1-14	The Word became human

#### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy. This very day in King David's hometown a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10-11 (CEV)

#### SAY, PRAY, AND BLESS:

**A Prayer for Christmas:**  
O God in Heaven, as we see these gifts today we give you thanks for the greatest gift of all, your Son Jesus. Fill our hearts with his love and our hearts with his peace. Amen.

**Midnight Prayer:**  
We thank you, O God, for the love between us, for food that feeds us, and for the gift of your Son to be born to us. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**  
May God's favor rest on you, and may the good news of Jesus' birth bring you great joy. Amen. (Luke 2:10,14)

© 2015 Milestones Ministry, LLC. All rights reserved.

DECEMBER 24-25, 2015  
CHRISTMAS EVE,  
CHRISTMAS DAY



#### CARING CONVERSATIONS

- Discuss in your home or small group:
  - Share about a time when you missed out on something.
  - How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they found out there was no room in the inn (Luke 2:7)?
  - Is there room in your life for Jesus? What things sometimes crowd him out? How could your life become more of a "manager" for Jesus?

#### DEVOTIONS

Use this simple prayer for lighting the center candle on your advent wreath. Leader: In John 1:9, we read that Jesus is the true light who gives light to every person. Our center advent candle is our Christ candle. As we light it, we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the true light of the world. (Light all the candles on your advent wreath.)  
All: Thank you, Lord Jesus, for being born into our world. Light up our hearts and our homes for our Savior, Jesus.

#### SERVICE

Christmas festivities usually involve a great deal of preparation and cleaning up. Resolve to work together as a home to carry out the necessary chores. If you are guests at another home, do what you can to serve your hosts this Christmas with willing hands.

#### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Before you rush to open your Christmas gifts this year, pause to pray and thank God for the gift of Jesus, and for the gift of one another.  
Leader: We gather today to celebrate the gift of Jesus to our world and to our home. As God has blessed us by giving us Jesus, we share his love with one another by giving and receiving gifts. Let us pray.  
All: Father in Heaven, as we open these gifts today we give you thanks for the greatest gift of all, your Son Jesus. Fill our hearts with his love and our hearts with his peace. Amen.

In giving gifts to one another, use the following words:  
(Name), as a sign of God's gift of Jesus to me, I give you this gift with love.

In addition to Taking Faith Home, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)

## Christmas Tree Milestone Moment

We invite you to establish a ritual in your home this Christmas season using this Moment.

## Christmas Eve/Day

[Click here to download at no cost.](#)

Moments that cause us to pause and shift gears like the beginning of the church year and preparing for Christmas happen once a year and sometimes come all too quickly.

Providing opportunities to take a breath and find God's presence in these moments is important. This Christmas Tree Milestone Moment is meant to do just that for you and your family. Introduced just two weeks ago, the Christmas Tree Milestone Moment has already been downloaded over 75 times and been used in newsletters and as bulletin inserts to nurture faith in the home.

## Facebook Party!

Thursday, January 14th

8:00 pm Central Time

**Milestones Ministry will host  
an online discussion.**

Mark your calendars today. More info to come in the New Year. The party will take place on our Facebook Group page. Join today if you have not already done so.

We look forward to our first party!

[Milestones Ministry  
Facebook Group Page](#)

## Taking Faith Home

**Free download!**

If your congregation does not have Taking Faith Home bulletin inserts for people to take home each week, we know from experience that they serve as valuable outreach to people who may not be to worship for months. Christmas Eve or Day worship provides an opportunity to send families and friends out of the worship service with God's word in their hands to read and to live during the days and weeks ahead. We believe it would be wise for preachers to reference the inserts as a resource people can use as part of their Christmas celebrations at home.

***Throughout the year, we at Milestones Ministry, make special Taking Faith Home editions available at no cost for all to use and to sample with their worshipping communities.***

We invite you to spread the word to other pastors and congregations about this month's free download. Other non-Sunday inserts are provided for New Year's Eve/New Year's Day for those who are already using Taking Faith Home for the 2016 church year. A special Epiphany Day insert is also available to you for Wednesday, January 6.

We would appreciate it if you would get the word out and encourage others who do not yet have Taking Faith Home in their weekly bulletins to consider using them. Thanks for your help!

[Click here to download the Christmas Eve/Day Taking Faith Home to place in bulletins.](#)

## A Gift Idea for Christmas that Blesses

For Everything A Season



75 BLESSINGS FOR LIFE'S MILESTONES

## For Everything a Season

For Everything a Season offers meaningful family and small group faith formation opportunities for the home. It beautifully



## A Faith Formation Story

Thanks to Robin Souhrada  
from Bethlehem Lutheran for  
sharing this story!

Bethlehem Lutheran in Cedar Falls, IA has a ministry of Blessings and Milestones that helps us mark life transitions, important parts of our daily lives and recognize the presence of God in our lives.

Some of our members have their own blessing bowl and milestone pebbles set at home. Jennifer Holden has hers out on a coffee table as a daily reminder of the blessings in her life.

One day her friend Desiree was visiting. She and Jenn looked at the blessing bowl and milestone pebbles. Desiree wanted to make her own milestone blessing pebbles to take home.

[The rest of the story...](#)

incorporates daily life experiences (75 different occasions!) with faith formation by using Scripture, conversation questions, blessings, and more.

This book makes a great gift for families to use in the home, for staff and for council members. Consider ordering multiple copies for your congregation to sell or give as Christmas gifts.

The cost is \$12.95 each but if ordered in quantities of 10 or more, we offer a discount. [Click here](#) to see a description of this faith-nurturing resource.

If you are interested in 10 or more copies, please call Debbie at 703-303-7255 to learn more about discounts.



***"Grow the church by growing people in faith."***

Visit our website: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org) and like us on [Facebook](#) page and join us for conversations on our [Facebook group page](#).

Milestones Ministry, LLC Website - [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)

David Anderson - [danderson@milestonesministry.org](mailto:danderson@milestonesministry.org)

Debbie Streicher - [dstreicher@milestonesministry.org](mailto:dstreicher@milestonesministry.org)

*The Milestones Ministry Mission is to provide congregations and households with resources and coaching services to nurture the Christian faith and reach out to others with the love of God in Christ.*

STAY CONNECTED

Like us on Facebook 

Follow us on  twitter