



Advent 2004

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Santa has arrived at the malls, media ads are heralding us to spend, and television is transmitting the umpteenth version of Rudolph and Frosty. It is hard to find the heart of God out of the overwhelming noise of the season, yet in Matthew 25 we hear the voice of Jesus-

*...For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. Whatever you've done for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.*

There is a crisis occurring this Christmas season that U.N. observers are calling the world's worst humanitarian crisis:

- **350,000** children, women and men in **Sudan** are currently at the risk of starvation by year-end.
- **Tens of thousands** have already died as a result of civil unrest, lack of food, and disease.
- **1.2 million people** have been driven out of their homes in search of food and safety.
- This year's planting season has passed without new crops, and... **next year's planting forecast is grim.**

I am asking you as a follower of Jesus to be part of God's solution. I am challenging each of us to celebrate Jesus' birthday by spending more simply on our families so that we can give an equal amount for meeting this unprecedented need.

Ginghamsburg Church is partnering with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to collect a miracle offering for feeding the starving in Sudan. The entire amount given goes directly to support the mission; none will be held back to cover administrative costs. The offering collection will be held on the final weekend of Advent (December 18/19). Simply make your check payable to Ginghamsburg Church, write "Sudan" on the memo line, and insert the check into the enclosed Sudan offering envelope. Bring your envelope to our special Sudan offering during weekend worship celebrations on December 18 and 19 or return your envelope to the Main Campus office.

This will be a gift beyond our regular tithe and offerings to the ongoing mission of Christ— Truly a gift that honors Jesus on the celebration of his birth.

Remember... We have power with God by our actions toward people!

Live Christ-mas,

Pastor Mike Slaughter