

says the 54-year-old Rhode Island native.

Then he entered a contest —

kah, which started last night, is the act of divine providence that allowed people to survive,

"The Maccabees were saying: 'We want to be who we

not you, and that's a hard message for one with a fragile religious ego."

MESSAGE CENTER

Bethlehem Inn' play

■ CEDAR RAPIDS — First Christian Church will host a dinner theater, "Dinner at Bethlehem Inn," at 6 next Saturday night in the fellowship hall of the church, 840 Third Ave. SE. The play will transport the audience to Bethlehem Inn the night Jesus was born. The innkeeper welcomes and invites all to enjoy their meal, but there are interruptions from people wanting rooms, servants who have seen a star overhead and shepherds who turn out to be angels. All are finally invited to visit the newborn Messiah in the stable.

Tickets cost \$5 (children under age 5 admitted free). For reservations, call 363-2069.

The church also is presenting a live Nativity scene from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, starting next week and continuing through Dec. 22.

Global warming program

■ IOWA CITY — Trinity Episcopal Church, 320 E. College St., will host a program, "Global Warming from a Faith Perspective," Wednesday night.

tive," Wednesday night.

Activities will begin with a potluck dinner at 6 and continue with the program at 6:45. The program will feature Robert Hogg, Iowa City native and global warming project coordinator for Ecumenical Ministries of Iowa.

Peace Conference

■ CEDAR RAPIDS — Area Bahá'is are sponsoring a Peace Conference for the 21st Century from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday in Beems Auditorium, Cedar Rapids Public Library.

Guest panelists for the conference, to be held on the eve of United Nations Human Rights Day, will be: Jonna Higgins-Freese, environmental outreach coordinator, Prairie Woods; Franciscan Spirituality Center; Betty Daniels, Miss Black Cedar Rapids for 1970; Marcellino Hivento, immigrant from Bolivia, chairman of Latin American Association; Ingrid Wehrle-Ray, artist and mother; and Jim Jones, high school Spanish teacher.

Panelists will focus on the

"Bahá'i Approach to Peace." Discussion will follow.

First Assembly drama

■ CEDAR RAPIDS — First Assembly of God, 3233 Blairs Ferry Rd. NE, will present the drama "Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames" at 7 tonight and Sunday. A cast of 40 will act out a series of vignettes about people who live life, make choices, die and find themselves outside heaven asking, "Angel, is my name in your book?"

St. Bridget's party

■ SOLON — St. Bridget's Catholic Church will host an open house and Christmas party starting at noon Sunday.

A program featuring Tribute singers will take place from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. The group will sing songs featured on their Christmas compact disc, which was recorded in the church in 1998.

Area youth interested in the youth program at the historic brick church, built in 1894, should call Marie O'Donnell, 354-9071, or Mary Ellen Wall, 643-5495.

Coffee House Inn

■ CEDAR RAPIDS — St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 1340 Third Ave. SE, will host Coffee House Inn, an Advent study for adults, from 4:30 to 5:15 p.m.

today and next Saturday in the parlors.

The study will be based on James A. Harnish's book, "Come Home For Christmas."

Participants can enjoy specialty coffees, cookies and fellowship. Children's activities and child care will be provided. Reservations can be made at www.stpaulsumc.org or 363-2058.

Missions Market

■ KALONA — The Council of Mid-Prairie Churches will hold its annual Missions Market from 9 to 11 a.m. today in the fellowship hall of Kalona United Methodist Church.

The event offers an opportunity to buy Christmas gifts that benefit local and international missions. Gifts will include craft items made in Third World countries and alternative gifts, such as a card or token indicating a contribution has been made to a specific mission project in the recipient's honor.

Participating churches are: Kalona United Methodist, Kalona Mennonite, Kalona United Christian & Baptist, Sharon Center United Methodist, West Chester United Methodist, Lower Deer Creek Mennonite, Asbury United Methodist, First Baptist, St. Joseph's Catholic and Wellman Mennonite.

BRIEFS

Excuses fall short

■ MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Patricia Kovacs says she's heard all the excuses for not volunteering during the holidays — and any other days, for that matter — and they're not good enough.

Kovacs, of the Minneapolis-based Lutheran Brotherhood, Insurance and Service Company, has compiled a list of excuses and her rebuttals. Among them:

• "I don't have enough time." Volunteers don't have to work long hours, she says. Helping to sort toys for a toy drive can take just a few hours.

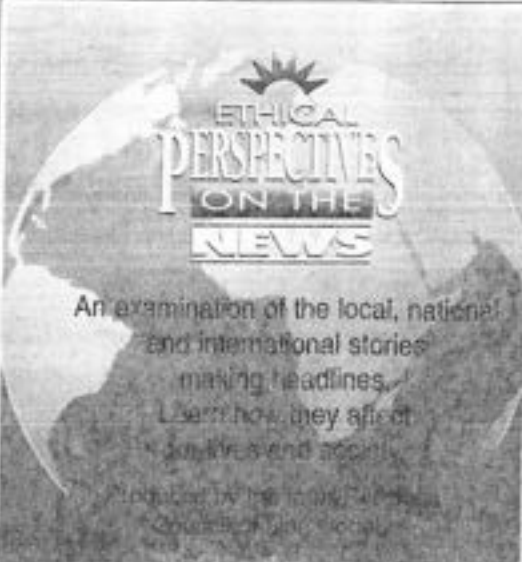
• "I donate money. Isn't that enough?" Some organizations need money more than volunteers during the holidays.

• "I want to spend my free time with my family during the holidays." Volunteering as a family can become a meaningful tradition.

Prayer breaks OK'd

■ WASHINGTON (AP) — A high-tech manufacturing company has resolved a dispute with Muslim employees over their right to pray at work.

Soletron Corp., based in Milpitas, Calif., and the Council on American-Islamic Relations, on Tuesday announced the resolution of a dispute that began when more than 30 Muslim contract employees in Atlanta, Ga., quit their jobs assembling cellular phones. They said they were not allowed to offer obligatory prayers during work breaks.



ETHICAL
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ON THE
NEWS

An examination of the local, national
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Learn how they affect
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Presented by the Council on American-Islamic Relations

**Tomorrow
at 7:45am**
Following the
TV9 Sunday
Morning
News



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