

# A Moment in Macedonia

## Christmas Programs

In Macedonia we celebrate Christmas on the Orthodox date, January 7. We had church services on Sunday, January 6, in the morning and evening. Then again at 9:00 on Christmas morning, the church was full, with extra chairs added and people standing for Christmas worship. The adult choir sang. On Christmas evening, the children presented their programs.



In Strumica, the children’s program included two dramas. One was the story of Babuska, an old woman who is visited by the Wisemen and invited to join them in their search for the Christ Child. The second drama was the traditional Christmas story told from the point of view of the angels who visited Mary, Joseph and the shepherds. The children,

even the teenagers, love to perform and work hard to prepare a program that is enjoyed by adults as well as children. The children also sang seven songs, including some solo and duet parts, and smaller children recited Bible verses and short poems.



**The Strumica UMC decorated with candles on Christmas Eve**

Gift giving is not a big part of Christmas in Macedonian, but children usually receive a bag of treats such as chocolate, chips, pretzels, candies and gum.

On December 26th, youth from our church distributed goody bags to the children at the nearby school for children with special needs. Many of these





children are wards of the state. The gift bags were provided by the church.



### Children with special needs received Christmas packets



### English classes for children



On Saturday morning I teach English to children. It is a diverse group with children at different levels, something like the old one-room schools. It is a challenge to find activities that will keep the interest of the children and allow them to learn new vocabulary and grammar, but it is a challenge that I enjoy.

### Children in Church

Many churches want to involve more children and families in worship. From some friends in England I received information about an interesting approach, a monthly worship and activity time called "messy church." This web site: <http://www.messychurch.org.uk/> provides information.



*Thank you for your prayers and financial support. God bless you!*

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### Relaxing at home with cats Snezka and Senka

