



SteepleTalk

December 2006

First Presbyterian Church
304 West Main Street
Lebanon, TN 37087
Phone: 444-1360
Fax: 444-9916
office@fpclebanon.org

www.fpclebanon.org

Dr. John T. Cheetham,
Pastor
1705 Brian Street
Lebanon, TN 37087
Phone: 443-7510
pastor@fpclebanon.org

v v v

**Member Care
Volunteer
for December**

Lois Ann Wauford

**Deacon of Month/
Visiting Deacons**

Jennifer Breland
James Herren

**Steepletalk
Deadline**

December 22nd

Circle Meeting

December 5th at
9:45 a.m.

Words of Welcome

Pastor on Vacation:

Dr. Cheetham will be on vacation from December 27th-January 3rd. If you are in need of a pastor during this time, please contact the church office.

From the Pastor...

“Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord.” (James 5:7a)

This Sunday is the beginning of the Advent Season. Advent is a time of waiting and looking forward to the coming of a very special birth.

Waiting is something we human beings ought to be pretty good at. We get plenty of practice, especially at this time of year! We wait in traffic and check out-lines. We wait for people to arrive for the holidays or for our names to be called for a restaurant table. Dieters wait until the holidays are over. Children wait for Christmas. We ought to have waiting down to a fine art. If you look around, however, at how we behave while waiting in line or in traffic, you would see that waiting is not one of our finer points. When we are waiting for something—anything—we are not on our best behavior.

James urges us to be patient in our waiting. All human beings have to wait for something important. James nods toward the farmer who is waiting for “precious” crops to grow. He reminds us that the prophets of old told us for whom and what we are waiting. We wait for a word from God. It is a word that God will speak in God’s own time. It might not be a word we expect to hear. When God does not act as we think God should or come to us in a manner that we expect, we lose patience even with God. James knows that when that happens, we tend to “grumble.”

We are better at the grumbling than we are at the waiting. We grumble because waiting takes up valuable time, and time is a precious commodity these days. Why wait when we could be doing something more productive? When waiting seems foolish and futile or when we do not know whom or what we are waiting for, unwanted weeds sprout on the landscape of the human heart: anger, despair, disillusionment, doubt, and distrust, even of God.

This is the time of year when we wait for God to come. Yet, we want God to come on our own terms. We want God to act in ways that conform to our own political opinions and priorities. When that does not happen, then we grumble and complain to God and to each other. We withhold our worship and our witness until God acts like we think God should or we wonder if God will show up at all!

James urges us to wait patiently for the coming of the Lord. All four Gospel writers promise us that God will come but may do so in ways that we might not expect. God’s coming in the person of Jesus Christ might be unsettling and may cause us to reexamine how we are living our lives and what we are expecting God to do. When God does come, it is not to say that our lives are empty and full of nonsense. God comes to speak a word of love and grace in the drama of human existence by sending Jesus.

Grace and Peace
Dr. Cheetham

A Festival of Lessons and Carol

The Choir and Lay Readers will lead a service of lessons and carols at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, December 17th. The service retells the entire Christmas story from the fall of man to the coming of Jesus in Bible readings and the singing of carols.

Wednesday Night Fellowship 6:00 p.m.

December Menus and Programs

6th Chicken Parmesan, Broccoli & Carrots,
Pasta Salad, Rolls, Dessert

“Surprise Program”

13th Ham, Baked Sweet Potatoes w/honey
butter, Peas, Green Salad, Corn Muffin,
Dessert

“Santa Night ”

To make a reservation, call the church office by Tuesday morning. Adult meals are \$5.00, children meals are \$2.50. **Carry-outs are available.** Help is always needed! If you would like to help with setting tables, serving, or collecting money, please call the church office.

NEW MEMBERS

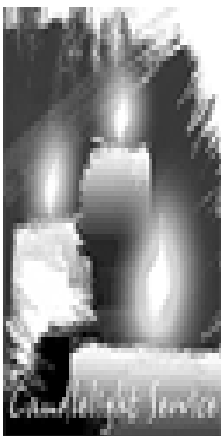
Welcome to:

Linda Bramhall, Betty Clay, Lori Lester, Faye Murphy, and Patricia Santilli who joined by profession of faith on November 19th;
Kay Pellerin who joined by profession of faith and Justin Taylor who joined by letter of transfer on November 26th.



Please remember:
cookies are needed for the
Christmas Eve Service

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



At 7:00 PM on Christmas Eve, our church sanctuary will be festively decorated and brilliantly illuminated with candles as we open our doors to the community for the Annual Christmas Eve Service. We will enjoy a traditional service of Lessons and Carols, including music by our choir and soloists. Bring your family and friends for this wonderful occasion of worship and celebration.

Hangings of the Greens Service

The Hanging of the Greens Service will be held **Sunday, December 3rd** at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Make plans to attend this special service as the church begins its celebrations of the Advent Season.

Poinsettias will once again decorate our Sanctuary for the Christmas Eve worship service. If you would like to give a plant as a memorial, please call the church office. The cost of the poinsettias is \$13.00. The deadline to place an order is Monday, December 18th.



CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

A Presbyterian tradition for almost seventy years, the Christmas Joy Offering is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to provide congregations with support for specific causes that help those in need. Half receipts are given to the Board of Pensions for assistance to retired and active church workers and their families. The other half supports Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education providing help with basic operating costs in addition to scholarships.

Alternative Gift Market

Celebrate the season with gifts that are truly different. Honor your friends and family with gifts of **Heifer International** farm animals and training sent in their name to struggling families around the world. The **Living Gift Market** will be held in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 10th.



Everyone is invited to go caroling at Cedarcroft on Monday, December 11th at 6:30 p.m.. Both singers and non-singers are needed. After caroling, refreshments will be served to the residents.

We need donations of cookies and baked goods for this event. Please bring them to Fellowship Hall by 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

Bible Quiz

According to Matthew's gospel, King Herod heard that wise men from an eastern land had come to Jerusalem to honor one they believed was "born king of the Jews." Herod was frightened because he did not want any competition for his position or his power. Herod told the wise men to return when they found the new king, and tell him where he could go to pay homage himself. Of course, Herod had murder on his mind. The wise men found the child, but what did they do afterward?

- A. They immediately returned and told Herod where to find the child.
- B. They returned to their own country by another road (or way).
- C. They stayed in Bethlehem until Herod died.
- D. They returned to Herod, but gave him misinformation.

Session Highlights

- Presented and approved for membership: Linda Bramhall, Betty Clay, Lori Lester, Faye Murphy, Kay Pellerin, Patricia Santilli and Justin Taylor.
- Approved Betsy White to be hired as the nursery attendant, beginning November 29th.
- The hole in the water pipe to the boiler has been repaired and the leaks in the Sanctuary stopped.
- Approved Lesley Jacobson as the Deacon representative to the Officer Nominating Committee.
- Report was given on the October Presbytery meeting.
- The Church Information Form has been approved by the Session and Presbytery's Committee on Ministry. It is now posted for prospective applicants to review.
- Judge Rodney and Georgeann Ahles are continuing to help Katrina victims with their legal concerns. Notes to them can be mailed to their Lebanon address and they will be forwarded to them in North Carolina.
- Lisa Clark was approved for the Frances Sellars Music Scholarship.
- The dates and locations of Presbytery Meetings for 2007 were given.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to

Judy Denney and family upon the death of her husband, Don Denney, on Sunday, November 19th at his home in Watertown. The funeral service was held in the church on Wednesday, November 22nd.

Melody Pollard and family upon the death of her mother, Grace Garrard, on Sunday, November 26th.

Lectionary Readings

December 3	Jeremiah 33: 14-16 1 Thessalonians 3: 9-13 Luke 21: 25-36
December 10	Malachi 3: 1-4 Philippians 1: 3-11 Luke 3: 1-6
December 17	Zephaniah 3: 14-20 Hebrews 10: 11-25 Mark 13: 1-8
December 24	Micah 5: 2-5a Hebrews 10: 5-10 Luke 2: 1-14
December 31	1 Samuel 2: 18-20, 26 Colossians 3: 12-17 Luke 2: 41-52

Thank You

To all of the people in the church that gave old records and history items to assist in the completion of the history of the church.

To Bob and Peggy Frye who delivered the lap robes made by our Monday Morning Sewing Group to the Veterans Hospital in Nashville.

To Our Officers Completing Terms of Office

Our most sincere thanks to the following people who will rotate from the governing body and boards of our church in January. Your work is deeply appreciated.

Elders—Joe Adams, Jimmie Crawford, Brenda Thaxton, Lois Ann Wauford.

Deacons—Jon Baker, Carolyn Beard, Mary Ellen O'Neil, Deborah Sanders

Youth News

- **December 16** 6:00 pm Youth Movie Night

For more information, contact Karen Jump (444-3669) or the church office at 444-1360.

Answer: B

December 2006

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

<u>Sunday</u> 8:45 & 11:00 Worship 9:45 AM Church School					1	2
3 Communion 7:00 pm Hanging of the Greens	4 9:00 am Sewing Group	5 9:45 am Morning Circle 4:00 pm Knitting Group	6 5:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Dinner 7:15 Choir	7 9:00 am Preschool 6:30 pm Contemp	8	9
10 6:30 pm Session	11 9:00 am Sewing 7:00 PM Caroling at Cedarcroft	12 9:00 am Preschool 4:00 pm Knitting Group	13 Santa Night 5:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Dinner 7:15 Choir	14 9:00 am Preschool 6:30 pm Contemp	15	16 Youth Movie Night
17	18 9:00 am Sewing Group	19 4:00 pm Knitting Group	20 7:15 Choir	21 6:30 pm Contemp	22 Steepletalk Deadline	23
---Kristy on Vacation---						
24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27 7:15 Choir	28 6:30 pm Contemp	29	30
---Dr. Cheetham on Vacation thru January 3---						
31 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">4 Cents a Meal</div>						

SteepleTalk
First Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 457
Lebanon, TN 37087

Address Service Requested



NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage Paid
Lebanon, TN
Permit 106

In January Elders and Deacons will be named to the church committees. We would like these committees to be more inclusive of our members. Therefore, we are asking you to review the Standing Committees and see if there is an area of church service on one or two of these committees where you would be willing to serve the church with your gifts and talents. Please fill out the form below and leave it in the church office at your earliest convenience. We look forward to hearing from many of you.

I would like to serve my church by being appointed to the following committees:

Christian Education Member Care Outreach
 Worship Budget Stewardship/Planning

Standing Committees

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The committee is chaired by an elder and normally meets monthly or as required. The committee will be comprised of Elders, Deacons, and members of the congregation.

The Christian Education Committee is normally made up of but not limited to the following sub-committees: Sunday school, Youth, Wednesday night Dinners, and Special Program. The responsibilities of the Christian Education Committee are (but not limited to): church school, youth ministry, Wednesday night dinners, Vacation Church School, conferences and work-projects, confirmation classes, Bible Study programs, Preschool, college ministry, and leadership/officer training.

MEMBER CARE

- The Member Care Committee is chaired by an elder and normally meets monthly
- Develop and oversee a comprehensive program of member care for our church family
- Develop and oversee a comprehensive program to enfold new members into the life of the church family
- Responsible for maintaining the church rolls, which are reviewed annually to assure accuracy
- Responsible for checking the Friendship Register after each worship day, keeping information regarding visitors
- Contacting those who visit the church by phone, letter, or visit
- Keeping before the congregation the necessity of developing an atmosphere of welcome and warmth
- Developing a Pictorial Membership Directory, on a regular basis (approx, every 3 years)
- Prepare an annual committee budget by September 1st
- Provide caring programs dealing with aspects of human need: (i.e. divorce recovery workshops, grief workshops, parenting skills, teenagers and sex, chemical dependency, etc.)

STEWARDSHIP/PLANNING

- This committee will be chaired by an elder and will meet upon the call of the chair.
- Plan for the year round promotion of the mission of our local congregation and its larger mission through the Presbyterian Church (USA)
- Plan a concentrated Stewardship Promotion/Pledge Drive in the Fall
- Consider the future funding of the church's mission with special attention to deferred giving through the Presbyterian Foundation
- This committee will prepare an annual budget by September 1st

OUTREACH

- This committee will be chaired by an elder and generally meets monthly
- Oversee and review our church's responsibility for ministry beyond its local program
- Challenge the congregation to increase its global awareness and personal involvement in the mission of the church
- Oversee the **4 Cents A Meal, Christmas Joy Offering, and One Great Hour of Sharing** programs
- Coordinate possible Campus Ministry for Cumberland University
- May choose to promote Heifer Project, Habitat for Humanity, or other programs
- This committee will prepare an annual budget by September 1st

WORSHIP

- This committee will be chaired by an elder and will meet monthly or upon the call of the chair
- The membership of this committee should include persons having some knowledge of the music of the church and a good understanding of Christian worship
- Oversight for the making, caring for, and displaying banners used in worship
- Oversight and evaluation of worship activities
- Recommend to the Session new ideas, changes, special worship opportunities, and newsletter announcements
- Prepare for communion services
- Plan Cedar Forest Ministry
- Plan annual Hanging of the Greens Service
- Plan annual Christmas Eve Service
- Recruit and assign Lay Readers
- When the minister, organist, or choir director are ill or on vacation, it is the responsibility of this committee to secure an appropriate substitute
- This committee will prepare an annual budget by September 1st

BUDGET

- This committee shall be comprised of two elders and two deacons, and one trustee, among whom one elder shall serve as chair. The committee will meet as needed
- Keep a continually updated 3-5 year plan for church facilities, growth, mission, and other opportunities
- Prepare annual budget by November 1st
- Track annual expenditures against previous year's budget and rewrite new budget and submit to the session for its approval
- The committee shall communicate each annual budget to the congregation
- This committee may be called upon by the Stewardship Committee for information which would prove helpful in its work

This committee shall be responsible for supervision of the financial operations of the church, and will work closely with the Treasurer and the Church Secretary to insure all records are in order.

Gospel of Thomas

On Tuesday, January 9, 2007 at 6:00 p.m., Dr. Cheetham will resume a study of the Gospel of Thomas. The Gospel of Thomas is one of the Gnostic Gospels and contains a collection of sayings attributed to Jesus. If you would like to participate in the class, please call the church office to order a study guide.

2007 Stewardship Campaign

Information for the 2007 Stewardship Campaign will be sent in December in preparation for making your pledge. Please prayerfully consider your commitment of time, talent, and financial support for the coming year.

Pledge Sunday will be held on January 14, 2007.