



SteepleTalk

December 2008

First Presbyterian Church
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Member Care Volunteer

Judy Leonard

Deacon of Month/ Visiting Deacons

Judy Leonard

Steepletalk Deadline

December 26th

Circle Meeting

December 2nd at 9:45 a.m.

From the Pastor...

We begin the Holy Season of Advent early this year. The first Sunday of Advent is November 30th which is also our 5th Sunday Combined Service at 10:00 a.m. Sunday School will begin at 9:00 a.m.

The first Sunday in Advent is also the beginning of the Christian Year. It is a time when we prepare ourselves for the coming of our Messiah. Advent means "Coming." We celebrate these days of Advent in expectation and preparation for Christ's arrival.

Through the centuries, Christians have observed a time of waiting and expectation before celebrating the birth of the Savior at Christmas. The Advent season is a time for reflection and preparation, but its mood is joyful. Advent has been enriched by Christian tradition to reflect its distinctive Christian meaning. It proclaims the revelation of God's love as expressed in Christ's birth in a humble stable, Christ's sacrificial death on the cross and his victorious resurrection! It points to the hope of Christ's coming again as the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Advent makes innkeepers out of all of us, asking each of us to make room for the arrival of Christ The King. Let us prepare room for Christ in our hearts, our lives and our homes this majestic and holy season!

Blessings,
Dr. Cheetham

A Mighty Message

When Charles Wesley wrote "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" in 1739, he had the angels proclaim: "Glory to the newborn King; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" And what did Wesley think should be the consequences of that message? "Joyful, all ye nations, rise." The Prince of Peace had come. "Light and life to all he brings." "Born that we no more may die; born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King!" When Wesley wrote that hymn, England was going through a desperate, hopeless time. Unemployment, poverty, illness, alcoholism and crime were widespread. Wesley and his brother, John, believed the answer for their nation was Christ's life-changing message. Changed lives would bring a changed nation.

Wesley's Christmas song rang true: "Light and life to all he brings." Some historians have written that England didn't have a revolution (as did France) mainly because of the message the Wesley's preached and sang.

Wednesday Night Fellowship Dinners 6:00 p.m.

Adults \$6 Children under 10 years \$3.00
Under 5 years "Free"

Reservations must be made no later than noon on Tuesday. Programs are announced in the Sunday bulletin. Please note, there will be no dinners on December 24th and 31st.

Santa Night

Santa will arrive at First Presbyterian Church on Wednesday, December 17th. So bring your camera and your list!

Hanging of the Greens Service

The Hanging of the Greens Service will be held **Sunday, November 30th** at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Make plans to attend this special service as the church begins its celebration of the Advent Season.

Alternative Gift Market

Celebrate the season with gifts that are truly different. Honor your friends and family with gifts of **Heifer International** farm animals sent in their name to struggling families around the world. The **Living Gift Market** will be held in Fellowship Hall on the December 14th and 21st.

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 was of supporting 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.

The Christmas Joy Offering will be received on Sunday, December 21st

To Our Officers Completing Terms of Office

Our most sincere thanks go to the following who will complete their terms of service as officers in January. Your work is deeply appreciated.

Elders - Charles Bradshaw, Pat Climer, Ken Hawkins, and Gwynn Lanius.

Deacons - Doug Bone, Jennifer Breland, Faye Brown, and Becky Burris.



Poinsettias will be used to 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 a poinsettias is \$13.00.

The deadline to place an order is Monday, December 15th.

Secrets Workshop

Make a gift for Mom, Dad, brother, sister, grandparents - 5 gifts in all. The workshop will be held on Sunday, December 14th from 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. and is for children in kindergarten through 6th grade. The cost is \$8.00. Call the church office by Sunday, December 7th to make a reservation.

We extend our deepest sympathy to:

Peggy Williams and family upon the death of her brother, Ray Ford, who died on November 1st in St. Petersburg, FL.

Jack and Kalee Pratt upon the death of Jack's mother, Judy Pratt, who died on Saturday, November 8th.

Kathy Adams and family upon the death of her uncle, Sam Gibson, who died on November 13th.

The family of Patsy Purnell upon her death on November 15th at her home in Cleveland, TN.

November Session Highlights

- The Session discussed the need for trimming the large trees on the church grounds and authorized Ken Hawkins to get a cost estimate.
- Information was presented on the cost of purchasing new computers for the church offices. This was referred to the Budget, Finance, and Stewardship Committee.
- A new copier, to be located in the church office, has been leased.
- The Session approved the slate of officers submitted by the Officer Nominating Committee.
- Thanksgiving dinner will be served to the residents at Cedar Croft.
- The Session approved Barbara Howell overseeing the heifer project.
- The Hanging of the Greens Service will be November 30.
- The Chancel Choir will present a Christmas program on December 7.
- The annual Secret's Workshop will be December 14.
- Financial contributions for October were as follows: the balance as of September 30, 2008--\$15,506.01; contributions for October--\$14,879.25; designated receipts for October (new and carryover)--\$23,349.84; total funds available (October)--\$53,735.10; expenditures for October--\$26,385.42 (budgeted) and--\$15,552.95 (designated). The bank balance as of October 31, 2008, was \$11,796.73.
- The Building Fund balance is \$271,365.67.

Sunday, December 7th
11:00 a.m.

Sing Noel!

*A Carol Service
by Hal H. Hopson*

The Chancel Choir will present this collection of traditional as well as contemporary Christmas carols from many traditions. The scripture lessons are replaced by poetry and texts from Christian hymns. The choir will be accompanied by the organ, hand bells, and percussion. The congregation will join in the singing of the familiar carols.

Please invite family and friends to join us for this special worship service.

Lectionary Readings

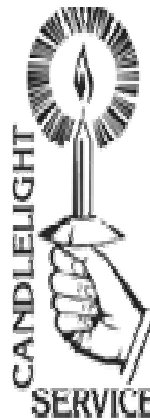
- November 2 Joshua 3: 7-17
1 Thessalonians 2: 9-13
Matthew 23: 1-12
- November 9 Joshua 24: 1-3a, 14-25
1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18
Matthew 25: 1-13
- November 16 Judges 4: 1-7
1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11
Matthew 25: 14-30
- November 23 Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24
Ephesians 1: 15-23
Matthew 25: 31-46
- November 30 Isaiah 64: 1-9
1 Corinthians 1: 3-9
Mark 13: 24-37

Raleigh Ringers

The Raleigh Ringers Handbell Ensemble will perform on Sunday, December 7th at 2:00 p.m. in the Enrichment Center at First Presbyterian Church, Nashville. The group is an internationally acclaimed, advanced community handbell choir based in Raleigh, NC. Since its founding in 1990, the Ringers have been performing unique interpretations of sacred, secular, and popular music. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Jean Tyree.

Christmas Eve Service

At 7:00 pm on Christmas Eve, our church sanctuary will be festively decorated and brilliantly illuminated with candles as we celebrate our Annual Community 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 service of worship and celebration.



Please remember cookies are needed for the Christmas Eve Service.

December 2008

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Sunday 8:45 & 11:00 Worship 9:45 AM Church School	1 Lifeline Screening	2 9:00 am PreSchool 9:45 am Morning Circle 4:00 pm Knitting	3 5:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Dinner 7:15 Choir	4 9:00 am Preschool 6:30 pm Contemp	5	6
7 Communion for 8:45 a.m. Service	8 9:30 am Morning Sewing Group	9 9:00 am PreSchool 4:00 pm Knitting	10 5:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Dinner 7:15 Choir	11 9:00 am Preschool 6:30 pm Contemp	12	13
14 4:30 pm Secrets Workshop 7:15 pm Session Communion at 11:00 a.m. service	15 9:30 am Morning Sewing Group	16 9:00 am PreSchool 4:00 pm Knitting	17 5:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Dinner 7:15 Choir Santa Night	18 9:00 am Preschool 6:30 pm Contemp	19 10:30 am Department of Children Services	20
21 5:00 pm Deacons 6:00 pm Worship	22 9:30 am Morning Sewing Group	23 4:00 pm Knitting	24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 Office Closed	26 Office Closed Steepletalk Deadline	27
28	29 9:30 am Morning Sewing Group	30 4:00 pm Knitting	31			
4 Cents a Meal	Dr. Cheetham on	Vacation through January 3rd				

From the Associate Pastor...

With Thanksgiving passing by and Christmas just around the corner, the holiday season always makes me think of the joys of living in a community. The holiday season is community oriented in so many ways. Throughout the season there are so many parades, parties, and family gatherings.

The word “Community” is a wonderful thing. Those who know me well know I love to use the word “Community”. Without a sense of a community, the church would not be the same and our faith would not grow as much. God calls us to live in a community of faith and worship Him as a community of faith. To me the church’s sense of its own community is the life line to a healthy, active, and hopeful church. Without one another to show us God working in our life, our faith would not be as strong.

If you come to church and worship God because of the way it makes you feel, then you are missing out. If you come to church and worship God because of the way it makes you grow and helps others grow in their faith journey, then you have found the right reasons. The question every member of God’s church and community of faith should be asking themselves is how we can become a stronger community of faith? We also should ask ourselves how we serve our God and our community of Faith. We can all be active in the church by being present during times when the community of faith is gathered together, particularly on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings.

We are reminded through Paul’s letters that we all have been created by God with extraordinary gifts to share with God and one another. What gifts and talents can you offer God and this community of faith? If you are struggling with what gifts you have to offer, ask someone what gifts they see in you.

Finally, as we see in our different family communities, the most critical part of being a part of a community is accountability. We need to push one another in exploring new possibilities of serving the church, but also we need to remind some to slow down and take a break so they do not burn out from the church.

So, as the New Year approaches, I want to challenge everyone to volunteer for one new thing at the church. I also ask that you not only affirm someone and give thanks for their current service to the church, but challenge them to take on something new. God has created us all with many gifts to serve God’s church and God’s community of faith.

Go now and listen to how God has called you! Go now and serve God with thanksgiving in your heart!

Grace and peace,
Nick

Youth Group Christmas Project

The youth are collecting new toys and hygiene products to donate to the Community Help Center. Suggested items include soap, toothpaste, deodorant, toilet paper, books, and games. Donations may be brought to Fellowship Hall by Sunday, December 21st.

Wreath Making

Thursday, December 4th has been set as the day for making wreaths. We will start at 9:00 a.m. and continue throughout the morning. All help is welcome; come for as long as you can, even if it is just one hour. We also need greenery of all kinds: pine, magnolia, cedar, holly, etc.

Aluminum Can Recycling

We are now saving aluminum cans to benefit Habitat for Humanity. Look for the recycle box in Fellowship Hall.

Standing Committees

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Some of the responsibilities of the Christian Education Committee include oversight of Sunday school, youth programming, Vacation Church School, confirmation classes, Bible study classes, and recruiting teachers.

MEMBER CARE

The Member Care Committee develops and oversees a comprehensive program of member care for our church family, enfolds new members into the life of the church, contacts visitors, plans adult activities, oversees Wednesday Night Dinners, and provides programs that deal with needs of the congregation.

OUTREACH

The Outreach Committee oversees and review our church's responsibility for ministry beyond its local program, promotes global awareness and personal involvement in the mission of the church, develops mission connections on a local level, and oversees the **4 Cents a Meal**, **Christmas Joy Offering**, and **One Great Hour of Sharing** offerings

WORSHIP

The Worship Committee includes oversight and evaluation of worship activities, prepares communion, plans Cedar Forest Ministry, plans special worship services (Christmas Eve, Hanging of the Greens, and Easter), and recruits lay readers.

BUDGET / FINANCE / STEWARDSHIP

The Budget/Finance/Stewardship Committee plans for the year round promotion of the mission of our local congregation and its larger mission through the Presbyterian Church (USA), plans a concentrated Stewardship Promotion/Pledge Drive in the fall, tracks expenditures, prepares a new budget to submit to the Session, presents an annual budget to the congregation, supervises the financial operations of the church, arranges for an annual audit, and keeps an updated 3-5 year plan for church facilities, growth, mission, and other opportunities.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The Buildings and Grounds Committee is responsible for preserving and maintaining the buildings which belong to First Presbyterian Church, the parking lot, and grounds which surround them, and maintenance of the church van.

If you are interested in serving on one of these standing committees, please fill out the form below and drop it off in the church office.

I would like to serve my church by being appointed to the following committee or committees.

Christian Education _____ Outreach _____ Budget/Finance/Stewardship _____

Member Care _____ Worship _____ Building and Grounds _____

Name: _____