

First Presbyterian News

DECEMBER 13, 2011



Mary, Nazareth girl: What did you know of babies, you, barely out of childhood yourself? God-chosen girl: What did you know of God that brought you to this stable blessed among women? Could it be that you had been ready . . . waiting . . . listening for the footsteps of an angel? Could it be there are messages for us if we have the faith to listen? – **Ann Weems, Knelling in Bethlehem**

DECEMBER 18, 2011

Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:45 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m.

A Service of Lessons and Carols

Our worship this Sunday will consist of the reading of texts from the Old Testament prophecies to the birth of Jesus Christ, with hymns and anthems commemorating the Incarnation. Following worship, please join us in Watts-Hill Hall for lunch and a time of fellowship.

Meditation:

"The Mystery of Christmas"

Joseph S. Harvard, preaching

The **Christmas Joy Offering** will be received during worship. See the enclosed brochure for information regarding this special offering for the PC(USA).

Acolytes: **Rosa Ramirez, Peter Compton**

Crucifer: **Kennedy Wilkins**

Crossdaile Driver: **Mary-Jo Keenan**

Narthex Greeters: **Minnie Cameron,**

Hilda Bradshaw

After Worship: **Kate Busa** (side, font)

Lea Bingham (rear / narthex)

Ushers: **Joy Kerner** (head), **John Cowden**

(no flowers delivery), **Leslie Shaw, Lin**

Bentel, Mary-Jo Keenan, Amy Sanchez

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Faith and Community Class

"Beyond Lost Causes in Mark"

This Sunday, **Robert Brawley** continues his excellent introduction to the Gospel of Mark. He will explore "lost causes" in Mark's account. Please join us at 9:45 in Watts-Hill Hall.

Lectionary Class

David had plans to build a temple, but God had other plans. Mary had plans for a quiet, traditional start to her married life, but God had other plans. What plans have you made? Join us for discussion at 9:45 in the East Parlor.

Adult Discussion Class

We will be discussing an Advent series following the lectionary from *The Thoughtful Christian* this week. Join us at 9:45 in the Wilson Parlor.

The **Starting from Scratch** and **Women's Spiritual Formation** classes will meet as usual.

CHRISTMAS CONCERNS

LAST CALL to share greetings via the Christmas Concerns display at the church. The money you save on cards and postage can be given to help those in need. Simply write your greeting on the tree-shaped note card in the church foyer, adhere it to the Christmas Concerns window display, and then make a donation to FPC, memo: Christmas Concerns. This year's donations will be divided between Urban Ministries of Durham, Presbyterian Urban Ministry, and Durham's Emergency Energy Fund. **The names of those who shared greetings will be listed in next week's church newsletter.**

A HABITAT HOUSE . . .

in honor of Reverend Joseph Harvard,
Rabbi John Friedman, and
Bishop Elroy Lewis

FPC is making plans for a Habitat House to be built in 2012 in honor of the service of **Joe Harvard, Rabbi John Friedman and Bishop Elroy Lewis**, long-time friends and social justice advocates in Durham. A Kick-off / Planning Dinner will be held on **Sunday, January 8 at 6 pm at Judea Reform Synagogue** (Levin Social Hall). If you are interested in helping with this exciting project, please contact **Tom Bacon** or **Sharon Hirsch**.

ADVENT COMMUNION

Wednesday, December 14

led by **Susan Dunlap**

Worship at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Supper at 6:30 p.m. in Watts-Hill Hall.

DONOR DRIVE

A BEAUTIFUL EVENT

Sunday's donor drive to honor our two precious girls undergoing life-saving stem cell transplants, **Florence McDow** (6), and **Kate Crockett** (23), was a beautiful thing to observe. Of the many who came forward to fill out the paperwork it takes to be tested for the national registry, 49 were accepted, and 15 more added their names to the plasma registry with the American Red Cross. In addition, \$905 was collected to assist the processing of the tissue samples taken at the drive. Some, who wanted to donate, were turned away because of age or health issues . . . Thank you, thank you anyway, for your willingness to support these precious families.

Many thanks to those who worked hard to make this drive happen: to **Robert Daye** (who came on his day off) and **George Kirschmann**, who helped with set up; to **Margaret and Tom Keller, Kate Busa, Margaret Rubiera, Christyn Klinck, Pat Ashby, Marie Sappenfield, Marcia Lorimer, Barbara Gerwe, Elizabeth Klinck, Karen Romines, Julie Maxwell, and Dawn Carsey**, who helped with registration and refreshments; to **Sharon Hirsch and Taylor Anderton**, who represented Donate Life and who put us in touch with **Betsie Letterle**, the regional representative for Be the Match, who made three trips to FPC to arrange the drive. And to **Dan Kane**, who covered the event for the N&O, and who at the end of the day, registered and submitted a tissue sample to the drive himself because, as he said, "I have a two-year old and can imagine how meaningful this would be for those with children who are suffering." Those who still want to donate can pick up forms from **Marilyn Hedgpeth**.

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

The past week has been heavy with many of our members and friends facing illness and death. This is never easy, but it seems the contrast between the celebratory mood in our culture and the grief and pain makes it more difficult.

That is why I am so grateful this year for the encouragement of Advent to listen to words of comfort and hope. During these trying times, we have been waiting together as a congregation. God is hearing our cries and reaching out in a myriad of ways to support us.

I invite you to join me in these days before Christmas to listen and wait for God's coming among us. As we gather in homes and at church, let us pray together, speak tenderly to each other and offer a supportive hug. It makes a difference.

The Service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday at 11 a.m. is special as we listen to Scripture and songs about God's steadfast love which you can count in season and out of season. May the good news of God's coming among us bring healing and hope to you.

Joe

OUR SYMPATHIES

The love and concern of the congregation is extended to **Vern and Beth Neece** on the death of Vern's brother-in-law, **Larry Evans**, on December 11th in Braceville, IL. A service will be held in Greenville, IL on December 16th.

OUR CONCERNS

- **Carol McKnight** is recovering from surgery at home.
- **Bob Graper** is in hospice care at home.
- **Rob and Amy Harkey** remain in Uganda to receive their adopted child.

Margaret Boswell	Martha Howerton
Tom Howerton	Diana Hyland Huggin
Don Jenkins	Carol Johnson
Florence McDow	David Parkins
Mozette Rollins	Sarah Todd
Jerry Tyren	

- **Michael Atkins**, friend of Rebecca Leonard
- **Chester Bisette**, grandfather of Abi Bisette
- **Mary Causey**, sister of Ellen Bacon
- **Kate Crockett**, granddaughter of Alex and Becky Crockett
- **Donald Davis**, brother of Lorraine Davis
- **Rick Degand**, cousin of Deborah Momsen-Hudson
- **Dwight Huntley**, father of Lesley Curtis
- **Rolf Olsen**, friend of Bob and Lina Yoder
- **Mary Russell Roberson**, daughter of Ruth and Russell Roberson
- **Karen Wolcott**, cousin of Jean Wilson



Your support the past three years has been

tremendous. Sunday's bone marrow registry beautifully demonstrated the care and love that lifts us up. It was faith in action, a faith that we feel daily in prayers around dinner tables and at kids' bedsides across our broad community. To the entire church congregation, in all the ways each of you has given, thank you for demonstrating the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love that is Advent and the rebirth it heralds.

Leslie, Will, Laura Mishler & Florence
- aka **The McDows**



Dear Session and Congregation of FPC,

Losing our dear daughter Sara has been difficult, but you have made your presence known to us by the lovely flowers, your numerous cards, calls, prayers, hugs and kisses. We are grateful for each expression of your love and concern to us and Anna.

With heartfelt gratitude,
Robert and Jane Brawley

NOTES

- Thanks to **Melinda Ruley and Stewart Fisher** for hosting an enjoyable Christmas gathering for First Friends last Saturday night.
- The **Daytimers'** Christmas lunch was enjoyable at Croadsale.

CONGRATULATIONS TO . . .

- **Jim and Jacque Robins** who recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary;
- **Gwendolyn Dilworth** who has been awarded the Girl Scout Silver Award, the second-highest achievement in Girl Scouting;
- **Bob Yoder**, who graduated from NCCU last weekend, *summa cum laude*, with a Masters degree in history.

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Building the Body of Christ Together

Received as of December 11:

158 Pledges totaling **\$667,890.00**
representing **80.6%** of our goal.

2012 Pledge Goal: \$828,182.98.

If you have not made a pledge, please do so as soon as possible.

ATTENTION FPC HOOPSTERS!

For all men (and young men 16 and over) interested in playing in the competitive Hope Valley Baptist Church league this winter, we have open gym on **Saturday, December 17**. For more information, contact **Carl Rist** at rist@frontier.com.

YOUTH NEWS

Friends,

Advent continues and with the busyness of our lives, I wonder how many of us have had the chance to slow down and reflect upon this season's meaning. My hope for all of us is that peace, which brings understanding. But I realize that for most of you, getting through this week of pre-end-of-semester exams, tests, projects and more will be pretty tough. God is with you this week in its busyness and next week in its potential to be less stressful.

We will kick off the week before Christmas with our annual **Christmas Caroling and White Elephant gift party** at FPC. Everyone will gather Sunday at 4:00 p.m. at FPC. **DRIVERS ARE NEEDED.** We will head over to Hillcrest (where this year we were "requested") and then into a surrounding neighborhood. We will return to FPC at 6:30 for dinner and our party. Everyone should bring a wrapped gift (recycled or \$3 or less) to share in our gift-giving game. Be sure to dress warmly and festively for caroling! See you Sunday!

Rebecca

PRIME TIMERS' CHRISTMAS GATHERING

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16
at 7 p.m. at the Gerwes' home
2704 Trailwood Drive
bebegerwe@gmail.com
Check your mailbox for details

A CHRISTMAS GATHERING FOR YOUNG ADULTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18
at 6 p.m. the Harvards' home
124 Monticello Ave, Durham

You are invited to bring a side, dessert or drink to share.

RSVP to: candice.provey@gmail.com

IGLESIA EMANUEL

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21

**Christmas performance:
"A Colorful Christmas"**

6 p.m. at Northgate Presbyterian Church
followed by our free
Christmas community meal

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25

Joint Christmas service at 1:00 p.m.
with a dramatized sermon at Northgate PC
For more information contact the pastor,
Julio Ramirez-Eve: 672-4333.

SALUTING A SENIOR

Anne Powell Leathers was born in Durham on December 13, 1919 and grew up on Gloria Avenue, where she met the young man who would become her husband. Bill Leathers' aunt lived across the street, and his frequent visits to Gloria Avenue led to a romance which culminated in their elopement to Danville, VA in 1941, while Anne was a student at Greensboro College. The couple lived in High Point and Burlington, after which Anne moved back to Durham while Bill served in World War II. Anne and Bill raised three children, Cathy, Anne, and Bill, while Anne also worked at different times at the Ellis Stone department store, Duke Hospital, and Durham Regional. Although Anne was raised as a Methodist, she joined her husband's Presbyterian church. Anne has used her extraordinary giftedness as a craftswoman for various projects at FPC and has been a member of the Prayer Shawl Group since its first meeting. She is a faithful volunteer in the church office and is also an excellent bridge player. A widow since 2000, Anne has recently been spending six months in Bethel, NC, at the home of her daughter, Anne, and six months in Durham with her daughter, Cathy. We thank God for Anne and her willingness to share her many gifts with her church family. - Submitted by **Barbara Fish**

BOOK GROUP

The **Things that Matter Book Group** will meet to discuss John Grisham's The Confession on **Tuesday, January 10 at 7 p.m.** at the home of **Mary-Jo Keenan** (2407 Tryon Rd, Durham). **Marila Stone** will lead the discussion.

TRAVEL SEMINAR PLANNED

Carlisle Harvard will be assisting **Dr. V. Bruce Rigdon** on a travel seminar entitled "From Constantinople to Kiev: The History of Eastern Christianity and the Diverse Challenge of Modernity" from **April 26 – May 10, 2012**. If you are interested and would like to see the brochure, email Carlisle at ccharvard@gmail.com

END OF YEAR DEADLINES

The church must receive your charitable contributions by the end of the day (4:30 p.m.) on Friday, December 30, 2011, or the gift must be postmarked by December 31, 2011, if mailed, to be deductible on your 2011 taxes. If you wish to make a gift of stock, please notify **Tom Bloom**, (t.bloom@firstpres-durham.org) as soon as possible.

The **last edition of the FPC newsletter** for 2011 will be issued next Tuesday, December 20. This edition will cover church news through January 2, 2012. Church auxiliaries, officers and staff are asked to submit articles to **Valerie McMillian** (v.mcmillian@firstpres-durham.org) by Monday, **December 19th**. Thank you!

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