



THE CHURCH FAMILY

*Presenting Everyone
Complete in Christ*

Vol. XXXVIII, No. 23

December 7, 2011

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Sunday, December 11, 6:30 pm



LIVE CHRISTMAS SCENES

Wed., Dec. 14 - Fri., Dec. 16

You can participate. See bulletin board for sign-ups.



CHRISTMAS DAY SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 25

10:30 a.m. Morning Worship

Please note: No Sunday School; one worship service

FAMILY GATHERING

by Scott Deneen

Dear Youth and Families,

Christmas is a beautiful and wonderful time – full of joy and delight. Think of the seasonal music, the colored lights, the tree decorations, the smell of baked cookies, and the festive atmosphere and you get an idea of what I'm thinking.

However, the original Christmas lacked such outward flare. In fact, most everyone in the world was ignorant of what was happening in Bethlehem. Most people had bedded down for the night, not even remotely aware that the Son of God's entrance into the world was moments away. Why?

Because our Savior was humble. Humble enough to be born a man, humble enough to be born in Bethlehem to commoners, humble enough to be born into poverty rather than splendor, humble enough to have His birth announced to a very few people (shepherds and wise men [who, by the way, had to walk from a distant land just to see Him months/years after His birth]). And yet He came... came not to be served but to serve and give Himself a ransom for many... came to suffer and die on a cross that we could be made the children of God through faith in Him... came to do for us what we should have done but could not... came for the glory of God through our salvation.

Oh, the marvels of Christmas! Take a few moments each day and think through the glory of the original Christmas – the humility and meekness of our Savior – and then share your Christmas joy with others.

Blessings,

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Leaf raking Service Project – Sat., Dec. 10th, 9AM-12noon
2. Live Christmas Scenes – Dec. 14-16th, 7-8:15PM
3. Progressive Dinner – Fri., Jan. 13th
4. Ski Retreat to Winter Place – Feb. 3-4th
5. Super Bowl Party – Feb. 5th



"A Charlie Brown Christmas"

The final dress rehearsal for the Children's Christmas program will be on Friday, December 9th from 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm. We will begin the practice with a pizza dinner. Please make sure your child is here if they are in the program.

MISSIONS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

Giving

We praise God for **\$147,249** committed for **Faith Promise for 2012!** As God provides these funds through you, we support missionaries around the world. Look at the missionary boards in the hallway for recent news from our 51 missionary families. If you would like to volunteer to post information on one or more of these boards, please contact Martha Sue Mitchell.

Praying

We praise God for **390 people** who have said they will be **praying** regularly for one or more of our missionaries in 2012. If you are one of those people, check your P-Mail box to pick up your prayer guides and refrigerator magnets.

Going

We praise God for the **many** who have gone out from First Presbyterian on **short-term mission teams**. Opportunities abound: Would you like to **help roof a house for Harold and Brenda Bracken in Forest City** on Thursday, December 29? Contact Rick Herd or Jimmie Mitchell. Would you like to go to **Haiti** for a week in March to help build a home for a pastor and minister to children? Is God calling you to go to **New York City, Peru or Palmer Home** for a week next summer? Sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office.



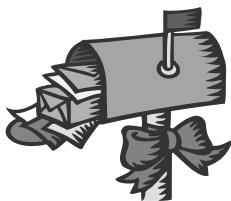
Make plans to attend our traditional candlelight

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Saturday, 12/24, 7:00 PM

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING UPDATE

When the votes were counted last Sunday following our annual congregational meeting, all candidates on the ballot for elder and deacon were elected with strong majorities. These men will be installed in a special service Sunday evening, January 8: Tommy Barton, Rick Herd and Mike Prather as elders; and Leon Lineberger, Paul Seufert, Graham Smith, Rodney Wilkinson and Tracy Withers as deacons. Officers stepping away from active duty and due our thanks and appreciation for service rendered are Elders Clyde Haley, Jimmie Mitchell and Robert Rhyne. Elections to the Board of the Stanley Total Living Center included Steve Smith to fill the remainder of a vacant term and Mike Dixon and Jerry Ratchford to new terms of service.



GOT MAIL?

Remember to use FPC's P-Mail service to send your Christmas greetings to your FPC friends. Be sure to check the appropriate box periodically for mail sent to you.

REMARKABLE! AMAZING! DELICIOUS! OUTSTANDING! AWESOME!

These are just a few of the words of praise used to describe the WIC Christmas dinner this past Monday. Many of our FPC men came out to prepare steak, chicken, baked potatoes and salad. The women were truly blessed by a wonderful meal with great service. Thank you to all the men who came out and helped make this a special night. You did a great job and it was very much appreciated!

DO YOU LOVE TO BAKE?

The Gaston Correctional Facility will be holding its Christmas Party on December 19th. This is the one time a year that the Gospel can be presented to all the inmates! You can be a part of this ministry by bringing in a cake for the party no later than Sunday, December 18th. *Please use cardboard or plastic as the holder. No returns can be made.* Contact Jim Ramsey at 263-1062 if you are interested.



PCA CHRISTMAS OFFERING

In your December 18th bulletin, you will find information about the PCA Christmas Offering. A gift from you offers encouragement to those PCA retired and disabled pastors, missionaries, church lay workers, pastors without call, their widows and dependent children who may have a financial need. Prayerfully consider your gift and come prepared on the 18th to gift a gift of love.

You are invited to

A Christmas Festival

Presented by the Gaston Symphonic Band

December 16 at 8:00 pm

Prelude Concert by Exodus Handbell Ensemble at 7:30 pm

First Assembly

777 S. Myrtle School Rd., Gastonia

Free admission!

MERCY MINISTRY NEWS

We would like to recognize several groups that worked to bring in items for our food pantry recently. The FPC preschoolers collected food during the month of November. The FPC American Heritage Girls troop sold baked goods to raise money that they used to purchase items for the pantry. Last week the Venturing Crew 94 and Boy Scout Troop 94 from Stanley collected food from the community and brought that into us. On top of these donations, many of you have brought in bags of food. We have truly been blessed!

Here is a letter we received recently from one of the many people that benefited from this ministry:

Thank you for all the help that you have given to me for my family. I pray that God will richly bless you in your effort to help others in need. I know that what you have done for me and my family is greatly appreciated and has blessed this household in a very big way. The food and the financial help to us was a blessing from the Lord!

COMING IN 2012

| February 2012 | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | | |

Mark Your Calendar!

The Christian Education Committee is sponsoring a Marriage Seminar with Dr. Gary Chapman on Tuesday evening, February 28. It is open to the public. Don't miss this special opportunity!!!

WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Christian sympathy is extended to **Roy, Janet and Jeff Redding** in the sudden death of Janet's sister. Gail Sherrill was killed in a car accident on November 30.

We are glad **Chloe Billings** is home from the hospital after suffering with severe symptoms which led to a diagnosis of Juvenile Diabetes last week. Please pray for the family as they embark on a new lifestyle. **Cindy Davis** is doing well after outpatient surgery.

Congratulation to **Josh and Melissa Clevenger** on the birth of their 1st child, **Peyton Lee**, born December 3. Proud grandparents are **Ron and Karen Ensley**.

With Loving Thanks

Dear FPC family,

The Rust family sends our sincere appreciation and thanks for all your prayers, concern, cards and meals during my recent illness. We know that prayer is so effective and my knowing that you all were praying is what carried me through each day.

*Much love,
Tommi*

The Child Development Center would like to thank everyone who donated snacks for the children. What a blessing! We wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Debbie Smith and staff

Dear First Presbyterian Church,

As I recount my blessings this year, I thank the Lord for you. Thank you for your love and support as it flows through the Crisis Pregnancy Center to reach women, babies, mean and families who are in need. What a blessing to know we stand side-by-side in the cause for life. May God continue to bless you and strengthen you.

*Sherry Overbey,
Director - CPC - East*

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

16 Chris McGinnis

17 Brenner McMinn

18 David Griffin
Craig Mesimer
Jerry Ratchford

20 Bobby Blackman

22 Janice Barton
Patrick Rhyne
Skip Ribbeck

23 Hayley Black
Isaiah Nelson
Roxi Smith



25 Happy Birthday Jesus!

26 Ellen Beam

29 Michael Ham
Phyllis Withers

30 Marlen Chappell
David Rust

31 Carly Rhyne

The Church Family is a twice-monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church
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Senior Pastor, Dan King • Associate Pastor, Scott Deneen
Worship 8:30 and 11:00 AM • Sunday School 9:45 AM

First Presbyterian Church
512 Old Mt. Holly Road
Stanley, NC 28164

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