
December 15 Volume 21, Issue 24

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First Presbyterian

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

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3rd Sunday
December

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Reflections

“The Discipline of Reserving Judgment”

15When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” 16So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Luke 2:15-20

As we come to celebrate the coming of Christ, we need to acknowledge some important points about why many religious people did not recognize Jesus’ appearance, as the Messiah, when he was born in Bethlehem. For one thing, Bethlehem was all wrong as a place for the Messiah to be born. Yes, there was an obscure reference to Bethlehem from the Prophet Micah (5:2). But honestly, it wasn’t a particularly good location for people to be looking for the Messiah. More importantly, who would have expected the Messiah to be the child of uneducated homeless peasants? Even less expected, was that Jesus’ lineage, though correct as the prophecies go, wasn’t impressive.

The announcement of the Messiah to Shepherds was a little sketchy, too. Shepherds were not bad people per se, but they weren’t known for being ones whose endorsement was eagerly sought either. The thrill and excitement, of the message, to the shepherds was more the news that the Messiah was someone who was familiar with their own struggles and life situations. The angel army, proclaiming God’s transformation of all human life, was given to people who were not going to be completely trusted, as believable witnesses.

An underlying message of the birth of Jesus is that if you don’t pay attention, and particularly if you are overly caught up in your own expectations of what God should be doing, it is unlikely you will see what God is doing. The most powerful and profound acts of God frequently begin with very subtle origins and work through ways that we don’t see coming. Without humility, we have very little chance of seeing God’s grace flowing in the world around us.

As Advent dawns in the world around us, it is a good time to remind ourselves that God tends to begin and to work among those who are least influential. God acts through means of which the rich and powerful are unaware. God is known best in places which often lack strength or comfort. The good news, particularly of the songs of angels and commotion of excited shepherds, is that if we do pay attention, we are welcome to join in on the celebration and share in the miracles! It mainly requires us to pause, to listen, and to pay attention to the people around us, regardless of their power or our judgments regarding their importance.

It is in the people, who God places around us, that we are able to see Christ’s movement and love flowing in the world around us.

Peace,
Pastor Jack

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Coming Up in Worship

12/15/2019 Cantata at 10:30 Service.

Sermon: "Reach Out!!"

Theme: God has given us a time for proclaiming peace both in our own lives and in the lives of the people who are around us.

Purpose: We will participate together in seeking ways we can build and share the peace that is God's will.

Scriptures: Isaiah 35:1-10 God is making a way of healing and reconciliation, inviting all of us to participate in welcoming the renewal.

James 5:7-10 Practice patience and release the grudges that separate us from God.

Questions:

What happens to us when we become part of reaching out in love to others? How are we enabled to grow and see ourselves differently when we are participating in God's love and grace flowing to others? What do we need to do in order to redirect our complaining and grumbling into reaching out in love and celebration of peace? How do we practically begin to work for peace rather than live in defensiveness and hostility? How do we find the place where we can reach out in love and serve Christ?

12/22/2019

Sermon: "Make Space in Your Heart!!"

Theme: God's invitation is to clean out the past, to let go of what has been meaningless, and to open our hearts to God doing something new.

Purpose: The congregation will take time in the week to consider what needs to be released in order to move forward in relationship with God and one another.

Scriptures: Isaiah 7:10-16 A son will be born to us, whose name will be "God with us."

Romans 1:1-7 God sent the Apostle Paul to proclaim a declaration of resurrection.

Questions:

What does it mean to make space in our hearts for Christ's love and presence? What do we need to do to be open to God's love? How is it that we become "cluttered" in our holding onto the past and to things that do not matter? What are some practices or activities we can do that will help to move us forward in opening ourselves to God's love and presence? How can we be people live our lives as a declaration of God's love and forgiving peace?

12/29/2019 One Service - 9:00am

Chaplain Darren Beachy is preaching

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

PYA = Presbyterian Youth Association

Basic Information PYA is for students in the 5th-12th grade
Purpose To get to know Jesus Christ and have lots of fun!

Sunday December 22 1:00pm-4:00pm Christmas Party and Baking Cookies (for the 5pm Christmas Eve Worship Service)
PYA Christmas Party
Bring a dish to pass, Advent Box item and a \$5 gift to exchange.

December 24 - Call for Christmas Eve Performers

For our **5:00pm** Christmas Eve Service, we are looking for people willing to play parts in a drama of the Angel's annunciation of the coming of Christ. We are looking for people to play the parts of:

- Shepherds
- Magi
- and other parts
- Mary – the mother of Jesus
- Zechariah – John the Baptist's father

These parts can be played by any age group. It will be an enjoyable time to take part in a joyful and meaningful worship service. Those who are available and wish to play a part should let Pastor Jack, or Kris Bartelt know. You can also sign up in the office.

Music in December

As we look forward to the Advent season we will once again be singing familiar Christmas Carols as we gather for worship. During the service, we sing songs that may not be as familiar due to the season coming but once a year.

The following is a list of some less familiar hymns to listen to and help us prepare for the Reason for the Season. Notice that the tune for "O Lord How Shall I Meet You" is the same melody we use for "All Glory Laud and Honor" often sung on Palm Sunday. How appropriate given Christmas does not mean much without Holy Week and Easter! Enjoy!

#20 Watchman, Tell us of the Night
<https://youtu.be/-TfGHDGW3X4Light>

Light of the World
<https://youtu.be/dCRunZGYBi4>

#13 Prepare the Way
<https://youtu.be/uORyi9V3B3Q>

Sing, Sing, Sing
https://youtu.be/IV5Vdi_550U

#14 Savior of the Nations, Come
<https://youtu.be/RxWVSmhF4xg>

Christmas Cantata at 10:30am
#22 O Lord How Shall I Meet You?
https://youtu.be/d_up_TRb7GI

Cornerstone
<https://youtu.be/QvLxZEU02uI>

December 15 -
Christmas Cantata

The Winter Rose

by Joseph M. Martin

Phil Schmahl conductor
Austin Wenker accompanist

Let the words and music of this cantata remind you that even in the deepest winter, we are people of joy and life...children of the garden.

Joseph and Pamela Martin

We are excited to be collaborating with Immanuel-Trinity Lutheran Church this year. We look forward to sharing this wonderful message on December 15th at:

8:30am worship
Immanuel-Trinity
Lutheran

(20 Wisconsin American Dr.)

10:30am Worship
First Presbyterian Church

Join us to celebrate the season of Advent!

December 15 -
Angel Tree Gifts



The Angel Tree is once again in the Narthex.

This year, we have requests for 66 children and 6 families. One recently homeless family, with four young daughters, have greater needs, as they lost many of their possessions.

**Return unwrapped gifts
to church by Sunday,
December 15**

Thank you for participating. Your generous support will put huge smiles on the sweet faces of 66 children.

*Whenever you possibly can, do
good to those who need it.*
Proverbs 3:27

December 18

Church of Our Saviour Lutheran Church (363 South Main Street) will host two special noon concerts followed by lunch. Each concert will last about 30 minutes.

The concert and lunch are free and open to the community. Seasonal music will be performed. No reservations are necessary.

Bob Martin will present an organ prelude at both concerts, beginning at 11:45.

The **first** concert is Wednesday, December 11 at 12:00pm. It will feature the Brass Menagerie, a brass quintet directed by Jill Wagner.

The **second** concert is Wednesday, December 18 at 12:00pm. The Cardinal Singers from Fond du Lac High School will perform. This auditioned ensemble consists of junior and senior students and is directed by Cory Schneider.

The performances and lunch are open to the public. A free-will offering will be taken.

Mitten Tree!

We are collecting hats, scarves, socks and mittens for all ages. Please help those in need stay warm this winter.

You can place your donations on the tree in the Narthex. If the tree is too full, you can place your items in the basket.

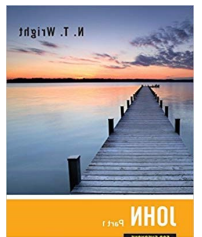
Thank you for your help!



December 18 - Bible
Study 10:30 – Noon

John 7:1-52

Jesus and His Brothers Disputes about Jesus Moses and the Messiah Rivers of Living Water Where does the Messiah Come From?



Advent Candle Lighting



December 15

3rd Sunday of Advent
8:00am Sabel Family
10:30am Hayes Family

December 22

4th Sunday of Advent
8:00am Braatz Family
10:30am Conran Family

December 24 Christmas Eve

5:00pm Polacek Family
7:00pm

Please let the office know or see the sign up sheet if you are willing to be Advent Liturgist for the 7pm Christmas Eve service.



Reverse Advent Calendars are supporting:

- Sam's Closet
- Food For Thought
- Family Resource Center
- Fond du Lac Food Pantry

The Alternative Gift Fair is supporting:

- Loaves and Fishes
- Presbyterian Mission Agency
- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
- Habitat for Humanity of FDL County



Providing supplemental healthy food options and education for families in need in Fond du Lac County.

Walk-in Pantry Hours

Monday 3:30pm - 5:30pm
Tuesday 11:00am-1:00pm
Wednesday Closed
Thursday 3:30pm-5:30pm
Friday 3:30pm-5:30pm
Saturday 10:00am-noon
Every 3rd Saturday of the month

Donation Hours

Monday-Friday 9:00am-5:00pm

Office Hours

Monday-Friday 9:00am-5:00pm

Contact Information

Fondy Food Pantry, Inc.
573 W. Rolling Meadows Dr.
PO Box 492
Fond du Lac, WI 54937

Voice 920.322.0369

Email

office@fondyfoodpantry.org

Website

<https://www.fondyfoodpantry.org>

Donations can always be brought to church. There is a shopping cart by the East door.

Coffee Hour

Every Sunday 9:15-10:15

Please volunteer to host.

December 15

Cookie Walk Cookies

December 22

Conran / Johnston

December 29

Roy & Wendy Johnson

Coffee Hour hosts are needed on a weekly basis. Can you help?

Coffee and fruit are provided.

Inclement Weather

Please check one the following sources for weather-related cancellations of Worship Services or church activities.

Church Website

www.fdlpresbyterian.org

Internet

www.kfiz.com (KFIZ Radio)

Radio

97.7 WFDL

TV

Channel 5 WFDL



Thank You - From Deacons' Annual Cookie Walk



We had a great variety and quantity of cookies for the Cookie Walk. Many thanks to all our talented bakers who helped make this a successful event.

A special thank you to Sally Sleder who donated the beautiful seasonal table runner/wall hanging for the raffle! Judy Dassow was the lucky winner!

A profit of almost \$700 will go into the Deacons' Compassion Fund.

Avoid Falling Prey to Scams

Recently an email was sent from a phony address representing itself as Pastor Jack. The sender used addresses gained from our Newsletters and other items on our web and online media to send a convincing appeal for individuals to purchase gift cards and send the information.

The email was able to convince some who were concerned about members of the congregation and a legitimate desire to serve. The problem is that this is new territory for us.

The church will never ask you to provide personal account information, identity information, or other sensitive material by email. We will always do monetary transactions through Vanco or Breeze, or have you use your own financial institutions make Electronic Funds Transfers (EFT's). I wish these safeguards were enough, but the sad truth is that the scams keep evolving and those who develop them are determined. Our best bet is direct communication. Before initiating any transactions or sending any vulnerable information, please confirm with us, by phone or other means, rather than a "reply" to an email. The email address that was created, looked very similar to our legitimate emails, meaning that a "reply" put those who were contacted, in communication with the scammer.

People who care and are wishing to be helpful are always going to be vulnerable. We don't want to nurture suspicion or seek to live in fear. So, our best bet is greater familiarity of communication.

Pastor Jack's cell phone number is available through Breeze and is published for all church members. You can connect through the office, also. Always call if you have questions.

Pastor Jack



Growing Connections 9:15am in the Parlor



Christians
SERVING LEARNING LOVING

Growing Connections is our ministry of learning opportunities for adults. We seek to grow in relationship, wisdom, and understanding – all of the connections that enable us to know Christ more fully and discover our mission in the world. Growing Connections opportunities will focus on learning about our relationships and how we grow in faith, as well as, mission opportunities.

We are “Christians, Serving, Learning and Loving.” This is an opportunity to grow in faith as we learn more about ourselves, how Christ is reaching out to the world, and how we may use our gifts as the Body of Christ.

DECEMBER

15 TBD

22 Session Forum Monthly a time will be set aside to review recent action by the church session, discuss the work of the church, and share vision for where Christ is taking First Presbyterian Church in the future. The forum will be hosted by the Elder of the Month. These forums are an opportunity to seek to gather as “Christians, Serving, Learning and Loving.”

Talkback - Sunday Mornings at 9:15am (Resource Room)

Talkback is a discussion of the scripture passages and themes for that particular Sunday’s worship. Discussion facilitators help to create an atmosphere where participants can explore their thoughts and feelings about the issues and topics presented by the scriptures of the day. The class is open to anyone who wants to enjoy an open and caring environment for exploring their faith.



ADVENT

Hope. Peace. Joy. Love.

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

In December

Deacon

Larry Johnson
sjlj330@gmail.com

Elder

Dave Erickson
djericks975@att.net

First Presbyterian Focus

Please send submissions for the Newsletter to:

fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org.

Church Office Hours

Monday - Wednesday
9:00am - 5:00pm

Thursday
9:00am - 12:00pm

Friday
Closed

Saturday
9:00 - 12:00pm

Fall/Winter Worship
(September - May)
8:00am & 10:30am

Summer Worship
(May - September)
9:00am

Ushers

December 15

8:00 Jim & Judy Dassow
Larry Merrill
Jack Hughes
10:30 Carol Smith
Sheryl Brown
Todd & Emily Hayes

December 22

8:00 4 Ushers Needed
10:30 Wendy Wilcox
Sue Baker
Jolene Schry
Les Mier

December 24 Christmas Eve

5:00 Carol Wetzel
3 Ushers Needed
7:00 Wendy Wilcox
Jolene Schry
Linda Theyerl
1 Usher Needed

December 29

9:00 Jim & Judy Dassow
Orv & Gail Kamhuis

Ushering is an opportunity to serve God by serving His people. It's a great way to actively and faithfully participate in the functioning of our church.

Good ushers are "people-persons" who help make our members and visitors feel welcome and appreciated. Ushering should not be seen as a duty, but as a privilege to serve your church and your congregation. Usher's help make everyone's church experience a positive one.

Next to the minister, the organist, and choir,-the ushers have the most important task to perform in the worship service.

Prayers and Praises

Continued Prayers for:

Liam Anderson
Silas Willey
Chastity Geisthardt
Jesse Fisher
Pat Dilling
Mike Frize
Dan Mitchell
Lincoln Deanovich
Paige Clumpner
Rhonda Brewer
Ruth Smith
Jim and Peg Dvorak
John Meyst
Kristina Arellano
JoAnne Klein
Leisa Wagstaff - PCUSA
Mission Co-worker in South Sudan
Ann Herzig
Kay Burbach

Prayer Partners

Prayer request cards are in the pew racks and in the Prayer Box (on the table in the Narthex). Put your request in the offering plate or the Prayer Box and we will partner with you in prayer.

Rejoice: The gift of growing together in the body of Christ.

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

December 2019

15 Cantata - 10:30 Service 8a-9a 8:00 Worship 9:15a-10:15a Coffee Hour 9:15a-10:15a Education Hour 9:15a-10:15a Talkback 10:30a-11:30a 10:30 Worship 6:30p-8p Boy Scout Troop 702 Meeting	16 8a-11a Angel Tree Gift Sorting 10a-11:30a Staff Meeting 6:30p-7:30p Session Meeting	17 9a-11a Financial Team Mtg. 6p-7p AA Meeting	18 8a-9a Breakfast - Pump & Pantry 10:30a-12p Bible Study - The Book of John 12p-1p Noon Prayer 6:30p-7:30p Confirmation Class 6:30p-9p Fond du Lac Table Tennis Club	19	20 7p-9p Cribbage	21 9a-10a Tech Rehearsal 9:30a-11a Christmas Eve Tech Rehearsal
22 <i>Winter Solstice</i> 8a-9a 8:00 Worship 9:15a-10:15a Coffee Hour 9:15a-10:15a Education Hour 9:15a-10:15a Session Forum 9:15a-10:15a Talkback 10:30a-11:30a 10:30 Worship 1p-4p PYA Cookie Making and Party 6:30p-8p Boy Scout Troop 702 Meeting	23 10a-11:30a Staff Meeting	24 5p-6p 5pm Worship 6p-7p AA Meeting 7p-8p 7pm Worship	25 <i>Christmas</i> Merry Christmas	26 Office Closed	27	28 9a-10a Tech Rehearsal
29 9a-10a Worship Service 10:15a-11:15a Coffee Hour 6:30p-8p Boy Scout Troop 702 Meeting	30 10a-11:30a Staff Meeting	31 6p-7p AA Meeting	Notes:			

The
Joy
of CHRISTMAS

C E L E B R A T E T H E S E A S O N

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

January 2020

~ January 2020 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 New Year's Day Church Office is closed	2	3	4 8a-9a Men of Faith 9a-11a Deacons take down decorations and January Meeting 9a-10a Tech Rehearsal
5 8a-9a 8:00 Worship 9:15a-10:15a Coffee Hour 9:15a-10:15a Education Hour 9:15a-10:15a Talkback 10:30a-11:30a 10:30 Worship 2p-3p Woodlands Communion 6:30p-8p Boy Scout Troop 702 Meeting	6 10a-11:30a Staff Meeting	7 1p-2p Ruth Circle 4p-5p Learning Team 6p-7p AA Meeting	8 8a-9a Breakfast - Pump & Pantry 10:30a-12p Bible Study - The Book of John 12p-1p Noon Prayer 5p-6p Serving Team (CANCELLED) 6p-8p Women in Faith 6:30p-9p Fond du Lac Table Tennis Club	9 10:30a-11:30a Lakeview Place Communion Service 6:30p-8p Creative Arts	10	11 9a-10a Tech Rehearsal
12 8a-9a 8:00 Worship 9:15a-10:15a Coffee Hour 9:15a-10:15a Education Hour 9:15a-10:15a Talkback 10:30a-11:30a 10:30 Worship 6:30p-8p Boy Scout Troop 702 Meeting	13 10a-11:30a Staff Meeting	14 6p-7p AA Meeting	15 8a-9a Breakfast - Pump & Pantry 10:30a-12p Bible Study - The Book of John 12p-1p Noon Prayer 4p-6:30p Loaves & Fishes 6:30p-9p Fond du Lac Table Tennis Club	16	17 7p-9p Cribbage	18 9a-10a Tech Rehearsal
19 8a-9a 8:00 Worship 9:15a-10:15a Coffee Hour 9:15a-10:15a Education Hour 9:15a-10:15a Talkback 10:30a-11:30a 10:30 Worship 6:30p-8p Boy Scout Troop 702 Meeting	20 Martin Luther King 10a-11:30a Staff Meeting 6:30p-7:30p Session Meeting	21 6p-7p AA Meeting	22 8a-9a Breakfast - Pump & Pantry 10:30a-12p Bible Study - The Book of John 12p-1p Noon Prayer 6:30p-9p Fond du Lac Table Tennis Club	23	24	25 9a-10a Tech Rehearsal
26 8a-9a 8:00 Worship 9:15a-10:15a Coffee Hour 9:15a-10:15a Education Hour 9:15a-10:15a Talkback 10:30a-11:30a 10:30 Worship 6:30p-8p Boy Scout Troop 702 Meeting	27 10a-11:30a Staff Meeting	28 6p-7p AA Meeting	29 8a-9a Breakfast - Pump & Pantry 10:30a-12p Bible Study - The Book of John 12p-1p Noon Prayer 6:30p-9p Fond du Lac Table Tennis Club	30	31	Notes:

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

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