



GOOD NEWS
December 2009
United Presbyterian Church
Harrodsburg, KY 40330

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I always enjoy talking to people who have come back to church after a prolonged hiatus, or those who joined the church later in life. I like to hear what brought them back, or what pulled them in. One story I heard a few weeks ago was from an Elder in this Presbytery. He had grown up in church, left the church in his teens, and then in his late 20s, he came back. All it took was an invitation, extended by the teacher of a new Sunday school class. Within two months, he was teaching the Sunday school class, and now, more than 40 years of ordained service later, the rest, as they say, is history.

Christmas and Easter are the two times of year when many people return to church, if only for the Sunday service. I recently heard one pastor refer to them as “Alumni Sundays,” but perhaps a better term would be “Homecoming Sundays.” We welcome everyone at all times – from first-time visitors to those coming home for the holidays. It doesn’t matter how long you’ve been away; there is always a home for you here. But even as “Homecoming Sunday” approaches, in the spirit of Advent, I’d like to ask, “What are you waiting for?”

Advent is a season of waiting and preparation in anticipation of the birth of the Messiah and the return of Christ. In our lives today, what are we waiting for? For what are we preparing ourselves? Advent is my favorite season of the year. It is the start of a new year in the Liturgical cycle, and new beginnings are always pregnant with hope. Advent is a time of great hope and anticipation of what is to come.

I noticed that Christmas decorations seemed to come out earlier this year, and I heard Christmas music playing before Thanksgiving. Perhaps, in these times of prolonged economic instability, in these times of greater uncertainty, these are visible indications of a people hungry for hope. During Advent, we read from the prophets of Israel, spanning several centuries in their writings, and speaking to different contexts. But all of them look and point forward, to a coming savior who will restore righteousness, who will save the oppressed and lift up the lowly. Some of the prophets speak to the Israelites in exile. We might not be in exile in a foreign land, but the emotional, spiritual, and relational exile of our current context is very real.

The promises on which we reflect in Advent speak as surely to us today as they did to the Israelites centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ. The promises of hope, love, joy, and peace are promises to which we can cling today. These have been realized in the birth of our Savior, but they also point to a time yet to come, to a future where the reconciliation of Creator and Creation is complete. They point to a new heaven and a new earth, where hope is fulfilled because love, joy, and peace reign. We live with the assurance that the anxieties, pain, sickness, death, and brokenness of our current world are not the final story.

We have a glimpse of that future reality in the person of Jesus Christ, and as the church on earth, we are called to be the Body of Christ here and now, to show glimpses of that future reality, to work for God’s peace and righteousness on earth, and to spread the message of hope and assurance to a world that desperately needs it. What are we waiting for?

If it has been a while since you have been active in church, know that you have been missed. The Advent season is one of the special seasons of the church, and we invite you to come back home. The doors are always open. What are you waiting for?

All of us have at least one person in our lives who desperately needs a message of hope. Have we invited them in? Often, an invitation is all it takes. What are we waiting for?

Grace and Peace,  
Stephanie and Andy

## *Pastors' Travel*

Andy and Stephanie will be taking vacation time from December 23<sup>rd</sup> through the 27<sup>th</sup>. Rev. Jim Rucker, Sr. will be our guest preacher on Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup>. During our absence, the Rev. Dr. Eric Mount of Danville will be on call for Pastoral Care emergencies. Nadine White is the Elder on Call for December. The office will be open as usual, though closed for Christmas Eve.

## *Grace Notes*

**How often should we celebrate communion?** “It is appropriate to celebrate the Lord’s Supper as often as each Lord’s Day. It is to be celebrated regularly and frequently enough to be recognized as integral to the Service for the Lord’s Day. It is also appropriate to observe the Lord’s Supper on other occasions of special significance in the life of the Christian community, as long as the celebration of the Sacrament is open to the whole believing community. The Lord’s Supper may be observed in connection with the visitation of the sick and those isolated from public worship as a means of extending the church’s ministry to them....

The session is responsible for authorizing all observances of the Lord’s Supper in the life of a particular church and shall ensure regular and frequent celebration of the Sacrament, in no case less than quarterly.”<sup>1</sup>

In our church, we typically celebrate communion once a month, on the Third Sunday. We also celebrate the Sacrament on special occasions, such as Christmas Eve, Easter, and World Communion Sunday. We could celebrate it as often as every Sunday, or as seldom as once a quarter. The Session is charged with authorizing all celebrations of the Lord’s Supper and gives oversight for it to the Worship Committee.

Do you have questions about our Sacramental theology or practice? Questions about Baptism or the Lord’s Supper? Pass those along, and we can answer them here.

## *Presbyterian Women*

The Kate Riker Circle will meet Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am in the Fellowship Hall. They will be studying Lesson 4 from the Horizons Bible Study on Joshua. The evening circle will meet on Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Ladies’ Parlor, and will study Lesson 3 from the Horizons Bible Study on Joshua. There are still copies of this study available in the church office for purchase (\$6 each).

Interfaith of Breathitt County Christmas Store and Bellewood: Once again we have the Christmas tree set up in the back of the church to collect donations for Interfaith of Breathitt County – this year Bellewood has also been added to our list. Because of this year's floods, any leftover items from Christmas 2008 were handed out this spring, and as a result, they need everything: socks, underwear, new toys and good used toys for ages 0 through teen, hats and gloves, reading books, coloring books and crayons, school supplies, Christmas stockings and stuffers (small personal care items and candy), gift wrap and tape, or tax-deductible monetary contributions. Items can be brought to the small room in the southwest corner of the basement for collection. The Christmas Store will be held on December 10th, so all items need to be here before then.

Christmas needs: Because of the condition of our economy, our school children are encountering new problems and need our help, especially during this Christmas season. The need is great! If you want to help, please contact Jane Adrian, Belle Little or Shirley Howe and they will send the money or gifts to April Ellis at the Harrodsburg Herald who will be assisting all three schools. Georgina Bray from Mercer County Schools has said gifts for children aged 10 to 16 are always in short supply. Do as much as you can as soon as you can. The need is great!

## *Christian Education*

### **Children and Youth**

Don’t miss church on Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>! Our children and youth are preparing a special Christmas presentation for worship that morning. Please come out and support them.

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<sup>1</sup> *Book of Order* W-2.009, W-2.010, W-2.011.

## *Thoughtful Christian Sunday School Class*

The Thoughtful Christian Class meets at 9:30am in the Ladies Parlor. All studies are available for download and reading online at <http://defaoite.us/UPCWeb/Index.htm>. Whether or not you have a chance to look at the study in advance, we welcome any and all to join in the discussions on Sunday mornings. The topics for December are as follows:

- [6 December - Reclaiming Christmas](#)
- [13 December - Pro-life Pro-Choice: Any Common Ground?](#)
- [20 December - The Gift of Friendship](#)
- [27 December - New Year's Resolutions](#)

In the coming month they will be choosing topics for the next quarter or two for study. The possibilities are abundant, from contemporary issues to popular culture, Bible studies and studies on Christian Living. Go to <http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com> to look at available studies. For more information, contact Del or Nadine White.

The “Stage Class” meets in the classroom adjacent the Fellowship Hall in the Basement, using “The Present Word” as its curriculum. The Winter Quarterly study will start in December, and the new books have already arrived at the church. The authors of the student book for the Winter Quarter include some familiar names – Sheldon Sorge and Stephanie and Andy Wing!

## *Pastors' Study*

The pastors will continue to lead a book discussion of *Christianity for the Rest of Us* by Diana Butler Bass in December. We will meet December 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm on Tuesday evenings and 1pm on Wednesday afternoons, both in the Conference Room.

## *Living Wills*

Rev. Beth Mosier Silence, who was a guest preacher in May, will be coming to lead a workshop on living wills and directives for anyone interested. Many of us know the importance of letting our friends and loved ones know our wishes in cases of medical crisis, but there is no substitute for a written living will. Watch the bulletin for more details on the scheduling of this workshop.

## *Christian Education and Young Adult Surveys*

We have two surveys online – one for all young adults/adults regarding Bible studies, classes, and other activities at church, and the other geared specifically towards young adults. We would appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to fill out either or both of these surveys (both 10 questions or under). If you know of young adults that are not active in church anywhere or sometimes active here or elsewhere, please encourage them to fill out this survey, as well! For the Christian Education Survey, go to [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=PFd\\_2bnQYMea6dXOjrJu\\_2f3IA\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=PFd_2bnQYMea6dXOjrJu_2f3IA_3d_3d), and for the young adult survey, go to [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=2BTJMd8B1vHV7GPQ0rJWeQ\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=2BTJMd8B1vHV7GPQ0rJWeQ_3d_3d). Thanks for your help!

## *Stewardship and Finance*

### **Pledge Sunday**

On Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, we will have a time for dedication of our pledges for 2010 in church. If you are unable to be in church that Sunday, please mail your pledges into the church. Otherwise, you can bring them with you on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Please take time to prayerfully consider how God is calling you to share your time, talents, and treasures, and how you might give your “first fruits” for the work and ministry of the church.

### **Special Offerings this Month**

This month we will collect the Hunger Offering as usual on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday (Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>). The Hunger Offering is sent to the Presbytery for hunger relief work. We also collect food donations throughout the month for the Christian Life Center food pantry, benefiting individuals in our local community. We will also collect

the 4<sup>th</sup> and final special denomination-wide offering on Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. The Christmas Joy offering is collected each year. 50 percent of the receipts to the Christmas Joy Offering are distributed to the [Board of Pensions](#) for assistance programs that provide support to retired and active church workers and their spouses and families. The other fifty percent supports [Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education](#) through the General Assembly Council. For more information, see our church website, or go to <http://www.pcusa.org/cjoffering/>.

### **Five for Five!**

Did you know that we are a “Five for Five” congregation? Each year, we participate in the four denominational offerings that are collected, including One Great Hour of Sharing, the Pentecost Offering, the Peacemaking Offering, and the Christmas Joy Offering, and we also give basic mission support through the denomination. Thank you for your faithful stewardship and support!

### **Living Waters Fundraiser**

The Synod of Living Waters has a well-established mission, Living Waters for the World, which trains mission teams to install drinking water filtration systems in areas where clean drinking water is not accessible. Most of this work has happened in developing countries, but they have also been expanding to provide home units in some areas of eastern Kentucky and Tennessee. The Session has approved a new fundraising project to begin raising money so that we can fund a team and an installation project in Appalachia in the future. Mary Weber has already raised several hundred dollars for a local installation through the sale of her necklaces, in addition to the thousand of dollars raised and still being raised for the Synod-wide project. If you would like more information about this, please contact Mary Weber, and keep an eye on the bulletin and newsletter for more details.

### **New UPC Bookmarks**

We have new UPC bookmarks with our church information and a brief church history on the back. If you would like to take some to post around town, just let us know. We hope this can be a tool for church outreach. If you would like to “purchase” bookmarks with a donation to help offset the costs, you can do that as well.

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Necklace Making for Living Waters**

On Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2pm, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall downstairs to make necklaces for sale to support the local installation project for Living Waters for the World. Bring your crochet hook and trellis yarn if you have it. If you are able to take some necklaces to sell (at work, at family gatherings, or other places), please talk to Mary Weber.

#### **Presbytery Meeting**

The final Presbytery of Transylvania Stated meeting for 2009 will be Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> in Lexington. The Elder Commissioner for this meeting is Irene Mitchell, and Henry Grall is alternate. Anyone wishing to attend may do so as a guest. See Stephanie or Andy for more details.

#### **Called Congregational Meeting**

There will be a Called Congregational meeting on Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> immediately following church. The two purposes of the meeting are to approve the change in terms of call for the Co-Pastors to reflect the salary increase recommended by the Personnel Committee and Session, and to elect a 4th Elder to fill a vacancy for the class of 2012.

#### **Decorating the Church**

The Flower Committee will be decorating the church on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 10am. Contact Sue Saufley Sullivan with questions.

*United Presbyterian Church  
Christmas Open House*



*December 13<sup>th</sup> from 3 – 6pm*

**Christmas Caroling and Christmas Day Gathering**

We will go Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm. Mark your calendars now for this festive annual event! Also, please mark your calendars for a special new event on Christmas Day. From 2-4pm, we will open up the church for a Christmas Day drop-in for hot chocolate and Christmas treats, singing songs, and enjoying fellowship on this day when we celebrate the birth of our Savior. Christmas is typically a time for families to gather, but many in our community and even in our church find themselves alone on Christmas day. Please come join us to celebrate Christmas together with our church family. Think of those individuals or families you know who might especially appreciate this time to gather with others and share God's love. Both of these events are sponsored by the Worship Committee. If you have any questions, contact David Bradshaw.

**Christmas Caroling and Christmas Day Gathering**

We will go Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm. Mark your calendars now for this festive annual event! Also, please mark your calendars for a special new event on Christmas Day. From 3-6pm, we will open up the church for a Christmas Day drop-in for hot chocolate and Christmas treats, singing songs, and enjoying fellowship on this day when we celebrate the birth of our Savior. Christmas is typically a time for families to gather, but many in our community and even in our church find themselves alone on Christmas day. Please come join us to celebrate Christmas together with our church family. Think of those individuals or families you know who might especially appreciate this time to gather with others and share God's love. Both of these events are sponsored by the Worship Committee. If you have any questions, contact David Bradshaw.

**“Blue Christmas” Service**

On Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, we will have a special service at Burgin Christian Church. While Christmas is often a time of joy and celebration, for many it also is a time of sorrow and grief. This service seeks to honor honest feelings and troubled hearts around the holidays. All are invited. Bring someone you need, or come with someone who needs to be there. We will meet at our church at 6:30pm and travel over together, or you can meet us in Burgin at 7pm. There will be a reception following. If you would like to contribute something for the reception, or if you have any further questions, contact Stephanie or Andy.

**Christmas Eve Service**

We will again join with Harrodsburg Christian Church and Harrodsburg United Methodist Church for a Christmas Eve service at Harrodsburg Christian Church. The service will begin at 7pm, and we hope many from our church are able to attend this special service.

## *Church Directories*

Church Directories are here! Picture directories have arrived. You can pick up your copy before or after church from the back of the Sanctuary, or anytime Monday through Friday from 9am to noon from the church office. Please make sure to check your name/sign out your copy. There is one directory for each family; additional directories can be purchased for \$5 each.

## *Alternative Giving*

Interested in Alternative Giving this year? There are resources at the back of the church from the Medical Benevolence Foundation. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance offers information on Alternative giving at <http://www.pcusa.org/pda/tools/alternativegiving.htm>. SERRV is a nonprofit organization selling fairly traded items that support artisans and farmers worldwide, working towards the goal of eradicating poverty. To learn more about their work or to order from their large selection of gifts, go to their website, <http://www.serrv.org/default.aspx>.

## *Pledge Sunday*

Next Sunday we will dedicate our pledges for 2010. Please bring your completed pledge cards to worship. Everyone can participate - even if you are unsure of your financial pledge at this time, there is a place for dedicating your time and talents in stewardship.

## *December Celebrations*

### *Birthdays*

|    |                    |    |                |    |               |
|----|--------------------|----|----------------|----|---------------|
| 2  | Taylor Marie West  | 14 | Carl Mattacola | 23 | Curry Haven   |
| 3  | Les Greenwald      | 15 | William Sims   | 24 | Sara Sims     |
| 3  | Mary Frances Moore | 17 | Linzie Cooper  | 24 | Jonathan West |
| 5  | Belle Little       | 18 | Eileen Motzer  | 26 | Dick Howe     |
| 13 | Korie Voll         | 20 | Harold Davis   | 27 | Natalie Berry |
| 13 | Margaret Woodard   | 22 | Nick Lewis     | 31 | Angela Romero |

### *Anniversaries*

|    |                        |
|----|------------------------|
| 26 | Doug & Leslie Ferguson |
| 28 | Mike & Pat Rockas      |
| 30 | Chad & Julie Semrau    |

## *Calendar at a Glance for December 2009*

- December 1            7pm Evening Bible Study Group
- December 2            1pm Afternoon Bible Study Group  
2pm Necklace making in Fellowship Hall for Living Waters for the World
- December 5            Presbytery Meeting at Chapel Hill PC in Lexington  
10am Work detail for decorating the sanctuary for Christmas
- December 6            2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent – Hanging of the Greens  
Called Congregational Meeting immediately after Morning Worship
- December 7            10:30 Kate Riker Circle  
6:30 Property Committee Meeting
- December 8            7pm Evening Bible Study Group
- December 9            1pm Afternoon Bible Study Group  
6:30 Christian Education Committee Meeting
- December 10           6:30 Stewardship & Finance Committee Meeting
- December 13           3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent – Children’s Special Christmas Program  
1pm Session  
3 to 6pm Christmas Open House sponsored by Evangelism & Outreach Committee
- December 14           7pm Evening Women’s Circle
- December 15           7pm Evening Bible Study Group
- December 16           1pm Afternoon Bible Study Group
- December 20           4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent – Lessons and Carols – Christmas Joy Offering  
1:30 Christmas Caroling  
6:30 Meet at UPC for Blue Christmas at Burgin Christian Church
- December 24           7pm Christmas Eve Service with Harrodsburg Christian Church at HCC
- December 25           3 to 6pm Christmas Day Open House with refreshments

*Revs. Andy & Stephanie Wing – Co-Pastors*

(859) 734-4710

Choir/Organist: Susan Shewmaker Thoughtful Christian Class @ 9:30  
Secretary: Bobbi Rightmyer Sunday School @ 9:45 am  
Nursery: Dorothy Shuman Sunday Morning Worship @ 10:45 am  
Treasurer: Pat Alexander Wed. Choir Rehearsal at 7:30 pm  
Custodian: J. L. Devine

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United Presbyterian Church  
326 S. Main Street  
Harrodsburg, KY 40330

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*Lectionary Readings for December 2009*

Nadine White – Elder Host

**December 6, 2009**

Old Covenant Lesson:  
New Covenant Lesson:

**Luke 1:68-79**

**Malachi 3:1-4**  
**Philemon 1:3-11 and Luke 3:1-6**

**December 13, 2009**

Old Covenant Lesson:  
New Covenant Lesson:

**Isaiah 12:2-6**

**Zephaniah 3:14-20**  
**Philemon 4:4-7 and Luke 3:7-18**

**December 20, 2009**

Old Covenant Lesson:  
New Covenant Lesson:

**Psalm 80:1-7**

**Micah 5:2-5a**  
**Hebrews 10:5-10 and Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)**

**December 27, 2009**

Old Covenant Lesson:  
New Covenant Lesson:

**Psalm 148**

**1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26**  
**Colossians 3:12-17 and Luke 2:41-52**