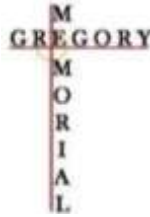


THE HERALD

December - 2013



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December 2013

THE HERALD

Volume I Issue 12

Dear Gregory Memorial, Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



*"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory,
the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." ~ John 1:14*

The ornaments and decorations started showing up in the stores back in September, well before Halloween, even. In my home area, one of the more well-known radio stations began their 24/7 playing of the seasonal music in the first week of November. Some people are happy with these realities; others...not so much. To some, it is a downright scandal to introduce Christmas before we have even gotten into the month of Thanksgiving, much less into December.

On a purely personal note, I am one such person. I have a difficult time of it every year, seeing how early stores and radio stations and television commercials begin advertising Christmas, and all the shopping that is "required" to go along with it. To be honest, it irks me to the point that I can easily relate to Dickens' infamous character, Scrooge.

And yet, I know that there are people in the world, in our community, and even in the families of some of you reading this that would be perfectly happy if Christmas music was played year-round. I recognize that I tend to disagree with such a sentiment, and in the middle of August I find it scandalous, but I also have come to this conclusion: My idea of such a scandal regarding Christmas pales in comparison to the true scandal, and from such the true meaning, of Christmas.

The awaited and long-expected Messiah was anticipated to be a warrior-king who would come in glory and fanfare, routing the foreign nations with his mighty sword and redeeming the people of Israel once and for all. Instead, Messiah came quietly as a fragile, newborn babe to a poor family in the middle of the night.

And if that weren't scandal enough, the very idea that a God that was so holy, so divine, so *other* and

incorruptible, would ever stoop to the level of humanity...well, that idea was so scandalous that it was never even truly considered (though it *was* prophesied).

It seems that the Christmas season, the true Christmas season, is one full of scandal – of God's chosen and anointed One arriving in ordinary humility; of the Holy and Divine God taking on the full trappings of humanity to walk among us, with us, showing us a better way, an *achievable* way of connecting with God; of reconciliation with those that would disobey and disagree, rather than ostracizing and punishing them, pushing them away.

If God was willing to go to such scandalous lengths to reconcile mortal humanity with divine holiness...well, then I guess I can put up with seeing decorations and hearing music out of "season." Because, when it comes down to it, every season is now one in which we can approach God, and be reconciled through Christ, who walked among us, fully human and fully divine, born of a mother, to erase the lines of separation and division. Our season of Advent is the two-fold remembering of this truth, and calling us to make the ultimate hope of such reconciliation a reality.

That does call for some joyous music, indeed. May this Advent season lead to the deepest of Christmas blessings.

Peace,
Pastor Jason

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WORSHIP INFORMATION FOR DECEMBER 2013

Sunday, 01, December 2013

1st Sunday of Advent: Liturgical Color: **Purple**
 PCUSA Emphasis: "World AIDS Day;
 Presbyterian HIV/AIDS Awareness"
 Old Testament: Isaiah 2:1-5 & New Testament: Matthew 24:36-44
 Sermon: "Standing the Watch"

Sunday, 08 December 2013

2nd Sunday of Advent: Liturgical Color: **Purple**
 Old Testament: Isaiah 11:1-10 & New Testament: Matthew 3:1-12
 Sermon: "Crying in the Wilderness"

Sunday, 15 December 2013

3rd Sunday of Advent: Liturgical Color: **Purple**
 Old Testament: Isaiah 35:1-10 & New Testament: Matthew 11:2-11
 [Choral Cantata: "Behold the Star"]

Sunday, 22 December 2013

4th Sunday of Advent: Liturgical Color: **Purple**
 PCUSA Emphasis: "Christmas Joy Offering"
 Old Testament: Isaiah 7:10-16 & New Testament: Matthew 1:18-25
 Sermon: "Sign of God"

Tuesday, 24 December 2013 - "Christmas Eve"

Old Testament: Isaiah 9: 2-7 & New Testament: Luke 2:1-20

Wednesday, 25 December 2013 - "Christmas Day"

Old Testament: Isaiah 52:7-10 & New Testament: John 1:1-14

Sunday, 29 December 2013

1st Sunday after Christmas Day: Liturgical Color: **White**
 Old Testament: Isaiah 63:7-9 & New Testament: Matthew 2:13-23
 [Guest Minister]

OUR PRAYER IN TIMES OF JOY AND CONCERN.....

Family & friends of Lisa Fuzy (d. 11/13)	Victims of Typhoon Haiyan & emergency responders in Philippeans & Southeast Asia
Frank Solesbee - recuperating, home	Tragic events that have occurred in Commonwealth of Virginia
Russell Houston, Sheila Fields's brother	Survivors of natural disasters & those who have lost loved ones from acts of violence
Jerry Hasky, recovering from pneumonia	Shirley Barlow (Jean Waymack's sister), recovering from surgery
Katherine Tompkins	Helen Cibula - continuing knee rehab, home
Marian McDonald	Ed Smiley (Doug Holc's friend) - leg problems
Gladys Wiseman	Maryland Blanchard (Grace & Helen Cibula's friend)
Audrey Turner	Lyn Bond (Jerry & Brenda Bond's grandson)
Kenneth Figg	Mary Chadwick (Dink Armstrong's sister)
Ruth Figg	Evelyn Lichvar, recovering from foot surgery
Grace Cibula	Lawrence & James Hartsell (Robert Hartsell's brothers)
Henry Parker	Pam Harsh, Bradley Cooper, Jacob Spain - 1 st year in college
June Hawks	Our Joy: Audrey Turner, home from hospital, improving
Aida Faries	Amy Townson (Josh Ingram's sister) recovering at home
Clara Smith	Frankie Meade - Glenda Mayhew's mother, received a good report
Tara Foster	Tommy Forehand (Bishops' friend) - recovering, home
Don Vtipil	Victor Tomko (Doug Holc's cousin) - therapy, in-home rehab
2013/14 School Year	Sentral Riggins Gravley (Bishops' friend) - recuperating, home

QUICK CALENDAR EVENTS:*Holy Communion @ GMPC* - 12/01, 11 pm*Poinsettia orders due* - 12/01*Advent Kick-off* - 12/05, 6 pm*PG Christmas Parade* - 12/07, 3 pm*Committee reports due* - 12/09, 9 am*Brighter Living's Christmas Cantata by Gregory Choir* - 12/11, 7 pm*News Article Deadline* - 12/14, 9 am*Gregory Christmas Cantata* - 12/15, 11 am*PG TRIAD Mtg.* - 12/16, 1:30 pm @ PG Recreation Dept @ Old Stage Road*Session meeting* - 12/17, 7 pm*Preschool Christmas program* - 12/19, 12 pm*Christmas Eve Service & Holy Communion* - 12/ 24, 6:30 pm (pew) & 11 pm (intinct.)*Christmas Day* - Dec. 25**THE CLERK'S CORNER**

By David E. Johnson

The Session of Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church met on Tuesday, November 19, 2013 and approved the following:

- Recommendation from the Stewardship & Finance Committee to contact Loehr family for approval to research different investment options for the endowment received from Helen Loehr.
- Recommendation to set up a new line item in the Designated Gifts account to be used for funds toward the Oklahoma mission trip.
- Week of June 23-27, 2014 for the Day Camp with Camp Hanover staff.
- Christmas Eve worship service at 6:30 p.m. with communion in the pews and 11:00 p.m. service with communion celebrated by intinction.
- Request to use the church parking lot for the walking units to gather in after the Christmas parade on Dec. 7, 2013.
- Generous gift to the Church by Les Mayhew for new storm windows for five of the church windows.

**HOLY HUMOR****THE OLDER I GET, THE MORE I LOVE CHRISTMAS**

The Older I Get...

The simpler my holiday preparations become...

The closer I feel to old friends as I write my Christmas cards...

The more I cherish the oldest ornaments...

The more fondly I remember Christmases past...

The longer I hold on to a holiday hug...

The more I realize Christmas is a matter of the heart...

The tighter my throat gets when I sing "Silent Night"...

The more I enjoy giving than receiving...

The more I try to see Christmas through the eyes of a child...

The longer I sit at night in the glow of the Christmas tree...

The more wondrously beautiful the Christmas story is...

The deeper my awe at God's infinite love...

The More I Love Christmas!



ADVENT TRADITION: POINSETTIAS IN THE CHURCH SANCTUARY

The tradition of placing memorial poinsettias in the Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church Sanctuary began decades ago. Living red poinsettias purchased by congregational members and their families are displayed in

the Sanctuary during Advent.

Under the watchful eye of a volunteer, the plants are watered and tended until the night of the Christmas Eve service. After the service, the poinsettias may be taken home for the enjoyment of family and

friends, or gifted to a special someone.

A Special Remembrance List that will include the names of those to whom the poinsettias are dedicated will be included in the Bulletin for the last Sunday of December.



HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS : 9:00 am-2:00 pm

Week of Christmas: Dec. 23, 26, 27

Week of New Year's: Dec. 30, 31, Jan. 2



SUNDAY SERVANTS FOR DECEMBER 2013

GATEKEEPER:  H. F. Scott, Jr.	December 01	December 08	December 15	December 22	December 29
Ushers & Acolytes (A)	Keith Spain Ruby Spain Josh Ingram Morgan Ingram Justin Ellis-Bowman (A) Jamie Meurer (A)	Bobby Allen Donna Allen Velma Allen Jerry Bond Chayse Hartsell (A) Breeana Hunter (A)	Jerry Hasky Wayne Powers Glenda Mayhew Les Mayhew Breeana Hunter (A) Jamie Meurer (A)	Sheila Fields Janet Swinton Rose Scott Valerie Harsh Breeana Hunter (A) Jamie Meurer (A)	Robert Hartsell Dianne Overstreet Wayne Powers Les Mayhew Chayse Hartsell (A) Kaitlyn Hartsell (A)
Announcements	Mary Kay Schroeter	Rose Scott	Jerry Bond	Dianne Overstreet	Pat Hunter
Junior Sermon	Valerie Harsh	Rev. Cashing	Patsy Johnson	Pat Hunter	Susan Walker
Junior Church	Patsy Johnson Breeana Hunter	Susan Walker Jamie Maurer	Jessica Mauger Kevin Foster	Rose Scott Madison Foster	Josh Ingram Morgan Ingram
Nursery	Susan Walker	Glenda Mayhew	Ann Hartsell	Ruby Spain	Rose Scott
Counting	Morgan Ingram Sandy Hunter	Donald Hunter Glenda Mayhew	Kevin Foster Rose Scott	David Johnson Sheila Fields	Sandy Hunter Ron Recher

**OPEN HOUSE AFTER PG
CHRISTMAS PARADE!**

Don't forget to sign up to either bring cookies or to serve on December 7 for Gregory's Open House! Contact Judy Recher for details.

**CHRISTMAS ANGELS!**

Missions is putting up the Angel tree again this year. In this season of giving to us God's greatest gift, what better time to give back to someone not as fortunate.

The 8th of December will see the trees in the Narthex decorated with angels for the children and food gifts for the family. Please have your gifts and food back to the Church by the 22nd of December. What a warm feeling it

gives to know that a child will have a smile on Christmas morning!

Thank you and Christmas blessings to each of you!.

**DECEMBER 24****Christmas Eve****DECEMBER 25****Christmas Day - Merry Christmas!****ANNOUNCEMENTS**

LINE DANCING CLASS ("GREGORY BOOT SCOOTERS") - For month of December, only class is Dec. 2. Come out and see the Gregory Boot Scooters march in the Prince George Christmas Parade Dec. 7 at 3:00 p.m.!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE - No meeting in December.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO USHER & KEEP NURSERY! Please consider volunteering as an usher or to keep the nursery. If you would like to serve as a volunteer for either of these tasks, please contact Rose Scott.

GREAT NEWS!!! CAMP HANOVER IS COMING TO GREGORY!!!

By Sandy Hunter

The week of June 23-27, 2014, the staff of Camp Hanover will be at Gregory for a five-day camping experience. This program is designed for children who are **currently in kindergarten thru 5th grade**. We must have a minimum of 15 children. The maximum is 32. They will be engaged in Bible study, arts and crafts, and active play from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. each day. The cost is \$100 per child. The Church is

prepared to award scholarships on an as-needed basis. We do not want cost to keep a child from having this wonderful experience. Those who attended two years ago are excited that we will be able to offer it again this year!

Mark your calendars now. Available spots will be given on a first-come/first-served basis. If your child knows already that they want to come, please let me know now so I can put their name on the

list. There is no obligation at this time. More information will follow in January. Registration forms will be available at that time.

Contact person:
Sandy Hunter
Co-chair, Christian Ed. Committee
804-733-8414 H
804-731-0082 C
baskethunters@comcast.net

AN OPEN LETTER TO GREGORY CONGREGATION

My name is Bryan Hudgins, and I am a Life Scout of Troop 900 chartered by Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church. Since becoming a Life Scout, I have been in search of an Eagle project to help the community, and after participating in our annual Scout Sunday in the Temple Building, I have realized where my help was needed most. After seeing the struggle that many of the members of our chartering organization faced while attempting to access the festivities in the Temple Building, mainly due to the fact that there is a lack of an entrance designed for the disabled or elderly, I have decided to make my project revolve around solving this problem. This means that I intend to install a handicap ramp on the front facing entrance of the Temple Building to make all Scout and Church events located in the building accessible to all.

After finally deciding what my project could be and getting it approved, I now move to the most crucial part of the project: Fundraising. In order for my project to begin, I must first begin by raising money. I have begun this process by sending letters asking for donations, and starting a scrap metal recycling fund. However, I am still not close to my goal. Based on the materials we are going to need, a rough estimate of \$3,000 will need to be raised before any construction can begin. After realizing how much money was still needed to be raised, I began to talk to Mr. Foster. One of the suggested routes of action was to send out a letter to the congregation asking for help, so here I am!

Any individual who wishes to aid in the fundraising process can be assured that every dollar given will be directly applied to the project, and any donation will be a huge help to the ramp's success.

Donations in check form can be written out to Troop 900 and the memo should read "Bryan's Eagle Project. Any and all donations are certainly appreciated, and can be given to Mr. Kevin Foster, or left at Mr. Hagerich's mail box.

Thanks for your consideration,
Bryan Hudgins

DECEMBER, 2013

GATEKEEPER: H. F. Scott, Jr.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1st Sunday of Advent 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship <i>Holy Communion</i> <u>Poinsettia orders due</u>	9:30 am Line Dancing 11:00 am Churches Outreach/PG Foodbank Qtr. meeting [<i>Boot Scooters performing</i>] 6:30 pm Missions	12:30 pm Circle 6:00 pm Cong. Care 7:00 pm Facilities 7:00 pm Worship	7:00 pm Choir	2-8:00 pm Cleaning 6:00 pm Advent Kick-off (Chili/Soup Contest & Fashion Show Contest)		3:00 pm Open House & PG Christmas Parade GMPC Boot Scooters in Parade (Parade walkers meet in GMPC pkg. lot)
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
2nd Sunday of Advent 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship	9:00 am Committee reports due	6:30 pm Outreach	7:00 pm GMPC Choir performs Christmas Cantata @ Brighter Living, Hopewell	2:00 pm Session Agenda out 2-8:00 pm Cleaning 6:30 pm Stewardship & Finance		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
3rd Sunday of Advent 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship & Christmas Cantata	11:30 am PG TRIAD @ PG Rec Center; lunch by reservation [<i>Gregory Boot Scooters performing</i>]	7:00 pm Session meeting	7:00 pm Choir 6-9:00 pm Boy Scout Court of Honor	9:00 am News articles due 12:00 pm Preschool Christmas program for parents 2-8:00 pm Cleaning		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
4th Sunday of Advent 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship <i>5 Cents A Meal Offering</i> <i>Christmas Joy Offering</i> <u>Angel Tree Gifts due</u>	<u>Office open</u>	<u>Office closed</u> Christmas Eve 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Service & Holy Communion [<i>from pew</i>] 11:00 pm Christmas Eve Service & Holy Communion [<i>by intinction</i>]	<u>Office closed</u> Christmas Day	<u>Office open</u> 2:00 pm Newsletter out 2-8:00 pm Cleaning	<u>Office open</u>	
29	30	31				
9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship <i>Local Emergency Aid Offering</i>	<u>OFFICE OPEN</u>	<u>OFFICE OPEN</u>				

NEWSLETTER



COME JOIN US!!
Sunday School 9:45 A.M.
Worship 11:00 A.M.

We're on: Facebook.com/gmpcva

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