

The Sampler December 2009

From the
Pastor



Keeping HOLY in the Holidays

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband, Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." **Matthew 1:18-23**

By the time you read this, the Thanksgiving feast leftovers will be gone and the full pressure of the Christmas season will have started. Unless the holiday season preparations started back in September when some of the stores first began putting out decorations and other seasonal possibilities.

One big downer of the early availability of holiday supplies is exhaustion. Actual physical exhaustion of dealing with all the choices involved with celebrating the season. Emotional exhaustion and burn out due to listening to seasonal music, watching television commercials, and encountering shopping displays everywhere you go. Overload becomes reality, and Holy is forgotten as escape seems to be the only survival.

Just like almost every other aspect of life, the only way to keep the Holy in the holidays is with an intentional attitude and practical planning. God is with us; all we have to do is see Him. Deliberately identify God-instances in what is happening during this time of year.

When someone is kind to stranger, tell you friends and family about it.

When the moonlit and starry night stirs your soul, murmur a prayer of thanksgiving or shout for joy.

When you find the perfect gift for a loved one, praise God.

When you hear the laughter of children, remember with joy happy memories of your own childhood, which were a special gift from God.

When the sun shines with warmth, bask in the glow of warmth from God.

When the chill in the air makes you shiver, thank God that you are alive and can feel.

Take time to admire a decorated tree and think about the Light of the World – Christ the Lord.

Use the Advent wreath every day with prayers and think about the blessings God gives you.

Use your imagination come up with other ways to acknowledge God is with us.

The Holy in the holidays is up to you. Remember that the entire reason for this special season is God caring so much for us that He sent his Son. Keep the focus on Jesus – as babe or risen savior – and you will keep the Holy in the holidays.

So say Happy Holidays to everyone you meet, telling them, in a secret code, God is with us!

Pastor Barb

Scribe's Scribbles



NEWS FROM THE SESSION

The session held its monthly meeting on Monday November 9, 2009. At the meeting, the session:

- Continued its study of the Shorter Catechism by reading and discussing paragraphs 7.021-7.030 (questions 21-30) of the Book of Confessions.
- Read and discussed the Book of Order section G-4.0301 (Presbyterian Polity).
- Received notes of thanks from Church World Service (blankets) and Servant's Heart Ministry (yearly budgeted donation).
- Learned that training for the elders elect had been completed.
- Learned that voices from around the congregation would read parts of the prayer at the November 29, 2009 communion.
- Learned that two brass vases would be purchased for the sanctuary. Pat York would purchase one in memory of Doug York and Sally Pancake would purchase one in memory of Ann Pancake and Virginia Pancake.
- Received the list of duties and responsibilities for the youth director.
- Received an advertisement for a youth director to be placed in local newspapers.
- Completed the annual review of the membership rolls.
- Received confirmation that Sue and George Brandon had been accepted into membership at the Calabash Presbyterian Church of Sunset Beach, NC.

The following actions were taken:

- Kathy Kuykendall, Bill Pownell, Linda Shriver, and Vida Simon were examined and were approved for service on the session.
- Approved the purchase of a computer for the pastor's office.
- Approved the celebration of the Lord's Supper on January 10, 2010 and on February 14, 2010.
- Approved the Souper Bowl of Caring special offering to take place in January and February of 2010.
- Approved transferring 12 members to the inactive roll.
- Cancelled the fellowship dinner for December 2009 due to increased activities and low attendance during the past couple of years.
- Approved the Pastor Care Committee's recommendation for a 5% increase in the pastor's terms of call. This would be recommended to the congregation at the Annual Business Meeting of the congregation scheduled for Sunday December 13, 2009. Any changes in the pastor's terms of call require an action of the congregation.
- Approved the list of duties and responsibilities of the youth director and granted approval to advertise for, and hire a youth director.
- Approved giving one of the church's spare pianos to the Romney Senior Citizens' Center. The church would also hire Frances Chilcoat to tune the piano following delivery.

In order to focus on Advent season, the session will not meet in December unless necessary.

Treasurer To Date Snapshot

October 2009

Total Income - \$9,017.72	Account Balances
Total Expenses - \$16,093.09	Money Market - \$13,258.89
Deficit - \$7,075.37	Now Account - \$21,612.64

ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF ELDERS

JANUARY 3, 2010

Welcome the Elder Class of 2012

Kathy Kuykendall, Billy Pownell, Linda Shriver, Vida Simon

Express Gratitude for Service to the Elder Class of 2009

Jeannie Hampton, Pamela Iman, Richard McIntyre, Kaye Strawn

Afternoon Circle will meet in the Fellowship Hall, Tuesday, December 8, 2009 at 12:30 p.m. for an afternoon of lunch (please bring a sandwich and beverage), fellowship, and Lesson 4 of “Joshua: A Journey of Faith.” Join us for an enjoyable December afternoon!

Evening Circle will meet at Anne Hill’s home on December 8th at 7:00 p.m. Mary Glenn will be the Bible Lesson Leader and Nancy Bowman will have devotions.

The Children’s Christmas Program will be held December 13th at 9:45 a.m. at the Town Church.



On Saturday, December 19th at 8:00 a.m. young, old and new helpers will gather at the Romney Fire Hall to assemble food boxes. This program began years ago and has become a tradition which continues to grow every year. **Volunteers are needed and monetary donations are needed and appreciated.** Make your check out to Romney Presbyterian Church c/o Christmas Food Boxes.

Blue Christmas Have you ever experienced “the blues” during the holidays? We’ve got the cure for you! The Reverend Barbara Johnson and the Reverend Roy Knight will lead a special Christmas service at Romney Presbyterian Church, Sunday, December 20th, at 5:00 p.m. Blue Christmas is a service designed for everyone in the community, especially those who are experiencing Christmas without a loved one. This service provides an opportunity to sing Christmas carols, pray, meditate, and hear the scripture in an atmosphere of hope and healing. Please join us in the sanctuary December 20th at 5:00 p.m.

Spotlight on Youth: Evan Staley



Evan Staley, son of Laura and Scott Staley, is an eleven-year-old sixth grader at Romney Middle School. However, Evan is not just any sixth grader—he’s a leader. Whether it’s academics, sports, church activities, or other endeavors, Evan is a leader. At Romney Middle, where math is his favorite subject, he enjoys being with his friends, serving as an assistant on the basketball team (he’d be playing on the team if he had not dislocated his elbow), and participating on the soccer and cross-country teams. Outside school, he is an active member of 4-H. At Romney Presbyterian Church, Evan had an early start in church activities—in 1998 at the age of several months, he was the baby Jesus in the Christmas play. Since those early beginnings, he has participated in Youth Choir, 4 cents-a-meal collection, pumping the organ, and last, but not least, Worship Leader. Evan ministered as Worship Leader at the November 15, 2009 service—it was here that he exhibited true leadership to both youths and adults in our congregation. We at Romney Presbyterian Church are so fortunate that Evan is actively involved in our Youth Group and our church. Hats off to Evan Staley, our Youth in the Spotlight!

News from Hospice of the Panhandle Tis’ the Season for the **Light up a Life Tree** in Hampshire County. Hospice of the Panhandle invites you to purchase lights in honor or memory of someone you love. Your personalized Christmas gift tags will be attached to the lights on the trees at the Hampshire County Library in Romney. To purchase your gift tag (light), simply pick up an envelope at the library or in the church vestibule and follow the directions. Stop by the library after November 24th to enjoy seeing your tags on the trees; then come to the **Tree Lighting Ceremony Tuesday, December 2, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.** at the **Hampshire County Library.** We will dedicate the *Light up a Life* trees to our loved ones at that time. Let’s make this Christmas our best one by supporting Hospice of the Panhandle.

The Reverend Dr. and Mrs. Donald E. Swope announce the marriage of their daughter Sarah Elizabeth to Mr. Erik Padron on Sunday, November 15th at Lake Side Presbyterian Church, West Palm Beach, Florida.



3rd Annual Hampshire County Santa Troop 9 am on December 12, 2009

Benefitting:



Sponsored By:



Events: 5k run 2 mile fun walk
NEW 20 minute indoor fun walk
(limited to 20 participants)

Where: Outdoor-Start and Finish at Hampshire Wellness and Fitness Center,

As a board member of CASA, I am sending this plea to help out this wonderful organization. If any of you would be willing to participate, or spend a Saturday in the great outdoors, while helping out an organization that helps children and families, then this would be a win-win situation. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact Sheri Coleman 304-492-5803 or e-mail secoleman@frontiernet.net.

Romney Presbyterian Church
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Return Service Requested

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