



December

THE FAMILY

Evangelical Presbyterian Church

DECEMBER 2010



- 4 Buddy Andrews
- 11 Nancy Strnad
- 11 Bill Klotz
- 13 Ryann Patheal
- 15 Linda Pelz
- 16 Kelley Spencer
- 20 Issac Bach
- 27 Ken Hickey
- 28 Bill Mills
- 31 Christi Alderman
- 31 Dan Moore

Kitchen Clean-up for December
Nina Bates and Marty Parker

NO FELLOWSHIP LUNCH THIS MONTH



		YTD
October, 2010		
Giving Income	26,696	243,519
Expenses	22,687	241,228
NET	4,008	2,291



***THE PROMISED HOPE...
starts with a Baby's***

first cry

presented by

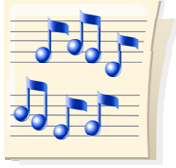
Voices of Worship

and

Joyful Sounds and More

December 12, 2010

6:00 pm



“O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.”

From the Music Director

In His Service,
Sarah Joe

Can you believe that December is here? Where did the year go? I love December; I love the Christmas Season; I love the music of Christmas.

Voices of Worship is preparing for the presentation of “The Promised Hope” on Sunday, December 12, at 6:00 pm. Joyful Sounds and More will also participate in this evening of Christmas music. There will be a few more surprises also. Together they will make for a special time of fellowship and worship for us all.

Food is always included in times of fellowship, and this evening will be no exception. Please bring finger foods to share during the fellowship time between the two parts of the presentation.

Voices of Worship and Joyful Sounds and More will take a Christmas break. Voices of Worship's break will be after the presentation on the 12th. Joyful Sounds and More will begin their break after the Christmas party on Wednesday, December 15, at their regular meeting time. Both groups will resume rehearsals on Wednesday, January 5, 2011. Membership will be open in both groups.

There is another opportunity to enjoy the music of the season. The annual Family Caroling Party will be on Sunday evening, December 19, at 6:00 pm. Meet in the EPC parking lot at 5:45. Charlie Parker will have his truck, flatbed, and hay and will transport us through the neighborhoods to sing Christmas carols. Please bring finger foods to share when we return to the church. May all of you have a very blessed Christmas and New Year. May we truly remember the “reason for the season”.



Young at Heart will not meet in December, other than the Christmas Party on December 2. Regular 4th Tuesday meetings will resume on January 25, 2011.



Children's Ministry

This Christmas season I'd love to share my favorite hymn with you. These words always make me tremble and fill my heart with the wonder of Christ's coming.

*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! O, hear the angels'
voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was
born;
O night divine, O night, O night Divine.*

Children of the Lord, what lengths he has gone to for your rescue! Does your soul feel it's worth? You are priceless to God. Let us rejoice!

May your Christmas be full of hope,
Angie



From The Youth Ministry

Church family,
On **December 5th** from 6pm to 7pm at EPC we will be showing *Don't Waste Your Life Sentence* at our 180° service. I have handed out flyers at various places in town and am praying that God will send those that need to hear the message of the video and experience the love of Christ in our church family. **Pray** for this time and, if you are able to, please come out and watch the video with us. We will be enjoying pizza after the service.

Looking ahead we have two **winter** conferences for our youth. In January (14-16) we will be taking **6th – 8th graders** to Tyler, TX for *Polar Thang* with some other Presbyterian churches. In February (4-5) we will be taking **9th – 12th graders** to Texarkana, TX for *Hot Hearts*. **Pray** for our students that they would not only have a good time but that they would also grow in grace. Some have never experienced the powerful work of the Spirit in conversion and so please pray that God would reveal himself to these students.

Thank you for your love for students! Christ's and yours,
Ben



It's December and the Season of Advent is upon us. Once again, we bring out the Advent Wreath and for four Sundays, we light each consecutive candle on the wreath. Then, on Christmas Eve, we light the "Christ Candle," which is the white candle in the center. Have you ever wondered what the colors of those candles stand for? Did you even know that the colors are purposeful? There's some confusion of the history on this, but here's how I've come to understand it (which I believe is most common):

Colors of the Advent candles:

Purple –Royalty (the Advent emphasis). It also represents suffering or the self-humbling of fasting, which is why it's also the color of Lent. [During Lent we acknowledge Christ's humiliation and suffering on our behalf.]

Pink – Joy (Which anticipates that the day of Christ's birth is almost here!)

White – Purity; again, this is called the "Christ candle" and is lit on Christmas Eve.

The Purple candles stand primarily for royalty in the Advent season because Jesus is the promised Davidic King who will reign forever:

^{ESV} **Luke 1:30-33** *And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. **And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."***

Hence, the purple is for royalty. But there's every reason to see a connection to suffering and humiliation, because Christ, the Son of God, humbled Himself incredibly when He left His place of glory in heaven with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and "came down" to earth, to become a child in the womb of an impoverished Jewish girl named Mary, and to be born into difficult circumstances. His early life was unspectacular (although sinless – which, on second thought, is AMAZING), until the last three years (about age 30-33) when His public ministry was carried out. And all during His life, He was headed for the humiliation of a sin-bearing death, "even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:6-8). Hadn't Isaiah prophesied of Him (Isaiah 53:3) that He would be "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief"? So the purple color really carries both meanings at Advent: Royalty and suffering.

The pink candle stands for Joy. As I've heard it, pink retains some of the hue of purple, but with the brightness and joy of white mixed in. It highlights the joyous anticipation of the day of Christ's birth, which is only a week or so away when we light the pink candle. [By the way, the pink color also lends support to understanding purple as both royalty and suffering. There would be no need to change colors if there was no hint of suffering present in the purple color.]

The white candle in the center is the "Christ candle." The white represents purity: Christ Jesus is the pure, unspotted "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

Have you noticed the symbol on our Christ candle? It's an ancient symbol formed by two Greek capital letters, with one of them superimposed on the other. The letter that resembles an X (albeit often turned at an angle so that it resembles a cross) is the Greek letter Chi; the letter that resembles a P is the Greek letter Rho (strangely, it looks like a P but is

actually sounded like our letter R; but then again, they had it first, so I guess we're the ones with the strange alphabet!). Chi and Rho are the first two Greek letters in the word "Christos" which is the Greek word for "Christ." [In Greek, it looks like this: ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (*chi-rho-iota-sigma-tau-omicron-sigma*: the letter *sigma* in the middle of a word resembles an "E", whereas when it falls at the end of a word it's written more like our "S")]. Therefore, as you probably guessed, the symbol on the candle stands for "Christ."

Finally, the sequence of themes for each consecutive Advent week is: HOPE, PEACE, JOY, LOVE; and the final theme as we light the Christ candle is CHRIST, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Why go into all of this? I just want you to know what we're doing when we bring out the Advent Wreath... and what it all stands for. I hope this helps you to be more reflective and worshipful of the wonder of Immanuel ("God with us") this Advent Season!

To God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – be all the glory!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Craig

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