



First Presbyterian Church of Hemet

FIRST WORD

December 1, 2009

Sundays, come join us for...

- 9:00 am
The Heritage Service in the Chapel — Old time hymns and verse by verse Bible Study
- 10:00—10:30 am
Fellowship on the Patio
- 10:30 am
The Sanctuary Service

Pastor's Column

Dear Friends,

We're coming to the end of another exciting year in this church. I look forward to our Chancel Choir concert on December 6 at 4:00, the annual Christmas dinner on December 13th with the Hemet High School jazz band at 5:00, and of course our Christmas Eve service at 7:00.

What a busy church. As I said recently in a sermon, our elders have tried to balance the church budget and pay a tithe of our offerings. We strive to keep our overhead as low as possible going to the point a few years ago using only volunteers to run the office. What we discovered is that a church of this size and activity generates a lot of administrative business no matter how much we try to cut back.

Last year church member and elder Kitty Vollmer was hired to bring some continuity by working alongside the volunteers in the office on Tuesdays through Thursdays. What we found is that there was even more work to be done than could be done on just those days. Thus we hired Jeannette Simmons, our new Administrative Assistant who now keeps the office open Monday through Friday from 9:00-3:00.

As we continue to grow (we had the largest number of new members this year that we've had in ten years), my hope is that with Jeannette I'll have to do less administrative work and more time making disciples. While our youth ministry is booming these days, my hope and prayer is to begin a midweek Kids' Club for grades 1-5, a Seniors Club for retirees and lead another Alpha Course starting January 10 for those new or not very familiar to the faith.

It's always exciting if not challenging to be in God's service. May you be blessed as you await the celebration of the birth of the Savior this season. Hope to see you in worship.



Pastor Larry Thorson

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Yours in Christ,

Pastor Larry Thorson

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS BEGINS

*When the song of angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are departed, when the shepherds are back
with their flocks, The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost, to heal the broken, To feed the hungry, To release the
prisoner, To rebuild peace among brothers, To make music for all to hear.*

Howard Thurman

Library News



I picked up a few good fiction books at the Fall Sale for our church library: an Alexander McCall Smith book, more books by Grace Livingston Hill, and a set of books about the Amish Church Librarian by Wanda E. Brunstetter. Books by Maeve Binchy and Fannie Flagg are good for relaxing reading, and there are also more Large Print *Reader's Digest* for us all to enjoy.

The Christmas Books that we have in the library will be on the book cart after Thanksgiving.

Thoughts on Christmas

Christmas is always. It was always in the heart of God. Like God, Christmas is timeless. It is memories, traditions, family, and our expression of love through the giving and receiving of gifts. It is a lesson in love. Jesus was God's gift to us.

A Thought For the New Year by Joyce Duerr

As the New Year dawns upon us
We seek your forgiveness for the sins of the
past.
May our resolution for the coming year
Be to walk with you from the first day to the
last.
Fill each day with a new awareness of your
Presence
And make us a blessing to those around us.

Happy Holidays!
Bernice Cole

COMMUNITY PANTRY

Thank You to all who filled grocery bags with items for the Community Pantry. Due to your generosity, we will be able to give you an exact count in the January "First Word".

Birthdays

December 2	Patricia Wenrich
December 4	Kitty Vollmer
December 7	Janice Bertling
	Maria Bottoms
	Marjorie Shepard
December 9	Jody Patterson
December 12	Al Mattson
December 14	Julie Lundy
	Virginia Stilwell
December 18	Pat Friend
December 20	Gwendolyn Finley
	Robert Close
December 23	Vera Cole
December 24	Clifton Brogdon
December 25	Mary Yager
December 26	Alice Planck
December 27	Irene Pritchard
December 28	Roy Nugent
December 30	Dorothy Wiley
December 31	Patricia Goodberry



Anniversaries

December 18	Pat Friend	December	Arthur & Nancy Cook	53 yrs
December 20	Gwendolyn Finley			
	Robert Close			



CORRECTIONS & ADDITIONS

The November 11 birthday noted for Joan Patterson should be changed to Russ Patterson.

Russ & Jody Patterson celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary on November 27.

We apologize for these errors!

Presbyterian Women

It was with much sadness that we said goodbye to our dear friend, Joann Marshall, who went home to be with the Lord on November 6. Joann served our Presbyterian Women in many capacities, including Circle Leader and Moderator. She taught us all a lot about faith and courage. She was a very caring, giving lady who will be greatly missed.

Rebekah Circle, under the leadership of Darlene Clark, is hosting our December Luncheon Gathering and Christmas Program on Friday, December 11 at 11:30 am. We hope you will make plans to join us. Please call the church office by Monday, December 7 for reservations. The cost of the lunch is \$7.00, and everyone is welcome. Please bring a wrapped gift for a shut-in. The 2009 PW Life Membership will be awarded at the lunch.

If you missed the October luncheon gathering, you missed a fabulous meal that was prepared by Sarah Circle's, Judy Strahan, Chris Huff, Eloise Patton and Sally McAlister; Martha Circle's, Lou Jolliff and their helpers. The tables were beautifully decorated as well. Men who helped with the Fall Sale were our guests of honor. Darlene and Bob Clark, Susan Gray and Bonnie Hansen were each given an adorable turkey centerpiece in thanks for their Fall Sale leadership.

Have you marked your calendar for Saturday, February 6 from 9:00am to 2:00 pm? That is the date that our church is hosting the Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery's Winter Gathering for lunch and fellowship. All of our Presbyterian women church members are encouraged to help and attend. We are so proud to have been chosen to host this event. If you can help, please contact Patty Werley or Joyce Emery.

Our beautiful All-Church cookbooks are here. They are \$12.00 and available by contacting Joyce Emery. The books are professionally bound in a laminated 3-ring cover with a photo of our church on it. There are 300 delicious recipes from our members. Get your copy today and a few more for your friends and family. They make a very nice gift.

We wish to thank each and every one of you who worked so hard to make the Fall Festival Sale another success. (A preliminary amount made from the Fall Sale was \$6,200.00). Wow! All of your efforts were appreciated very much. A "special" thank you to the leaders - Bob and Darlene Clark, Susan Gray and Bonnie Hansen.

May you be richly blessed this Christmas Season.
Patty Werley (925-7544) and Joyce Emery (658-2549)
PW Co-Moderators

P.S. Thank you to everyone who sent cards and prayed for my recovery from a recent illness and hospitalization. I am feeling much better and hope to be active again soon.

Patty

Music Notes

From Mary Ellen

Well, having just gotten through the Thanksgiving season by the time this arrives, I thought you might like to have some holiday humor to help you through these calorie-filled days, so here they are:

“Holiday Eating Tips”

Author Unknown

1. Avoid carrot sticks. Anyone who puts carrots on a holiday buffet table knows nothing of the Christ spirit. In fact, if you see carrots, leave immediately. Go next door where they're serving rum balls.
2. Drink as much eggnog as you can...You can't find it any other time of year. So drink up!
3. If something comes with gravy, use it. That's the whole point of gravy. Gravy does not stand alone. Pour it on. Make a volcano out of your mashed potatoes. Fill it with gravy. Eat the volcano.
4. As for mashed potatoes, always ask if they're made with skim or whole milk. If it's skim, pass. Why bother? It's like buying a sports car with an automatic transmission ...
5. Under no circumstances should you exercise between now and New Year's. You can do that in January when you have nothing else to do. This is the time for long naps, which you'll need after circling the buffet table while carrying a 10 pound plate of food and that vat of eggnog ...
6. Did someone mention fruitcake? Granted, it's loaded with the mandatory, celebratory calories, but avoid it at all cost. I mean, some have standards.
7. One final tip: If you don't feel terrible when you leave the party or get up from the table, you haven't been paying attention. Reread tips: start over, but hurry, January is just around the corner. Remember this motto to live by:

“Life should NOT be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, chocolate in one hand, eggnog in the other, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming “WOO HOO” what a ride!”

I love eggnog!!! It's a very good thing it comes out once a year!

Now to more serious things! You will not want to miss the Chancel Choir's Christmas Concert on December 6th at 4:00 pm, which will be followed (speaking of food and calories) by a cookie fellowship in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your friends and relatives and let's fill the sanctuary as you enjoy the music of the Christmas season.



CHRISTMAS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Saturday, December 5 - Hemet Christmas Parade. Come and cheer on our church float.

Sunday, December 6 - Chancel Choir Christmas Concert and Cookie Fellowship

Friday, December 11 - PW Christmas Luncheon

Sunday, December 13 - All-Church Christmas Party

Thursday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Service

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE CHURCH STAFF!

CHRISTMAS FOR THE CHILDREN



We are starting a drive for presents for the children of Home Away From Home and the Upward Programs. The age level is K - 5th grade. Please leave your unwrapped gifts in the box the children have decorated in the church narthex.

Thank You!

REMEMBER THE CHRIST CHILD



As we remember, our church will again be making up layettes for children born into poverty in our own area . Plan now to purchase some infant supplies from the following list to give as your gift to the Christ child.

New items only: Receiving blankets, Onesies, Sleepers, Hats, Bibs, Socks and Booties.

There is a basket located in the Narthex by the Christmas tree for the items.

Our children will wrap the collected items and they will be dedicated on Dec. 20th to be taken to Hemet Valley Medical Center.



Staff		On the World Wide Web	Partners In Mission
Pastor/Head of Staff	Rev. Dr. Larry Thorson	www.hemetpresbyterian.org	Dr. John & Dianne Fowler — Turkey
Director of Music	M. E. VanOstenbridge	larry@hemetpresbyterian.org	Rev. John & Gwen Haspels — Ethiopia
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Activities Director	“Coach” Mel Carter	(Jeannette Simmons)	Valley Restart — San Jacinto Valley
Office Manager	Jeannette Simmons	secretary@hemetpresbyterian.org	
Bookkeeper	Sharon Desgro	(Volunteers)	
Custodian	Javier Gamon		

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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