



Stirling Stuff

Volume 60, No. 11

December 2016

Pastor's Letter

By the time you read this, we will have begun the season of Advent. Advent is a time of waiting. As I reflected on this theme of waiting, I was mindful of the fact that in today's society we are losing the ability to wait. We can order something online and, if we are willing to pay for it, it will be on our doorstep the next morning. Recently I have had several conversations concerning the number of divorces today, around 50%. I've experienced families torn apart by politics or other things because someone would not change their ideas. I blame it partly on our inability to wait, to let things work out, or to take the time to work on the issues. Waiting gives us space... space to reflect, to envision something being different than what it is now.



However, waiting demands something of us. Waiting demands that we put our own needs or feelings aside to contemplate something different, something that is coming. This is what Advent waiting is all about--contemplating what the birth of Jesus really meant and means for the world and for us. As you have heard me say many times before, Advent keeps us from getting to Christmas too fast. Advent gives us time to think about a God who loves the world so much that he sends an infant child to save us. What does that mean, why not a warrior on a horse with a flaming sword? We need time to ponder these things just as Mary needed time. It wasn't until she got together with her older and wiser cousin that she began to understand what was happening and what it meant.



I challenge you this Advent season to take some time to hold one of your crèche figures and look at it; contemplate what the good news of the birth of Jesus meant for who that figure represents. Consider the lowly shepherd, think about the innkeeper, consider the majestic magi, the triumphant angel, the poor carpenter father, and, of course, the adolescent mother. What did they think when they heard the news? What would you have thought if you had been in their place?

In the dark days of winter, let us put our waiting to good use so that we might be ready to hear the good news once again on Christmas Eve/Christmas Day.

Have a blessed Advent!

Tom

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for December

December 4

- *Second Sunday of Advent*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Congregation of Meyersville Presbyterian Church
worshiping with us*
Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19;
Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12
Roots and Suckers

December 11

- *Third Sunday of Advent*
Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10;
James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11; Luke 1:46-55
Finding the Messiah Without GPS

December 18

- *Fourth Sunday of Advent*
Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19;
Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25
Christmas Pageant

Child Care is provided in the Nursery.

*Children join their families in church and then leave for
Christian Education classes after the Children's Talk.*

*Worship begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings,
followed by Fellowship Hour in Pollard Hall.*



December 18

7:30 PM

- *Blue Christmas Service*
Matthew 1:18-25
Letting Light In

December 24

8:00 PM

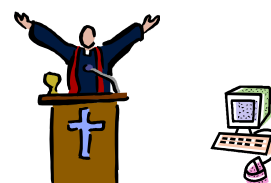
- *Christmas Eve Service*
Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96;
Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20
Did You Find What You Were Looking For?

December 25

- *Christmas Day*
Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98;
Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-14
Stories of Christmas

**Scriptures that are listed after the first Gospel
reading are non-lectionary passages
that will be used in the sermon.
All the scriptures are provided here for
any weekly Bible reading you may do.**

Rev. Peters' sermons and the scripture readings
are posted on the church website.
Visit: www.fpcstirling.org, click on:
"Sermon Archive," then select the sermon
and/or scripture reading date you would like.



Pastor's Coffee Klatch

The next Coffee Klatch will be on **Sat., Dec. 3rd, 9:00 a.m.**, at the Stirling House Diner. If you have a question, just want to talk, or have a friend you want to introduce to our church, plan to join Rev. Peters at the diner. Since he will not be doing any counseling, if you come and someone else is sitting with him, pull up a chair and join them.



2017 Church Offering Envelopes

The 2017 Church Offering Envelopes will be available to be picked up in Pollard Hall or the Church office shortly. Thank you!

**Annual Congregational Election Meeting**

At the Annual Congregational Election Meeting held on October 30th, the following members were elected/ re-elected to serve 3-year terms effective February 2017:

Elders: Lynn Blakeslee
Susan Brodziak
Kai Ihringer

Deacons: Joanne Murphy

Rev. Peters and the congregation expressed their thanks and appreciation to Lore Pateman, Shaylyn Gallagan, and Israel Sierra for their service as Church officers as their terms come to an end.

Holiday Music

On **Sunday, Dec. 4th at 5:30 p.m.** the Masterwork Chorus will be presenting their *Holiday Concert of Carols* at the Chatham United Methodist Church. The cost is \$20; age 18 and under \$10. Tickets may be purchased at the door.

On **Sunday, Dec. 18th at 3 p.m.** the Chorus will present the *Messiah* at Ridge High School in Basking Ridge. Tickets are \$78, \$45, and \$31; age 18 and under \$12. They will also perform the *Messiah* at Carnegie Hall on **Friday, Dec. 23rd at 8 p.m.** All tickets may be purchased online at www.masterwork.org.

Musica Gratis – The Concert Series in Stirling

Our concert series continues on **Sunday, Dec. 11th, 2:00 p.m.**, when we welcome back pianist Joseph Hauer. He will be accompanying cellist Jiafan Shi for a performance of “A Classical Christmas.” Please join us for an afternoon of holiday music.



Admission is free; a free-will offering is accepted. A short reception will follow the concert, during which guests may meet the performers. Refreshments will be served.

Christian Education Committee

- Lore Pateman

Adult Bible Study

- Rev. Peters



We are continuing the study of the Book of Revelation at **10:30 a.m. every Thursday** in the meeting room. Please join us.

Fourth Sunday Focus

- Tom Parziale

Fourth Sundays give us an opportunity to connect with other members of our church family in a relaxed atmosphere: a pot of tea, a Box o’Joe, Munchkins . . . and conversation. **Since the fourth Sunday in December is Christmas Day, we will not be meeting. Our next session will be on January 22nd. If you have a topic you’d like to discuss, please contact Tom Parziale.**

Worship Committee

- Janet Parziale

Liturgists for December:

Dec. 4	Tom Parziale	Dec. 18	Madeline Hahl
Dec. 11	Tom Parziale	Dec. 25	Jan Somers



If you would like to serve as Liturgist during worship, sign up on the sheet in Pollard Hall or speak to Jan Somers.

Non-Perishable Food Collection, December 4th

On the first Sunday of each month, we collect donations of non-perishable food during the Communion worship service. While we are receiving the Lord’s Supper, we also want to provide for others. The food is donated to the township food pantry at St. Vincent Church. We continue to collect non-perishable food in the baskets located in the church entry-ways during the rest of the month.



Heritage Sunday



On Nov. 27th, the church celebrated Heritage Sunday with the *Blessing of the Tartans* service. Bagpiper Dave Paladino played several tunes, including “Stirling on the Hill,” which was composed for our church by Richard Streeton.

Following the service, the Worship Committee hosted a special Fellowship Hour that included lots of delicious Scottish delights and plenty of tea.



Blue Christmas Service



On **Sunday, Dec. 18th, 7:30 p.m.**, we will once again have our Blue Christmas service. This service is for people who have experienced a loss of some kind in their lives and are having trouble celebrating Christmas. If you, or someone you know is feeling a sense of loss this Christmas, please come or invite your friend or family member to attend. During the service, we will be lighting candles of remembrance.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Our Christmas Eve service will be held at 8:00 p.m. We hope you will join us for this beautiful service of candles and carols as we await the birth of Christ.



Christmas Day Service

Join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, during our worship service on **Christmas morning at 10:00 a.m.** The sermon is entitled, "Stories of Christmas."

Deacons Corner

- Susan Gerecht

Christmas Poinsettia Orders

The Deacons are coordinating the ordering of poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for the Christmas season. **Please complete the order form on page 10 of this newsletter. The deadline is Tuesday, December 13th.**

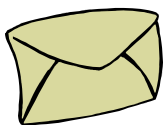
Community Carol Sing and Ring



Please join us in singing Christmas carols by candlelight on the front lawn of the church on **Sat., Dec. 17th at 6:00 p.m.** **Please note: it is being held on Saturday this year.** Afterwards, come inside the sanctuary and enjoy the beautiful music of our Travnicek Memorial Ringers handbell choir. Then, warm up in Pollard Hall with Christmas wassail, hot chocolate, and cookies. If you would like to donate cookies, please bring them to morning worship that day or when you come to the carol sing.



Deacons' Fund



Please remember to use the green Deacons' Fund envelopes for donations to help the Deacons with their Mission work. These envelopes are available in the pew racks or in the church office and may be placed in the offering plate. Thank you!

Church Flowers

Please sign up on the Flower Chart in Pollard Hall if you would like to place flowers on the chancel for Sunday morning worship in honor or memory of someone. Allow enough lead time to have them ordered for the date you would like. The cost is \$30, and cash or checks (made payable to: Flowers on the Ridge) should be given to Israel Sierra.



When you sign up on the flower chart, please be specific, i.e. in memory/honor, given by, and print clearly.

Mission Programs

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Jean Hoffman, Coordinator



Our final 2016 commitment for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, Dec. 9th, 9:30 a.m.**, in Pollard Hall. We are in need of small bottles of water and cartons of juice; snacks of cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels, etc.; and, plastic spoons. Cash donations are also appreciated to help with the purchase of bread and lunch meat. You can drop items off in Pollard Hall on Sunday mornings, or give cash donations to Madeline or Jean.

Upcoming dates: Jan. 6, Feb. 10, March 3, April 7, May 5, and June 9

Thanksgiving Turkey Donations

Thank you to everyone who donated a turkey for the Thanksgiving holiday. Rev. Peters delivered 10 turkeys to the Market Street Mission in Morristown. The staff was grateful for the generous donation. Your continued support of this program is very much appreciated.



Family Promise of Morris County

info@familypromisemorris.org

- Jan Somers

In 2017, our Church will begin its 27th year of supporting this program. Phyllis Clemson, who has been coordinating our Church's involvement in the program for the past 26 years, has decided it's time to "pass the baton." Our 2017 hosting dates will be: Jan. 10th, March 28th, and Nov. 3rd-4th at Trinity House in Stirling. Please watch for a sign-up sheet in Pollard Hall later in December to help with our Jan. 10th hosting, when we will be providing a lasagna/pasta dinner. If you would like to help with the planning and coordinating for our Church, please speak with Rev. Peters or Jan.

Recently, some families who were in the program moved into apartments. Following is a list of items they can use:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tall Square Pantry for kitchen (2x2) ▪ Ironing board ▪ Wooden shelving closet units ▪ Recliner, office desk, black dresser ▪ Curtains and rods 104" x 84" ▪ Gift certificates: Target, Staples, Shop-Rite, Home Depot ▪ Snow shovels ▪ Holiday decorations ▪ Ice-melt (de-icing products) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cleaning supplies ✓ Garbage bags (13 gallon & 8 gallon) ✓ Conditioner ✓ Razors ✓ Deodorant ✓ Paper towels ✓ Toilet paper ✓ Feminine hygiene products ✓ Diapers (All sizes) ✓ Boxers (Men's 2X) ✓ T-shirts (Lg, X-Lg) ✓ Socks (Men's and women's) ✓ Women's underwear (Sizes 4-9) ✓ Toothpaste ✓ Toothbrushes ✓ Shoes (M: 9's, 10's; W: 8's, 9's) ✓ Ponchos |
|---|--|

All guests who have moved out of the Emergency Shelter Program will need help during the first year in their new home. Needed items include:

- ✓ Hats, Gloves, Scarves
- ✓ Lysol wipes
- ✓ Laundry detergent

Community Food Bank, Hillside

- Kai Ihringer

Thank you to our 15 volunteers who worked at the Community Food Bank in Hillside on Sat., Nov. 12th. Our group included members of the Meyersville Church and the MOMS Club that meets at our church. This time our task was to transform huge bins of loose pasta into enough dinner-sized packages of pasta to feed over 1,200 families. This was accomplished by our group working along with 21 volunteers from other organizations. As usual, we worked hard and had a great time!



All the work was done while we sported the latest in hairnet fashion. According to the food bank employee who worked with us, we filled 164 boxes with 2,624 bags of pasta, which will feed 1,312 families through food pantries around the state. Job well done!

We will be scheduling two trips in 2017 (most likely in May and October). Once they are scheduled, we will provide you with the dates.

Our Volunteers

Kai & Katherine Ihringer
 Daria Jankura
 Dina Krupa
 Brooke Kupferman
 Juanita Lawrence
 Dawn & Sandy Mackay
 Katherine Opalka
 Janet & Tom Parziale
 Tom Peters
 Alycia Ross
 Doug Smith
 Karen Wills

Clothing/Sneakers Donations

- Jean Hoffman

I can no longer accept donations of clothing/sneakers. My Pioneer contact who took them to the center in Elizabeth is not available at this time. If this should change, I'll let you know.

I will, however, still be collecting toiletries, cell phones, and knitting wool/fabric. Thank you.

Johnsonburg Presbyterian Camp

The 2017 Summer Camp Schedule is available.
The summer of 2017 may seem far away, but we can't wait!

Click link to visit our website for the downloadable version. <http://www.campjburg.org/2017-summer-camp-schedule/>
Mark your calendar, and we will see you here before you know it!

Free Gentle Yoga Class - Meyersville Presbyterian Church

Roseanne McGraw, a certified yoga teacher for 15 years, is teaching a free gentle yoga class in the parlor at Meyersville Presbyterian Church on **Tuesdays from 9:00-10:00 a.m.** The class is on-going, so you can join at any time.



You will not be sitting or lying on the floor, so just bring yourself in comfortable clothes, and invite friends along. This class will be appropriate for all, the flexible as well as the tight. Injuries will be accommodated. Yoga is relaxing, as well as good for general health; so, come give it a try.

Call or e-mail Rosanne with any questions or concerns: 908-508-1435, rosanne.mcgraw@gmail.com.

Meyersville Presbyterian Church Free Computer Basics Classes

Meyersville Presbyterian Church's free computer basics classes continue on Saturdays, 9:00-11:00 a.m. through Feb.11. This MS Windows 7 basics computer training is for novice windows computer users. You can attend the entire course or just certain topics. The training is part lecture, but mainly hands-on in our state-of-the-art computer lab.

The course book is free for use in the classroom or \$10 to purchase. Following is the list of the remaining topics and dates:

<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Date</u>
5	Communication	Dec. 10
6	Surfing the Internet	Dec. 17
7	Personal Internet	Jan. 7
8	Excel	Jan. 14
9	Music and Speech	Jan. 21
10	Photography	Jan. 28
11	Gadgets and Gizmos	Feb. 4
12	Manage Your Computer	Feb. 11

Please contact Rudy Zydell from the Meyersville Church at ruudz@aol.com to register.

Church Archives

Please remember to forward news clippings, bulletins, programs, pictures, or other memorabilia regarding any member of our church family to Rene' Phelan so she can keep our church archives up-to-date. There is a mailbox outside the church offices for this purpose. Thank you.



Church Communications

If you have things that need to be communicated to the church office, please take the initiative, and contact Paulette directly. Send an email, make a call, or leave a note - they're all good ways to reach our office manager.



Church Website

Our Church website, www.fpcstirling.org, is your source for church news, the Church calendar, Stirling Stuff, upcoming events/programs, Pastor's sermons, Scripture readings, Church history, and more. Please make it a point to log on regularly and keep up-to-date with what's happening.

These Days

"These Days has been the concrete expression of the church's witness to the love of Jesus Christ to the world for more than three decades."

Our Church has a subscription for multiple copies of this devotional booklet; they are available in the Church narthex.

Water Available During Worship

There is a pitcher of water and cups available in the Church narthex in case you need a drink during worship. Please feel free to help yourself or signal an Usher to bring it to you.



Labels/Box Tops for Education; Pop-Top Can Tabs

- Jan Somers

Please continue to save [Labels for Education](#), [Box Tops for Education](#), and [pop-top can tabs](#). The labels are used by parent organizations in schools to earn educational and recreational items for students.



The can tabs are sold by weight to recycling centers, and the proceeds are donated to Ronald MacDonald House to help fund their programs for hospitalized children and their families. There is a collection canister in the church office. Thank you.



Editor's Note

- Jan Somers

I just renewed my [Notary Public license](#). If you ever need something notarized, please feel free to contact me, and I'll bring my stamp/seal to church or arrange to meet with you to do it for you.

Christmas Poinsettias Order Form

The Deacons are coordinating the ordering of poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for the Christmas season. Please use the order form below or the forms available in the Sunday bulletin to place your order, and specify if you are ordering in memory or honor of someone special in your life.

The deadline to order is Tuesday, December 13th



Price: \$16.50

Colors: Red, White, or Pink

<u>What Color</u>	<u>How Many</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
TOTALS	_____	_____

Purchased in MEMORY / HONOR of:
(Please circle one)

Given By: _____
Please print clearly

Please check one: To be picked up following Christmas Eve worship: _____ To be donated: _____

Please submit your order and payment to Israel Sierra, to the church office, or place in the offering plate.

Make checks payable to: Flowers on the Ridge and note: Christmas Poinsettia on your check.

Deadline to order: Tuesday, December 13th

Ongoing Mission Programs

Road to Bridges

Change (and more) is collected during Fellowship Hour and supports Bridges Program, providing 40 lunches per month to NJ/NY homeless.

Township Food Pantry

Non-perishable items can be left in baskets labeled "Food Pantry Donations" in the Church narthex and outside Pollard Hall.

Items collected for various causes; may be placed on the pew in Pollard Hall:

- ✓ Full-sized and "courtesy" sized bars of soap, shampoo, conditioner, shower caps
- ✓ Used pairs of sneakers (any size)
- ✓ Cell phones, eyeglasses, sunglasses
- ✓ Fabric: about ½ yard minimum, used to make small bears for children, totes for wheelchair patients, etc.
- ✓ Yarn: used to make lap robes for wounded veterans, afghans for battered women, and hats for newborns in hospitals

Ongoing Fundraisers

ShopRite Gift Cards

- ✓ No additional cost to you to use
- ✓ Purchase cards at face value
- ✓ Church earns 5%
- ✓ Denominations available are:
\$20, \$50, \$100

Gift Cards are available each week during Fellowship Hour or by contacting Madeline Hahl.

iGive

- ✓ No cost to you
- ✓ Log on / sign up / find out more at:
<http://www.igive.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-StirlingNJ>
- ✓ E-mail this information to your friends

Please e-mail submissions for the January issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by **December 23rd**. Thank you!

Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of

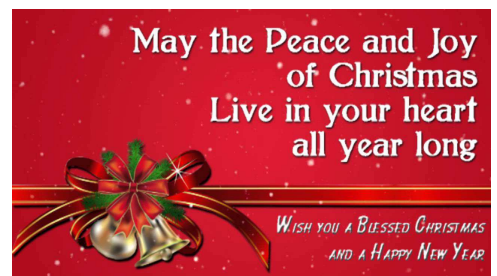
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Why not invite a friend to church?



Our Mission

Jesus said, "Feed My Sheep." This welcoming and caring family, empowered by the love of Christ, shares the grace and peace of God's blessings by serving those who are hungry in body or spirit.

