

Wee Kirk Gazette

Tappahannock Presbyterian Church

December 2013

A “Christmas-Is-Coming Message”

I was thinking about this the other day. Advent means “coming.” Advent means preparing for what is to come. Advent is about rejoicing. You good folks of Tappahannock Pres have been in a state of waiting and preparing for things to come on several fronts for a while now! There was the waiting process for choosing your new minister. I’m coming! I’ll be with you December 1st. When we got together on November 2-3, we did quite a little rejoicing. Then there’s the new church building. It’s coming! You can see the progress every day. It’ll “be here” (be ready) in the spring. Will we ever rejoice then!

And yet, above it all, there’s the original thing, the most important thing, for which we wait, for which we prepare. Advent, of course, is our time of preparing ourselves for the coming of our Lord Jesus. What!? He’s already come, hasn’t he? Well – not exactly. What happened in that stable in that house in Bethlehem so long ago, the coming of the Messiah, wasn’t the *end* of what people were waiting for; it was only the beginning. There was more to come!

I know there are all sorts of Scriptures that talk about a birth ordained by God. For example, Isaiah 9:6: “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Or Jeremiah 23:5: “The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.” Or Isaiah 11, which says in part, “and a little child shall lead them.” Literally, an infant. If you concentrate on that infant’s *coming*, then you’ve reached an “end.”

But, if you look at what all these passages have in common, you see something different. They all look *beyond* the day when the king (or the child) comes, and look to *the days of his reign*. Each of these verses describes what the one-to-come will *begin* doing. When we move through Advent and Christmas arrives, we’re not celebrating an *end*, we’re celebrating the beginning of a new time – if you will, a new “reign.”

Sadly, our American culture has taught us that Christmas *is* the end. It’s the end of the shopping season; it’s the end of the big buildup to December 25, when we get a holiday day off; it’s the end of the time of holiness for a while (for those folks who we only see at Christmas and Easter). No doubt, we get this line of thinking from our obsession with buying and giving gifts; for the retailers, Christmas is the end of the best time of the year for business. With all these “ends,” it’s no wonder some people get the “Christmas blues,” get depressed when December 25 comes around. There’s no joy when you’ve reached the end of something good!

If, on the other hand, we *don’t* think of Christmas as the end, but as the beginning of a new time, then we can *only* deal with it in joy. The time approaching it is a joyous time, because we know the time *after* it is going to be joyful. What we’re doing is preparing ourselves for a time of joyous preparation – and a joyous existence to follow.

Wait a minute! Isn’t Christmas what we’ve been preparing for? Then how can Christmas itself be a time of preparation? Simple. When we celebrate our Savior’s birth, we’re preparing ourselves for the new age, the new era, of forgiveness – bought for us on the cross and from the empty tomb. We’re preparing ourselves for Easter.

Us Tappahannock Pres folks are preparing ourselves for the new time that has begun with the calling of a new pastor, and which will fully dawn when we hold our first worship in the new building. That day won’t be an end either, but the beginning of a new time, a time of ministry to some people who desperately need it. We should consider ourselves blessed, and on Christmas Day, when we usually celebrate by giving gifts, we should think about the gift we’ve been given- our ministry to Tappahannock- and think too about the new era, in our lives and in the lives of our neighbors, that ministry begins. It’s coming! If that’s not a cause for rejoicing and giving thanks this Christmas, I don’t know what is.

Don

Highlights of the Stated Meeting of the Session

November 19, 2013

COMMUNICATIONS

- Request from Presbytery to pledge additional money for the year; request will be considered during budget discussions
- Thank-you being sent to Brett-Reed PC for the \$5000 gift.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- Peacemaking budget \$750 - 50 above last budget.
- 5¢-a-Meal is behind the expected income for the year.
- Money to be received from POJ this month should be \$41,324.
- Motion carried to have Treasurer Jones cash in a CD for \$100,000 to make the payment to contractor
- Asking budget discussed by Session; revisions will be re-submitted after Finance Committee has re-visited the income pledged.
- Motion carried that we begin making our bulletins on our color laser printer, this saves \$278.00 per year as well as giving flexibility in what's on the bulletin covers.
- Discussion on pursuing local loan. TPC Trustees will take under advisement.

OLD BUSINESS

- Building Committee: The new church building project is farther along than expected. (see article)



- 1001 Worship Communities workshop: Bill and Susan Spage attended; stated it was about creating worship groups out of groups of people who already meet, such as in trailer parks, motorcycle clubs, or Interest groups.

MINISTRY REPORTS

1. Worship and Music

- Greening of the church is Saturday morning, November 30.
- Memorial poinsettias may be ordered now



2. Congregational Care and Fellowship:

Following the worship service on December 8 there will be a pot-luck Christmas Dinner at the Riverside Condominium party room.

3. Mission and Outreach

The Angel Tree will contain gift lists for 11 children of incarcerated parents/ care-givers



- Doing something for the patients at the Dialysis Center next door was discussed.
- "Breakfast With Santa" is Dec. 7. TPC members have been very generous with purchasing tickets to give away.
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NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion about appointment of Treasurer and Clerk for the coming year.
- Discussion about establishing a communication committee to oversee all media that represents TPC. This includes but is not limited to the newsletter, community publicity, press releases, and Facebook.
- Discussion about choices of internal furnishings recommended by the Decorating and Furnishing Committee, moderated by Susan Spage. Samples will be shown to the congregation

Building Progress



- ✓ Outside walls are almost completely finished.
- ✓ HVAC is nearly done, electrical work is almost done.
- ✓ Sheet rocking will begin soon.
- ✓ Doors will also be installed soon.
- ✓ Electricity to the building from Dominion Virginia Power should be hooked up by late January or sooner.
- ✓ LED lights and dimmers are being purchased for the sanctuary area. Prices are being compared and the best value for the money will be purchased.



Angel Tree is Up and Ready

The congregation is encouraged to bring unwrapped gifts for children by **Dec. 8**. The Angel tag is to be taken from the tree and there you will find suggestions/ sizes for a gift for a local child whose parent is incarcerated somewhere, not necessarily locally. Please have the unwrapped gift in an open bag with the angel tag attached. This is to allow the caregiver at home to have the pleasure of seeing what the gift is and wrapping it.

The Christmas Mother has been in existence for 3 years in Essex County. This is an effort to see that all children who need gifts are served and that there is not "double dipping" by some to the exclusion of others. Names are collected from Social Services, Community Services, and applications which are due in October. A data base monitors distribution.



dreamstime.com

Welcome Don and Nancy McLean!

Help them get to know you by inviting them to your home for a visit. Nancy will come to Tappahannock for Saturday and Sunday. She will join Don full time when her contract in the Portsmouth school system is up in June. Don is developing his Tappahannock/Portsmouth schedule.

For the time being they will be renting the cottage at Strathbrae until they settle on a place to rent or buy. Don can be reached on his cell phone 757-254-8517.



Christmas Luncheon

Christmas Potluck Luncheon will be served in the Riverside Condo Party Room on December 8, following worship service. Please sign up so that seating can be planned



The table decorations will be crèches from different parts of the world. If you have any you would share let Alice Roye know.

DECEMBER AND JANUARY



* Worship Assistants will read both scripture and prayer of dedication.

December 1 Kim Sydnor
8 Barbara Cullom
15 Roland Geddes
22 Sherry Jones
29 Pat Morris

January 5 John Colby
12 Bill Smith
19 Jill Robertson
26 Janice Canby

Greeter Johnny Frischkorn
Ushers Randy and Lucy Sisk

Greeter John Hardy
Ushers Bill and Vivian Smith

December Birthdays

Lucy Sisk 6
Herb Sebren 9
Peggy Crittenden 10
Chuck Dyer 12
Frank Rossi 25 (Mary Wigmore's son in the Navy)
Jessica Sisk 31



Church Family News

Congratulations to Linda Ball who has another grandson, Freddie, born November 25, to Linda's daughter Christy and Jamie Beamer. This makes Susan Hiller a great aunt, again, and Virginia Hillyer a great grandmother- again!!! Rejoicing for all!

Congratulations also to John and Ann Colby who recently had a new grandbaby. We haven't been able to catch up with them to get more info!

It's a wonderful time of the year to have new babies in the family!



Tappahannock Presbyterian Church

Picture taken November 19, 2013

September 2013 we began building our own structure so as not to continue to share space with a business or organization. This will give us an identity that we have not had in all the years TPC has been in existence. More people know about us since beginning construction than in the past 17 years. We will have a “base camp” from which we go out to serve the community. We will have a sacred place in which Believers will honor God in a variety of ways by (Acts 2:42-47)

- The Apostle’s teaching – reading, studying, and discussing God’s Word.
- Giving – providing for one another’s needs and for outreach.
- Worship – praising and glorifying God through word and music.
- Fellowship – being with each other, enjoying one another, and encouraging one another.
- Breaking of bread - sharing meals together and participating in the Lord’s Supper.
- Prayer – praying for one another’s needs and for advancing God’s kingdom.
- Being together – hanging out and living in harmony with one another.

We have stepped out in faith that those of us in TPC now will continue to support the programs of the church and, in addition, finance the building and its maintenance. That faith also includes the assurance that God will provide more giving members and gifts than we can even imagine.

Alice Roye, editor

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