

Grace Presbyterian Church Newsletter

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www.gracechurch-pcusa.org for prayer list, sermons, and more

December, 2010

"The TV news people keep saying this could be the greatest Christmas we ever had. I kind of thought the first one was." – Milton Berle

Blood Drive at Grace, Jan 3, 2011, 3:00-7:00p.m. Call Mary Orr, 337-8188.

Advent is the beginning of the Christian year. It begins four Sundays before Christmas and runs through Christmas Eve. Advent refers not only to Jesus' birth, but to his coming at the end of time.

In worship, we are in the process of lighting candles on the **Advent Wreath** each Sunday: the Prophecy, Bethlehem, Shepherds, Angels, and Christ Candle.

On Sunday, **December 19**, the choir will perform our annual choral program.

On **Christmas Eve**, a Friday, we will have a service at 11:00p.m. Communion will be served.

Please note that on **Sunday, Dec. 26**, worship will be at the usual time, 10:45, but there will be no Sunday School that day.

The **Joy Offering** is being taken during Advent. You can mail it in to Liz McClain.

It is confusing that the Sundays prior to Christmas are called by so many "the Christmas Season." Certainly everyone is preparing for Christmas, but the Christmas Season, or **Twelve Days of Christmas**, begins on Christmas Day and ends on Jan. 5. January 6 is the beginning of the Season of Epiphany, during which we celebrate the epiphany, or manifestation, of the Christ child to the Magi.

Estimate of Giving Cards for 2011 continue to come in to Grace secretary, Liz McClain. If you intend to send one in or drop it by the church office, please do so ASAP.

Per capita is an assessment paid by each Presbyterian Church to the presbytery, synod, and General Assembly based on membership. If you can pay your per capita, which is \$27/person, it would help Grace tremendously. Just mail to Liz McClain or drop by the church office.

Postings. Condolences to **Melody Manning Williams** (Lillian Manning's daughter) whose husband Lamont passed away on Dec. 3....and to Bob Petschonek Jr. on the death of his father .

Meal-a-month donations to the Rescue Mission for December include canned meat, hot/cold cereal, shaving cream, and trash bags. To be collected at Grace on Sunday, Dec. 26.

Youth Group. Youth have been active recently both in a candle-lighting ceremony on All Saints Sunday and as readers for the Advent Wreath lighting. For info, call Terry at 314-322-2449

Alpha Course. The spring Alpha Course (10 weeks) will begin March 1, Tues. evening, with dinner at 6:15. Please consider taking this course, as well as inviting friends. A second course, for those having taken Alpha, will also be offered beginning March 1, **A Life Worth Living**.

Children's Sunday School (GPS) starts a new rotation, "Miracles of Jesus," Jan. 2

Adult Sunday School. "The Present Word," and the DVD-Discussion classes continue!

The congregation recently mailed Christmas cards to the 20 soldiers in Jeremy Benoit's (Toni Houzenga's son) unit in Afghanistan. DEACONS included two large packages of goodies. PW gave \$200 to the Rescue Mission, as well as assisted several needy families with Christmas gifts, food, and other items.

Pastor's column. There was once a woman who wanted a good world and to be a good person. But the newspaper and television showed her how far we are from such a reality. So she decided to go shopping. She went to the mall and wandered into a new store, one in which the person behind the counter looked strangely like Jesus. "Are you Jesus?" she asked. "Yes, I am," the man answered.

"Do you work here?"... "I own this store," he said. "You are free to wander up and down the aisles, see what I do, and then make a list of what you want. When you are finished, come back here, and we'll see what I can do for you."

The woman did just that. And what she saw thrilled her! There was peace on earth, no hunger or poverty, no more drugs, just harmony and clean air. She wrote furiously and finally approached the counter, handing a long list to Jesus. He skimmed the paper, and then smiling at her said, "No problem." Reaching under the counter, he grabbed some packets and laid them out on the counter. Confused, she asked, "What are these?"

Jesus replied, "These are seed packets. This is a catalogue store."

Surprised, the woman blurted out, "You mean I don't get all the things in the store?"

"Not yet. I give you the seeds, you plant them, nurture them, and help them to grow into the finished product. You plant, and then others reap the benefits. Some you reap also!"

"Oh," she said, deeply disappointed. Then she left the store without buying anything. -DJ

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By BILL KEANE

