



Pluckeminews - December 2010



Dear Friends,

Thursday is Thanksgiving and I want you to know that I will give thanks for you as one of my many blessings. Everyday I am reminded of the wonderful ministry and mission you do in the name of Jesus Christ and Pluckemin Church. You are changing lives with food, work trips, Bible studies, prayer groups, our preschool, medical equipment, visitation, Stephen Ministry, Boy and Girl Scouts, building and repairing homes and churches, our web site, our music ministry, and our ministries of education for children, youth, and adults. Fortunately, worship is the glue that holds us together. It is where we are inspired and energized to do God's work in a decidedly broken world. Thank you for accepting this call and your continuing commitment to uphold fellow Christians so that all of us are strengthened for our journey in faith. I am grateful to be sharing that journey with you.

I am looking forward to our Advent and Christmas services of worship and hope you will take the opportunity to invite your friends and neighbors to join us. Often people who are unchurched still want to worship during Christmas. I've heard that "The Greatest Gift" is a community favorite and I can't wait to see it. Sadly, the Christmas the world celebrates is very different from the Christmas of the Christian Church. While it's wonderful to enjoy the holiday, much of what we see and do at Christmas is about external needs and gifts. For Christians that's not the only focus of the holiday. Jesus came to change our hearts and minds so that we might live faithfully and follow him. Although this is a busy time, please take the opportunity to think prayerfully about the meaning of Jesus' coming and pray that he will come and renew each of us, our church and our world this year.

May God richly bless you during this holy time of year.

In Christ,
A. Coile Estes

Adult Education Offering for Advent

The Adult Ministries education offering for December will be a three-part series titled, "Hallelujah! The Bible and Handel's Messiah." This is a curriculum published by Kerygma Press. "Hallelujah" explores the scriptural texts of Handel's Messiah and includes musical commentary. The three sessions will be offered on Sundays at 9 a.m. in the Covenant Room beginning December 5 and continuing on December 12 and 19.

Thursday Morning Bible Study for Advent: *Hallelujah-The Bible and Handel's Messiah*

Handel's Messiah is one of the best loved musical compositions of all time. In this study we will use the Messiah as an avenue into the biblical texts on which the Messiah is based. Please join us for this four-week Advent Study on Thursday mornings (December 2,9,16 and 23) from 7 to 8 a.m. in the Library. Coffee and snacks are provided. Contact person: Rae Watson (908-326-6035)

Are You Visiting Pluckemin Church?

Are you visiting Pluckemin Presbyterian Church? Are you considering becoming a member? Would you like to learn more about what it means to be a Presbyterian? If you answered yes to any (or all) of these questions, then the Discovery Class is for you. Rev. Estes will lead a class on Sundays, December 5 and 12, 11:15-12:30, in the Library. We will discuss what it means to be a Presbyterian and what it means to be a member of Pluckemin Church. Please plan to join us. Childcare will be provided. Contact Rev. Estes with your questions (908-658-3346 or revestes@ppch.org).

Elders and Deacons Elected

At the congregational meeting held on November 21 the following were elected and will be installed and/or ordained on Sunday, January 23, 2011. Elders are Class of 2013 Pam Ely, Adam Juechter, Dick Lant, Eric Philp, and Bill Sisco; filling an unexpired term in the Class of 2012 is Lisa Rabke. New Deacons are Lauren Powelson and Rich Sample (Class of 2013), and Don Couch will fill a vacancy in the Class of 2012.

~ In the Interim ~

I am reading for the Advent and Christmas season. In my office I found an Advent devotional book from a few years ago with these words:

“A candle light is a protest at midnight.
It is nonconformist.
It says to the darkness - I beg to differ.”
(Father Samuel Rayan, S.J.)

As we approach the darkness we call winter, the shorter days and longer nights, every candle becomes a protest of light against the darkness. We begin Advent by lighting one candle in the Advent wreath. Each Sunday we add one more light, climaxing with the Christmas Eve glow of many lighted candles during worship. All together the light is the witness showing us how God illuminates the darkness with the coming of Christ.

How are you preparing this Advent season? Will your light be volunteering for one of our church events? Baking cookies for the Cookie Walk Fundraiser (the XL Youth Group is raising funds for its summer mission trip) is one way to show light. Perhaps you continue to teach Sunday School, attend a Bible Study, ring bells, sing in a choir, or pray for your church family. Maybe you make visits or take a meal, write cards, call or email. All those actions light a candle in the darkness.

It is your presence that can show the light of Christ. A ministry of presence is so very important. It shows in the family, church and community. So be here, be in prayer, be present, and let your light so shine!

Pastor Karen



We're Going Green!

Beginning in January, *The Pluckemine* will be emailed to the congregation. It is already posted on our website (www.ppch.org). It will be mailed through the post office to all those for whom we have no email address.

If you have an email address but are not receiving emails from the church, please give your email address to the church office and help us save postage. Contact Paula Windus at 908-658-3346 or paula@ppch.org.



Service of Lessons and Carols Sunday, December 19, 10 a.m.

Time-honored traditions make the Advent and Christmas Seasons very special. On Sunday, December 19, at 10:00 am, our congregation will gather for a Service of Lessons and Carols. The voices of our sanctuary choir, the hymns of the congregation, the sounds of the organ, and the pealing of the Carillon Bells will provide the music of the day. Nine scripture readings bring us to the manger. Join us for this beautiful service followed by refreshments in our fellowship hall. Contact the church office for more information (908-658-3346).

Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) Guests Arrive December 12

Everyone is busy during this holiday time, but wouldn't it mean so much more, if you could take two hours of your time to do something for someone else? Please consider spending either two hours or an overnight at the church during the week of December 12 to host our IHN guests? Hosting hours are from 5 – 7 p.m., 7 – 9 p.m., and overnight (9 p.m. – 7 a.m.). SIGN UPs will be held in Fellowship Hall immediately following worship service on Sundays.

We are also in need of a few teenagers to babysit approximately 15 children on Thursday evening, December 16th. Thank you for your support of this very important and vital ministry.

Lynn Ingemi (908-725-3628 or jbingemi@verizon.net)

Men's Breakfast December 21

The monthly Men's Breakfast will be held on Tuesday, December 21 (note the date change) at 7 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. All men of Pluckemin Church are invited.



Operation St. Nick

On Sundays, December 5 and 12, Joan McKinney will be in Fellowship Hall after the 10 a.m. worship service with a list of requests for gifts given to us by the Somerset County Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS). You may choose one or more of these requests, or share a gift purchase. The gifts must be returned to Fellowship Hall or Joan's home by December 15, so that they can be distributed to the families in time for Christmas. Please also provide wrapping paper and ribbon so that parents may wrap the gifts themselves. Questions? Call Joan at 908-722-5140.

Winter Coat Drive

Somerville Area FISH is asking for donations of children's winter coats and jackets for its Children's Clothing Pantry. You may put them in the marked box in Fellowship Hall. Thank you!

Stewardship Update

Adam Juechter, Stewardship Commission Chair, thanks all who have handed in their pledge cards. Those who have not yet returned a pledge card may drop it confidentially in the box in the church office or his mailbox.

Elders of Pluckemin Church

Class of 2011	Class of 2012	Class of 2013
Dieter Fryer	Sal Lalama Pam Ely	
Bob Hole	Gavin Millard	Adam Juechter
Roe Patterson	Marie Moravek	Dick Lant
Andy Plank	Lisa Rabke	Eric Philp
Cheryl Schuman	Bill Savo	Bill Sisco
Elaine Thomas		

Summer Rental Needed

Former long-time members Barry and Carol Isenburg are looking for a place to rent for next June and July (perhaps August also if the price is right). Please call them if you can help (561-704-5133 or 561-704-5122). Thanks.

News from the Pews

- Judith Serino, Diane McBride's sister, died November 6 at age 50.
- Ron Hollmann's mother, Margaret, died October 26 in California at age 90.

More News from the Pews?

Celebrating a milestone anniversary or birthday? The pastor would like to know in advance so we may rejoice with you and share the big news with the congregation during worship. Please call the church office a week before the big day. Going into the hospital? Please tell the church office so we can provide you with Christian care. (Hospitals don't inform us when a church member is admitted. We'll count on you to help us care for you.)

The Arc of Somerset County to Present Lifetime Achievement Award to Mr. Fred R. Patterson

Pluckemin Church member Fred Patterson, 20 year board member of The Arc and retired executive of Johnson & Johnson, has spent his life passionately advocating for disability rights and services. He formed a four year national partnership between The Arc U.S. and Johnson & Johnson to build public awareness. A true pioneer in the disability services movement, Mr. Patterson was a national spokesperson for the "Key of Our Own Campaign" to end residential services waiting lists. He was a member of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, and was a Co-Founder of Safe Kids USA, an effort to increase awareness about the prevention of childhood injury. Mr. Patterson continues to serve as chairman of the NJ Governor's Council on the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities, a position he has held for 20 years. The award will be presented at Fiddlers Elbow Country Club on December 3.

Annual Reports Due January 4th

Annual reports from all commissions and church groups are due in the church office no later than January 4 so that they can be compiled into the Annual Report for 2010 which will be available at the annual meeting on Sunday, February 6. (Finish your report early and enjoy the holidays!) Please submit your report by e-mail to paula@ppch.org. Many thanks!

Children's Ministries



The Greatest Gift

Please share in the joy of the greatest story ever told, the birth of Christ, by attending our very own production, *The Greatest Gift*. This wonderful production of the Christmas Story will take place on December 12th at 6 pm. There will be live animals, hot chocolate, cookies, and singing!

Christmas Eve Pageant

We have such a wonderful treat every year on Christmas Eve - we get to watch our children share the message of Christmas! Please join us on Christmas Eve at 4:30 pm when, under the guidance of our own Mrs. Valerie Sell, our children take us back over 2000 years to the night when Christ was born.

Helping Families in Need

Please join us in helping local families in need. Children's Ministries and the Pluckemin Preschool is supporting DYFS (Somerset County Division of Youth & Family Services) by having a giving tree this holiday season. On the tree are paper angel ornaments with Christmas needs for children. Please, please take an angel and make a child's Christmas dreams come true. The Angel Tree will be in Fellowship Hall after worship. Thank you for your support!

The Children's Ministry Commission would like to wish all our congregants a very merry Christmas! May your holiday be filled with love and prayers.



A Christmas Prayer

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Children's Worship

We will have a special children's program on December 19th during Children's Worship in the Covenant Room. Remember - we have **No Classes** on Sundays, December 26 and January 2! We'll see you all next year!

Save the Date

The very popular Mr. Ray will be performing on January 29th at 3 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Tickets are \$8.00 per person in advance and \$10.00 at the door. Check Mr. Ray's music out at www.mrray.com. There will be more details in the Sunday bulletins in January.

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YOUTH MINISTRIES

Cookie Walk



Sunday, December 12

Come to our **Annual Cookie Walk** during the Fellowship Hour, after Worship. This is our Fall Fundraiser for our 2011 Youth Mission Trip. Please help out by donating cookies to be sold, or by buying cookies.

- Sarah Fryer (908-719-9012,
or silenox@optonline.net)



Mark Your Calendars

Nov 28: NO XL – Happy Thanksgiving.

Dec 5: XL Meeting, 5:30-7:30pm.

Dec 12: Cookie Walk. Come at 9:30am to help set up, then help with the sale at 11am, eat an *occasional* broken cookie, and clean up.

Dec 12: No regular XL – we'll all be attending *The Greatest Gift* that evening. See you there.

Dec 19: XL Meeting, 5:30-7:30pm.

Dec 26: No XL – Merry Christmas!

Sunday XL for grades 7 through 12 meet 5:30 – 7:30 pm, with different times for special activities.

Senior High youth meet Sundays at 9 AM in the library (*check the bulletin for December's schedule*).

Coming Attractions

SAVE THESE DATES for what's happening this winter.

January 2 XL Reunion Brunch for recent XL graduates. PARENTS: PLEASE PASS THE WORD.

January 14 Lock-In: From 9PM Friday until 9am Saturday, we'll have programs, games, movie, and maybe some sleep.

February 6: Super Bowl Progressive Dinner.

February Ski Trip: We leave Friday evening, ski on Saturday, and return Sunday early afternoon. *Tentative date is February 12-14, 2011.* CAN YOU MAKE IT? (bob@ppch.org, 908-526-0008).

Are they taking notes? If you are looking at our Confirmation youth – Yes, they are. The Confirmands are learning many aspects of our faith, including the structure of our worship service. So you may occasionally see them taking notes during service.

December Calendar

Every Week:

Sundays (Nursery care provided 8:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.)

9 a.m. Adult Education, Covenant Room
 9 a.m. Church School/Children's Ministry Wing
 9 a.m. Senior High Church School/Library
 9 a.m. Confirmation Class/Upper Room
 10 a.m. Worship Service, Sanctuary
 10:15 a.m. Children's Worship (age 4 – 2nd grade), Covenant Room
 10:15 a.m. Young Disciples (grades 3-5), Trinity Room
 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall
 11:30 a.m. Intercessory Prayer Group, Upper Room
 2:00 p.m. Korean Sebit Church, Worship Service, Sanctuary
 5:30-7:30 p.m. XL (youth, grades 7-12)

Mondays

Monday Morning Bible Study, 9:30-11 a.m., Library
 Men's Prayer Group, 7 p.m., Library
 Narcotics Anonymous for Men, 7:30-9 p.m., Trinity Room

Tuesdays

Preschool, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.; 12:30 - 3:00 p.m.
 Carillons Bell Choir, 5:45 – 8 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Wednesdays

Preschool, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.; 12:30 - 3:00 p.m.
 Senior Chair Exercise, 9:45-10:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall
 Sebit Church Women's Bible Study, 10:30 a.m., Upper Room
 Jubilation Ringers, 6-7 p.m., Covenant Room
 Women's Bible Study, 7-8:30 p.m., Library
 Carol Choir, 7-7:30 p.m., Covenant Room
 Chapel Ringers, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m., Covenant Room

Thursdays

Bible Study, 7 a.m., Library
 Preschool, 9 - 11:30 a.m.; 12:30 - 3:00 p.m.
 Alcoholics Anonymous, 8 – 9:30 p.m., Grace Corner/Upper Room
 Sanctuary Choir, 8 p.m., Sanctuary or Fellowship Hall

Fridays

Preschool, 9 - 11:30 a.m.; 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.
 Sebit Church Language Classes, 6-7:30 p.m., CM wing, Trinity, Covenant, Upper Rooms
 Sebit Church Bible Study, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m., Trinity Room
 Boy Scouts, 7:30- 9:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

1 (Wednesday)

Evangelism Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Grace Corner

2 (Thursday)

Worship & Music Meeting, 7 p.m., Library
 Cub Scout Leaders' Meeting, 7-9 p.m., Trinity Room

4 (Saturday)

Girl Scout Troop 782 Workshop, 8 a.m. – 12 noon, Fellow. Hall

5 (Sunday)

Communion at 10:00 a.m. worship service
 Discovery (New Members) Class, 11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Library
 Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 11:15 a.m., Covenant Rm

7 (Tuesday)

No Deacons' Meeting this month

8 (Wednesday)

Children's Pageant Rehearsal, 7-7:30 p.m., Covenant Room
 Children's Ministries Meeting, 6 p.m., Room 102
 Finance Committee Meeting, 6 -7:30 p.m., Trinity Room
 NO Book Club this month

9 (Thursday)

Preschool Christmas Programs, 9 and 11 a.m., Fellow.Hall

11 (Saturday)

Greatest Gift Rehearsal, 9-11 a.m., Sanctuary

12 (Sunday)

Cookie Walk, 11 a.m., Fellowship Hall
 Discovery Class, 11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Library
 Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 11:15 a.m., Cov. Rm
 Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) guests arrive, 5 p.m.
 The Greatest Gift, 6 p.m., Sanctuary

13 (Monday)

Preschool Board Meeting. 7:30 p.m., Room 202

14 (Tuesday)

Congregational Care Meeting, 7 p.m., Library
 Session Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Cov. Room (note date change)

15 (Wednesday)

Operation St. Nick gifts due (drop off at church or Joan McKinney's home)

16 (Thursday)

Cub Scout Pack Meeting, 7-8 p.m., Fellowship Hall

18 (Saturday)

Kulick Piano Recitals and Receptions, 12 noon – 6 p.m., Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall

19 (Sunday)

Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) guests leave 8 a.m.
 Service of Lessons and Carols, 10 a.m.

20 (Monday)

Deadline for January newsletter (*The Pluckeminews*) articles
 HR Commission Meeting, 7 p.m., Pastor's Study
 Missions Commission, 7:30 p.m., Covenant Room

21 (Tuesday)

Men's Breakfast, 7 a.m., Fellowship Hall (note date change)

22 (Wednesday)

Children's Pageant Dress Rehearsal, 6-8 p.m., Sanctuary

24 (Friday - Christmas Eve)

Children's Pageant, 4:30 p.m., Sanctuary
 Worship Service, 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary
 Worship Service/Communion, 10 p.m., Sanctuary

26 (Sunday)

No Sunday School or XL Youth Group

27 (Monday)

Church Office closed
 Stephen Ministry Leaders, 7 p.m., Covenant Room

28 (Tuesday)

No Carillons Bell Choir Rehearsal

29 (Wednesday)

No Jubilation Ringers, Carol Choir, or Chapel Ringers

31 (Friday – New Year's Eve)

Church office closes 1 p.m.
 Sebit Church Worship & Fellowship, 6 p.m. – 1 a.m.

Pluckemin Church Preschool News

The Preschool celebrated its 40th Anniversary and it was a fun filled event for everyone. The children enjoyed face painting, compliments of Seton Helwig, and balloon animals and creations by Brian Hall. The guests of honor were Shirley Young, our founding Director, and Barbara Hagan who served as Director for thirteen years. It was a great turnout of approximately 150 guests! It was wonderful reminiscing with former teachers and friends of Pluckemin. While Pluckemin Preschool began with a small enrollment of 26 children and a staff of four, it has grown to over 100 children with a staff of 16 teachers. There have been many changes over the years, yet the heart of the program has remained the same. The Preschool has been a tremendous outreach to the community, instilling Christian values and promoting the love of learning in children which goes beyond their years at Pluckemin.

Thank you to all the church members who contributed to our Clothing Drive this fall. We collected over 2300 pounds of clothing and accessories.

If you would like to get into the Christmas spirit, please consider participating in the Angel Tree outreach program. The preschool is teaming with the Sunday School classes to help provide gifts for children with the Somerset County Division of Youth & Family Services. There is a Christmas tree located in the Children's Ministry wing lobby. Please take a tag from the tree and place your name and information on the sheet located near the tree. Return the unwrapped gift with wrapping supplies along with the tag attached, and place it in the marked box by Friday, December 10th. This is a great way to share a bit of joy for a less fortunate child.

Church Members and In-House Registration:

Church members are invited to enroll their children for the 2011-2012 school year at the same time as families with children currently enrolled in the preschool. Registration for this group will take place from Tuesday, January 4th through Friday, January 14th, 2011, **prior to public registration.** Call the preschool office at 908-658-4720 to receive important information and paperwork prior to registration. Spots do fill up quickly and placement will be completed as registration forms are received.

Tuba City, Arizona, Mission Trip

In October, Emmanuel Presbyterian (Thousand Oaks, California), Christ Presbyterian (Goodyear, Arizona) and Pluckemin Presbyterian members continued work with the First Presbyterian Church of Tuba City members. The long-term objective is to stabilize, and then grow, Tuba City Presbyterian Church so that they can continue to proclaim the Gospel.

Tuba City is struggling financially as traditional Presbyterian General Assembly and Grand Canyon Presbytery Mission funds dry up. 60 – 70% unemployment on the Navajo Reservation (more than double the 25% unemployment of the Great Depression) limits the ability of the congregation to support itself. 40% of Navajos, including Tuba City's Clerk of Session, do not have running water.

Tuba City members have been tenacious in supporting the church. They have held Bible studies and Session meetings in parkas and mittens, when they could not afford heating propane, and in daylight only, when they had no electricity.

The church does not have a pastor, and two lay members take turns preparing sermons and leading worship. The Manse has been rented to traveling nurses on a temporary basis. Some of the nurses attend Tuba's Bible study, and the rent now covers some church utility bills and other expenses.

The Manse will be needed for a future minister and can't be rented indefinitely. Another building is being renovated for rental income. This October, electrical, heating, lighting, flooring, windows and parking lot improvements were made. The building is closer to being rentable, and the overall condition of the church has improved.

Significant progress has been made at Tuba City Presbyterian since Pluckemin started renovating its Sanctuary and other buildings in 2008 and helped replace the Sanctuary roof in 2009. There is still much work to be done. Next year Pluckemin will likely join Trinity Presbyterian (Camarillo, California) the week before Easter, or Emmanuel Presbyterian the week after Easter. The main project will be replacing the Manse roof, but other projects are also planned.

Some locals have referred to Tuba City Presbyterian as "the dinosaur church" because of its dilapidated condition. Congregation members have been depressed with their inability to maintain it. The church is now more attractive, and the congregation is enthusiastic about its future. They are very appreciative of Pluckemin's support and have given Pluckemin a handwoven Navajo rug to express their appreciation. The gift is especially meaningful since it had been hanging in their Sanctuary since Tuba City members wove it in the 1930s. We are looking into the best way to display their treasured gift.

News from the Church Office

- The church office is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. The deadline for announcements to be submitted for the Sunday bulletin is the Wednesday before that Sunday. The deadline for submitting articles for the monthly newsletter, *The Pluckeminews*, is the 20th of every month. Please e-mail Sunday announcements or newsletter articles to Paula Windus in the church office at paula@ppch.org.
- The Rev. A. Coile Estes is in the office every weekday except Friday. You may reach her through the church office (ext. 102) or by e-mail. In an emergency, you may call her on her cell phone: 404-405-5692.
- The Rev. Karen Brostrom-O'Brien, interim associate pastor, is in the office every weekday except Friday. You may leave a message on her voicemail (ext. 103). In an emergency, you may call her on her cell: 908-635-6933.

Deacon-on-Call for December: Diane Gibson (908-781-0734)

Call for temporary or emergency needs of the congregation such as eldercare, transportation, meal preparation, respite care, visitation, or Communion for those who are homebound or in nursing care facilities.

Pluckemin Church Staff

Pastor/Head of Staff: The Rev. A. Coile Estes (revestes@ppch.org)
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**Return Service
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