

# PresbEnews

*Good News Edition - December 2011*



A monthly newsletter of First Presbyterian Church - Jody McDevitt & Dan Krebill, co-pastors  
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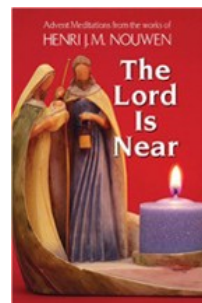


*Co-Pastors' Corner....* Are you finding time to slow down in the busy-ness of this holiday season? Between the shopping, the decorations, the parties and the hectic hurry towards Christmas, is there space in your life to let Christ be born again in you?

There are signs all around us of God's presence, but unless we are tuned in to notice them, we experience the world as a God-less place. The fast pace of our lives works against our awareness of God. And without that awareness, our own calling to be channels of God's love and light is blocked. This isn't the way God wants us to live!

So how do we slow down and become more aware of God? This morning's meditation from Henri Nouwen reminds us to "search amid the small." Recalling Isaiah's words, "a shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse," foretelling the coming of the Messiah from the lineage of David, Nouwen reflects on the small child of Bethlehem who comes for our salvation. What small signs of God's presence are in our lives? The touch of someone who loves us, the kindness of a stranger, the marvel of a snowflake, the taste of bread, the face of a child? Seek these small signs; notice them; thank God for them; let them light up your life and by doing so let God's light shine through you. You may be the small sign someone else needs.

Slowing down can start with a daily practice of devotion. For this Advent season, there are copies of *The Lord is Near*, Advent meditations from Henri Nouwen, available in the church office and on the tables in the sanctuary entrances.



**Don't forget the Brunch on Sunday between services!!** Come after the first service and enjoy the company of church friends that you sometimes do not get to visit with! The Presbyterian Women Circles are hosting the brunch between the early and late services in the fellowship hall. The food promises to be delicious (and plenty of it)! Please plan to come with your family and/or friends and join in the conversations and laughter! We hope to see you there.

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### Student nurse to Learn and Serve in Kenya

Heather Archer, daughter of Sandy and Dan Archer, will be graduating from college this coming semester. She is a nursing student at Jamestown College in Jamestown, North Dakota. In February she will be traveling to Africa with a group of nursing students and will be working at a hospital in Chogoria, Kenya.

Jamestown College is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the hospital where she will learn and serve is run by the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, which our Presbyterian Women's group has supported in past years. In addition to the hospital, the group will visit an orphanage school. They plan to take clothing and school supplies for the children, as well as funds for food.

Heather will be awarded assistance through our Educational Assistance Fund and the Children's Orphanage is receiving monies to provide meals. She will also be taking supplies to the children for school needs.

Betsy Crabs, Outreach Committee

### 2 Corinthians 9:7

*Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

Thank you for giving your time, talents, and financial contributions.  
Without your generous support, we could not do all the great things we do to Glorify God.

Below is a table showing our financial status as of the end of October.

October Income	\$36,161.78	Year-to-Date Income	\$ 346,185.80
October Expenses	\$ 31,462.66	Year-to-Date Expenses	\$ 349,472.36
October Balance	\$4,699.12	Year-to-Date Balance	(\$ 3,286.56)

## Congregational Meeting Dec 11

A special congregational meeting will be held immediately following the 10:30 service on Sunday, Dec 11 for the purpose of electing a person to fill a recently vacated seat on the Session. The meeting will be brief (60 seconds?) but important. Please plan to hear the Nominating Committee report and elect a new church officer. Thank you. and elect a new church officer. Thank you.

## Advent and Christmas at First Presbyterian Church

What more special time of year could there be than the seasons of Advent and Christmas? And in the church, we have so much more than Santa Claus, super sales, and busy sidewalks to offer. We have Christ, and the story of God coming into the world in love!

Special services and events bring our church family together in this season. Plan to join in and make your Advent and Christmas meaningful this year.

**Dec 4 9:15 am, Advent Brunch** – Between the 8:30 and 10:30 worship services, hosted by our Presbyterian Women circles, an opportunity for fellowship around tables. No reservations needed, all ages welcome, come enjoy being together.

**Dec 17 5 pm, Lessons and Carols at Rockhaven**- Hear the Christmas story and sing traditional carols in the warmth of a wood stove fire in the chapel at Rockhaven. Then hasten to the dining hall for a chili and cornbread supper. Kids are encouraged to bring sleds and try out the hill.

**Dec 18 3 pm, 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Messiah Sing, 3 pm** – This year, an orchestra will accompany the assembled choir and soloists. Come early for a good seat, and bring your Messiah score if you want to sing along. This is a very popular community event and a wonderful way to welcome others into our sanctuary.

### Dec 24 Christmas Eve

**5 pm Family Service** – Led by children and youth of our congregation, this service welcomes the young and the young at heart to hear the Christmas story, sing carols, hear lovely children’s music, and see the story enacted in costume. *Invite a friend with a youthful spirit to this joyous celebration.*

**8 pm Traditional Service** – Led by our Worship Choir and First Bells, this service celebrates the Christmas story in glorious music and message. Ponder the meaning of Christmas as you praise God in carols and prayer. *Invite a friend who is longing for good news to this festival celebration.*

**11 pm Candlelight Service** – Led by soloists and ensembles, this service marks the gift of Christ in the world, as a candle illuminates the darkness. Await the coming of the Christ child, singing carols and lighting candles. *Invite a friend who might otherwise be alone on Christmas Eve.*

**Dec 25 10:30 am, Christmas Day** – A Sunday to celebrate the birth of Christ! This year we will mark the occasion by remembering that Christ came for the whole creation, and was welcomed by the animals of the stable. A “Blessing of the Animals” service will honor pets. *Invite someone who knows how God’s love comes to us through animals. (more information inside)*

The Lord is near—welcome him into the world!



## Christmas Day Blessing of the Animals

When Christmas falls on a Sunday, we have a rare opportunity to celebrate. This year we will come together as a church family for one service at 10:30 am. Many of us include pets in our families and PETS ARE INVITED for a “Blessing of the Animals” service. Remembering the donkey, sheep, cattle, and other animals who welcomed Jesus’ birth, please bring your dogs, cats, lizards, turtles, rabbits, hamsters, gerbils, parrots, monkeys, snakes, etc., etc. to be blessed!

Some guidelines for the day:

Pets must be controlled at all times. Use a leash for your dog, a leash or cage for other animals.

If you have a pet who would be difficult in a public setting, bring a picture or a symbol of that pet for blessing.

Be prepared to clean up after your pet.

Stuffed animals are welcome, too!



We will sing songs and hear scriptures which lift up the special role of animals in God’s world. As the carol says, “And heaven *and nature* sing!”

## 10th Annual Messiah Community Sing

Sunday December 18th @ 3:00pm in the Sanctuary.

Lead Choir rehearsal: Saturday December 17 @ 10:00am. Please let Kathy Braun know if you need a score.

Events will include soloists, organ, and orchestra. Refreshments following.

## *Thank You's:*

Thanksgiving Baskets were delivered on November 18, to 68 families in the greater Bozeman area with all the trimmings. The baskets provided dinners for 283 individuals, 112 adults and 171 children. This was due to the incredible generosity of the members of our congregation. The Board of Deacons would like to thank everyone who made this possible. The 48 people who packed and delivered the baskets, the 6 truck drivers who transported the food from Van’s to the Senior Center and countless others who donated \$1,250 and 17 turkeys to fill the baskets. It was truly a team effort that made this possible and was so gratefully received by the recipients.

***THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO HELPED WITH THE GREENING OF THE CHURCH ON SATURDAY:***

***Stephanie Breen for her guidance, and the following elves who helped:***

***John Patterson, Austin Braun, Nancy Williams, Kingston Chirwa, Suzanne Bratsky, Jill Brauss, Randy, Jody, Jacob, Logan and Maggie Kleinhans and Larry Growney.***

***And the Boy Scouts who brought us the trees!***

## REMEMBER

### 30 YEARS OF AIDS

December 1st, 2011, marks 30 years of AIDS. Join us as we remember those who are infected and affected by HIV and AIDS throughout our community and our world. Greg Smith will be sharing a commemoration speech as we reflect upon the impact of this disease. Remember these 30 years.

### 2011 WORLD AIDS DAY CANDLE LIGHT VIGIL

**Christus Collegium** 714 S. 8th Ave., Bozeman

Thursday, December 1, 2011 **6:00-8:00pm**

## You're Invited! Come to Love INC's Annual Open House

on December 8, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Take a peek at this outreach ministry hub of our church and 42 other Christian churches in our area. Drop in, enjoy Christmas goodies, take a tour, talk with staff and see what the church volunteers are doing to transform lives in Gallatin County! We hope you will come!

## BIRTHDAYS!!

12/2 *Joy Ames*

12/3 *Jim Mitchell*

12/4 *Tom Hinman*

12/5 *Dan Holland*

12/6 *Shelly Clunie*

*Holly Severson*

## Newsletter Notices

**There will be NO newsletter on December 28 (between Christmas and New Year's).**

**The Good News for January will not be published on January 4; look for it later in the week (January 5 or 6).**

## Church Facebook page a source of up-to-date news!

Even if you're not a Facebook member yourself, you can still access the church's Facebook page at

[www.facebook.com/fpcbozeman](http://www.facebook.com/fpcbozeman)



## Holland-days...

(by Dan Holland)

Most years the Thanksgiving weekend is one of my most treasured times. There is always good food, and when mixed with loved ones and an overwhelming sense of gratitude, a wonderful experience normally transpires. This year was different, though — I threw my back out on Thursday morning and spent the next four days writhing in agony on the floor in front of the tellie (luckily Thanksgiving also means lots of good games to watch.) As a result I contemplated taking a flyer from this week's PresbEnews.

Then I realized this is also the first week of Advent. I need to start 'preparing the way' as Isaiah commanded us to do. So the first thing I did was to yield to nagging common sense and went to the doctor early Monday morning. Perhaps it is the muscle-relaxers and pain relievers talking here, but I am finally able to see beyond the tyranny of self-absorption that had shackled me for several days. Now I can see there is a baby coming. A baby coming to a barn.

### **A Manger in My Heart**

Regardless of your tradition, regardless of what you believe,  
I think we can agree there is magic on Christmas Eve.  
Yes, there are many different customs, many different views,  
and on the blessed night there are lots of people in the pews.

History tells us that it all began with a humble birth,  
and this simple, little baby was sent to save the earth.  
So as I go to all the parties, as I stroll about the town,  
Christmas comes into focus as the days get counted down.

But until I clear a place for peace in the manger of my heart,  
until I lay down a bed of straw for hope to make a start,  
not until both love and faith are lowing gentle in their stall,  
can I claim I have Christmas spirit – that I celebrate at all.

Oh sure, I can put up decorations; I can deck the halls;  
I can belly laugh some Ho-ho-hos like Santa in the malls.  
This is all well and good, it helps to set the stage.  
But I can never lose the wonder, no matter what my age.

So I must make an effort to muck my heart of worldly woes,  
and then I must climb the railing and stand on tippy-toes.  
For I must keep an eye out for a foaling in the night;  
I must be attentive for the coming of love's pure light.

Like a Salvation Army kettle ringer, I must look ahead,  
and I need to say more prayers before I go to bed.  
And if I make these changes, if I do my part,  
then Christmas can be merry in the manger of my heart.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>December 2011</h1>						
				1 7:30 am Women's Morning Book Group  7 pm Deacons	2	3
4 8:30 am Worship 9:00 Hospitality Brunch 10:30 Worship 10:45 K-4 Sunday School	5	6 6:45 pm Handbell Rehearsal 7 Boy Scouts	7 4 pm Adult Study Forum 7 Choir Rehearsal	8 7:30 am Women's Morning Book Group  7 pm Committee Night	9	10
11 8:30 am Worship 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 10:45 K-4 Sunday School 11:30 Congregational Meeting	12	13 6:45 pm Handbell Rehearsal 7 Boy Scouts	14 4 pm Adult Study Forum 7 Choir Rehearsal	15 7:30 am Women's Morning Book Group  7 pm Session	16	17 10 am Messiah Rehearsal  5:30 Rockhaven Lessons and Carols and Chili Dinner
18 8:30 am Worship 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 10:45 K-4 Sunday School 3:00 Messiah Sing	19	20 6:45 pm Handbell Rehearsal 7 Boy Scouts	21 4 pm Adult Study Forum 7 Choir Rehearsal	22 7:30 am Women's Morning Book Group	23	24 5 pm Family Christmas Service 8 Traditional Christmas Eve Service 11 Communion Service
25 Merry Christmas  10:30 Blessing of the Animals Christmas Service	26 Office Closed	27 6:45 pm Handbell Rehearsal 7 Boy Scouts	28 4 pm Adult Study Forum 7 Choir Rehearsal	29 7:30 am Women's Morning Book Group	30	31