



*Come home  
to God's love*

# Our Vision

**The First Presbyterian Church of Dearborn**  
**December 2015 Newsletter**



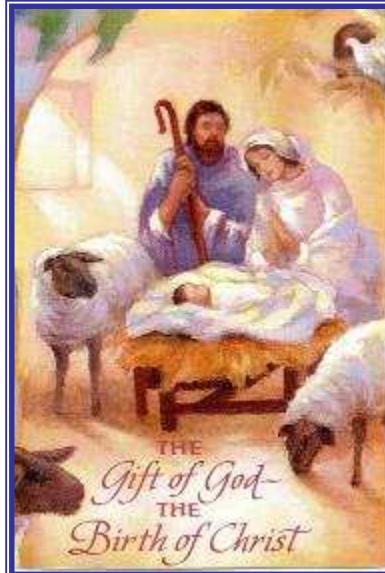
*Celebrate Christmas  
Friday, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>*



**Christmas Caroling  
Young and Old!**

**Sun. Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> at 4pm**

See Page 6



***NOEL FESTIVAL***  
**Sunday, Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> at 6pm**

See Page 4



**Touch of Hope Christmas Offering  
Angel Adoptions**

See Page 6



***Children's  
Christmas Shopping***  
**Sun. Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>  
during Sunday School**

See Page 4

**Please join us for these special Christmas events:**

**Sun, Dec 6 Children's Shopping ~~~~~ 9am  
Christmas Caroling ~~~~~ 4-7pm**

**Sun, Dec 13 NOEL Festival ~~~~~ 6pm**

**Thurs, Dec 24 Family Christmas Eve Service ~ 5:30pm  
Candlelight Christmas Service~ ~ 11pm**

**Please bring a friend!**





## December at FPCD

Do you hear what I hear??? Beyond the Turkey and Black Friday there is a gentle breeze bringing in the sound of the bells - ah, Christmas bells. One of my fun "toys," as the catalogs refer to electronic items, is a small chest of bells. At this time of the year, although Advent is just begun, they play Christmas carols. What a wonderful experience to sit and enjoy the songs of Christmas - the rooms full of Christmas decorations - the beautiful Christmas trees - and family. Truly a blessing.

Unfortunately the joy and warmth feeling is dulled by the reality of the time in which we live. While we might like to sit by the fireplace with chestnuts roasting - the world is aflame with war and the rumors of war. Pope Francis has called upon Christians to weep.... for God weeps....Jesus weeps... at his creation- consumed with hatred wars, sufferings...and death. It was not supposed to be this way you know. Jesus came to bring peace to the world. Forgiveness/love was to be the way - as we have been forgiven -forgive; loved - love.

Human Sin got in the way - the best and the brightest from Camelot - with their brilliant minds and clever hands have created a world of woe. When we dream of what could be...what could have been - it is so sad. Ah, but there are some lights in the midst of our darkness...some glimmers of the rainbow beyond the dark clouds.

Antoine Leiris is the husband of one of the 130 killed by Islamic Terrorists in Paris. He shared his soul on Facebook with his post: "you will not have my hatred." He begins (in French) "Friday night you stole the life of an exceptional being, the love of my life, the mother of my son, but you will not have my hatred. I do not know who are and I do not want to know; you are dead souls. If God, for which you kill blindly, made us in his image, every bullet in the body of my wife has been a wound in his heart."

"So I will not give you the privilege of hating you. You certainly sought it, but replying to hatred with anger would be giving in to the same ignorance which made you into what you are. You want me to be frightened, that I should look into the eyes of my fellow citizens with distrust, that I sacrifice my freedom for security. You lost, I will carry on, as before."

He continued: "I saw her this morning," Leiris said of his wife Helene. "finally, after nights and days of waiting. She was as beautiful as when she left on Friday evening, as beautiful as when I fell madly in love with her more than 12 years ago. I am of course, devoted by heartbreak, I'll cede you that little victory, but it will be short lived. I know that she will be with us every day and that we will meet again in a paradise of free souls to which you will never have access."

Lewis closed by promising to raise his son happy and free. "There are only two of us, my son and I, but we are stronger than all the armies of the world. Moreover, I have no more time to grant to you. I must go to Melvil who is waking up from his nap. He is just 17 months old. He will eat his snack like he does every day, then we will play like we do every day and every day of his life this little boy will affront you by being happy and free, because you will not have his hatred either.

I envision God watching over Golgotha - with broken heart at his son's lifeless body - temple cloth torn – earth quaked - darkness all around....but then.... but then... a stone was rolled away.... He Lives...Dear friends in Christ that is what this season is all about -- a babe born - He set us - free souls - in God's creation which we have besmirched but cannot destroy...God is with us every day and nothing in this whole world can ever separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord! The Terrorists will not defeat the love of God...no, they will never know the paradise of free souls for they will not have access.

Let these days prepare your minds, souls, and hearts for the coming....of His days! Amen and Amen.

See you in Church,  
Pastor Don

## Children's Ministry



### Treasure Chest Christmas Shopping:

Sunday, December 6 - The Treasure Chest (resale shop in our church's basement) opens its doors for the seventh annual Children's Christmas Boutique. Kids can shop for their loved ones with the assistance from the wonderful volunteers from the Treasure Chest. This will take place both during education hour and Children's Church.

**Donations needed!!** This is a great time to clean house! Do you have any treasures that other kids would appreciate as gifts for their family members? Jewelry, accessories, toys, tools, household items and decorations will all be welcome in our sale. If you have a donation of goods to make, please leave it in the Christian Education office, marked "Treasure Chest" by December 2.

**Helpers needed!** Do you want to be part of this event? You can be a shopping assistant for one of our youngest shoppers, you can help wrap presents, or you can help with entertainment for those who have already finished their shopping. Contact Beckie Dicks at [BDicks1220@gmail.com](mailto:BDicks1220@gmail.com) if you're interested.

**Sunday School** will continue through the holidays, with the exception of December 27. On that Sunday during education hour, we'll gather in Mitchell hall for an informal carol sing.

*~Beckie Dicks- Children's Ministries Coordinator*

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## Treasure Chest Good News!



**Rummage Sale-** The ladies of the Treasure Chest recently held the Annual Rummage Sale. This Friday and Saturday sale brought many members of the community to our church. \$3,000 was raised in sales of gently used items donated by our congregation. Thanks to all the ladies (and men) that worked diligently to assure this sale was a huge success.

**Fashion Show-** In mid-October the Treasure Chest paired up with the City of Dearborn Senior Services to provide a fashion show at the Dearborn Civic Center. This was a ladies luncheon with everyone bringing a tea cup for tea. The Treasure Chest provided 15 models who each modeled 2 outfits. The show was well received and has already lead to more customers looking for coats and better outfits for the fall. Be sure to see the bulletin board in the main hall for pictures. Thanks to all the models and the people who dressed them. The award for the two cutest models goes to Rev. Don Wright and Evelyn Reid, Charlene's granddaughter. At age 84 and 3, they stole the show!

**Volunteers Needed-** Lastly, the Treasure Chest needs several new volunteers. A commitment of one Wednesday morning or afternoon a month is needed. This is a great way to help the less fortunate, make new friends and maybe even find a few treasures of your own. Please contact **Jeffel Dean** at 313-565-4114 to discuss opportunities.



## Annual NOËL Festival

***Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 6pm in Mitchell Hall***

Come join us for our 7<sup>th</sup> annual NOËL Festival! There will be dramatic presentations and lots of carol singing, with all of our choirs participating.

***A great dinner begins at 6:00pm.***

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW IN THE NARTHEX!**

Patron level: \$100 (includes 4 tickets)

Adult: \$10 each

Children ages 5-12: \$5 each

Children under age 5: FREE!

## Children's Christmas Shopping

The Treasure Chest will open on **Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>** for Children's Christmas Shopping during Sunday School and Children's Church. Let your children do their Christmas shopping in the safe environment of the church.



***Free gift wrapping.***

***Fun shopping for the kids!***



## **Adult and Teen Christian Education, Young Adult Worship & Study & Youth Groups**

***Pastor Mike Hoffman, CRE, Christian Education, Young Adults, and Youth Groups Director***

The CE Committee consisting of Pastor Don, Beckie Dicks, Jane Dearth, Chris Masouredis and I would like to wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Currently we are tying up the loose ends in planning the winter and spring class offerings. Keep your eye on our weekly worship bulletin and screens for updates that will begin in January 2016.

Good teaching comes from good learning, and the book of Proverbs has much to say to students in particular. This book makes it clear that there is no alternative to learning wisdom. We either choose to become successful learners or choose to become foolish failures. Please take time to get yourself and your family involved in 9:00 AM Sunday Offerings (adult, youth, and children), Sunday at 3 PM *4:12 and CREW Youth Groups*, 6:00 PM Wednesday *FISH* dinner & class (adult and children), or 5:30 PM Saturday evening *Converge* (young adults @ Panera Cares).

**Wise Learners:**

Quietly accept instruction/criticism  
Love discipline  
Listen to advice  
Accept parent's discipline  
Lead others to life  
Receive honor  
Profit from constructive rebuke

**Proverbs:**

10:8, 23:12, 25:12  
12:1  
12:15, 21:11, 24:6  
13:1  
10:17  
13:18  
15:31, 32, 29:1

**Foolish Learners:**

Ignore instruction  
Hate correction  
Think that they need no advice  
Mock parents  
Lead others astray  
End in poverty and shame  
Self-destruct by refusing rebuke

**Teachers also are given advice in Proverbs:**

Help people to avoid traps  
Use pleasant words  
Speak at the right time

13:14  
16:21  
15:23, 18:20

Take time to make sure you and your family are "well-fed". Plan to make a New Year's Resolution to attend one or more of the first paragraph offerings in 2016. Remember, you cannot transform unless you have a good relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, as well as have the proper nutrition provided by Christian Education.

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## **Presbyterian Women's Bible Study**

**Lamkin PW (Presbyterian Women) Bible Study** will be starting the 2015-2016 HORIZONS Bible study, *Come to the Waters*. Join us on Thursday mornings from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Charlie Aronson and Jane Lewy-Mykytenko will lead our discussions. "The rich imagery of water throughout the Bible helps us understand and articulate our faith. Just as water nourishes our bodies, so the scriptures on water nourish our souls."



## Music Corner

A special thank you and kudos to Frédéric Blanc for his recital on November 20<sup>th</sup>. I hope you all could make it, it was a special evening. What a wonderful way to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our organ. We began the year with a recital by Dr. James Kibbie from the University of Michigan and our own Dr. Timothy Huth, and got to close out the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration with Frédéric Blanc. Outstanding! A special thank you to our own organist, Dr. Timothy Huth for all the work he put into both recitals. We also would like to acknowledge the assistance from the Detroit Chapter of the American Guild of Organists in helping to bring Mr. Blanc.

It's hard to believe that December is here already. With the Holidays upon us, here are some events to remember during the month of December:

Sunday, 11/29 **Hanging of the Greens**. Please come and join us for the decorating of the Sanctuary and the Chrismon Tree! Meet at 6:00pm in the Sanctuary!

Sunday, 12/6 **Church wide Christmas Caroling to Shut-ins**. Meet at 4:00pm in Mitchell Hall. From there we will split up into groups to carol to our shut-ins. This is a great time of fellowship and fun. Come ready to have a great time. When we're done caroling we come back to the church for hot chocolate and cookies!!

Sunday 12/13 **NOËL Festival**. Come join us at our annual NOËL Festival for a great catered dinner, fellowship, and a musical program provided by our children's, youth and adult choirs. \$10 for Adults, \$5 for children ages 5-12, children under 5 are free. We also offer a patron ticket package of 4 tickets for \$100 if you'd like to help defray the costs of the evening.

Thursday 12/24 **Christmas Eve**. We invite you to one of our Christmas Eve services. We have a 5:30 Family Service, with music provided by children's and youth choirs, with soloists. We also have our 11:00pm Candlelight service, with Prelude music beginning at 10:30. Come join us at either service to celebrate Christmas with fellowship and wonderful music.

I hope to see you at some of these wonderful opportunities!      ~Marshall



## Touch of Hope Christmas Offering

The Christmas season arrives with joy. Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus and a time to be grateful for God's blessings to us. Many of our fifteen Touch of Hope families are struggling. As a congregation we can brighten their holiday season and show them God's love.

Gifts will be collected and dedicated on Sunday December 6. Please turn gifts in before Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> if you cannot be at church on that Sunday.

Non-perishable food, personal care items, paper products and cleaning supplies will be collected the week after the gifts on December 13. Fifteen of any item listed in the above categories would be appreciated. All donations of any amount are welcome, provided the items are not past the expiration date. These items will be sorted on December 13 and sponsors and families will pick up donations and gifts on that day.

Help will be needed to sort gifts and donated food, personal care items, paper products, and cleaning supplies. This will mean sorting on both December 6 and December 13. Please consider donating time on those Sundays. If you have questions or want to volunteer please contact Margie Johnston-Maurer at 313 563-9520. All volunteer help and donations of gifts and supplies are appreciated. Monetary donations are also welcome. Our families need and appreciate the support we give them, especially during the Christmas season. Thank you for your generosity and support.

## Musings from Pastor Mike, CRE

Young Adult & Adult CE Director and Youth Groups Leader

### The E.P.I.C. Style of Learning in Worship

I have noticed that many young people have been staying away or dropping out of the traditional, mainline church. Some have told me that they prefer a service that begins later on a Saturday or on a Sunday evening. Others have told me that they are looking for something that is less liturgical and more casual. Still others have shared with me that they are drawn to a more ancient form of worship with candles, incense, stained glass, and other details that appeal to the senses. But most have spoken about how they are having difficulty relating to worship. This is mainly because "post-moderns" learn differently than us "moderns" do, and have a distinct mind-set on how they desire and long to participate in worship. This was reinforced recently when I had coffee at Starbuck's with a twenty-something from our own congregation. She remarked to me that she was spiritually hungry for a message and worship service much like the one that she had when she was at college. It was evident that she was describing a service that was experiential, participatory, image-based, and relational (E.P.I.C.). Likewise, a regular at *Converge* talked with me the other night about how he will most likely never step into a typical church service again because he cannot "live with the top-down structure of the typical worship and message". He desires participatory relationship, interaction, questioning and guidance to be the main-stay of his Christian, worship experience.



Martin Luther reformed the sermon into an academic lecture as the centerpiece of worship, a one-way, authoritative, top-down model. But, as Pastor Rick Chromey, D. Min. writes in *Sermons Reimagined, Preaching to a Fluid Culture*, the Web culture has shattered this 500-year old wineskin, making everyone an influencer and partner and desiring to contribute to worship as a participant, not simply as a bystander. I know that this can make those of us trained at seminary as a "Sage from the Stage" nervous, but it can also be exciting and challenging to become a "Guide from the Side". Making a message so relevant that members of a family of faith can reproduce and live-out the topic spoken on Sunday morning (or in my case, mostly on Saturday evenings) to friends, family, and co-workers during the week is a goal that most pastors desire.

Let me be very clear on the focus of this article that I am penning. It's not about changing the message of the gospel, but it is about changing the methodology of making that Biblical message relevant, one that sticks, and is transformational.

Much preaching today in churches across the nation is expository, which dissects (exposes) passages of scripture and then explains and applies the truths discovered. While I was trained in expository preaching and I appreciate it, I admit that I struggle with any method that reduces scripture to something akin to a seminary lecture. The Word of God is living, active and is full of narratives (stories). Narratives draw listeners into the cultural context and the lives of the characters. Narrative preaching reveals the story behind the story, hence the great impact that people's personal testimonies have on each other.

Narrative preaching is only part of the story...a speaker must also include substantial interaction. To be effective with emerging generations, we must also guide conversations about the selected text, answering questions, and inspiring insight through video clip, personal testimony, or experiential activity. As preachers, we are not the source of information (God is, as expressed through Holy Scripture) but instead, we are the resources. Pastor Chromey states that, "Postmodern narrative, interactive preaching offers up stories, lens, and orthopraxy (right behavior), as opposed to modern propositional, expository preaching which proposes solutions, frames, and orthodoxy (right thinking)". The goal of conversational narrative preaching is much like what John the Baptist said about Jesus, recorded in John 3:30, "He must become greater. I must become less." Our role as pastors is to reveal the Messiah to others. It is not about our profound words, penetrating insights, or powerful applications.

I am not saying I have all the answers, because quite frankly, I don't. I am simply trying to meet the need of many young adults who are spiritually falling through the cracks of our current church structure and liturgy. I know that what I prescribe is much easier to do on a Saturday evening at *Converge* or at *Saturday Night Alive* with 20-30 people, than it may be for me to do on a Sunday morning with 200-300 people, but that is the challenge that the Holy spirit has given me, as I work intensely to see the church grow in numbers with young adults playing a part in something new and different. I know that many young adults desire Experiential, Participatory, Image-based, and Conversational (E.P.I.C.) worship that reflects that faith is not an academic subject, but is a relationship with our one and only Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Thanks for being patient with me (especially thanks to Pastor Don Wright, a highly competent and creative communicator for over 50 years who has finely honed his own, distinctive style), as I continue to assist young adults in engaging in a meaningful relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen. ~ God's Peace - Mike

December

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WED
		9am Men's Fellowship Work 10am Physical & Spiritual Fitness- YC 4:30-5:30pm Sewing Class 7-9pm Worship & Arts- SP 7:30-9pm AA- MH	1 10am Stephens-Currie- M 10am-4pm Treasure Che 10:30am-12pm ALL Sta 6-6:45pm FISH (dinner)- M 6:45-8pm Adult and Kids' C 7-8:30pm GriefShare- SP 7-9pm Adult Choir- Sanct., C
<b>Communion</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> Children's Shopping Day (T. Chest) T. of Hope Angel Gifts returned- Narthex, Bride's Room  9am Education Hour 9:25am Adult Choir 10am Worship Service- Sanctuary 11:30am Property- Library 3-4:30pm Youth Groups/Caroling No Children's, Handbell, or Youth Choirs 4-7pm CHURCH CAROLING (MH,K) 7pm Bible Study- Bert Ebi's	6 10am Card Ministry- R14  DEADLINE FOR BULLETIN	7  9am Men's Fellowship Work 10am Physical & Spiritual Fitness- YC 12pm Volunteer Christmas Luncheon- Parlors 4:30-5:30pm Sewing Class 5:30pm Outreach & Missions- SP 7:30-9pm AA- MH	8 10am-4pm Treasure Che NO FISH 7-8:30pm GriefShare- SP 7-9pm Adult Choir- Sanct.
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> T. of Hope Food & Gifts sorted and distributed- MH, Bride's Room  9am Education Hour 9:25am Adult Choir 10am Worship Service- Sanctuary No Youth Groups No Children's, Handbell or Youth Choirs 6-9pm NOEL FESTIVAL- MH 7pm Bible Study- Bert Ebi's	13 11am-2pm Garden Club- MH 6:30pm NAMI- NP  DEADLINE FOR BULLETIN	14  9am Men's Fellowship Work 10am Physical & Spiritual Fitness- YC 4:30-5:30pm Sewing Class 5:30-6:30pm Finance- SP 6:30pm SESSION/DEACONS- NP 7:30-9pm AA- MH	15 10am Stephens-Currie- M 10am-4pm Treasure Che 10:30am-12pm PROGRAM NO FISH 7-9pm Adult Choir- Sanct.
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 9am Education Hour 9:25am Adult Choir 10am Worship Service- Sanctuary 3-4:30pm Youth Groups- YL 3:30-4:30pm Children's Choir- Sanctuary 4:30-5pm Handbell Choir- Bell Room 5-6pm Youth Choir- Sanctuary 7pm Bible Study- Bert Ebi's	20  DEADLINE FOR BULLETIN	21  9am Men's Fellowship Work 10am Physical & Spiritual Fitness- YC 4:30-5:30pm Sewing Class 7:30-9pm AA- MH	22 11am-1pm Keenagers- M Treasure Chest closed NO FISH 7-9pm Adult Choir- Sanct.
9am CAROL SING- Mitchell Hall 10am Worship Service- Sanctuary No Youth Groups No Children's, Handbell, or Youth Choirs 7pm Bible Study- Bert Ebi's	27 No Home School Class  DEADLINE FOR BULLETIN	28  9am Men's Fellowship Work 10am Physical & Spiritual Fitness- YC 4:30-5:30pm Sewing Class 7:30-9pm AA- MH	29 Treasure Chest closed NO FISH NO ADULT CHOIR

11/20/2015 2:27:21 PM

# ember 2015

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
urie- NP re Chest JL Staff- SP ner)- MH, K   Kids' Classes are- SP Sanct., Turco	2 10-11:30am PW Bible Study- NP 6-8pm PNC- NP	3	4 Set up Communion 5 9am-11am Rebekah Circle- MH 5:30-7:30pm Converge at Panera Cares
re Chest are- SP - Sanct., Turco	9 10-11:30am PW Bible Study- NP 6-8pm PNC- NP  DEADLINE FOR VISION	10 6:30-9pm Game Night- MH  NOEL setup (ALL DAY)- MH	11 10am-2pm Treasure Chest 5:30-7:30pm Converge at Panera Cares  10am-2pm NOEL Rehearsal - MH
urie- NP re Chest PROGRAM Staff- SP - Sanct., Turco	16 10-11:30am PW Bible Study- NP 6-8pm PNC- NP	17 6:30pm Staff Christmas party at Pastor Don's	18 9am PW Board- NP 5:30-7:30pm Converge at Panera Cares
pers- MH (K) losed - Sanct., Turco	23 <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> <u>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</u>  5:30pm Family Service- Sanctuary 11pm Candlelight Service- Sanctuary	24 <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b> <u>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</u> <u>(NO ACTIVITIES)</u>	25 5:30-7:30pm Converge at Panera Cares
losed R	30 <b>NEW YEAR'S EVE</b> <u>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</u>	31	

## A Christmas Reunion – True Story

The brand new pastor and his wife, newly assigned to their first ministry to reopen a church in suburban Brooklyn, arrived in early October excited about their opportunities. When they saw their church, it was very run down and needed much work. They set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on Christmas Eve.

They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, etc., and on December 18th they were ahead of schedule and just about finished. On December 19th a terrible tempest - a driving rainstorm - hit the area and lasted for two days. On the 21st, the pastor went over to the church. His heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, causing a large area of plaster about 20 feet by 8 feet to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary just behind the pulpit, beginning about head high.

The pastor cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the Christmas Eve service, headed home. On the way he noticed that a local business was having a flea market type sale for charity so he stopped in. One of the items was a beautiful, handmade, ivory colored, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colors and a Cross embroidered right in the center. It was just the right size to cover up the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church.

By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus. She missed it. The pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus 45 minutes later. She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he got a ladder, hangers, etc., to put up the tablecloth as a wall tapestry. The pastor could hardly believe how beautiful it looked and it covered up the entire problem area.

Then he noticed the woman walking down the center aisle. Her face was like a sheet. "Pastor," she asked, "where did you get that tablecloth?" The pastor explained. The woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials, EBG were crocheted into it there. They were. These were the initials of the woman, and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before, in Austria.

The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just gotten the Tablecloth. The woman explained that before the war she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria. When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week. She was captured, sent to prison and never saw her husband or her home again. The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth; but she made the pastor keep it for the church. The pastor insisted on driving her home, which was the least he could do. She lived on the other side of Staten Island and was only in Brooklyn for the day for a housecleaning job.

What a wonderful service they had on Christmas Eve. The church was almost full. The music and the spirit were great. At the end of the service, the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door and many said that they would return.

One older man, whom the pastor recognized from the neighborhood, continued to sit in one of the pews and stare, and the pastor wondered why he wasn't leaving. The man asked him where he got the tablecloth on the front wall because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war and how could there be two tablecloths so much alike? He told the pastor how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety, and he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in a prison. He never saw his wife or his home again all the 35 years in between.

The pastor asked him if he would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island and to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier. He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door and he saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could ever imagine. *Story taken from [www.inspire21.com](http://www.inspire21.com) ~Chris Mayer*



## **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God** (Matt. 5:3, NRSV)

In the Beatitudes, the Aramaic Jesus spoke had no verb; each statement was an exclamation (Barclay). Jesus said, "O the blessedness of the poor in spirit!" This structure also exists in Psalm 1, "O the blessedness of the man who walks..." Spiritual poverty is not just a pious hope; it exists, God blesses those with it, and here Jesus affirms them!

The poor in spirit are blessed by a divinely bestowed inner well-being that comes from experiencing a relationship with God by faith. This contrasts with the worldly pursuit of happiness based on riches, merriment, leisure, and abundance. Psalm 1 portrays a blessed man as living a full life meditating on and obeying Scripture.

The poor in spirit are humble because they clearly see their inability to satisfy God. So they turn to Him, trusting in His grace alone. Being repentant, they are blessed by a rebirth into faith. Trusting God for His forgiveness, they live with God now, sharing peace, love, and forgiveness toward all. The poor in spirit are the opposite of the proud in spirit!

Jesus is teaching that the Kingdom of God is a gift of God's grace, not our achievement. It comes to those who know their need and humbly respond to God's grace by faith in Christ. God's kingdom cannot be earned by merit; but, it is available to all who will see themselves and God realistically and respond appropriately. We are to worship God in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24). See Isaiah 6 as an example.

~ John Holden

### **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Galleria 'Thank You!'**



**A huge thank you** to everyone who baked yummy goodies, cooked a delicious lunch, exhibited their handcrafted items, shopped till they dropped, and volunteered precious time on a Saturday to make the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Galleria a success. All the profits will be given to local charities that support women and children.

### **Stewardship 2016**

'Thank you' to all who returned their faith response cards. This will allow finalization of the church budget. If you have not done so, please return your faith response to the church office.

Thank you,  
*The Stewardship Committee*

God loves  
a  
Cheerful Giver!

2 Corinthians 9:7

Dear Church Family,

Laura and I want to inform you of some big changes in our lives, in addition to having a baby in December. Over the past few months, we have discerned that now is a critical time for us to pursue our calling as vocational ministers. Valuable opportunities have opened up for pastoral training and education, and we feel compelled to move toward those goals. Here are the details:



**Master of Divinity at Calvin Seminary:** Jonathan will graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in economics in December, and start the Master of Divinity program at Calvin Theological Seminary in February. He will participate in the distance program, commuting to Grand Rapids once per semester, so we will still live in Dearborn.

**Laura Continues Teaching:** Laura will continue to teach at Woodworth Middle School in Dearborn following her maternity leave, and Jonathan will take care of the baby while completing coursework at home. The plan is for Laura to continue to teach until Jonathan starts a paid/support raised position within the next couple years.

**Pastoral Residency Program at Woodside Bible Church:** Jonathan will start as a pastoral resident with Woodside Bible Church in Dearborn in 2016. The residency program offers a high-level pastoral leadership coaching program, sermon coaching from the church teaching team, and supervised pastoral responsibilities to prepare for senior church leadership. Residents will also participate in graduate level seminars at Woodside with Tim Keller, Francis Chan, Al Mohler, and other gifted pastors. We believe that this hands-on learning experience will be invaluable for preparing to be a pastor, and for God's calling on our lives.

**We'll Transition after the New Year:** We look forward to celebrating Advent and Christmas with you before leaving in January. We will still live and work in Dearborn, and hope to maintain the valuable friendships we have built with you over the past 4 ½ years. Thank you for your love, support and encouragement as a first-time youth director, in our marriage, and in preparing for our first child. You are very dear to us and we will always love our church family at First Presbyterian. Please pray for us as we seek to be obedient to God's voice and overcome the hurdles of parenthood ahead.

Much Love,

Jonathan & Laura Mallard



### **'Thank You' from Mission Sewing**

Our Mission Sewing ministry contributed \$1100 in items purchased by you, our wonderful church family. These items were distributed to charities and shelters both in our immediate area and overseas. Our Presbyterian Women's chapter here at First Church want to thank all our members who participated. *God is good.* ~ Olimpia Todor

**If you are KEEN... and over 50 years of age,  
YOU ARE A ~ Keenager**

Please join us the fourth Wednesday of each month for Christian Fellowship and Information as we go for lunch, or meet in Mitchell Hall. Check the Keenager bulletin board for details and sign-up sheet.

## **The First Noel**

“The First Noel” portrays in vivid narrative the story of the birth of Christ.



All six stanzas are needed to complete the entire event... The repetition of the joyous “noel” in the refrain is equivalent to our singing out “happy birthday.” Reflect on the words of this precious hymn:

The first Noel the angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay:  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

...  
This star drew nigh to the north-west;  
O'er Bethlehem it took it's rest,  
And there it did both stop and stay,  
Right over the place where Jesus lay.

...  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel

Let us remember the miracle of Jesus' birth as we enter this joyous season.

Source: <http://www1.cbn.com/devotions/first-noel>

**AN ORGANIST'S CHRISTMAS**

A 2<sup>nd</sup> most festive pipe organ event of the season!  
virtuosic showpieces • glorious carol singing • indulgent reception to follow

featuring the Boychoir of Ann Arbor and

Joseph Balistreri      Glenn Tucker      Mary Zelinski



**Friday, December 4 • 7:00 pm**  
First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor  
1432 Washtenaw Avenue, Ann Arbor

FREE & Open to the Public! • [www.AnnArborAGO.org](http://www.AnnArborAGO.org)

## **DEACON CARD MINISTRY**

### **INTERESTED?**

*We meet the first Monday of the month at 10:00am upstairs in Room 14.*

*For further information, please contact Nancy Barber, (313) 565-2741*



## Christmas Joy Offering



During Advent we remember God's promises to us. We gather together and wait in hope for the coming Emmanuel, God with us. God, who has promised, is faithful (Heb. 10:23), so on Christmas Day we celebrate that the promise is kept in the birth of Jesus Christ. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) provides the opportunity for congregations to join this celebration of God's faithfulness by supporting those in need of help and hope.

Thanks to your gifts, the Christmas Joy Offering is able to provide financial assistance to individuals and families that have dedicated their lives to the church and also support racial ethnic education and leadership development for students attending Presbyterian-related schools and colleges. The promise made is one of hope in situations where hope can be hard to find. When we give, we declare that our hope is well founded because it is God who has promised and God who is faithful.

~ Outreach and Mission Committee



## Consider *Online Giving* during this Holiday Season

During the holiday season, we extend a warm welcome not only to our current congregation members, but also to their families and friends and to former members of our congregation.

No matter where you live now or how infrequently you attend services, many of you probably have your religious roots here and regard this congregation as your religious home. If you are not making regular donations, we hope that you will consider contributing to the support of our congregation. Your donations now and throughout the year are needed and greatly appreciated.

**Consider giving online.** The church offers a convenient online giving option that allows donations to be made on a scheduled, automatic basis. We highly recommend this method of giving for visitors, former members and others who wish to support the church on an ongoing basis. Contact **Nancy Setterlun** [Church phone: (313) 274-1313, Extension 15] for information.

## Sunday Night Bible Discussion Group

The Sunday night Bible study group plans to discuss Dr. Francis Schaeffer's book, "How Shall We Then Live?" (a study of the development of Western Culture from Roman to the present time). It covers the areas of Philosophy, Science, and Religion and explores how our individual world view affects how we act in our times. We will use DVD and a study guide based on the book. Please call Bert Ebi (562-5156) or the Leslie's (336-8238) if you plan to participate.

## Poinsettias and Touch of Hope Donations

If you'd like to order a poinsettia or make a donation to Touch of Hope in memory or honor of a loved one, **please fill out the form included in the bulletin and place it in the basket on the table in the Narthex.**

PLEASE DO NOT PLACE FORMS  
IN THE OFFERING PLATES

**Cost is \$12.50 per plant.  
The deadline is Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>**



## ANNUAL REPORTS DUE SOON

All Committees, Staff, and Groups wishing to submit an Annual Report for the Congregational Meeting on February 7, 2016, must email them to Vicki Davidson at [vickidfpcd30@gmail.com](mailto:vickidfpcd30@gmail.com) by Monday, January 4, 2016.



## NEED A LIFT? WE'D LIKE TO HELP!

We will try to accommodate members who need a ride to a medical appointment or Sunday Service. Contact Nancy Barber at (313)565-2741, or call the church at (313)274-1313. Also, if you are free to occasionally help with driving, we'd like to hear from you too.

~Nancy Barber, Deacon Moderator.

*Matthew 25:40 "Whatever you do for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."*



## FPC Knitters

Knitters: Our December meeting is preempted by Christmas Eve. Worship with your family, enjoy the Christmas season and plan on joining us January 28, 2016 when the knitting ministry resumes. If you haven't checked us out yet, January is a good time for new beginnings. See you in January!

See you in January! ~Lynn Hoffman



## New Logo Name Tags

Name tags with our new cross logo can be ordered through the deacons. This is a good way for all of us to get to know each other. To order, please see Nancy Barber, Deacon Moderator (313) 565-2741.

## Meals for the Homebound

Some of our homebound congregation could use assistance with meals. The next time you are preparing something that is easily frozen, just make a little extra. Freeze enough for two people in a non-returnable container and drop it off at church, letting the office know. The Deacons will deliver it. This small gesture will mean a lot to the recipients and what a wonderful way to show our Christian love. Nancy Barber - Deacon Moderator

## Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 am

- December 6 / - Communion, *Preparing the Way*- Rev. Don Wright**
- December 13 / - *Enacted Promises*- Rev. Don Wright**
- December 20 / - *Believe and Trust*- Rev. Don Wright**
- December 27 / - *The Future Belongs to God*- Rev. Don Wright**

## December Birthdays

- 12/01: Michael Watson
- 12/02: Susan Williams
- 12/05: Marcia Meyer
- 12/07: Noreen Macdonald, Gregory Fink, Kaitlin Fink
- 12/08: Robert Buell, Margaret Richards, Marcia Scott
- 12/09: Pauline Fink, Robert C. Miller, Lochlan Cole
- 12/11: Tom Kopke, Steven Britz, Eric Jones Elizabeth Saylor
- 12/13: James M. Jones, Sheila Mistecki
- 12/14: Bert Ebi, Carol McFadden, George Hyma, Ronald Doan, Abraham Hughes
- 12/15: Bob Brinton, Alexander Best
- 12/16: Robert Putnam, David Williams, Gary Mayberry
- 12/17: Stella Doverspike
- 12/18: Vivian Foster, Christine Bassett
- 12/20: Peggy Hoblack, Beckie Dicks, JoAnn Isaacson
- 12/21: Sarah Duggan
- 12/23: Duane Schmatz, Jessica Romeo
- 12/25: Beverly Reiter
- 12/26: Joan Cahow, Marilyn Joachim, David Setterlun
- 12/27: Mary Ellen Mitchell
- 12/30: Margaret Blair
- 12/31: Jared Hoffman

Newsletter of The First Presbyterian Church of Dearborn  
600 North Brady Road  
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[firstpresdearborn.org](http://firstpresdearborn.org)

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## Our Vision

16

## Sent with a Prayer

**Are you praying for a Vision?**

**Pastor Don**

Pastor  
Rev. Don Wright

Education & Young Adult Coord.  
Mike Hoffman, CLP

Parish Associate & Pastor Emeritus  
Rev. Don Wright

Children's Ministries Director  
Beckie Dicks

Director of Music  
F. Marshall Dicks, M.M.

Parish Nurse  
Chris Mayer, B.S.N.