

COMMUNITY CALL

Ministers: The People of God; Pastor: Rev. D. Matthew Stith
702 Sheyenne St., P.O. 546, West Fargo, ND 58078 701-282-4135 E-mail: CPChurchWF@msn.com Web: <http://cpcwf.org>



ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of Community Presbyterian Church is set for January 11th (storm date 18th). A potluck is tentatively scheduled for that day. All committee chairs, group leaders, etc. are asked to PLEASE deliver their written annual reports to the Pastor or the Clerk by December 31st. Everyone is urged to attend so that they may vote on the issues that are presented.

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN



Atlanta, GA
November 24

As I enjoy my annual conference of biblical and religion scholars, I nevertheless have been thinking a great deal about the coming weeks at Community Presbyterian Church. For the first time since I have been among you, the calendar is about to change. No, not that calendar, as I know perfectly well how many months have come and gone since July 1 (although sometimes I can hardly believe it). The calendar to which I refer is the calendar of the Church. We will enter, as of Sunday, November 30, the season of Advent.

Advent is, in fact, considered the beginning of the church year. It is, traditionally, a season of preparation and contemplation prior to the celebrations of Christmas (which, as you know, marks the birth of Jesus) and Epiphany (the celebration of, among other things, the visit of the magi to see the infant Jesus, held on January 6). As such, Advent is, in some ways, similar to Lent, the season of contemplation and preparation that precedes Easter.

Unfortunately, there is a strong ten-
(Continued to Page 2)

In this issue

Page

18 Hour Flight	5
Afternoon Circle	5
Attention CPC Men!	3
Clerk's Corner	6
Candy and Cookie Sale	3
Cuddle Ups	4
From the Pastor's Pen	1
December Calendar	7
December Dates	3
Offering Boxes	3
Salvation Army Meal	6
Soul Train Schedule	5
Sunday School Calendar	4
Teachers Needed	4

(Continued from Page 1)

dency on our part to look past Advent, or at least to collapse it into what we often refer to as the "Holidays" or the "Christmas Season." I suspect that there are a number of reasons for this tendency, including: the incessant pushing of 'Christmas, Christmas, Christmas' by our retailers (starting earlier every year, it seems) and our perfectly understandable excitement about the coming holiday. I fear that this ignoring or at least compacting of Advent threatens to obscure a season that offers Christians some very significant spiritual benefits and opportunities. I would even dare to suggest that a more robust observance of Advent might well lead to a celebration of Christmas that is even more joyful and rich than before!

So what am I suggesting? In the first instance, I urge you to think, over the five weeks (or so) separating November 30 from Christmas, about what it means that God became a human baby, and was born into the world as an expression of his love and care for us. In particular, spend time reading the Bible, alone, with family, or with some other group, focusing not so much on the stories of Jesus' birth as on the things that led up to it, both as described in Luke 1 (it's a long chapter—there's plenty there!) and, if you're feeling ambitious, in the Old Testament, especially in prophetic texts like Isaiah 52-53, which the Christian tradition has always read in order to help understand the role of Jesus as the Messiah.

In worship, you will see signs of Advent as well. I will preach on texts that are traditional for the season, and focus the service to some extent each week on one of the great traditional themes of Advent: Hope, Joy, Peace, and Love.

Christmas is coming, but do not let that fact make you so busy that you forget

about the more important event that we anticipate: Jesus is coming, both in our celebration of his birth, and in the final return that we commonly call the Second Coming. Let us prepare ourselves to receive him.

**OH COME LET US
ADORE HIM.....**

Come and spend some of your Advent listening to the choir's presentation of The Christmas Light during worship on Sunday, December 7th. From the darkness and hope of Advent to the light and joy of Christmas, this cantata blends classic carols and rich new songs in a celebration of the Incarnation. The cantata literally moves the service from darkness to light, vividly illustrating the hope of Christmas through music and the spoken word.

**SECRETARY'S
OFFICE FUND**

We have received contributions of \$1,130 so far for the Secretary's Office Fund. The total cost of this project is \$2,500 so we would like to ask our members to consider contributing to this fund so that we can get the work started. If you haven't looked in the secretary's office lately, take time to do so and see how crowded it is and how short on storage space it is.

**SILVER BELLS**

The Bell Choir will be practicing on Sundays after worship for the month of December. Please join us if you can read music and would like to learn how to ring bells. Everyone else is welcome to enjoy the music at the Christmas Eve service.

Contact Boots Misheski (282-5429) if you have any questions.



**DECEMBER DATES
TO
REMEMBER
BIRTHDAYS**

- 12-2 Amber Swart
 12-5 Terry Meester
 12-6 Kailyn Ohm
 12-8 Casey Larson
 12-9 Arletta Geiss
 Brandi Vistad
 12-10 Brady Bahls
 12-11 Madison Kellerman
 12-12 Jim Martens
 12-13 Brooke Bellamy
 Bo Sheeley
 12-15 Anneus Meester
 12-19 Mike Moe
 12-21 Gail Sheeley
 12-23 Erin Thostenson
 12-25 Ray Christopherson
 Todd Montgomery
 12-26 Boots Montgomery
 12-28 Gary Duggan
 12-31 Sophia Dobrinz
 Shane Saari

ANNIVERSARIES

- 12-12-70 – Jack and Dixie Smith
 12-19-86 – Ron and Kathy LaCoe
 12-18-82 – Andrew and Gayle
 Thostenson
 12-29-77 – Phil and Maryjane Martens

ATTENTION CPC MEN!

It's time for the Men's Christmas Chorus! Anyone who is interested, please join us for practice on Wednesday, December 10th at 7:00 p.m. We will practice one song, which will be performed in church on Sunday, December 21st. The music is easy for young and old, even if you have not sung with a group in years. Remember how great the guys were last year when they sang, "Do You Hear What I Hear?" This year promises to be yet another eventful experience! RSVP's will be helpful, but not mandatory (Dawn Larson—281-1174). Hope to see you there!



**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS
COOKIE AND
CANDY SALE**



The Annual Presbyterian Women's Christmas Cookie and Candy Sale will be held on December 7th and 14th in the narthex. The women ask that everyone bring cookies, candy or other goodies to sell on both days. This is a good chance to try new goodies and save yourself the trouble of making many different kinds of good things to eat.

Also, the Quilters have been busy making a beautiful Christmas quilt. The quilt will be on display during the Christmas Cookie and Candy Sale. Make a one dollar donation and drop your name in the bucket to win it! The drawing will be held during the potluck dinner on December 14th. The donations will be used for our Cuddle Up Program.

OFFERING BOXES

The 2004 Offering Boxes are available on a table in the rear of the sanctuary. They are arranged in alphabetical order. Please pick up your box when you come to church. We would like to have most of them picked up before Christmas so that we do not need to mail them.

In the box you will find an envelope for your Per Capita Assessment. The amount for per capita will be announced in the near future. Every active member is asked to pay this amount to help defray the expenses of our Presbytery of the Northern Plains, Synod of the Lakes and Plains, and PCUSA General Assembly. As you will remember we made very good use of the Presbytery when we were searching for a new pastor.



CUDDLE UP PROJECT

CPC donated 41 "cuddleups" to Cass County Social Services and received the following "Thank You":

"On behalf of the staff at Cass County Social Services, I want to thank you and the other members of Community Presbyterian Church for your generous donation of "cuddleups" to our agency. They really do help the transition into foster care for many children. Having to be placed outside of home can be frightening for children and receiving a gift of something they can call their own can make the transition easier. We greatly appreciate your time and generosity on behalf of the children."

It's wonderful knowing we CAN make a difference.

Carol Sterup



SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED

Teaching positions are filling up fast. Don't miss your chance to get to know the children of your church. We need four teachers every month.

Teachers needed:

- October Sorry, filled
- November Sorry, filled
- January Sorry, filled
- February Sorry, filled
- March > 2
- April Sorry, filled

Please sign up soon so that we can order the materials for the rest of the year.

Contact Becky DeJong (281-8122) or Lisa Steffens (282-5308) with any questions.

PLASTIC BOTTLES NEEDED

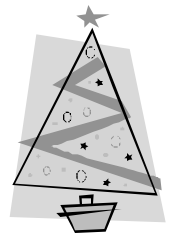


The "Soul Train" is collecting clear, clean plastic bottles (16 oz.) for their mission project in December. They need between 50 and 75 bottles. They need the bottles by Dec. 14th. Please help them by drinking the pop or water and then bringing the bottles to church.

*** It is important that we have the lids also.***

Thank you,
The "Soul Train"

THE GIVING TREE



The "Soul Train" has filled the giving tree with ornaments. The twinkling tree will be displayed in the sanctuary from Nov. 30 through Dec. 14. Please remove an ornament from the glowing tree and deposit it with an age appropriate present beneath the tree. Please do not enclose your gift in wrapping material.

With regards,
The "Soul Train"
(the sophisticated youth group)

2003-2004 SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR



- Christmas Program Dec. 14
- Potluck
- Christmas Break Dec. 28
- (No Sunday School) Jan. 4
- Sunday School Resumes Jan. 11
- Palm Sunday Apr. 4
- Senior Recognition May 16
- Sunday School's Last Day May 16
- Potluck



18 HOUR FLIGHT

On January 19, six frozen North Dakotan Presbyterians will board a plane and set off for Kenya. Almost a whole day later, they will land on the other side of the world in the midst of the hot African summer. The icicles having finally melted from the tips of their noses, they will go through customs, exchange money, and board a van. Then, the real journey begins...

For a period of three weeks, a delegation from the Presbytery of the Northern Plains (including yours truly, Jenna Barentsen) will be visiting Presbyterian Missions in Kenya, building bonds between our partner Presbytery in Chogoria, Kenya and ourselves, and engaging in fellowship together. This ambassadorial journey is meant to show the Kenyans we are in this for the long run, discuss where we want this partnership to take us, and set goals for it. It is time to move this international presbytery partnership to the next step.

Missions we will visit include:

- The Shalom Girls School
- The Bahati Training Center
- The Tumani HIV Orphan's Children's Home
- Kikuyu Hospital
- The Presbyterian College
- The Lay Training Institute
- The Old Folks Home
- Church of the Torch
- Kazuri Beads
(training for unwed mothers)
- Nanyuki Weavers
(training for unwed mothers)

For a period of four days we will be staying with host families in the Chogoria Presbytery to engage in one-on-one fellowship together. This will help us to

gain a better perspective on the needs of the Kenyan people, cultural difference, and what they, as a Presbytery, can bring to us. This is a partnership.

After we come home and have had time to reflect, I will put on a program for those interested about the partnership, the trip, and our goals for the future complete with pictures and lots of stories.

If you would like to pray for our group and mission in Kenya and would like more information, please contact me: JennaBarentsen@aol.com or 282-8595.

AFTERNOON CIRCLE

The Afternoon Circle met on November 11th at Jiggs Restaurant at 12:30 p.m. Linda Bass of Youth for Christ's Teen Mom Program was a guest and was presented with \$25 and two baby blankets. Members were reminded that at the December 9th meeting we are to bring 1 1/2 dozen cookies for the New Life Center Christmas Dinner. All women of the church are welcome to attend these meetings. New study books have been ordered and we will begin the new program in January. It is about unnamed women in the Bible.

"SOUL TRAIN"/ YOUTH PROGRAM SCHEDULE



Attention all youth in grades 7-12! Please mark your calendars for Sunday evenings:

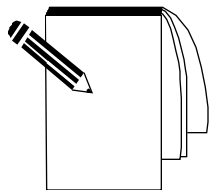
Dec. 7 - 6:30 - dinner,

Connie Bruse, First Aid

Dec. 14 - 6:30 - dinner, mission activity-
Look and Find Bottles.

Dec. 21 - 6:30 - Progressive Dinner

Can you help? Call Becky DeJong at 281-8122.



CLERK'S CORNER

The Session and Trustees met on Wednesday, November 12 at 7:00 p.m.

The Trustees reported that the upstairs of the church had been measured so that we will know the amount of carpeting needed to replace the old carpeting.

Tiffany Peihl was accepted into membership, transferring from Flame of Faith, United Methodist Church of West Fargo.

The Presbyterian Women were given approval to hold their Annual Christmas Cookie and Candy Sale on Dec. 7th and 14th.

David Ruhnke was elected as the delegate to Presbytery for Community Presbyterian Church for 2004. He will attend Presbytery meetings and will be allowed to cast a vote at the meetings.

A request from the Quilters Group to ask for donations on a Christmas quilt on Dec. 7th and 14th was approved. The quilt will be given away on December 14 at the Sunday School Program Potluck.

A request from Carrie Lauber Leopold to be reinstated as an active member was approved.

A total of 102 persons were served communion on November 2nd. Four new Home Communion boxes were purchased as the number of shuttles had increased. Two funerals were held at the church during October: Joe Jameson and Roy Gill. Tona Vistad and John Sweeney were married at the church on November 1st.

SALVATION ARMY CHRISTMAS MEAL



We will be serving our 11th Christmas meal at the Salvation Army on Christmas Day. Those of you who have been part of this CPC tradition know we always get more out of it than we give.

The kitchen crew shows up about 9:00 a.m. to get the meal cooking and others start decorating the tables. We will prepare over 200 meals this year, and Meals on Wheels will take about half of them at 10:30 a.m. The steam table team shows up about 10:00 a.m.

The dining hall has ten 8-person tables and our servers, who show up at 10:30 a.m. or earlier, tend tables and serve this sit down meal. Our guests arrive at 11:30 and we will wait on them through 1:30. Then, we clean up and go home (usually by 2:30).

Please sign up on the bulletin board so we can arrange who is doing what on Christmas Day. As Dave Ruhnke once said, "When I help at the Salvation Army, it's nice to know no one need go hungry in Fargo-Moorhead" especially on Christmas!

Dixon Moorhead

Work: 232-8283; Home: 277-1414

MIDNIGHT MIRACLE



During the worship service on December 14th, the Sunday School classes will perform a musical Christmas story called "Midnight Miracle." The story is told through angels, shepherds, and animals! Rehearsals will be held during Sunday School classes. Please join us for this special children's performance. If you have any questions, please contact Toni Stith (282-2715).