

The Carillon

December 2019

Volume 26

Issue 11



First Presbyterian Church of Battle Creek



firstpresbc.org



From our Lead Pastor

"She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins"
(Mt 1:21 NRSV)

Dear Friends:

According to the folklore surrounding Santa Clause, we are judged by whether we have been naughty or nice. If we have been naughty, we will not receive any gifts. But God's love is unconditional and does not depend on our merit.

The father of five children had won a toy at a raffle at work. He called his kids together to ask which one should have the present. "Who is the most obedient?" he asked. "Who never talks back to Mother? Who does everything she says?" Five dejected voices answered in unison, "Okay, Daddy, you get the toy!"

Fortunately, this is not the way God treats us. We receive his wonderful gifts even though we do not deserve them. The greatest gift of all is his Son, Jesus Christ. This gift can be received at any time. Today if you wish.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16 NRSV).

Yours in Christ,



Jeff



From our Associate Pastor

Seasons Greetings....

Our Advent Devotional is ready! It's been a special pleasure to delegate and gather the writings for our BC First Pres Advent Devotional. I encourage you to complete the intended project: to **read the Gospel according to Luke, in December.**

To encourage you, and to add to the comradery, 25 different members have written a brief reflection for a day. The varying ages and styles of the authors, and their personal stories, are enjoyable to read. There will be ample paper copies available, and we will also post it on the Facebook page and on the website.

The chapters in the gospel of Luke are lengthy. You will want to be as consistent as possible in making this a **daily** practice. All of this is an effort associated with our **CORE VALUE: "Life rooted in scripture"**. Let's have the gospel be the foundation of our December preparations. Grace and peace, for the living of these days.

God loves you and so do I!



Pat Weatherwax

Advent Sermon Series: In Those Days

December 1	(1) A DECREE WENT OUT	Luke 2:1-4
December 8	(2) NO PLACE FOR THEM	Luke 2:5-7
December 15	(3) AN ANGEL OF THE LORD	Luke 2:8-14
December 22	(4) THERE WERE SHEPHERDS	Luke 2:8, 15-20

Invite Someone to Church on Christmas Eve

By Lisa Brown

Christmas is still a great opportunity to reach people who no longer ordinarily attend church. Most people love Christmas! Most decorate their homes, businesses, and cities. Sure, the motives are commercial. But Christmas is the only time of year when explicitly Christian songs can be heard playing in public spaces. It's an excellent time to connect with those special people God has placed in your life.

We may assume people who don't normally attend church are not interested in attending at Christmas. But the reality is people tend to be especially open to going to Church on Christmas Eve. **In a recent poll of 1,000 Americans, LifeWay Research found among those who don't attend church at Christmastime, a majority (57 percent) say they would likely attend if someone they knew invited them.** So, make :

1. Pray. Ask God who He wants you to invite and the Holy Spirit to equip you.

2. Say what's good about the service. "The music is amazing" or "Our pastor always has an encouraging message" or "The candle lighting is so beautiful"

3. Offer to pick them up or meet at a particulate entrance & sit together. Walking into a church for the first time is daunting. Let them know they won't face that awkward moment alone.

4. Be clear about the time and place. Invitations are available at each exit to the sanctuary, direct them to the EVENTS section of our website, forward our church e-newsletter, share a post from our Facebook page, or simply write down the details for them.

5. Accept the answer. Yes or no are equally acceptable. A pleasant invitation is almost always seen as an honor. Inviting is part of relationship building. You've taken a great first step! Let the Holy Spirit handle it from here.

Among Americans who do not attend church at Christmastime:

If someone you know invited you to attend church with them at Christmastime, how likely would you be to attend?



LifeWay

LifeWayResearch.com

Volunteer and Enjoy Holiday Cheer! VOLUNTEER VIBE

The Deacons welcome support for this year's Christmas Basket Program and Delivery. Read the Deacons Corner for more information.

We are seeking volunteers to deliver poinsettias to shut ins after the Christmas Eve service. If you can assist contact Jenny in the office or sign up on the list posted on the bulletin board in the hall.

Keep the cookies and finger foods coming for Sunday Morning Coffee Hour. Simply leave these in the kitchenette next to the Parlor on Sunday morning.

Substitutes are needed for the Franklin Food Pantry. Please sign up on the sheet in the main hall.

Nursery volunteers are needed to help in our crib and walker nursery. Sign-up sheet available or call church office.

Our Mission partners' program held here at First Pres need volunteers. These are Early Childhood Connection (ECC), Charitable Union, City-LinC, Women's Life Recovery and SAFE Place. Information and sign up is in the main hall.

"Volunteer Vibe" is a monthly feature from the Connections Team. If you have a special need for volunteers, contact Jan Emery Barney at 979-4734 or jyreme@aol.com to have your request listed in the next issue of the Carillon.



clean up

Enjoy this "first Sunday in advent" Anticipating Christmas

Our annual advent celebration will be held after worship on December 8th in the Fellowship Hall.

Sign-up to bring your best chili or soup for the competition (and our lunch). Voting and prizes are planned.

There also will be carol singing, great crafts, door prizes and birthday cake for Jesus.

This is a family friendly, outreach event. Invite guests for a faithful, fun-filled time of preparation and fellowship!



Jana Turpin 12/1
Carol Gault 12/2
Frances Gorman 12/2
Marion Merten 12/2
Chris Allen 12/5
Eric LaFleur 12/5
Opal Bell 12/6
Nate Martens 12/6
Lauren LaFleur 12/6
Paula Coleman 12/7
Jodine Bandlow 12/8
Joyce Evans 12/9
Dan Budrow 12/11
Dave Tuls 12/12
Susan Hickman 12/12
Rynda Somers 12/12
Linda Holden 12/13
LeRoy Miller 12/14
Jim Hoglen Jr. 12/15
Jean Rost 12/16
Carrie Hoglen 12/18
Bruce Medaugh 12/22
Daniel Janz 12/22
Finley McRae 12/24
Betsy Martens 12/25
Marilyn Sauder 12/26
James Woodman 12/27
Belinda Bullard 12/29

Notes from the November

Meeting of SESSION

Carl McCune, Clerk of Session

Tom Cole, Chair of the Finance Committee, urged Committees and Ministry Teams to submit any budget requests to either Jenny Moore or him as soon as possible. Work is beginning on the 2020 Budget.

Francie Winslow noted that Committees and Ministry Teams may suggest changes to their Purpose Statement or Objectives. Since these groups have been established by Session with a designated purpose, any change would need to be approved by Session.

Diana Golden and Denise Rust, previously received into membership by Session, will be presented to the congregation on November 17. Session members may greet them in the library prior to the service.

The Ministry Advisory Council is meeting November 14 concerning the Vision Summit results. A motion prevailed to call a special meeting of the Session on December 9 for the purpose of discussing the results of the Vision Summit Series in a workshop environment focused on future planning.

The next Session meeting will be the called meeting on December 9,

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Make sure to stop and say "Hello" and introduce yourself to these new church members.



DENISE RUST

Denise enjoys reading, Sweet Adelines (a Capella music), Dune Buggy-ing, sewing and traveling in her and husband, Mike's motorhome. Denise and Mike are retired and have two grown and married children. She comes to First Pres by way of transfer from St. Paul Lutheran Church.



DIANA GOLDEN

Diana is a retired government employee and substitute teacher. She enjoys cycling and kayaking. She lives in Richland and transferred to First Pres from Reno Bethel Presbyterian Church in Sorento, Illinois.

DEACONS CORNER

submitted by Amy Rosa

The Deacons have been very involved with working on helping make Thanksgiving and Christmas bright for our many families in need.

Thanksgiving put the Deacons to work delivering over 22 baskets including Meijer gift cards for perishable items. The families picked up the baskets on Wed Nov 25th Thank you Finley McRae for leading our church volunteers to a well planned Thanksgiving program this year.

The next volunteer program is the completion of Christmas baskets for our Christmas families. It is very important for our church family to generously help our program continue its success. The following is a list of things you can do to help:

On Sunday Nov 24 gift opportunities for our families were posted in the Sanctuary. Gifts listed on website and Christmas candy can be donated in boxes located on the Fellowship Hall stage or Church Parlor

Gifts are due to the Stage in Fellowship Hall or in the box in the Parlor by Sunday Dec 15th

Pack Christmas boxes after church service on Dec 15 (volunteers welcome)

Distribute Christmas Baskets Tues Dec. 17 from 8:30-Noon.

Thank you Judy and Paul Yettaw for your leadership on this wonderful project.

There will be a list posted on the church board if you can help deliver poinsettia plants to shut ins after the Christmas Eve service. Thank you!

The Food Pantry is doing well with the generous donations of our members. Keep up the good work!!

Have a Blessed Holiday Season!

Contributions from the White Gift Offering envelopes assist the Deacons with fulfilling their holiday basket program. These are available in the church office and at the entrances to the sanctuary.

PICTURED ON THE COVER: starting at the bottom and going clockwise: Youth Mini Golf (l-r) Lisa Brown, two new girls from the neighborhood, Marcus Peevers, Liam Gault, Owen Sears (Liam's friend) Chris Owel and top row Tom Till, Steve Owel, Josh Leichty, Carl McCune. Our Flower Lady Kathy Medaugh. Liam Gault rock climbing. Jazz trio Loren Rex, Grant Mischele, Jodine Bandlow. Marcus Peever delivers a pumpkin to Bob Moore with Kathy Baker in the mirror. First Pres' bell ringers at the Eaton Rapids Festival (r-l) Marie Davy, Jim Hoglen, Tom Til, Pat Scheid, Sue Healy, Mary Maley, Carrie Hoglen, Kathy Sawchuk. First Pres from the top of The Milton taken by Lori Kneeland. (continued on PAGE SIX)

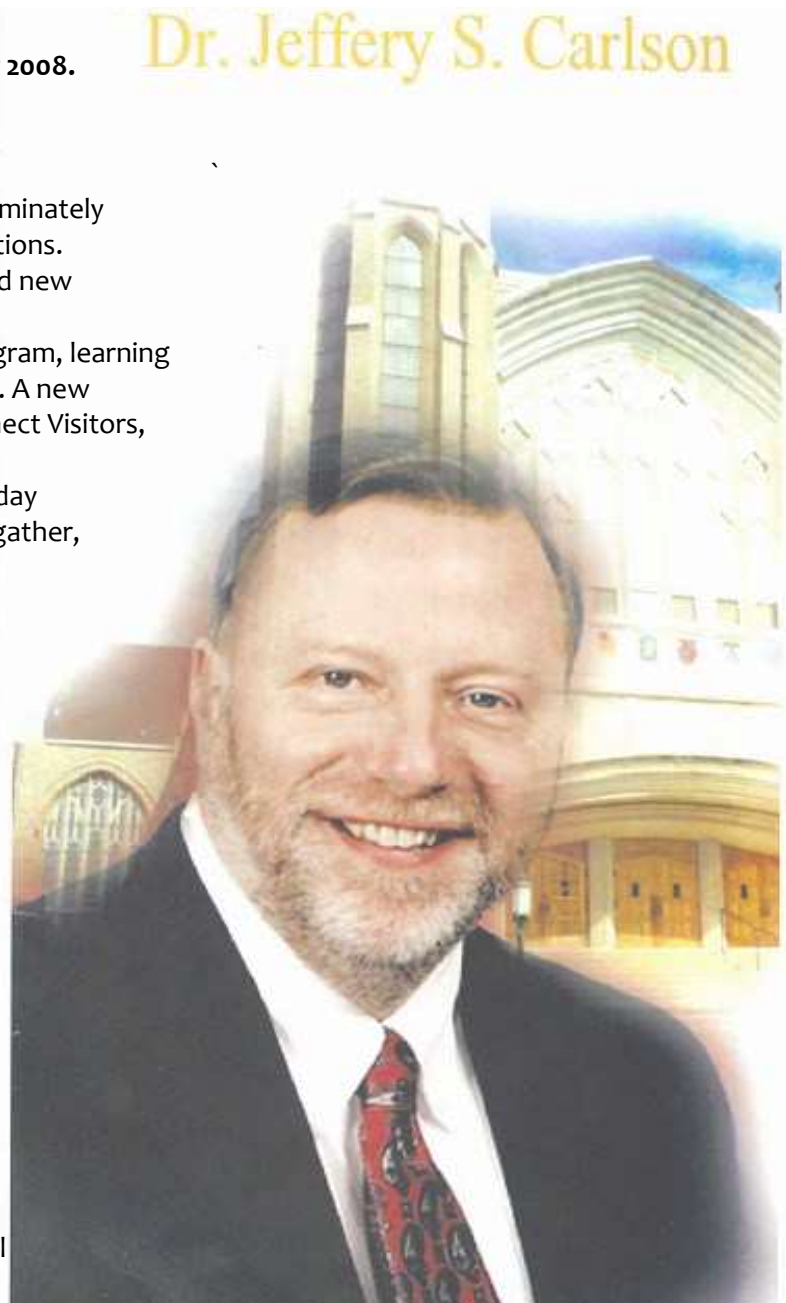
Reflections of Yesteryear

By Martin Ashley, Church Historian

As I grow older, I'm finding that time seems to be flying by faster and faster. Every so often I take the time to reflect on what has happened during the past month or occasionally the past year. Recently I was reviewing some recent history in the Church Archives and realized that Pastor Carlson had come to **First Church in 2004**. I could hardly believe that here we are fifteen years later. The Presbytery of Lake Michigan converged at our church on **Sunday, September 19, 2004** for the Service of Installation of the **Rev. Jeffrey S. Carlson as our Pastor**.

I thought it would be interesting to look over the past 15 years and note some of the highlights of Pastor Jeff's ministry with us. The following excerpts come from the Church's Annual Reports:

- The Non-Traditional Service Subcommittee recommendations were implemented on **September 10, 2006** when we began a new Contemporary Service with Kathy Petrich as Praise Team Leader
- On **September 26, 2007**, we began the High Point, a midweek program for all ages.
- A Welcome Center was installed in the Parlor and a new Sound System was completed in **December 2007**.
- In **May 2008** to celebrate our 125th Anniversary as a congregation, Communion was observed using replicas of communion tokens from the 1920s.
- Sacred Dance was re-introduced to worship in **December 2008**.
- In **January 2009**, Rev. Pat Weatherwax was welcomed as our new Pastoral Care Associate.
- We participated in Sacred Conversations on Race during **2009**. This was a series of meetings involving two predominately African-American and two European-American congregations. Barriers were removed, new friendships were formed and new opportunities became available.
- During **April 2010** we kicked off the Engaging Church program, learning practical tools for effective outreach and church growth. A new Connection Team was formed to Attract Outsiders, Connect Visitors, and Integrate New Members.
- In **April 2011** we went to one Full Treasure service on Sunday mornings. The aim of Full Treasure is to glorify God, and gather, unite and bless his people.
- The emphasis of **2012** was our "Campaign for Renewal" to help fund the Engaging Church revitalization plan. The funds would be distributed three ways, for Mission, Ministry, and Building Improvements. We exceeded the original goal of \$300,000, receiving over \$420,000 for local mission, ministry within our own congregation, outreach through the Connection Team, refurbishment of Fellowship Hall and redesign the Chancel.
- The year **2013** saw the start of Church-wide Alpha, a ten-week course exploring the relevance of the Christian faith for our lives today.
- Upon the Recommendation of the Building Improvement Task Committee during **2013**, our Fellowship Hall was renovated.
- Rev. Pat Weatherwax was installed as our Associate Pastor on **August 18, 2013**.
- Early in **2015**, we went through "Loving God" – a four part Series on Worship. The series taught the theological basis for our worship and provided ways to utilize our new Chancel and enhance our worship experience.

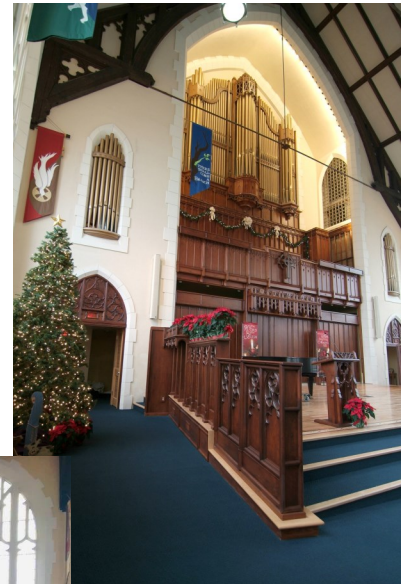


- During **Lent of 2016**, we participated in a church wide program called, “The Daniel Plan,” a healthy lifestyle six week program founded on biblical principles and focused on The Essentials: Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus, and Friends. It teaches us to rely on God’s power, not our own willpower.
- In the **fall of 2016** after careful review, we decided to replace our church hymnals with “Glory to God,” the new Presbyterian Hymnal which includes many older hymns as well as new contemporary praise songs.
- Our Mission Focus continued in **2017** with our ongoing involvement with Early Childhood Connections, Charitable Union, and CityLinC organizations.
- **2018** marked the 90th anniversary of the dedication of our church to the Glory of God. We thought it appropriate to do a re-dedication on **November 18, 2018**. Guided by the report of the Building Improvement Task Force, the leadership of our church came up with a tiered approach to new capital projects.

The first tier was to refurbish the Fellowship Hall to make it an attractive, and comfortable venue for year round use and as needed for worship experiences. The second project was to renovate the Chancel to be consistent with our biblical and theological heritage, to significantly improve its usability, flexibility and safety as well as enhance our outreach and service to the community. The third was Sanctuary updates including lighting improvements, painting, refurbishment of pews, woodwork, and flooring.



The chancel as pictured in 1928 (above) and post-2012 after the redesign that significantly improved its size, accessibility, flexibility and use.





Off the Pres

Mini

golf championship was a big success. There were several first time players and they got to experience what it is like to play 18 holes of golf spread out over 4 floors of the church. It was a lot of fun for everyone December finds the youth again getting ready to spread Christmas joy to some of the older members of the church. On Sunday December 8th we will be participating in the Anticipating Christmas event where we will be putting together the Christmas gifts that we will be delivering. On Sunday December 15 the youth will meet at 3:30 to deliver the gifts to our friends at Northpointe Woods and after we get done delivering we'll head back to the Youth Center for a Christmas party. On Saturday December 28 we will get together to try and solve the mysteries of the New Year's escape room. We will get started about 5pm. You will have 60 minutes to escape. Dinner will be provided.

That's all for now!

Doug McCune



CPR, AED, First Aid and Teamwork

On Saturday November 9, sixteen members give several hours to learn or refresh their first aid skills. Many are members of our Safety Ministry Team or are active members who live and give generously. They will be here to help in the case of a medical emergency, by using the AED (automatic external defibrillator) from the main hallway, and initiating rescue attempts as necessary. Our downtown location means professional help is near, but these people are prepared to help, even outside of our building, quickly, (CONTINUED)

in a serious situation. They are a blessing and we all are blessed by their willingness to be trained.

As a family of faith we can help each other in an emergency by keeping calm, retrieving the AED, calling 911 if directed, clearing an area, directing medical personnel, and offering prayerful compassion toward those directly involved.

Another new addition from the safety team are flashlights all around the building- magnetically held to walls, by the doorways. We also now have NARCAN available, a medication used to treat pain med overdoses. It's stored by the AED.

Pastor Pat

PW Christmas Luncheon

All three Presbyterian Women's circles are gathering together for a Christmas Luncheon on Tuesday, December 10, 2019 at 12:30 pm in the parlor. After the luncheon, Francie Winslow will lead the Bible Study for all three circles. There will be no PW Bible Study on Wednesday, December 4.

PW Christmas Tea

The music starts at 2:00P.M on December 14th in the Sanctuary for this year's event. It will be followed by a tea in the Parlor.

"Love Carved in Stone – Words of Love Through Music" is the theme with a special performance by renowned Christian music artist, Jean Watson.

Family Game Night

Everyone who's been coming out has had a lot of fun. Time for YOU to join us. There are always several games going on. In November the puzzle was finished!!! We will be starting a new one in December. Our next game night will be Wednesday December 4th at the Youth Center. We'll get started at 6pm and wrap up around 8pm. Feel free to bring any favorite games or snacks when you come. This event is open to both the young and young at heart. You'll have lots of fun.

Christmas Special Offering

Our Christmas Special Offering goes to S.A.F.E Place in Battle Creek. S.A.F.E. Place exists to provide safety to, empower and advocate for victims of domestic violence and their families. S.A.F.E. Place stresses early intervention, strengthening families, and providing a continuum of care through community resources and referrals. Please consider making a monetary contribution to this most worthy community resource.

Enjoy an Albanian Lunch & Peace Corps Presentation Hosted by the O'Briens

On Monday, Dec 23 Carolyn and Colin O'Brien will host a light luncheon in the parlor to share about their experience as Peace Corps Volunteers in Albania. They have been living in Albania for a year and have about one year left to go! In this time they have made meaningful connections in their community and have learned a great deal about Albanian culture. Their presentation will focus on culture and religion in Albania. Albania was under communist rule until 1992 and during the communist regime all religion was banned. Albania was the first country to declare themselves an Atheist State. Traditional Albanian dishes will be enjoyed by all! Colin and Carolyn are deeply grateful for the continued prayers from the faith community at First Pres and are looking forward to sharing a piece of Albanian culture with you all. An RSVP will be most helpful in determining how much food to prepare. RSVP to Lisa Brown by calling 269.580-6162 or email lisachristbrown@gmail.com

(continued from page 4 article "PICTURED ON THE COVER") Game Night puzzle finish! (l-r around the table) Arden and Ruth Hetletvedt, Shirley Sajter, Julie Chapman, Carl McCune, Carrie and Jim Hoglen, Kathy Baker. Back row: Gary Chapman, Josh Leichty. Last photo on bottom right corner: Tom Till and Jim Kerner watch Mike Greenman clean up at the Retreat Center.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10A Worship Communion 1P Deaf Fellowship	2 10:30A XYZ English Inn 3:45P CIR 5:30P Retreat Ctr Com 6:30P Boy Scouts	3 7A Prayer 10A Exercise 6:30P Cub Scouts	4 11A Staff Meeting 6P Family Game Night	5 7:45A Prayer 8A Sr. Pastors' Prayer Group 6:15P Hand Bells Practice 7:30P Choir Practice	6	7
8 10A Worship 11A Anticipating Christmas 1P Deaf Fellowship 4P Master Singers Concert	9 3:45P CIR 6:30P Boy Scouts 6:30P Deacons Session 7P	10 7A Prayer 10A Exercise 12:30P PW Christmas Luncheon 6:30P Cub Scouts 7P Boy Scouts Committee	11 11A Staff Christmas Lunch	12 7:45A Prayer 8A Sr. Pastors' Prayer Group 6:15P Hand Bells Practice 7:30P Choir Practice	13 9:30A Sew N Sews Charitable Union Christmas Party	14 2P <i>Presbyterian Women Christmas Tea</i>
15 9A Praise Team 10A Worship 1P Deaf Fellowship 4P Youth Group Party 4P Music Center Concert	16 3:45P CIR 6P Cabinet 6:30P Boy Scouts 6:30P Mission Ministry	17 7A Prayer 8A Deacon Basket Pickup 10A Exercise 5:30P Parent Coalition 6:30P Cub Scout Den	18 11A Staff Meeting 4P SAFE Place Christmas	19 7:45A Prayer 8A Sr. Pastors' Prayer Group 6:15P Hand Bells Practice 7P Men's Fellowship 7:30P Choir Practice	20	21
22 10A Worship 1P Deaf Fellowship 6P Praise Team	23 9A Carillon Mailing 12N Albanian Lunch & Presentation 6:30P Boy Scouts 7P Connection Team	24 7A Prayer Office closes noon 7P Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 	26 8A Sr. Pastors' Prayer Group	27	28 5P Youth Group Escape Room
29 10A Worship 1P Deaf Fellowship	30	31 7A Prayer	First Presbyterian Church Firstpresbc.org	111 Capital Ave., NE Battle Creek, MI 49017		269.964.3700

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00



In our Christmas Eve worship, we will rejoice in the birth of the Son of God and Mary's son, Jesus, who is truly God and truly human. He came to die on the cross and rise from death so that we can be adopted as sons and daughters into the family of God.

Christmas Eve service will take place at 7:00 p.m. We will feature the traditional candle lighting but also provide the option of "glow sticks" for younger worshipers. Child care will be provided.

The Carillon is a free monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church Battle Creek

111 Capital Ave NE

Battle Creek, MI 49017

www.firstpresbc.org

269.964.3700