



Presbyterian “Connection”

December 2008 Volume 15 Issue 12

by Rev. Mark Lenneville

“TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE JESUS”

‘Twas the night before Jesus when all through the earth, Every creature was stirring for a new baby’s birth. The people were looking straight up and then down, To the left and the right, both in country and town. Some faces were watching far out in the sky. Believing God’s Son would soon be coming by. In Bethlehem children were snug in their beds, with dreams of olives and figs in their heads.

Sheep had just baaed their last sleepy bleat, and Shepherds were tired, weary and beat, When up in the air there arose such a clatter, the Shepherds saw angels and asked, “What’s the matter?” They jumped to their feet and stood straight and tall and saw thousands of Angels, and heard Angels call. It sounded like glory, looked bright as can be; it was hard to believe, it was hard to see. When what to their wondering eyes did appear but a glory around them, so loud and so near. It happened so sudden, it happened so quick. Was it real? Was it true? Or was it a trick? More rapid than eagles the Shepherds then came, found Mary and Joseph and whispered His name.

“It is Jesus, Jehovah, Messiah, the Son, Emmanuel, the Lord. He is all and each one.”

They fell to their knees way down on the ground; how good to receive Him, the one they had found. The Shepherds saw Jesus; They almost did cry, for Jesus their Savior had surely come by. So straight up the hillside their running feet flew, with their eyes full of Jesus, their hearts now like new.

Far away, wise men stood on a roof, searching the skies for Biblical proof.

Night after night they hunted with care for a sign of God’s love in some stars up there.

“There!” Each one shouted. “Out in the east!” And they mounted with haste their two-humped beasts. One wise man with gold had a round little tummy. The frankincense wise man smelled yummy yum yummy. The gift of rare myrrh had been packed in a can, for they were soon filled with questions from head down to toe. They asked, “Where’s the new king; we must truly know?” They traveled so long and traveled so far, and followed their hearts and came to the star. Each face of the wise men was grim for a while, then slowly each cheek returned to a smile, They saw that God gave His Son to the earth, they took up God’s gift, putting theirs to the earth. There was no more to do; there was no more to say. This was God’s world, and this was God’s day. As the baby blinked slowly while turning His head; the wise men knew they had nothing to dread. They spoke not a word as they headed for home; they were thankful to God that Christ had come.

Christ was on earth, and old was like new. Now people could see what God could do.

When children hurt and old men whistle, where there are fir trees and dry prickly thistle, It’s the night before Jesus, from ground to the sky, and Jesus, the brother, will surely come by. So we know and you know that God is in sight. Good morning to all, and to all a good night.

From an article printed by T.R.E.A. Chapter 1 News
Chaplain Bob Kwiatkowski

CHURCH USHERS AND GREETERS

December 7 – Randi Saba, Peni Lloyd, Irene Bere & Jean Lyon

December 14 --Nancy Soares, Sandy Erickson, Irene Bere & Harry Van Gorden

December 21 –Bob & JoAnn James, Tywillah Schauer & Sandy Erickson

December 24 (Christmas Eve. Candle light Service)- Esther Roberts & Bonnie Reeves

December 28 –Paul & Pat Graham, Norm Hockley & Arabella Richardson

WEST ENTRANCE GREETER

Bob Richardson

PRAYER LIST FOR CONGREGATIONS, PRESBYTERY OF AR.-2008

December 7	First, Clarksville	Park Hill, North Little Rock
December 14	Mt. Vernon, Pea Ridge	First, Huntsville
December 21	First, Benton	Commissioned Lay Pastors
December 28	First, Des Arc	Church Musicians

PLEASE NOTIFY IRENE BERE IF YOU KNOW OF ANYONE WHO SHOULD BE ON OUR PRAYER LIST.



Every Wednesday night at 7:00 p.m.– Bible Study

Every Thursday at 10:00 a.m.– Coffee & Fellowship in Memorial Hall
(no fellowship on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1)

Every Thursday at 6:30 p.m.– Choir Practice (no practice on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1)

Every Thursday at 7:30 p.m.– P.A.W.S. (Presbyterian Actors Workshop)
(no practices on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1)

Tuesday, December 2– 9:30 a.m.– Presbyterian Women meet at the Village Wheel. Devotions by Ada Jeffrey and holiday fun by Esther Roberts.

Saturday, December 6– 1:00 p.m. till 4:00 p.m.– Holiday Open House at Rev. Mark & Laura Lenneville's home. 709 Locust, Bull Shoals.

Sunday, December 7– Communion Worship Service, Stated Congregational Meeting, Budget Results, Election of the Leaders and After Church Fellowship. Hosts will be: Mary Haggart, Lizzie Pemberton, Gail Sanderson and Rebecca Walker.

Saturday, December 13– Happy Birthday Rev. Mark!

Sunday, December 14– Ordination & Installation of Deacons & Elders.

Friday, December 19– 9:00 a.m.– Session meeting in Christian Ed. Room.

Saturday, December 20– 10:30 a.m.- (PAWS) Dress rehearsal for Christmas Play.

Sunday, December 21– Christmas Play

Wednesday, December 24– No Bible Study until Wednesday, January 7.

Wednesday, December 24– 6:00 p.m.– Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

Thursday, December 25-January 5– Office Closed for observance of the Holidays.

BIRTHDAY WISHES

December 4– Rich Hadzima

December 5– Betty Hobbs and Sharon Gardner

December 6– Shirley Lowe

December 11– Jewel Riley

December 13– Rev. Mark Lenneville

December 15– Susan Nixon

December 19– Jean Hoefer



December 10, 1939 Bill & Jean Lyon

December 17, 1984 Ed & Ellie Chapman

December 30, 1955 Bob & Gloria Wiles

LIBRARY LINES

We have some new books: Fiction: A COVINGTON CHRISTMAS by Joan Medlicott and A GIFT OF LOVE by Judith McNaught;

Non-Fiction: EVERY DAY LIFE IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES by A.C. Bouquet, EARTH PRAYERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD by E. Roberts, THE JOY OF ACTIVE PRAYER by Bill Bright, and A COURSE IN MIRACLES.

We have two books of the month both Christmas books.

The first is a children's book: ONE WINTRY NIGHT by Ruth B. Graham.

"When a young mountain boy is caught alone in a sudden snowstorm, he takes refuge in a cabin his grandfather had helped to build many years before. The woman living here shelters the boy, attends to his badly swollen ankle, and spends the hours they are snow-bound by telling the Christmas story-- beginning with creation and concluding with the resurrection. In a magnificent blend of a contemporary setting with the history of God's redeeming love, Ruth Graham has created a wonderful and unique version of the Christmas story."

The second is THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE by Max Lucado.

"In a tiny town straight out of a Dickens novel the citizens believe in miracles. Every twenty-five years the candle maker is visited by an angel--and when one single candle is lit, miracles aren't far behind. But this year it seems that the age of miracles is past. The new reverend is uncomfortable with the villagers belief in angels and miraculous candles. Yet a string of miracles is just what the village needs this Christmas. And no one could use one more than the cynical young reverend."

The Christmas books, videos and audios will be located in the Children's library.

May God Bless you all this holiday season. Faye Brackett, Librarian

Joy is the true gift of Christmas, not the expensive gifts that call for time and money. We can communicate this joy simply: with a smile, a kind gesture, a little help, or forgiveness. And the joy we give will certainly come back to us . . . Let us pray that this presence of the liberating joy of God shines forth in our lives.

– Pope Benedict XVI

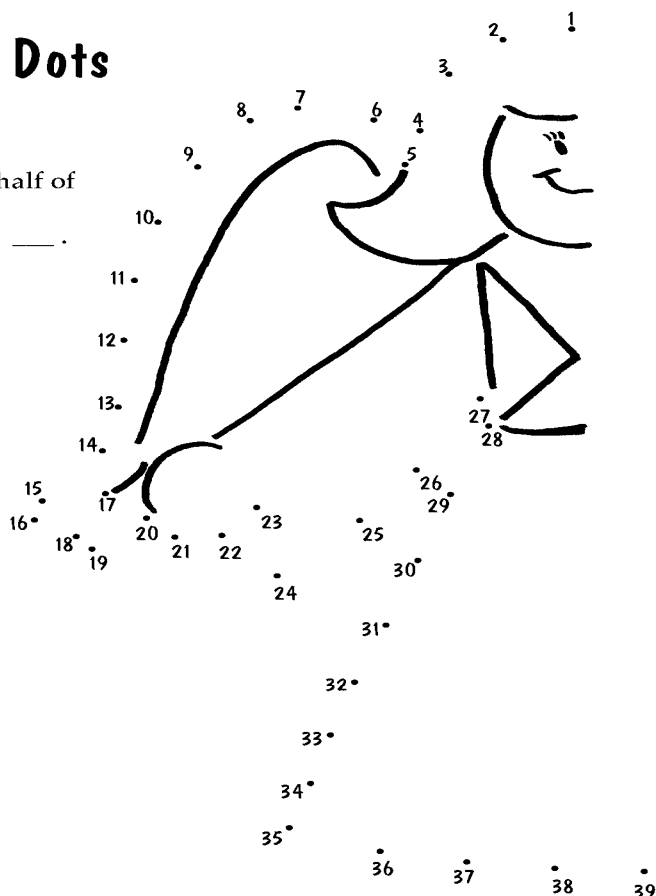


Connect the Dots

Connect the dots.

Then draw the other half of

this _____.



Angels

Here are some Bible verses that tell us some things that angels have done and can do for us. Can you match the verse and action?

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1. Heb 1:14 | a. gave directions to Peter |
| 2. Luke 1:11-20 | b. rolled back the stone |
| 3. Acts 12:7-10 | c. gave instruction to Philip |
| 4. Mat 2:13 | d. spirits in divine service |
| 5. Luke 22:43 | e. appeared as strangers to whom we should show hospitality |
| 6. Mat 28:2 | f. brought good news to Zechariah |
| 7. Acts 8:26 | g. appeared to Jesus and gave him strength |
| 8. Heb 13:2 | h. guard us and bear us up |
| 9. Ps 91:11-12 | i. appeared to Joseph in a dream |

Answers:
1. d
2. f
3. c
4. b
5. g
6. e
7. h
8. i
9. a

MISSION MINUTE

By Faye Brackett, Mission Co-Moderator

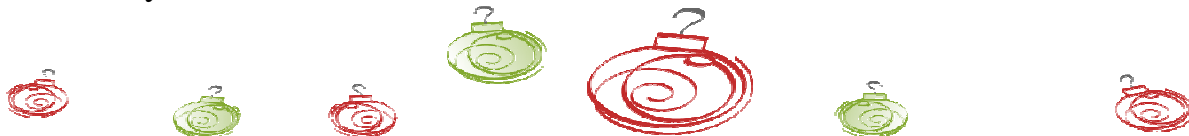
CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

“What is it about the word “comfort” that makes Christians uncomfortable? For me the problem is the word’s association with a kind of individual cocoon that insulates us from each other and the rest of the world--an easy chair in front of a TV that lets us live without having to confront the reality and pain of each other’s lives. This cocoon suggests that any passing discontent we might feel can be assuaged with a simple swipe of the credit card: within a few days, one more item we think will help distance us from discomfort will be delivered to our door. The problem, of course, is that distancing our self lies at the root of our discomfort; the urge to avoid pain is in fact what causes so much of our pain.

But that is precisely why we need true comfort. The word “comfort” comes from two Latin words meaning “strength” and “with.” It implies not the avoiding of either my pain or yours, but the facing of them together. This is central to the message of Jesus’ life--our deepest joy lies in loving God through loving and supporting one another as Jesus loves us. One of the ways this is lived out in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is through the Christmas Joy Offering. For seventy years, Presbyterians have given at Christmas time to support the needs of the church family--first to those who have faithfully followed their call to serve the church without counting the cost to their future security, but also to those who are trying to discern how they are called to use their gifts to serve the larger community. Let us not only rejoice in the tidings of comfort and joy, but embrace them by taking this opportunity to offer comfort to those in our church family who need it.” 2008 Mission Yearbook, pg. 358

The Christmas Joy Offering will start on Nov. 30th and run through Dec. 21st. The donation envelopes will be located in the pews. Please check the Mission Bulletin Board for information on the Joy Offering.

Thank You, Faye Brackett - Mission Co-Chair



WHAT'S YOUR TESTIMONY?

Every one has one! We would like to add a testimony tab to the church web site and need YOU to submit a 3-4 sentence testimony about how being a part of this church has been meaningful to your life and what encounters with God you have had. We also would like your permission, if you would consent, to use your name and maybe even your picture too! Let's show the world how good God is to us!

Q: What does “Testimony” mean?

A: A testimony is a public acknowledgement of the ways God has changed a person's life.

NATIVITY OF JESUS CHRIST

“This Christmas Day Christians will gather with friends and families to rekindle relationships, exchange gifts, and enjoy food and fellowship--all in ultimate honor and celebration of the birth of God’s Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. There will undoubtedly be news reports indicating the various places in the world where the birth of Christ is celebrated and the many ways the occasion is observed. Church bells and choirs will ring and sing throughout the world, and Nativity scenes will be displayed in recognition of his birth. The variety of images and sounds of this day reminds us of the unity that the birth of the Messiah brings and the faith, hope, and love that the people of God have in the Chosen One.

The first chapter of Hebrews puts Christ’s significance and relationship to God in perspective. The One whose birth we celebrate today lived among us, died for our sins, and sits at the right hand of God. Although prophets were instrumental in presenting opportunities for people to hear God’s Word, they were not imprints of God’s very being. This distinct characteristic is reserved for Christ, and it is He whom we are called to walk with in our faith journeys.

By the day’s end, we will have laughed and had food and drink with friends and families. Perhaps we will spend next Christmas with new friends and other family members, but the unity that the celebration of Christ’s birth brings and the relevance of Christ’s birth, life, and ministry to how we live our lives will most certainly remain.”

2008 Mission Yearbook, pg. 362

We will be putting out the Christmas Card Tree again this year. Instead of buying Christmas cards to send out for our church friends, we suggest that you make a donation to the Food Pantry by placing a Christmas ball on the tree with your name on it. Please mark your donations to go to the “Food Pantry” on your donation envelopes. Thank you from the Mission Committee.





As chair person for our Missions I decided to write this report of things we have done since the beginning of 2008.

***Brethren Service Center, New Windsor, MD.: 30 baby gowns-30 crocheted caps.**

***Serenity House: 2 baby afghans– Ladies gown, 4 caps– 8 baby gowns-3 decorated pillows and 2 twin flat sheets.**

***“Gift of the Heart” Ferncliff: 10 school bags filled with school supplies, 4 health kits.**

***R. Fears Women’s Center, Baxter Regional Medical Center: 35 baby caps, 2 baby blankets.**

***Twin Lakes Nursing Center: 15 lap robes**

Mission: 2 prayer shawls

***Marion County Health Dept.: 8 baby blankets, 4 receiving blankets, 8 baby gowns, 3 coloring books.**

***Gifts to Gamma House and Vera Lloyd: too numerous to mention.**

The caps were from Vicky Bair and a friend of Mary Kerr in TX. All items (blankets, gowns, etc.) were handmade or donated by P.W. members.

The value of these items alone came to \$912.15. We have also given cash to our money mission projects.

We have been busy and would like to invite more ladies to join us. We also held “The Potato Bash”, and a “Games Party”.

Our ladies also assist in other activities in our church-Food Pantry collection– Choir-Greeters-Ushers, etc.

**Hope to see you at our next meeting,
Betty Aaron**

STEWARDSHIP MINUTE

Deadline Approaches for No-Penalty IRA gift

By Kim E. Warner, Vice President, Texas Presbyterian Foundation Giving without penalty. That is the whole idea behind the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 signed into law recently. However, time is quickly running out for individuals to take advantage of this unique penalty-free opportunity as only three months remain. (The provisions of this new law also allow for another year, 2009, and Another distribution up to \$100,000.) Individuals 70 1/2 years of age and older have until December 31, 2008 to make distributions from their IRA without paying income tax on the distribution. Prior to the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 donors were required to report any amount taken from an IRA as taxable income –which caused some donors to pay more income tax than if they had not given at all. With this law, the gift amount counts toward the required minimum distribution, but does not increase the individual's amount of income tax. Without these penalties, individuals can now give in new ways. For example, one Texas Presbyterian Foundation client used this same provision two years ago to create a permanent endowment fund that year, rather than waiting for a bequest from the individual's estate. Giving in this way allowed the individual and charity to see the benefit from the fund more quickly.

During the last few months of 2008, consider creating a permanent fund (without tax consequences) using IRA funds. Distributions can be divided between your church and other charities but cannot exceed a total of \$100,000. Also, Donor Advised Funds and Life Income Plans cannot be the recipient of this distribution. If you have additional questions about the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, you are invited to contact the Texas Presbyterian Foundation office at 1-800-955-3155 and have a confidential conversation about how this works and how it can help you meet your giving goals in 2008.

Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008

Once in awhile the Federal Government takes an action which helps people with a real problem. In this case, if you are 70½ and are having to take more from your IRA than you would like, recent legislation has a solution to your problem. Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 has made it possible for owners of an Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) to request distributions totaling up to \$100,000 to be made directly to qualified public charities such as your Church. Any such distribution counts toward the owner's required annual distribution without adding to taxable income. (Just so you won't think this is an overly generous provision, this distribution will not also qualify as a deductible gift against other income.) If a person wishes to take advantage of this new provision, action must be considered soon. This is because the window for such distributions is for the rest of 2008 and for the year 2009 and that is all. That means up to \$100,000 for each of these two years. To make this happen for your estate Planning, do not take the distribution yourself because that would add to taxable income. Instead, notify your IRA administrator to make the gift directly to the charity—hopefully your favorite Presbyterian related charity!

~~~~NOTES FROM SESSION~~~~

Session Minutes will be posted on the bulletin board in the office and on the church website after they are approved. You may come by to read them or we will make a copy if you wish. In the newsletter we will let you know the actions taken by the session at the previous meeting. All stated session meetings are open to the whole congregation for observation. You may address the session by letting the Clerk (Vicky Bair) know in advance and she will put you on the agenda. You may have a voice but no vote on actions. Remember that everyone is invited to be on any committee they feel called to serve on (where you do have a voice and vote as a member of this church). Committees bring items to the session for vote.

October 31, 2008

It was voted to accept the donation of two flag poles from PW and place the flags back in the Sanctuary on the floor near the thermostats.

It was voted to appoint Norm Hockley as co-moderator of Property.

It was voted to approve the Worship Committee Job Description which had been amended since last approved.

It was voted to appoint Elaine Matejka as Music/Choir & Sound co-moderator.

It was voted to appoint Al Holtkamp as Worship Space Task Force moderator.

It was voted that Rose Martins be paid as a Substitute Pianist when filling in for Karla Thompson and accept any donation for her private use of the Choir room piano as stated in the Building Use policy.

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The new minister was intrigued to see an announcement in the church newsletter for a "Greening of the Church" service in early December. "Do you mean a Hanging of the Greens?" the minister asked. "Yes," came the reply. "But we changed the name after the Green family complained."

CONTACTING REV. MARK

Rev. Mark has a new toll-free number for church business. It is 866-541-1964.

This number will "find" Rev. Mark where ever he is.

Also feel free to call him at his other numbers:

Bull Shoals 870-277-4509, Lampe 417-423-8107

toll-free 866-541-1964, Cell 870-480-8869

Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals
903 Walnut, P.O. Box 687
Bull Shoals, AR. 72619 (870) 445-4622
presch@bullshoals.net
www.presbyterianchurchofbullshoals.com

THIS WE BELIEVE

December

**Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea,
to the city of David called Bethlehem.
(Luke 2:4)**

~MISSION STATEMENT~

**“We will be scripture-based to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and spiritually led to guide
all people to be active doers of the Word”
Approved by Session on November 16,2007**

CHURCH STAFF

Minister: Rev. Mark Lenneville-Stated Supply

Church Secretary: Debbie Heroux

Clerk of Session: Vicky Bair

Church Treasurer: Peni Lloyd

Financial Secretary: Dick Sass

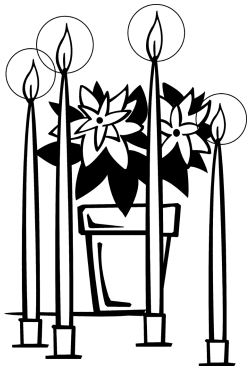
Asst. Financial Secretary: Elaine Miller

DEACONS

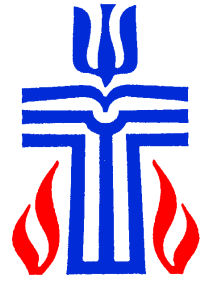
| <u>Class of 2008</u> | <u>Class of 2009</u> | <u>Class of 2010</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bill Kerr | | Jini Sass |
| Irene Bere | Elaine Matejka | Gloria Wiles |
| Sandy Erickson | Pat Erlewine | |

THE SESSION

| <u>Class of 2008</u> | <u>Class of 2009</u> | <u>Class of 2010</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Arabella Richardson | Norm Hockley | Bob Wiles |
| Vicky Bair | | Tywillah Schauer |
| Mary Kerr | Dolores Heroux | Harry Van Gorden |



DECEMBER 2008



EVERY Wednesday 7:00 p.m. Bible Study
 EVERY Thursday 10 a.m.—11 a.m. Coffee Fellowship
 EVERY Thursday 6:30 p.m.—7:30p.m. Choir Practice
 Every Thursday 7:30 p.m. PAWS

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
| | 1

8pm-AA | 2
9:30 a.m.- PW mtg.
at Village Wheel | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

1-4 p.m.
Holiday Open
House at Rev.
Mark & Laura
Lenneville's home |
| 7 After Church
Fellowship

Communion
 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14

Ordination &
Installation of
Deacons and Elders

8pm- AA | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19
9 a.m. Session

5 p.m. Family Night | 20
10:30 a.m.
Presbyterian
Actor's Workshop
Dress Rehearsal for
Christmas Play |
| 21


Christmas Program | 22

8pm- AA | 23 | 24
6 P.M Christmas
Eve Candle light
Service

No Bible Study | 25
Happy Birthday
Jesus!


Christ is born in Bethlehem | 26

Office Closed | 27 |
| 28 | 29
Office Closed | 30
Office Closed | 31
Office Closed

No Bible Study | 1
Happy New Year!

Office Closed | 2
Office Closed | 3 |
| | | | | | | |