



DECEMBER 2017

*Join Us in the Advent Journey  
as We Prepare Our Lives  
to Receive Jesus Christ the King of Kings*



### ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**ADVENT I – December 3 - 11:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion**  
Family-Friendly Worship preparing our hearts for Christmas  
Advent Wreath Lighting - The Burrows Family

**ADVENT II – December 10 – 11:00 AM Worship**  
Family-Friendly Worship preparing our hearts for Christmas  
Advent Wreath Lighting - The Town Family

**ADVENT III – December 17 – 11:00 AM Worship**  
Family-Friendly Worship preparing our hearts for Christmas  
Advent Wreath Lighting - The Sinnet Family

**ADVENT IV and CHRISTMAS EVE – 11:00 AM Worship**  
Family-Friendly Worship and Birthday Cake for Jesus  
Advent IV Wreath Lighting - The Resnick Family  
Christ Candle Lighting - The Taylor Family

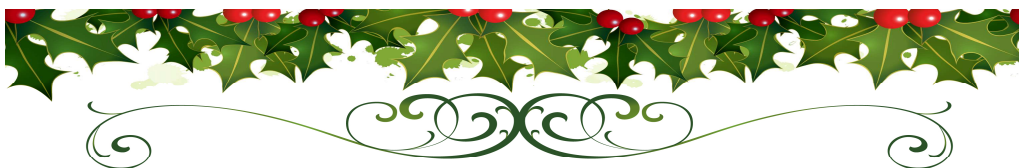
**1st Sunday After Christmas – December 31 – 11:00 AM**  
\*Family-Friendly - Final Worship of 2017



Pastor Tom Dendy

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**Merry Christmas**

*From Pastor Tom  
and Linda*

## PASTOR TOM'S ARTICLE

By Tom Dendy

**First - A Note of Thanksgiving:** Here we go again starting a new cycle of the Christian Year with Advent... and here we go again as pastor and congregation, starting our seventh year of shared mission and ministry at Celebration! I Thank God for each of you and I consider myself blessed to be serving God with you. I look forward with hope and great expectations to the coming year and I can't wait to see what God has in store for us in 2018. As we go forward together, may God guide our loving, our living and our giving. May God inspire our growing generosity as we bring our lives – heart, mind, soul, strength, time, talent and money to join with Jesus in service to His Kingdom – and to God be the Glory!

**Second - A bit of History on this season of Advent:** “Advent” means “coming” or “arrival.” During the season of Advent, we celebrate Christ's coming into the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. In its historical origins, the season of Advent was patterned after the season of Lent, a six-week period of penitence and preparation for Easter. Similarly, the four weeks of Advent present an opportunity for communal discernment and personal examination, as the church prepares to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord and looks with hope for Christ's return.

**Between memory and hope** an excerpt from the *Companion to the Book of Common Worship* (Geneva Press, 2003, 96).

In Advent we expectantly wait for the One who has already come. We anticipate the promised justice of God's new world, yet we praise God who raised the “righteous branch” to rule with justice and righteousness. We hope for the restoration of the afflicted, the tormented, and the grieving, yet we delight that healing has come in Christ. We long for the beating of swords into plowshares, yet we rejoice that the Prince of Peace has appeared. We yearn for the barren deserts of our inner cities to flourish, yet we laud the desert Rose that has bloomed. We dream of the land where lions and lambs live in harmony, yet we acclaim the child born to lead us into the promised land. Christ has come! Christ is risen! Christ will come again! In Advent, we are living between the first and the second coming of the Lord. The dialectical tension of *maranatha* [alternately translated “Come, our Lord!” or “Our Lord has come”] — placing us between memory and hope, past and future — may strengthen our Advent liturgies. Perhaps we need to cling to the ancient cry of *maranatha*! and its paradoxical meanings so we may freely embrace “the new thing” prophesied by Isaiah (Isaiah 43:19) that God is doing among us right now. The tension and paradox we find in Advent shapes our celebrations during the season. **\*HAVE A BLESSED ADVENT SEASON!**

**Third – An Advent, Christmas, Year-End Blessing:** God of love, in this Advent season you call us forth into a new day dawning. Help us work for a new day for people who need it most: the starving, the uneducated, the abusive and the abused, political tyrants, the despairing, the challenged. May your love be manifest in our presence to those in need. May your healing power move in places where there is space for it. Immanuel, God-with-us, you have prepared a path that brings hope, peace, joy and love into the world. May those who seek to know you find this path and the gifts upon it. May the hopeless, conflicted, depressed and lonely know that you have come to turn lives upside down, providing what we need in hopes that we too will provide for other's needs. Help us to prepare for and celebrate the coming Christ of Christmas. As we bring to a close 2017, we offer praise and thanks for all the many ways that God has made manifest the love of Christ in our lives and in our congregation and community. We are grateful for all our many blessings. May we know Christ's presence more fully as we follow his path of



The choirs of Celebration Presbyterian Church and St. Anne's Episcopal Church will be joining to present a concert of peace on December 14 at 7:00 at CPC, ***Peace Has Come***, by Mary MacDonald. Please join us as we celebrate the peace the God provides through his son, Jesus. Despite the turmoil in the world, may your holiday season be filled with love, joy, hope and *peace*. We will be taking up a love offering at this concert to benefit the Shepherd's Table, whose mission is to improve the lives of those in Horry County who need assistance by providing for their nutritional needs. Please join us as we celebrate the giver of all peace.

Night at the Movies—Tuesday, December 5, 6pm. Mark your calendars to join us for *It's A Wonderful Life*. Light Refreshments will be served during a short intermission. This movie is for all ages.



## Youth of Celebration

THE SECOND AND  
THIRD SUNDAY  
OF EACH  
MONTH IS OUR  
HE~BREWS  
COFFEE CAFÉ

### CAMP PEE DEE

*By Cecilia Evans*

Celebration will be hosting a Camp Rally Day on January 27. This is an exciting time to share information on Camp Pee Dee Retreat Center and give children and parents a preview of summer fun, faith and fellowship. Children from the community are invited and local churches as well. How can you share this exciting ministry and plant the seed to for faith to grow in these young disciples?

### MISSIONS

*By Cecilia Evans*

Mission and Outreach in action. The Beat goes on. Mission and Outreach has not slowed down the last two months of the year. We kicked November off with a blood drive collecting 28 units of blood. This event was well received by the community and the congregation. Thank you to the volunteers who helped with the event and those who contributed delicious soup.

One of our favorite times of the year is when the sanctuary begins to fill up with Sneakers for Santa. We will be delivering the sneakers and socks we have collected soon but the sleigh still has room for several more pairs. At last count we are over 89 pairs with a goal of 100 but anyone who has ever been in business knows you have to set a stretch goal and Bernadine has challenged us to 200 pairs. We shall see, but thank you for your support of this worthwhile cause.

The children and youth participated in creating cards for veterans for the holiday season. The cards were given to Terry Baker for inclusion in the packages his motorcycle club sends overseas. If you know of a soldier who is serving and would like to receive a care package, please connect with Terry Baker. Peace and Blessings the holiday season!

You are cordially invited to a Retirement Celebration for Rev. Dr. Bruce Ford, Presbyter of The New Harmony Presbytery, which will be held on December 9, 2017 at 4pm at the Fraser Memorial Presbyterian Church, 1746 Highway 521 South, Sumter, South Carolina. A retirement album is being prepared for Bruce and Genie. Please send all acknowledgements and items for the album to Ella Busby, PO Box 3324, Sumter, SC 29151, no later than November 30, 2017.



### LADYBUG LUNCHEON

*By Carol Butler*



Our November luncheon brought us to the new restaurant Carolina Ale House located at the former location of Planet Hollywood. Our hostess was Judy Leonard. Thanks, Judy, for making the arrangements.

There were twenty-one Ladybugs in attendance. We were happy to have Gloria Flowers with us; we haven't seen her in a while.

We collected \$110.00 for charity and, with other monies we had in the kitty, we sent \$150.00 to Camp Pee Dee.

The menu was extensive and orders ran from Reubens to wraps to Philly cheesesteaks to Greek pitas, etc. The service was good and we had the outside room practically to ourselves. As always, the friendship and camaraderie makes for a fun outing.

Because of the Ladies Christmas luncheon in December the next lunch will be Thursday, January 4, at noon, at Ciao Restaurant located at 5223 N. Kings Hwy. Yours truly will be your hostess. If you plan to attend, the sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex. Let me know if you need a ride. All Ladybugs, their friends and family (female of course), are invited....hope to see you there. Come join a bunch of fun LadyBugs!

## VOLUNTEERS SERVING THIS MONTH

### Elder of the Week:

Dec 3—Nanette Kelly  
Dec 10—Ken Krenzer  
Dec 17—Bernadine Lamar  
Dec 31—Priscilla Mulligan

### Liturgist

Dec 3—Carol Butler  
Dec 10—Carla Baker  
Dec 17—Daniel Watson  
Dec 31—Nancy Torcivia

### Visitors Table/Greeter

Dec 3—Carol Lagassee  
Dec 10—Linda Miller  
Dec 17—Joe Mehalick/Priscilla Mulligan  
Dec 31—Betsy Hughes

### Pre K –Kindergarten Children's Church— Tonja Paolini

### Children's Church Grades 1-5

Trudy Miller

### Nursery

Dec 3—Leslie Eckert  
Dec 10—Donna Woodard  
Dec 17—Vicki Jacobs  
Dec 24—Vicki Simon  
Dec 31—Donna Woodard

### Media Shout

Dec 3—Bernadine Lamar  
Dec 10—Katrena White  
Dec 17—Bernadine Lamar

Dec 24—  
Dec 31—Katrena White

### Sound Booth

Dec 3—Nicklaus McIlrath  
Dec 10—Carol Butler  
Dec 17—Carol Butler  
Dec 24—  
Dec 31—Nicklaus McIlrath

### Ushers for the month of December

Larry Dowd, Kerry and Nanette Kelly

### Communion for December

**Nancy Torcivia**, Carol Butler, Barbara Barranco, Bob Miller, Katrena White

**Thank you** for your faithful stewardship and generous giving in support of Celebration Presbyterian Church throughout 2017. Year-end gifts may be given through the offering or the church office through December 31, 2017.

In January 2018, you will be receiving your 2017 Annual Statement of Giving from the church office for your records. It will be sent by email and it will be coming **from REALM** as the email address. If the church office does not have your email address, the statements will be snail mailed to you.



## 5th Sunday Offering

December 31, is New Year's Eve and also the 5th Sunday of the month. We will be receiving our 5th Sunday Offering that helps us provide upkeep and improvement of our property. Envelopes will be available in the bulletins for your use.

## CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

We will be receiving the Christmas Joy Offering on December 17. This offering helps current and retired church workers who need extra financial help, people like pastors or Christian educators who have an illness or a tragedy happen in their family. This offering also helps students who attend one of our Presbyterian related racial ethnic schools and colleges. The wise men brought gifts to share with Christ as a response to the amazing gift God has given us: Jesus. We, too, can give gifts in response to the gifts we have been given—our church leaders and the college students who will be our future leaders.



## BIRTHDAYS IN DECEMBER

Take a moment to wish those who have a birthday this month birthday wishes or send them a card.

If your birthday is not listed, please let Linda Berry in the office know.

3—Logan White  
4—Daniel Watson  
7—Rainee Taylor  
13—Emerson Cicala  
13—Margaret Reeder  
14—Bob Stepanek  
15—Nicklaus McIlrath

18—George Vaupel  
21—Frances Mehalick  
21—Nancy Resnick  
29—Jeanne Bredbeck  
29—Quinn Coleman



## FINANCIAL UPDATE

*By Joe Alexander*

The October total undesignated income was \$54,868 while total expenses were \$47,746 for a net income of \$7,122. This positive performance is mainly due to increased offerings. Thanks!

The year-to-date October undesignated income was \$433,845 while total expenses were \$440,722 for a YTD net loss of \$6,877. Although a loss is not desirable, we had budgeted a October YTD loss of \$19,503 so overall giving has been better than expected. Thanks!

As of November 15, our 2018 stewardship Estimates of Giving stand at \$140,684. Estimates of Giving received in 2016 were \$149,711. Of the 93 stewardship packages sent out, we have received 46 back so far. (This is somewhat disappointing.) If you have not yet sent in your Estimate of Giving for 2018, please do so before years end. Together with God, we can meet the mission and ministry needs of Celebration in 2018! Thanks, Joe



## PRESCHOOL

*By Susan Spraker*



It's beginning to feel a lot like Christmas! We will start this festive month off by seeing a movie at the Stone Theatre in Market Common on December 4. Our feature this year is the animated film *Jingle Bells*. Our Christmas parties will be on the 18 and 19 and we welcome all to stop by for a visit.

On a sad note, we are saying goodbye to our longtime teacher and friend, Ms. Melanie. Melanie has been with the preschool for the past 13 years. Melanie is moving to Nashville and we will miss her so very much. We welcome Ms. Anita to our preschool family and encourage you to stop in Room 2 to welcome her.

Our preschool family extends a warm wish for a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The Preschool will be closed December 20-January 2. Preschool classes resumes on January 3, 2018. See you all next year!!!!



Join us on December 12 at Presbyterian Communities in Florence to fill the halls with faithful friends, old and new, as we come into Christ's presence with a joyful noise. We will gather in the front lobby at 10:45 a.m. before dispersing into groups for caroling. Please note, if there are certain residents you would like to visit during our time together, please be sure to contact Kelly Boone before Monday, December 11, so she can coordinate accordingly. After caroling, we will gather for a fun time of fellowship with the residents and enjoy a delicious meal together in the cafeteria.

Come join us as we spend special time with our friends at Presbyterian Communities.

Festivities begin at 11:00 a.m. with lunch starting at 11:45 a.m. Lunch is \$5 per person. Reservations are required. Please register by Friday, December 8. Contact Kelly Boone at (843) 479-3051 to register or with questions.



Elder Terry Pettijohn found an article by Cynthia Rigby that was reprinted from *Presbyterians Today* which reviews the role of Mary, mother of Jesus.

### **A New Look at Mary the "God-bearer"**

Presbyterian author Kathleen Norris makes the wry observation that Protestants have a limited attention span for Mary, the mother of Jesus. We unpack her from the box at Christmastime, she says, and then pack her back up again, with our other decorations, after the holidays are over.

One reason we Protestants hold Mary at arm's length is because we associate her with our own vague discomfort about the role of saints in Christian spirituality. As Protestants we remember that Luther and Calvin criticized the Roman church of the 16th century for compromising, in their understandings of Mary, on the basic Christian conviction that Jesus Christ is the one Mediator between God and humanity.

Not wanting to make the same mistake, however, we inadvertently make another: We relegate Mary to the sidelines. But the time has come for Protestants to recognize Mary's place at the heart of the Christ event and consider what she has to offer to our theology and spirituality.

Roman Catholic and Protestant theologians alike have argued that Mary is the model Christian believer, the symbol of the church in relationship to God. Consistent with this belief, Christmas sermons often lift Mary up as one of the great cloud of witnesses who respond faithfully to what God calls them to do.

But these messages are incomplete. Certainly Mary is one among many people of faith the Scripture bears witness to and we celebrate. But she is also the only one who is identified as the "God-bearer." And it is in this distinctive vocation that she serves as a model for the church in relationship to God. She reveals what it means for us, in turn, to bear God to the world.

The idea that Mary is "God-bearer" (theotokos, in Greek) was affirmed by the church in 451, at the Council of Chalcedon. This is the Council that formulated the Christology we still confess today: that Jesus Christ is "fully human and fully divine."

To confess that the young woman named Mary is the bearer of God is consistent with this affirmation. Born to a human woman, Jesus Christ is as fully human as every baby ever born. His birth to a human woman who is uniquely God-bearer reminds us that this human son is also fully divine.

Recognizing Mary as God-bearer leads us to ask questions about the character of our relationship to God. What does it mean to say that Mary - and we - are the bearers of God?

# DECEMBER 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Adult Bible Study 9:15 am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Fellowship 10:15 <b>Worship 11am</b> Children's Church					<b>1</b> Preschool Staff Breakfast  <b>The Polar Express</b> 6:30-8:30pm	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> <i>1st Sunday of Advent</i>  <b>COMMUNION</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Christmas Tree Light-</b> <b>ing at the</b> <b>Rec Center</b> <b>6pm</b>	<b>5</b> <b>Movie night,</b> <i>It's A Wonderful Life</i> 6pm	<b>6</b> Choir Rehearsal 7pm	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Ladies <b>Christmas Luncheon</b> <b>12noon</b>  <b>Bruce Ford Retirement</b>
<b>10</b> <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> He~Brews Café for Youth Combined Choir Rehearsal 4pm	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Combined Choir Rehearsal 7pm	<b>14</b> <b>Team C</b> <b>cooks at The Shepherd's</b> <b>Table 2pm</b> <b>Cantata 7pm</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> He~Brews Café for Youth  <b>CHRISTMAS</b> <b>JOY OFFERING</b> <b>STATED SESSION</b> <b>MEETING 12:15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Choir Rehearsal 7pm	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> Fellowship 10:15 Worship 11am	<b>25</b> <b>CHRISTMAS</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> <b>New Year's Eve</b> Fellowship 10:15 Worship 11am 5th Sunday Offering						

There is an online Advent Devotion at [www.d365.org](http://www.d365.org) that can be used this season for your personal devotional time.



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Celebration Presbyterian Church

Dr Tom Dendy—Pastor

Sarah Abushakra—Music Director

Linda Berry—Office Administrator



## CELEBRATION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

### OUR IDENTITY STATEMENT

*We are Christ followers who are open, accepting, loving and welcoming to all!*



## CELEBRATION LADIES CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

DECEMBER 9, 2017 AT 12PM

AT THE PINE LAKES COUNTRY CLUB

**\$25 PER PERSON INCLUDES TAX AND GRATUITY**

Meal includes your choice of entrée, a garden salad, roasted red potatoes, sautéed green beans, rolls, butter, chocolate mousse with raspberry, iced tea and coffee

**Entrée Choices: Lemon Herb Salmon, Petite Filet, or Chicken Franchise**

**PLEASE SIGN UP ON SHEET IN THE NARTHEX ALONG WITH YOUR ENTRÉE SELECTION.  
PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO CPC AND GIVE TO THE CHURCH OFFICE OR NANCY RESNICK.**

**WE ARE ASKING EACH PERSON TO BRING AN UNWRAPPED CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR EITHER A GIRL OR BOY, AGES BIRTH THROUGH 11 YEARS OLD.**

When you receive this article the Polar Express train will be close to leaving the station. Friday, December 1, 6pm, we will be hosting children from our community to kick-off the Christmas season. Currently we are expecting 50+ children to share a night of stories, hot chocolate, train rides, pictures with Santa, crafts and much more. Stop by Celebration and see the excitement of the season as the train leaves the station on Friday, December 1, at 6pm.

