



Grace Notes

Enjoying the Gift of God Together at FCPC!

December 2014

December Anniversary's

Daryl and Pat Arndt
December 7, 1961

Louis and Julie Lester
December 27, 1993



What Fort Calhoun Presbyterian Church believes and tries to practice to be is a church that provides opportunities for all to serve, to celebrate and worship and to share in the active pursuit of a life in Christ.

December Birthdays

Becky Grabow	December 1
Chris Nanfito	December 3
Judy Vandermeulen	December 4
Jennie Premer	December 10
Laura Shaner	December 13
Ben Rheinheimer	December 14
Tyler Tietz	December 16
Dick Valentine	December 17
Caroline Earwood	December 18
Bret Klabunde	December 18
Mary Beth Brandt	December 20
Madison Nelson	December 21
Ronald Rheinheimer	December 25
Hunter Bolen	December 28
Kathy Morley	December 28
Neale Shaner	December 29





PASTOR'S CORNER

December always seems to be one long preparation for Christmas. We focus so much of time and energy for this one day out of our month but do we really take the time to ponder what all of this preparation means for our daily living. We prepare meals, gifts, cookies, decorating, travel time, parties, mailings, picture taking, games to play, sleeping arrangements, programs to watch, and the list goes on.

We can get so focused on preparations that we miss out what the season is all about: God's Son coming to earth to be with us. How might God want us to spend our month of December preparing for this celebration of God coming into our lives? We just finished a season of looking at what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and so to follow through and be disciplined in our commitment to be more like Jesus I want to help us answer the question: How might God want us to spend our month of December as a disciple of Jesus Christ preparing to celebrate Jesus' birth.

God seek us to learn to pursue the marks of Jesus' character. So how might we do that this month?

- a. A Heart for Christ Alone – our world focuses on spending our money on gifts, when all Christ really wants is our heart. What is in our hearts is what we will share with the world. Is Christ in your heart? We cannot fake what is at the center of our living. “A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit” (Matt. 7:18). Are you preparing this December to give the gift of your heart with the world? There is no better gift to give than what is in our hearts – Jesus Christ.
- b. A Mind Transformed by the Word – With all our preparations to celebrate with friends and family Jesus' birth – don't forget to allow to God's Word to help you prepare wisely. Many people ask me how I can talk about the Christmas story year after year, and I can only say – ‘Because God shows me something new every time I read it.’ Don't forget that God took hundreds of years to prepare the world for Jesus to come. Let those prophecies speak to you this December. Allow God to show you something new as you hear the carols and listen to the story of Christmas!
- c. Arms of Love – So much of the hurry of the season is getting gifts. In the movie version of ‘how the Grinch stole Christmas’, Cindy Lou-Who watches people go crazy over all of the gift giving and she starts thinking of the one everyone hates and is afraid of: the Grinch. She reaches out with arms of love to invite him to the celebration. The only way we will ever know the reality of God's love is by making a choice. Every day we must choose to receive a fresh filling of his love, and to ask for the grace to learn how to love when love isn't easy. Practice the arms of love this season by giving yourself to help someone in need.
- d. Knees for Prayer – we can get so busy that we squeeze out our prayer life. Prayer is a journey of intimacy with God. Remember Jesus' own example as he was busy and wanted to be by people where ever he went, he still took the time to get away to a quiet place and talk with God. Remember what we learned of this mark – we can either worry or we can pray. Either we are in charge – which means we have a whole lot of worrying to do – or God is in charge, which immediately transforms prayer from an every now and then activity into an ongoing dialogue with God. Prepare time with God so that you will see clearly how to celebrate Jesus' birth

- e. A Voice to Speak the Good News – This is the one time a year that our culture allow the Christian faith to speak loud and strong – so when you are out and about and someone says, ‘Happy Holidays!’ We can respond to them the hope that we have for this holiday by saying, ‘MERRY CHRISTMAS.’ All this preparation in December points to someone – Jesus who is the Christ. We celebrate, sing, eat and drink because God has done something and the effect of Jesus coming is still transforming our lives today – so let us be bold in speaking the good news that Jesus is our Lord, Savior, friend, and teacher!
- f. A Spirit of Servanthood and stewardship – Jesus said this way – he didn’t come into the world to be served but to serve. Therefore the only lifestyle that is rational is that of the servant, the one whose joy increasingly becomes the result of seeing someone’s joy. Giving during December goes up, and what we need to remember through this season is to learn how we can sustain this spirit of giving all year long. The focus of Christ was to serve, so remember in your preparations to serve someone beside family and friends. Wisely give of your time, talent, and resources that will do the most good, and if you are speaking to God often, and listening to God through prayer and God’s Word, you will enjoy serving those God points out to you.

These six characteristics of Jesus is why we celebrate Christmas. This season prepare yourself to be transformed by God working in and through you! Enjoy growing in the likeness of Jesus!

Peace to you all,
Gregg



To place your order for poinsettias to honor or remember loved ones or friends, complete an order form, attach your check or cash to the form and place it in the offering plate or basket.

The Worship Team will be taking orders from November 23th thru December 7th. The cost is \$6.00 each and the forms can be found on the table in the Sanctuary.

Poinsettias will be on display December 14th through the 24th.

Please plan to pick up your plant after worship on December 24th or 29th.

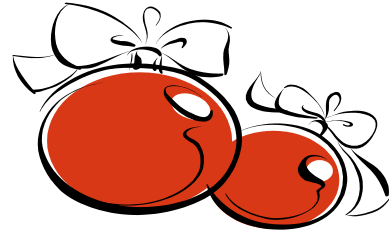
Thank You – Your Worship Team

JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP

**DECEMBER 3RD – CHRISTMAS FAVORITES
DECEMBER 17TH – CHRISTMAS PARTY**

We will enjoy dinner together and have a “White Elephant” gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped gift that is either necessary or not necessary but nice!!!

We will resume our fun times together on January 7th!



**The Women of Fort Calhoun Presbyterian Church wish to invite you to the annual Christmas Ornament Exchange & Brunch.
December 6, 2014
10:00 a.m.
Fellowship Hall**

Please bring a gift wrapped ornament and a dish to share for brunch.

Invite family, friends and neighbors to join us for a great time of fellowship.

If you wish to donate your ornament to the Church Christmas Tree that would be great!

ADVENT READINGS

December 7

8:30 a.m. Vance, Marcia and Ethan
10:45 a.m. Melvilles

December 14

8:30 a.m. Everswicks
10:45 a.m. Shaners

December 21

8:30 a.m. Still Need
10:45 a.m. Ronee Christensen

Christmas Eve

7:00 p.m. Still Need
11:00 p.m. Michelle Quinlan

There are still a couple of slots that need filled, please contact Andy Melville or Megan Moriarty if you are available.

Thank You

Christmas in Calhoun Event Site

FCPC Fellowship Hall

December 13, 2014

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Stop by for crafts, cookies and conversation.

Check out the full schedule of the day's events at www.fortcalhoun.org/christmasincalhoun

The Outreach Team is also looking for people to help make or work with the crafts from 10:30-1:15.

And they also need dozens of cookies for the visitors that stop by.

If you can help with either of these, please visit the sign up sheets on the table in the sanctuary.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

"FAITH GUIDES"

The Christmas Joy Offering provides assistance for those who have dedicated their lives to the service of the church and supports leadership development and education at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges. Follow in the tradition of the wise men, and give this Advent season.

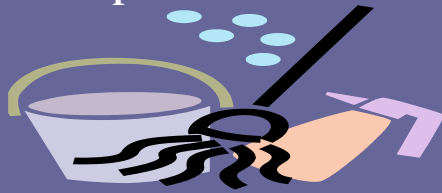
The Christmas Joy offering envelopes are on the tables in the Sanctuary. Thank you.

Custodial Care Team

The sign-up sheet for the 2015 year is on the table in the Sanctuary.

These custodial jobs are not the most pleasant or rewarding but they are essential for the upkeep of our church. It only takes an hour or less a week and we are always looking for new people or families to take on these jobs.

If you have any questions about what is required or how you can help, please contact Dave Stevens and Thank You for considering helping us with this important mission.



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE THAT WORKED ON THE CUSTODIAL CARE TEAM IN 2014.

THE TIME THAT YOU TAKE TO HELP WITH THIS IMPORTANT MISSION IS MUCH APPRECIATED.

DAVE STEVENS

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER?



We would like for everyone in the church to get to know one another a little better or to meet someone that they don't know. So, we are going to start a "Guess who's coming to dinner?" party starting in January.

It is a 4-month commitment because we are going to pair 8 people and each pair is going to host a dinner once a month. There is a sign-up sheet on both tables in the church.

If you have any questions, please contact Laura Shaner!



CAROL-O-GRAMS

The Senior High Youth Group will be delivering

Carol-O-Grams to Fort Calhoun residents on

Sunday, December 21st
Starting at 5:00 p.m.

To order this one of a kind gift for your friends or loved ones, please fill out the form at the back of the church, attach your check and place it in the Carol-O-Gram box.

Your free-will donation will be used to help fund the Youth Group Mission Trip !!!

Ushers/Greeters and Liturgist Schedule

Usher/Greeters

8:30 a.m.

- December 7 Nancy Goldapp and Mary Jo Dolinsky
- December 14 Steve and Robin Anderson
- December 21 Jim and Kathy Morley
- December 28 Irwin and Pat Nelson

Liturgists:

8:30 a.m.

- December 7 Don Johnson
- December 14 Jill Shields
- December 21 Stu Sprick
- December 28 Paul Oestmann

Usher/Greeters

10:45 a.m.

- December 7 The Jeff Shaner Family
- December 14 John and Becky Grabow
- December 21 The Klabunde Family
- December 28 Josh and Ronee Christensen

Liturgists:

10:45 a.m.

- December 7 Kristy Bolen
- December 14 Sheri White
- December 21 Melaney Towerton
- December 28 Joanne Slader

AUDIO VISUAL TEAM SCHEDULE

- December 7 Mike Moriarty
- December 14 Laura Shaner
- December 21 Teri Rheinheimer
- December 28 Jim Morley

The Next Session Meeting is:
December 10, 2014
7:30 pm

The Next Deacon's Meeting is:
December 18, 2014
7:00 pm

For the Month of December we will be collecting **CANNED PASTAS** for the Washington County Food Bank.

Please bring your cans of Spaghettios, Ravioli or any other canned pasta to church and we will take it to the Food Pantry.

THANK YOU!!!!

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP

December 7 – Service at the Open Door Mission – Meet at 3:15 p.m.

December 14 – Small Groups Meet following the High School Band Concert

December 21 – Carol-O-Grams – We will enjoy some hot chocolate and cider as we spread good cheer delivering Carol-O-Grams around the Community. Stick around for some cookies after!

Men’s Breakfast
Friday, December 5th
6:45 a.m.
Goldie’s

December Book Club
“Two From Galilee: The Story of Mary and Joseph” by Marjorie Holmes
Next Meeting – December 16, 2014

Fort Calhoun Presbyterian Church
Children’s Christmas Program
December 14, 2014
6:30 p.m.

This year we will join T-R-U-T-H TV’s *You Witness News Program* and *Starry Night, Luke Faithful* and *Angela Sing* for the evening news.

They will be interviewing special guest, *Isaiah Prophet* and have special reports from around Bethlehem by roving reporters *Matthew Follower, Eve Creation, John Gospel* and *Holy Daze*.

You may even see a commercial or two. It should be an exciting newscast, you won’t want to miss it!

DECEMBER 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 7:00 pm Prayer Shawl	3 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:30pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Adult Choir 7:30 pm LifeTree Cafe	4	5 6:45 am Men's Breakfast Goldie's	6 10:00 am Ornament Exchange
7	8	9	10 5:45 -7:30 pm Team and Session Mtgs 7:30 pm LifeTree Cafe	11	12	13 Christmas in Calhoun
14 6:30 pm Children's Christmas Program	15	16 11:30am-1:30 pm Pioneer Friends Lunch 7:00 pm Book Club	17 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:30pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Adult Choir 7:30 pm LifeTree Cafe	18 7:00 pm Deacons Meeting	19	20
21 5:00 pm Carol-O- Grams	22	23	24 7:00 pm Service 11:00 pm Service	25 	26	27
28	29	30	31			

