

PRESBYTERIANS AT THE CROSSROADS

Providence Presbyterian Church, Rev. Lisa Nance

December 2006



PASTOR'S PARAGRAPH

Over the past few weeks, we have seen our parking lot go from a fairly stable, gravel lot to what is now a muddy mess! It seems like as soon as the bulldozers arrived to start, the weather decided to see how hard it could make things! Thankfully, we have a dedicated crew working for us that has done their best to make sure we can continue to have services as the work gets done. The life of our church has not stopped because of the upheaval around the building, even if it has been a bit more challenging!

In so many, many ways, our parking lot construction reminds me of our faith journey. It seems like we can be quite content for any length of time about things in our lives, and then God starts nudging us to grow. The Spirit starts stirring us to change – to reach for more – to find where God is willing us to go. With a mixture of fear and excitement, we begin tentatively feeling out our future.

Then, just when we begin to move forward, the “weather” in our life starts stirring up stuff we never expected! Challenges come at us from the right and the

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PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN REAFFIRMATION

The Session of Providence Presbyterian Church would like to reaffirm our commitment to the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Confessions and the current Book of Order. In light of recent discussions and concerns, we feel that it is important to state clearly that we believe and uphold the standards for ordination outlined in our Form of Government. This includes G-6.0106b, which states:

Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scriptures and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of Word and Sacrament.

May God grant us the grace to discern His Will as we seek to be the people He is calling us to be.

PIONEER CLUBS

Due to the Youth Christmas Program on Sunday, December 3, we will not have Pioneer Clubs. However, the next meeting will be on **Sunday, December 17** at 5:00 p.m. for a Christmas Caroling Hayride. The club members, teachers, and parents will go around caroling and then return to the church for a warm meal of soup, sandwiches, and desserts. Please plan to come out for this time of fun and fellowship. If you have questions regarding Pioneer Clubs, please contact Georgianna Phillips



ATTENTION ALL YOUTH!!!

The first weekend in December will be a very busy one for our Youth Group. On **Saturday, December 2** the youth will leave from the church at 2:30 p.m. for a trip to Mike's Farmhouse for dinner and hayride. They will return to the church between 9:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. The cost of the trip will be around \$15 per person. Following that exciting trip, the Youth will lead our Worship Service on **Sunday, December 3**. They will serve as ushers, provide music, collect the offering, lead the children's sermon, and assist with scripture reading. Please plan to attend Worship Services on the 3rd in support of our Youth as they serve the Lord in this special way.

SCRIPTURES FOR DECEMBER

<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>SCRIPTURE</u>
Dec 3	Luke 21:25-36
Dec 10	Luke 3:1-6
Dec 17	Luke 3:7-18
Dec 24	Luke 2:1-20
Dec 31	Luke 2:41-52



SENIOR CITIZEN'S LUNCHEON

All Senior Citizens within our congregation and community are invited to the Senior Citizen's Luncheon scheduled for **Tuesday, December 5** at **12:00 noon** in the Fellowship Hall. A delicious meal, along with entertainment, is being planned by our Presbyterian Women. .



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left. And we start to wonder not only if we have what it takes to get us through the change, but we also begin to wonder why we really wanted to change in the first place!

Change is never easy. The laws of physics tell us that things like to stay the way they are – it takes real effort to make things different. But the faithful have always known that! Abraham, Moses, Esther, Daniel, Elizabeth, Joseph...the list goes on and on of our brothers and sisters in the Bible who followed the Lord in order to step out in faith and do the hard work that brought about Godly change.

We are entering into the season of Advent. Advent means the arrival of something that has been awaited. Jesus was the original Advent arrival – and He continues to be our Advent arrival now! Jesus called His original disciples to change, and He calls us to change – Godly change. But when we accept His call to change, to grow – things often will seem to get a little out of control. It becomes clear that, in order to make life different, we will have to step out in faith, into the “weather” of life.

Our God is a gracious and loving God, who longs for us to grow in faith. May the God who has blessed us so richly give us the grace to stay the course, even when the ground beneath our very feet seems to be shifting!

In Christ,
Rev. Lisa Nance
Interim Minister

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

On **Sunday, December 3**, the Youth will perform their annual Christmas Program at **4:00 p.m.** in the Sanctuary.

Following the program there will be a time for refreshments and a visit from a very special guest in the Fellowship Hall. Please mark your calendars to come out and support our youth as they put on a very special program for us. All children, workers, and youth involved in the program are asked to be at the church by 3:00 p.m. The children will have one more practice at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 2. A light breakfast will be provided in the Fellowship Hall.



CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Ryan Nelms and Stewart Pickens who were nominated and voted by their class to be on the West Johnston High School Homecoming Court. Ryan and Stewart were escorted by their mothers, Lisa Nelms and Beth Pickens. Congratulations guys!

Joseph Phillips who received the following awards during an Awards Ceremony at McGee's Crossroads Elementary: *Patriot's Character Nomination: Joseph received this award because he is always responsible for himself and others; Perfect Attendance; Recognition of Fine Effort; Principal's List; A-1 Speller (100 average).*

IMD INTERNATIONAL

Many of you may recall recent support that our church has given to Tim Bunn and his work with IMD International. We recently received information from Tim, and his group, requesting prayer for an upcoming mission trip that he and Eugene Stephenson will be taking. Below is the information that Tim provided to us:



Request from Tim Bunn and Eugene Stephenson: *Training and Discipleship meeting to take place with key leaders from north and south India and Myanmar (Burma). The meeting will occur in Bangkok, Thailand from December 2- 9, 2006 to work our way through **God's Plan for Church Planting**. Prior to this training in Bangkok, we will be visiting Vibol Uong in Cambodia: A Christ-servant who has recently completed translation of our manual into the Khmer language. The outcome of the training will be for each leader or leaders to develop his own personal strategy of church planting that is biblical, practical, simple, personal, powerful, and Spirit-led. Our textbook will be the Bible.*

Our prayer requests are 1) For Christ to be the Head of our meeting; 2) For God's power, grace, and character to be manifested as we allow the Holy Spirit to lead and fill us; 3) For Eugene to continue to be in good health since he has MS; 4) Safety and our Lord's provision; 5) That this meeting will be like the mustard seed our Savior talked about – growing from the smallest of seeds to the largest plant and even into a tree.

To learn more about this organization and their missions, you may go to their website at www.imdinternational.org.

WEST JOHNSTON HIGH SCHOOL HOLIDAY BAND CONCERT

On **Sunday, December 10**, the West Johnston High School Marching Band will perform their Annual Holiday Band Concert at 3:00 p.m. in the school auditorium. This concert is free and open to the public. Band Members from Providence include Austin Benson, Ryne Jones and Jane and Stewart Pickens.



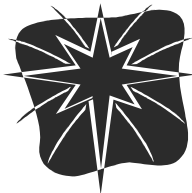
PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



On **Saturday, December 2 at 1:00 p.m.** the Presbyterian Women will decorate the church for the Advent Season. All women within the congregation are asked to come and help with this important project. As previously mentioned, the Presbyterian Women are hosting the Senior Citizen's Luncheon on **Tuesday, December 5 at 12:00 noon**. Then, in celebration of the Christmas season, the Women will enjoy a delicious meal and evening of entertainment on **Tuesday, December 12 at 6:30 p.m.** in the Fellowship Hall. If you have questions regarding the Presbyterian Women, please contact Kay Dry or Carolyn Stevenson.

WHY WE HANG THE GREENS

Have you ever wondered why we hang the greens? Or why we use greens for Christmas decorations? Well, the color green stands for new life, for freshness, and new birth. Plants like pine trees, holly, and ivy are all called evergreens because they never die. They always keep their green color. And we decorate our sanctuary with greens because God has promised that the church will never die. Advent is a time when we remember that death could not hold Jesus in his grave – and neither can it hold us either.



THE SYMBOLISM OF LIGHT

Jesus is the light of the world. He brings hope to all those who are in darkness. Jesus' name is Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." Just like a candle gives off its wax to bring light to the darkness, so Jesus gave of himself to bring hope to us.

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE HOLLY

Did you know that early Christians wore holly as they entered the church? They believed that the burning bush through which God spoke to Moses was the holly – or holy – tree. Many believed that Jesus' crown of thorn was also made from holly leaves, and that berries that were white turned red and have stayed red ever since. Some even say that wherever Jesus walked on earth, holly sprang up in his footsteps.



THE SYMBOLISM OF THE IVY

Ivy stands for love because it clings to the walls and trees when it grows. That's why Christians in the Middle Ages started to use it for Christmas decorations.

THE SYMBOLISM OF POINSETTIAS

Poinsettias are used as Christmas decoration because their flowers are shaped like stars, which remind us of the star that shone at the first Christmas. The flowers are red, which reminds us that the baby born in a manger became the Savior of the world. Jesus shed his blood on the cross so that our sins can be forgiven.



Shared by Frank Schaefer at: <http://www.desperatepreacher.com/sermonbuilder/greenhanging.htm>

CHURCH WEBSITE

Please don't forget that our church has a webpage. It is an excellent site with lots of information about our church. Copies of past newsletters, bulletins, and sermons can all be found there, as well as announcements and upcoming event news. The address is www.providencepresb.org. This is also where you will be able to find information about plans during any inclement weather over the course of the winter. If you have suggestions for additional information to include on the website, please contact David Nelms or Rev. Nance.



DECEMBER SPECIAL SERVICES

On **Sunday, December 17**, during our 11:00 Worship Service, we will install our new Elders for the Class of 2009. Please pray for those we have elected as they serve our church and our God.

This year, Christmas Eve is on **Sunday, December 24**. We will have our regular Sunday morning Worship Service at 11:00 a.m., with Communion, and a 5:00 p.m. service, with Communion. Please join us as we celebrate the joy of Christmas!

DECEMBER EVENTS AND SCHEDULES

INFANT NURSERY

- 3 Robbie and Kathy Wood
- 10 Jenni Dry and Carolyn Stevenson
- 17 Nell Franke and Jeffrey Wood
- 24 Johnathan and Amy Reed
- 31 Mary Langdon and Beth Pickens

TODDLER NURSERY

- 3 Richard and Andrea Jones
- 10 Heather White and Roxann Porter
- 17 Joan Littleton and Sandra Lordi
- 24 Pam Nelms and Brenda Dupree
- 31 Christina Nelms and Courtney Walton



USHERS

- 3 Ryan Nelms and Stewart Pickens
- 10 Kay Dry and Sandra Lordi
- 17 Jenni Dry and Crissy Porter
- 24 Mary Langdon and Beth Pickens
- 31 Christina Nelms and Amanda McLamb



ACOLYTE AND BELL RINGER

- 3 Kendall Nelms and Adam Ingram
- 10 Abigail Wood
- 17 Daniel Stephenson
- 24 Hannah Stephenson
- 31 Samuel Stephenson

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

- 3 Mark and Pam Nelms
- 10 Sam and Wendy Stephenson
- 17 Heath and Heather White
- 24 Robbie and Kathy Wood
- 31 Kay Dry and Sandra Lordi



CHILDREN'S SERMON

- 3 Lauren Collier
- 10 Ann Benson
- 17 Carolyn Stevenson
- 31 Lisa Nance

PRAYER LIST

Jeff Anderson, Richie Andrews, Josephine Byrd, Carol Clifton, Lovie Dorman, Gene Glasgow, Mary Hart, Lawrence Herron, Ricky Jackson, Vernon Jackson, Chris Johnson, Lacy and Marilyn Johnson, Tim Lang, Heather Langdon, Betty Lou Lee, Carolyn Lewis, Carol Mayben, Lewis McLamb, Amanda Moore, Julia Nales, John O'Connell, Jenny Parsons, Jamie Pearce, Mike Sanchez, Walt Skroch, Harry and Betty Smith, Alice Stephenson, Mary Stephenson, Suzanne Underwood, and Barbara Walton.



DECEMBER UPCOMING EVENTS



- 2 Christmas Play Practice at 9:30 a.m. with a light breakfast provided
- 2 Presbyterian Women decorate church for Advent at 1:00 p.m.
- 2 Youth Group to go to Mike's Farmhouse for dinner and hayride, leaving from the church at 2:30 p.m.
- 3 Youth Sunday during Worship at 11:00 a.m.
- 3 Youth Christmas Program at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary, followed by refreshments in the Fellowship Hall
- 5 Senior Citizen's Luncheon at 12 noon in the Fellowship Hall
- 12 Presbyterian Women Christmas Dinner and Program at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall
- 12 Stated Session Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- 17 Installation of Elders for the Class of 2009 during Worship at 11:00 a.m.
- 17 Pioneer Clubs at 5:00 p.m. for Christmas Caroling Hayride, followed by a meal in the Fellowship Hall.
- 24 Christmas Eve Communion Services at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- 31 Coffee and Doughnuts in the Fellowship Hall at 9:45 a.m., followed by Combined Adult Sunday School at 10:00 a.m.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

♪♪♪ Happy Birthday to... ♪♪♪

- 2 Heath White
- 4 Karen Sherrill
- 5 Nancy Nelms
- 6 Janice Parrish
- 7 Beck McLamb
- 7 Raeford Parrish
- 14 Riley Parrish
- 16 Frances Schmidt
- 20 Ella Sherrill
- 26 Jenni Dry
- 26 John Kopanski
- 27 Brenda Byrd
- 29 Stephen Nordan
- 30 Kim Schmidt