

the LANTERN

First Presbyterian Church

DECEMBER 2008

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Christmas Eve Service

Make your calendars for our Christmas Eve service, 7:00 pm on December 24!

the Lantern

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Kids Christmas Party

Calling all kids! Don't miss the *Operation J.O.Y./PYF* Christmas party.

Ages 3-15
Wednesday, December 10
3:15-5:15
Fellowship Hall

We are asking each child or family to bring a gently-used or new baby item for a Baby Shower for Jesus. The items will be donated to Lifeline Pregnancy Center here in Kirksville.

The party is during the regular J.O.Y./PYF meeting time. Questions? Contact me, Ronnaug, at the church or by email at office@presbykv.org.

White Gift Service

Our annual White Gift Service is scheduled for Sunday evening, December 7 at 5:30 pm. Bring a wrapped gift that will pamper a woman at Victim Support Services. Some-

Tax-Free IRA Charitable Donations Extended to 2008

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 provides an exclusion from gross income for otherwise taxable IRA distributions of up to \$100,000 per year from traditional IRAs and Roth IRAs for "qualified charitable distributions" made during 2006 and 2007 (this has now been extended for 2008) by plan owners who have attained at least age 70½ on the date of distribution to charity.

If you are unable to itemize, by taking advantage of the IRA rollover provision, you can

Congratulations, J.O.Y. & Bell Choirs

Thank you for the beautiful singing and lovely hymn on the bells that you contributed to our worship on November 9. Thanks, too, to Elaine



Operation J.O.Y. & PYF Resume in January!

There will be no Wednesday after-school programs after December 10. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas, and we will resume on Wednesday, January 7.

thing that will let her know someone cares and is remembering her with a gift. A finger-food supper will follow in Fellowship Hall. Bring something tasty to share!

transfer money directly from your IRA to a charity with no income tax liability, thus eliminating the taxes you would otherwise pay.

If you think you might benefit from this Act, you should consult your accountant or tax preparer. To make this type of donation to the church, you will need to contact the administrator of your IRA. The church will work with the administrator to make the donation possible.

AuBuchon, Director, for using your talent and skills with our young people. It made the day very special. Keep up the good work.

Dec. Lectionary

DECEMBER 7

2nd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1–11

Psalms 85:1–2, 8–13

2 Peter 3:8–15a

Mark 1:1–8

DECEMBER 14

3rd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11

Psalms 126:1–6 or

Luke 1:47–55

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

John 1:6–8, 19–28

DECEMBER 21

4th Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16

Luke 1:47–55 or Psalms

89:1–4, 19–26

Romans 16:25–27

Luke 1:26–38

DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2–7

Psalms 96:1–13

Titus 2:11–14

Luke 2:1–14 (15–20)

DECEMBER 25

At Dawn

Isaiah 62:6–12

Psalms 97:1–12

Titus 3:4–7

Luke 2:(1–7) 8–20

Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7–10

Psalms 98:1–9

Hebrews 1:1–4 (5–12)

John 1:1–14

DECEMBER 28

1st Sunday After Christmas

Isaiah 61:10–62:3

Psalms 148:1–14

Galatians 4:4–7

Luke 2:22–40

Spending by the Numbers

Why does our church act like a rich church one day and poor church the next? Read on for a look at some answers this question.

For the impatient, the message I'd like to give is that we do just about meet our day-to-day operating expenses at the church, and the Session hasn't approved any special project without a good idea of where most of the money will come from. Most of the time, special projects have been supported by large, designated gifts that we can't spend on other things. That means that when you are asked to contribute to the church, or to a special project, you should not feel that you've been roped into doing so. However, the church can't currently devote much of its regular income to outward-looking mission giving.

So, give what you can with a glad heart, knowing that it *does* make a difference, and knowing that any extra you give beyond your normal pledge is most likely going to help our church begin to look outward again.

CHECKING ACCOUNT: –\$5,000 AND \$300

We have two numbers to describe our checking account. At the end of November, we had

Cash in Checking Account:	\$318.01
Undesignated Cash	–\$5,784.41

The first, positive, number means that we are paying the bills each month, sometimes just barely. The second, negative, number means that we've been forced to internally "borrow" about \$5,000 from money that's been given to a designated church program in order to pay other church expenses. We keep track of this borrowing, and through the frugality of various groups within the church, we have not been called upon to spend any designated funds that we don't have. The situation is not ideal, and it is something we'll have to work to improve.

Members should also know that all money given to the church in support of outside mis-

sion or special projects within the church is always sent on to those causes.

BELL TRUST: \$20,000

The John Bell Trust was established with the main purpose of supporting "home missions" in Adair County through income given to First Presbyterian each year. Originally, this money was used by our church to support several rural churches. Now the majority of Trust's income is used by our church to support those aspects of our regular budget that are most closely aligned with the spirit of "home missions."

Looking to the future, it would be great (and in line with John Bell's vision) to find a way to free this income from our general budget and direct it even more strongly in an outward direction. Each extra pledge we get can help us do that.

PLAYGROUND: \$1000+

We've begun planning for an expanded playground. \$1,000 has been given to this project, enough for the construction of the playground equipment. Our Special Ministries fund, set up when Michael came to the church and separate from our general account, can make up the difference. The Bell Trust has also offered to help. However, your contributions can free up these funds for other uses.

WINDOWS: \$40,000 AND \$9200

Due to a generous dedicated gift, we have been able to start the refurbishment of our stained glass windows. \$40,000 has been given for this project thus far, and the total cost will come to \$49,200. (See Session Notes, Page 4.) Again, the Special Ministries fund can make up the difference, but in doing so that fund would be exhausted. Your gifts to this project will help build back our Special Ministries fund.

[Continued on page 3.]

Mike's Page: What Will Be Born in You this Advent?

Somehow it happened again—it's December! How has another year rolled by? I wish I knew. December is a time of celebrating "ends" and also "beginnings." The year is ending, but in the church we celebrate the season of Advent, a beginning. I am cracking open some new books that tell all about Year B, the year of the Gospel of Mark.

And that reminds me, speaking of cracking some books, I am also preparing for my January Doctor of Ministry seminars at St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City. I was admitted on my birthday, and being admitted means an end to waiting and a beginning to studying.

I read a very interesting article about the church for my first class. Gabriel Fackre (theologians have the greatest names) discussed the identity of the church and related it to the Gospel. The Church, he said, is to BE the story, TELL the story, DO the story, CELEBRATE the story. When we TELL the story, we are teaching. When we DO the story, we are ministering to each other and the community, possibly through our deacons. When we ARE the story of Jesus, that's fellowship, and the sharing that takes place. When we CELEBRATE the story, that's what happens in worship. The more I think about Dr. Fackre's book, and the chapter I read—I'll tell you, I have never been so blessed by homework!

This Advent and Christmastide will be a special one for all of us to BE Christ's Story and TELL Christ's story. We are reminded once

again that Jesus came into the world, that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," literally "pitched his tent" with us. God came to us. Just as we are, sinful, messed up, scarred, scared. God came to us as one of us. That's how it all began.

The Adventure of Advent builds up to the incarnation, Christ born among us. So it seems proper to ask: What is being born IN you? What new thing or things are being born in you? New prayer time each day? New responsibility at church? One young woman will be baptized this Advent—that's a new thing, eh? But what will you do? What will grow in your heart this Advent?

The Reality of Christmas is that once this new thing grows, and it's THERE, in your heart, in your life...what are you going to do now? I'll never forget when Elizabeth and I brought Noah home from the Hospital. We put him in the bed between us, probably like all first-time parents. And we said to each other, "well, what are we supposed to do now?" That's what Christmastide is, a time to figure out what to do with this new habit, this new reality of faith that Christ has laid upon us. How can we tell, be, do, celebrate the Story of the One who is coming into our hearts in faith? Answering that question will take quite a while—at least till the end of the year!

May you have a Blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas.

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Spending by the Numbers (Continued from page 2.)

ROLLINS APARTMENTS ROOF: \$11,000

When it became clear that the Rollins Apartments needed a new roof, it quickly became even more clear that we hadn't been saving for such circumstances. In order to pay for the roof, the Session has asked for a loan from the Bell Trust, to be paid back, with interest, from future Rollins rents. We will also likely segregate Rollins income into a separate account so that the income can be saved for future Rollins needs. We will also look at ways to strengthen the mission orientation of Rollins.

DIRECT MISSION GIVING: \$13,000 AND \$3,300

Although we cover our bills each month, we have fallen behind in our Direct Mission giving to the Presbytery. This year, we pledged \$13,000 to the Presbytery, but we've only been able to give \$3,300. Next year's budget will include a much more realistic pledge, but of course any additional giving to help us meet this year's pledge would be appreciated.

Tune in next month for another exciting story about next year's budget!

Mike's Office

Hours

MONDAY:

8:30 am – Noon

TUESDAY:

8:30 am – Noon

WEDNESDAY:

1:00 – 5:00 pm

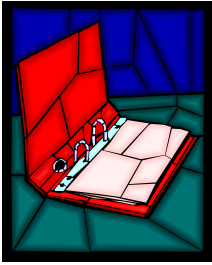
THURSDAY:

8:30 am – Noon

FRIDAY &

SATURDAY:

No office hours.



Notes from Session

DR. DAVID MEERSE

Our interim General Presbyter, Dr. David Meerse came to to say a few words of thanks for the role our church plays in the Presbytery. He shared some facts concerning our church's size and giving within the Presbytery. First Presbyterian ranks 12th largest in membership size among Missouri Union Presbytery. We rank 7th in terms of pledging to MUP's One Mission Gift, and the churches closest to us are 50 to 150 members larger than us. We rank 6th in terms of our per member giving to One Mission Gift: \$81.25 per member. Dr. Meerse told us that we should take pride in these numbers.

He also thanked us for the number of members in this church who serve in the structure of the larger church. Dr. Meerse told us that we're in an interesting time in this Presbytery. We are visioning our future, our structure and what God is calling us to be. Members of First Presbyterian are encouraged and invited to be part of that process.

JOINT DEACONS/SESSION MEETING

John Rowe has prepared a sign-up sheet for Salvation Army bell-ringing at Hy-Vee on Saturday the 20th of December.

The White Gift service will be held at 5:30 pm on December 7th.

We had our best Thanksgiving lunch in a long time. We had many people and a lot of food. Thanks were extended to John Rowe and all the Deacons.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Linda Hudnall spoke on behalf of the Billie Alison memorial. She has been working with Janis Keogh for six months on the purchase of new banners for the sanctuary, which would hang over the doors to the Dorcas room and to the parlor. The murals, windows and wood in the sanctuary were taken into account in choosing the right banners. We have purchased white banners (for Christmas), and green banners (for ordinary time). The banners will be hung professionally and be easy to change.

BUDGET & FINANCE

We had an above-average month for giving. The Bell Trust covered repairs at Westminster house. Our Peacemaking offering was \$590. \$4100 was received for the elevator, and special ministry received \$1000. We paid half the cost of Rollins roof repair. We paid for Westminster house roof: \$4,000. We've paid \$24,000 for stained glass window repair. Our checking account had a balance of \$3,430 at the end of the month.

Our received pledges now total \$94,000.

Bell: \$20000 for next year. asked for itemization.

The Bell Trust will loan the church money for Rollins roof repair, contingent on receiving a written report detailing how the loan will be repaid and how Rollins finances will be reorganized in order to save for future repairs and keep them separate from the church's general fund. These goals are shared by Session as well as the Bell Trust. Scott Thatcher and Greg Marshall will work on the loan proposal.

Committees should report their 2009 budgetary needs to the Budget & Finance Committee as soon as possible.

BUILDING IMPROVEMENT

"Calming Retreat" (PWN-43U) is the color that will be used to paint the Fellowship Hall. Painting will wait until money becomes available again after Stained glass repair is paid for. More on the elevator project will be brought to us during the December meeting.

HOUSE & GROUNDS

Session approved an extra \$1200 for one of our windows that required more than the estimated amount for repair, leading to a total cost of approximately \$49,200. It appears that we will receive only \$40,000, rather than the previously expected \$46,000, for this project before the bill comes due. The difference can be made up from the Special Ministries fund, coming close to exhausting that fund.

Congratulations December Birthdays and Anniversaries!

BIRTHDAYS...

J Biehl
 Laura Easley
 Debbie King
 Vera Burk
 Travis Poston
 Caroline Slavin
 Bob Keough
 Shirley Sprehe
 Perry Easley

Teri Haman
 Lyle Anderson
 Harvey Young
 Kimberly Easley
 Kelvin Hodges

...AND ANNIVERSARIES

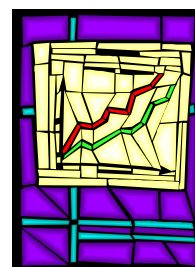
Laura & Perry Easley
 Doris & Stanley Bohon
 Amy & Seth Huston



Financial Report

OCTOBER, 2008

	Month	Month	YTD	YTD
	Income	Expense	Income	Expense
Giving & Other Revenue				
Restricted Program Transfers				
Designated Income/Expense				
Direct Mission				
Pastoral Leadership				
Worship & Music				
Christian Education				
Administrative Support				
House & Grounds				
General Needs				
Campus Ministry				
Membership Shepherding				
Community Ministries				
Rollins Ministry				
Westminster House Ministry				
Total				
Undesignated Cash Checking Account:				





Dates to Remember

SUNDAYS

9:30–10:45 am: Sunday Worship Service

11:00 am: Sunday School for All Ages

5:30 pm: Campus Ministry meal at the
Westminster House

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Dec. 14: Second-Sunday Brunch

Dec. 7, 5:30 pm: White Gift Service

Dec. 7: Presbytery Youth Retreat Concludes

TUESDAYS

Dec. 9, 7:00 pm: Session/Deacons

Dec. 23, 3:30 pm: Christian Ed. Comm.

Dec. 30, 7:00 pm: Presbyterian Women

WEDNESDAYS

1:15 pm: Bible Study

3:15 pm–5:15 pm: *Operation J.O.Y., P.Y.F.*

5:30 pm–6:30 pm: Adult Choir

...

Dec. 10: *Op. J.O.Y. & PYF* Christmas Party

Dec. 24, **afternoon**: Office Closed

Dec. 24, 7:00 pm: Christmas Eve Service

Jan. 7: *Operation J.O.Y. & PYF* Resume

THURSDAYS

Dec. 4, 1:30 noon: Budget & Finance

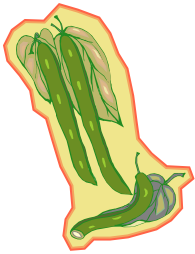
Dec. 11, 9:00 am: Presby Seniors at Rosie's

Dec. 25: Office Closed

SATURDAYS

Dec. 6: Presbytery Youth Retreat at First
Presbyterian

December Food:



Canned Beans!