

Calendar of Ministries

✠ Saturday, December 7

Evening Prayers at 8

✠ Sunday, December 8

Sunday School at 9:45

Morning Worship at 11

✠ Monday, December 9

Morning Prayers at 8

✠ Tuesday, December 10

Morning Prayers at 8

Shenandoah Presbytery meets at Massanutten Church at 9 a.m.

Food Pantry, 1:30 to 4 p.m.

✠ Wednesday, December 11

Morning Prayers at 8

Bible Club at the High School, 8:08

Super Pantry, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Choir at 7 p.m.

✠ Thursday, December 12

Morning Prayers at 8

✠ Friday, December 13

Morning Prayers at 8

✠ Saturday, December 14

Evening Prayers at 8

✠ Sunday, December 15

Sunday School at 9:45

Morning Worship at 11 with our Christmas Program

Light Lunch after worship with a birthday party for Jesus

Teen Group at 5 at Millboro Elementary

Advent Worship

The church has new Christmas Carol songbooks for worship. Each week we are singing a number of carols. You can request your favorites during worship. Join the joy in praising Jesus in this singular way.



The Weekly Word

Windy Cove Presbyterian Church

December 5, 2013

Advent Begins with "O Little Town . . ."

The celebration of Advent and Christmas began at Windy Cove on Sunday, December 1, with a focus on the Carols of Christmas. The carol which received special attention at Morning Worship was the familiar "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" has an interesting history. The carol was composed in 1868 by Pastor Phillips Brooks. He had visited the Holy Land at Christmas in 1865 spending Christmas Eve at a lengthy but inspiring service at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Three years later at the church he served in Philadelphia, PA, Pastor Brooks was working on a Christmas program with the children of the church. He determined to compose an original song for the program. The result was "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

The music director at the church in Philadelphia was Lewis Redner. Pastor Brooks asked Redner to compose an original tune for the new Christmas carol. Redner had difficulty coming up with a tune; but on the night before the program, he awoke with a tune in his head. He copied the melody down quickly and went back to sleep. The next day "O Little Town of

Bethlehem" was sung for the first time by 36 children and 6 teachers from the church's Sunday School. *(The information about this carol comes from an inspirational book on the composition of hymns, Then Sings My Soul by Robert J. Morgan. The Sherrards received the book as a gift from the Herscher family in 2011.)*

In worship on the December 1, Windy Covians not only sang the carol but also considered its message. The first stanza, *O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

(Continued Inside)

Take Note!

December 8, Christmas program practice for the children during Sunday School

December 15, Christmas Program during Morning Worship followed by a light lunch and birthday party for Jesus

December 24, Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion at 7:30

December 31, Watch Night Worship at 10:30 with Communion at midnight

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Advent (Cont.)

evokes the setting on the night of Jesus' birth. Its message is consistent with the Biblical idea that in a quiet small village God was doing a work that would change the course of history. In fact, a theme found throughout the Bible is God using the small and lowly things of this world to accomplish God's great purposes for creation.

The second stanza,

*For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love,
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.*

announces what God is doing that will change the world. The stanza also reminds us, that on that night, only the stars and angels were present at first to give praise for the birth of Jesus.

Stanza three,

*How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven.*

*No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still the dear Christ enters in.*

brings the carol from the past into the present of those who are singing it. In other words, the blessings that God brought to Bethlehem long ago are still available to people today.

As Jesus was born in Bethlehem long ago, he is still ready to be born in the hearts of those who will receive him today.

Stanza four,

*O holy Child of Bethlehem! Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in; be born in us today.*

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

elaborates on that idea of Jesus presently coming into people's lives with a prayer for that very advent of Jesus to those singing the carol.

Thus, in a poetical way, the carol speaks the same message as the Bible: that God has sent his Son Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah who will deal with the problem of sin and reign in the hearts of those who trust in him.

On Sunday, December 8, our featured carol in Morning Worship will be "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night." We hope to see you there!

Grateful Thanksgiving

Owing to the generosity of God's people, we are giving thanks to God for the Pumpkin Patch ministry for the school children in Haiti. You will remember that we began this ministry around the first of October in order to meet the needs of the Haitian children at the school which Windy Cove sponsors in David, Haiti.

Our Haiti Mission Team learned last July that many children enrolled in the school were suffering from not having enough to eat. So, in faith we undertook to provide one meal each school day for the children attending Notre Dame School in David.

Our calculation was that we would have 100 children enrolled for the year, that the school year was about 190 days, and that each meal would cost about \$.26. This math works out to $100 \times .26 \times 190 = \$4,940$. As of the end of November, we had received offerings of more than \$6,100 toward this ministry. These generous offerings came from individuals and church groups who heard about our Pumpkin Patch ministry and responded to it. We are rejoicing in the blessing these offerings represent for the children in Haiti. The extra offerings will be used to provide meals for any additional children coming to the school or reserved for scholarships for the next school year.

Elder April Miller who serves on the Board of the Haiti Education Foundation sends special thanks for all who contributed to the Pumpkin Patch. May God bless you!

Christmas Ministries

We have two special ministries going during the Christmas season at Windy Cove. The first of these ministries is our Angel Tree. Our Angel Tree has two different ways of helping others. One way is with direct

gifts which the people have identified as being especially needed. The other way of helping people is by giving offerings to other ministries such as camp scholarships, the Comfort Care Women's Health Center in Lexington, or the Windy Cove Samaritan Fund. You can check in the vestibule for more information about these opportunities.

Our second special ministry is our Christmas Card Mailbox. In this ministry we provide a mailbox at church for those who wish to send Christmas cards to regular attenders and members of Windy Cove. During December you can place your cards in the mailbox. Then, on December 22, folks can pick up the cards that have been addressed to them. That way, you can save the postage for the cards that you would have sent through the regular mail. Again, check in the vestibule for the mailbox.

People and Prayers

On November 24 during worship, we had a devoted time of prayer for State Senator Creigh Deeds and his family. Mr. Sherrard spoke briefly that day about the nature of grief and the hope that Christians have in the face of tragedy and grief. Fran Hobbs is still recovering from an illness originally contracted in China. She has made progress, but Fran is still not as strong as normal. Mary Durham is home after a stay in the hospital where she received a stent in a heart artery. Keep praying!