

Calendar of Ministries

† Saturday, December 21

Evening Prayers at 8

† Sunday, December 22

Sunday School at 9:45

Morning Worship at 11 as we continue with the Carols of Christmas

† Tuesday, December 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion at 7:30

† Wednesday, December 25

Merry Christmas to all!

† Friday, December 27

Open House with the Sherrards at the Windy Cove Manse at 6:30 p.m.

† Saturday, December 28

Evening Prayers at 8

† Sunday, December 29

Sunday School at 9:45

Morning Worship at 11

† Tuesday, December 31

Watch Night Worship begins at 10:30 p.m. and will include Communion and the Ringing in of the New Year.

Christmas Flowers

Our poinsettias are beautiful in the sanctuary. If you would like to give a special offering for these flowers to remember or honor someone, please contact Julie Wagoner or Traci Herscher. We will acknowledge your offerings during the Christmas season and appreciate your generosity. Enjoy the beauty of the Lord's sanctuary.

Vacation

The Sherrards will be taking a week of vacation after worship on December 29. In case of an emergency during that time, contact Elder Sharon Madison or Elder Vicki Grist.



The Weekly Word

Windy Cove Presbyterian Church
December 19, 2013

Connections at Christmas

Dear Friends,

Yesterday I finished some work for Shenandoah Presbytery that had taken more than a year to complete. Seven other folks and I worked as a team to devise a plan for a church to be dismissed from our Presbytery to begin new ministry with another Presbyterian denomination. Our plan was finally approved by our Presbytery. At times the work was difficult, tense, even grueling.

Did I enjoy the work? Not really. And, yet that question is more difficult to answer than it might appear. First, in reflection upon life, I would venture to say that some accomplishments that prove worthwhile are at times difficult. One does not enjoy the hardships, but one can recognize that enduring and overcoming hardships can lead to satisfying results.

Years ago, when I studied ten hours a day for two solid weeks [I did take Sundays off.] prior to taking the Virginia Bar Exam, was I having fun? Not really. However, when I saw my name on the list of those who had passed the exam and when I took the oath of office at the Virginia Supreme Court, I did appreciate the work.

Sometimes, ministry for the Lord Jesus is like that. At the moment we are in the middle of such ministry, it is difficult and not enjoyable. However, when the work is completed, there is a sense of accomplishment, of having been in the Lord's will and done God's work.

I can name a few situations in my more than thirty years at Windy Cove where at the time I might have liked being somewhere else. I have been with folks that I loved as they or their loved ones passed on to be with the Lord. I have had to deliver tragic news to families of events that have occurred. I have stood steady with families whose lives at the time seemed to be swirling out of control. Did I relish such times? Not really.

(Continued Inside)

Take Note!

December 24, Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion at 7:30

December 27, Open House at the Manse begins at 6:30 p.m.

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

The *Weekly Word* will resume publication in the middle of January. Have a Merry Christmas! See you next year.

Windy Cove Pres. Church
102 Windy Cove Road
Millboro, VA 24460
Address Service
Requested

U. S. Postage
Non-profit Org.
Permit # 2
Millboro, VA 24460

Pastor: Rob Sherrard
Phone: 540-997-5395
Email: wcpccp@cfw.com

Connections (Cont.)

On the other hand, however, I did and do appreciate being involved in these situations as a servant of the Lord Jesus. Jesus himself was involved in some tough ministry. His life was not just filled with visits and gifts from Wise Men, with the wonder and appreciation of those who had been healed, with the amazed reactions of the crowds to his teaching. No, his redemptive life also included sorrow at those who refused to respond, tension with those who challenged his ways, and the agony of a necessary cross. Should we not expect some of the same as we seek to serve in Christ's name?

Secondly, in further reflection upon the Presbytery work, I did enjoy the connections that I made with people during that job. Some of these I knew before; others I did not. The eight of us who worked together developed close friendships that will endure beyond the conclusion of our work together. I also made new friends at the church we were working with. Indeed, one of the most encouraging moments of this past year was when one of the elders of that church and his wife worshiped together with us at Windy Cove. Their presence was a positive sign from the Lord.

Such connections or friendships with people are often the best part of difficult service. Yes, hard times in ministry are just that: hard. Yet, the friendships forged during those hard times are deep, lasting, and

precious in the sight of God. For more than thirty years, God has allowed me and my family to forge such lasting friendships with you good folks at Windy Cove and the Bath County community.

We have been through some trying times together. We've seen two floods at the church; many of us felt helpless as Elder Richard Durham had a heart attack and died at the end of worship in December of 2000; plus individuals and families have suffered setbacks and loss. But, in the midst of all these hardships, God was drawing us together "in the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." Friendships constructed in these times have become the rich fabric of our family's life with you.

Now, we celebrate another Christmas together. Christmas reminds us of God's intent to be our friend and not our enemy. Instead of standing off somewhere, God came as a person to share our lives, the good times and the bad times. Jesus experienced life just as we do so that we could experience life just as God meant it to be. Does that surprise me? Not really.

For Jesus says, "I came so that they could have life—indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest."

Thankful for my friendship
with Jesus and with you,

The Carols of Christmas

Our Advent and Christmas celebration of the Carols of Christmas continued on December 15 with our Christmas Program during Morning Worship. Along with the presentation of the Christmas story, we sang carols to enhance the story. These carols included "Away in a Manger," "Go, Tell It on the Mountain," and "We Three Kings." Additionally, our highlighted carol was "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing."

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" was composed by Samuel Wesley in the 1700s. Wesley wrote over 6,000 hymns in his lifetime; and, although he was very willing to share these hymns with others, he often insisted that his original wording be preserved or recognized. His original version of this carol used an obscure English word, "welkin," in the beginning line:

Hark, how all the welkin rings.

Welkin was an old English term that referred to the vault of heaven, similar to the King James Version of firmament used in Genesis 1. However, when Wesley's friend, George Whitefield published the carol in 1753, he changed the line to the familiar:

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing.

Thank you, George!

The Carols of Christmas will continue through the rest of December. On Sunday, December 22, our focus will be "O Come, All Ye Faithful." On Christmas Eve, Mr. Sherrard will

share a meditation based on the familiar "Silent Night, Holy Night." The Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship will include many other carols as well as special music by our Choir and, of course, Communion. Then, our series will finish on December 29 with "Joy to the World."

Open House at the Manse

The Sherrards invite you to share fellowship with them on Friday, December 27 at their Open House at the manse. Festivities begin at 6:30 p.m. with games, puzzles, ice cream sundaes, cookies, fruit punch, and warm friendship.

They hope that many from the congregation and community will take this opportunity to visit the lovely home that Windy Cove has graciously provided for them. We'll look for you on the 27th to complement our Christmas celebration.

The Weekly Word

Our staff at the *Weekly Word* wishes you a Merry Christmas. We appreciate the opportunity to come into your home each week with the good news of Jesus. We have been praying for several weeks for Fran Hobbs who usually copies, folds, and addresses the *Weekly Word*. Fran has been battling several infections since her return from China. Currently, Fran is a patient at Bath Community Hospital.

This edition is our last for the year. We expect to resume publication around the middle of January.