

Calendar of Ministries

✝ **Friday, December 18**

Morning Prayers at 8

✝ **Saturday, December 19**

Evening Prayers at 8

✝ **Sunday, December 20**

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday School at 9:45

Morning Worship at 11 focusing on the Good News in the Gospel of John

✝ **Monday, December 21**

Morning Prayers at 8

✝ **Tuesday, December 22**

Morning Prayers at 8

✝ **Wednesday, December 23**

Morning Prayers at 8

Choir at 7 p.m.

✝ **Thursday, December 24**

Morning Prayers at 8

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion at 7:30 p.m.

✝ **Friday, December 25**

Morning Prayers at 8

✝ **Saturday, December 26**

Evening Prayers at 8

✝ **Sunday, December 27**

Sunday School at 9:45

Morning Worship at 11 with Elder Sonny Clark leading worship

Notice the change in our Watch Night Worship time: we will begin at 9:30 on New Year's Eve.

We will next publish the Weekly Word in the middle of January. Look for us then. Until then, Merry Christmas!



The Weekly Word

**Windy Cove Presbyterian Church
December 17, 2015**

Our Portrait of Jesus

Dear Windy Cove Friends,

As most of you know, our Advent Theme this year has been A Portrait of Jesus. On each Sunday of Advent, we have investigated one of the New Testament Gospels to understand the particular contribution of that Gospel to painting a complete portrait of Jesus. In my own study, I came across an academic textbook by Mark Strauss with the title, *Four Portraits, One Jesus*. That suggestive title got me thinking about where we actually do acquire our understanding of who Jesus is and what his character is like.

For many of us, our parents were the first people to introduce us to Jesus. Perhaps we listened to Bible stories read at home. Probably we heard our mothers or our fathers pray—maybe at mealtime or bedtime. Our parents also took us to church, either on occasion or regularly or always. Of course, the way our parents lived may also have been teaching us something about Jesus. What about you? Were your parents one of the important influences on your understanding of Jesus?

For those who did attend church on a regular basis, perhaps a Sunday

School teacher or even a pastor were a major inspiration to your relationship with Jesus. I can name the teachers that I had in Sunday School and recall some fairly specific memories of their classes and their kindness toward me. I was also influenced greatly by a gentle pastor, Julian Owen, who was at Gerrardstown Presbyterian Church during my teen years. He pointed me toward Jesus, toward Hampden-Sydney College, and in the Lord's own timing toward the pastoral ministry. What about you? Do you recall teachers and pastors who brought you closer to Jesus?

As we grow older, other significant influences enter our lives. We begin

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Take Note!

Sunday, December 20

Birthday for Jesus celebration after worship.

Thursday, December 24

Our Candlelight Communion Worship begins at 7:30. Bring your family and friends.

Thursday, December 31

Watch Night Worship **will begin this year at 9:30 p.m.** with a showing of the movie *Moms' Night Out* followed by Worship and Communion.

No Weekly Word until the middle of January

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Portrait (Cont.)

to read and study the Bible for ourselves. We start to realize that not everyone believes or lives as we do. We may experience challenges to our previous understanding of who Jesus is and how he works in our lives and in the world. During this period we may also gain perspective from other adults in school or at work or from our spouses if we marry. As I recently told the men in our Bible Study, my wife Sharon has been the most important person in my own spiritual growth except perhaps for my parents. What about you? Who were the people in your adult life who helped you to develop a deeper relationship with Jesus?

Of course, working in this entire process was another person: the Holy Spirit of Jesus. Growing up in a Presbyterian Church, I did know about the Holy Spirit; but I never realized how important the Spirit was to the growth of my relationship with God through Jesus. At least I never realized it until Sharon and I began to get serious about our friendship. As we have worked out our understanding of Jesus together over the last fifty years, I have come to realize how important a role the Holy Spirit plays in my portrait of Jesus. Why should I be surprised?

Jesus told his disciples in the Upper Room that when he returned to his place of glory in heaven, he would send the Spirit to be with them. That Holy Spirit would testify

to them of Jesus' presence with them and to the truth of who Jesus is and what he had taught them. The Spirit would also bring them power to witness and minister as disciples of Jesus to others. That power and presence of Jesus through the activity of the Holy Spirit has now been an indispensable part of my life for over sixty years. What about you? Do you look for and sense the Holy Spirit working in your life?

The Holy Spirit let me know as a child that God was guiding me along life's way. As a teen the Holy Spirit led me to make a public commitment to Jesus. As a young adult the Holy Spirit helped me get a good education. When I was teaching adult Sunday School in Key West, FL, the Holy Spirit gave me an incredible hunger to study and know the Bible. The Holy Spirit led me in and out of the Navy and to Union Seminary. And, in a most amazing way, the Holy Spirit led Sharon and me to Windy Cove and Bath County.

Now for more than thirty-five years, you and your families have been used by the Holy Spirit to deepen Sharon's and my relationship with Jesus. From the ordinary to the extraordinary moments that we have shared with you, God has molded you and us more towards the people that he wants us to be. Through the Spirit of Jesus, God has revealed more of himself to all of us together. God has continued to paint that portrait of who he is and

what incredible plans he has for our lives together. So, in this season of Advent and Christmas, I see a richer, fuller portrait of Jesus than I have ever seen before. What about you?

With much love,
/s/ Rob

Christmas Eve

We are now looking forward to our Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion which begins at 7:30. At this service we will finish our Portrait of Jesus by reviewing what the four Gospels have taught us and by considering the central panel of our carving: "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." Join us for this very special service!

On December 20, we will look at the Gospel of John symbolized in the lower right panel as an eagle.



Watch Night Change

We have made a **change to our Watch Night Worship**. The service will begin at 9:30 p.m. with a showing of the movie, *Moms' Night Out*. The movie is a charming comedy on the busy and hectic lives that we lead. Beneath the humor lies a much needed message for those who want to take a step back to consider what's really important to us. After the movie we still have time for worship and the celebration of the Lord's Supper as we enter the new year.

If you are worried about missing the end of the Alabama-Michigan State game, Mr. Sherrard will DVR the game and watch the end with you after the Watch Night Worship or even the next day!

Birthday Celebration and Cards

After Morning Worship on Sunday, December 20, we will have birthday reception for Jesus. Our Fellowship Ministry will provide a cake and something to drink as we take some time to celebrate and linger in fellowship with one another.

You can also pick up your Christmas cards in the Fellowship Hall. Our mailbox was positively overflowing last Sunday with cards intended for others in the congregation. If you have further cards to add, bring them on Sunday and add them to the table.