



www.WPCHattiesburg.com

December 2009

Our Mission: **TLC**
Trust God, **L**ove People, and **C**arry Christ into the World

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY:

The message of Advent is HOPE, PEACE, JOY, LOVE - things we all long for, pray for, need in our lives. We use these words because of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. These are not mere words. These are promises - divine promises - that give us courage to face whatever life throws at us, joys, hardships, heartbreak, uncertainty, even pain and loss. Our hope is rooted and grounded in the love of God made flesh in Jesus Christ, who has overcome the world. So, take heart. Be of good courage. Hold fast to the faith that you have received as a gift, and know that, in Christ, you are forgiven, loved, valued, and called to new life that is healthy and whole.

May the joy of our salvation be yours this Advent season.

PLEASE NOTE: Kay Salter will be out of the office on Tuesday, December 8 and Wednesday, December 9 for grand jury duty.

WORSHIP NEWS:



Now that worship services have resumed in the sanctuary, the **Chancel Choir** will also resume their Wednesday night rehearsals. Until potluck suppers start back in January, they will begin at 7 pm. Others who would like to join the choir in singing Christmas music during the Advent season are encouraged to attend.

November attendance average: 106

Nov. 1 - 114 Nov. 15 - 115 Nov. 29 - 99
Nov. 8 - 75 Nov. 22 - 127

Great news - we are within striking distance of finishing the **organ** project. Over Thanksgiving weekend **David and Susan Finch** painted the orange wooden organ pipes gray to better coordinate with the surrounding silver pipes. They will return in several weeks to install the digital brain and begin tuning the pipes. The painter has finished staining and painting the sanctuary, which looks fresh and clean. The City of Hattiesburg passed all the work on the project. **David Garraway** is nearly finished fine-tuning the lights for Christmas Eve. The risers for the choir are here, ready to be installed. Thanks to your **generous stewardship** we have kept our borrowing low. Your support and enthusiasm are deeply appreciated.



BELONGING:

December birthdays:

4 Bryan Hernandez
9 David Arnold
21 Bob Lochhead
25 Robert Cummings
27 Ben Ruff
28 Tami Dossett
29 Asa Bryant

January birthdays:

2 Margaret Lochhead	15 Lavon Smith
2 Sam Ruff	17 Pat Davis
4 Anthony Cafalone	19 Sheila Gaudet
7 Mark Richmond	19 Sarah Mabary
9 Ann Aldridge	24 Dean Cromartie
10 Brenda Owens	25 Nancy Johnson
10 Rachel Owens	29 Richard Potin
13 Mary Hannah Ruff	30 Betty Garraway
15 Andrew Gaudet	30 Margaret Pearson
15 Wesley Owens	31 Gene Owens



We want to include
ALL members' birthdays.
If you know of one we
missed, let us know ASAP!

BELONGING: (continued)

Although we will not have any Wednesday night potluck suppers during December, there are plenty of fun and exciting activities in which to participate at Westminster. To view Westminster's complete calendar of events, go to www.WPCHattiesburg.com and click on the "calendar" tab.



- Saturday, December 5 Put up Chrismon Tree in sanctuary and pull wiring for wi-fi at Jones House and office at 7:30 am
- Sunday, December 6 Advent Workshop at 4:30 pm
- Saturday, December 12 Men's Breakfast at 8 am (men only this month)
- Sunday, December 13 Caroling Party at 5 pm (meet at the church, go Christmas caroling to home-bound members and return to the church for hot dogs, chili and hot chocolate)
- Saturday, December 19 Lites and Bites Christmas party from 5 - 8 pm at the home of J. T. and Nancy Johnson
- Sunday, December 20 Prepack non-perishable foods for Christmas BreadBaskets
- Sunday, December 20 Youth Christmas Party (details TBA)
- Tuesday, December 22 Deliver Christmas BreadBaskets starting at 2 pm
- Thursday, December 24 Christmas Eve Communion Candlelight worship at 5 pm

Sunday Greeters: Please help us greet visitors and members at the front entrance on Sunday mornings. Please **switch** with someone if you cannot serve on a specific date, and notify Kay at 601-584-7574 of the change so she can prepare the nametags.

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|--------|-------------------------------|----|------------------------------------|
| Dec. 6 | Lisa & Ellie Forsyth | 20 | Larry Royals & Mary Clare Shaw |
| 13 | Wally & Mary Dayne Gregg | 27 | Sarah & Mary Kathryn Nobles |
| Jan. 3 | Kenny Harrell & Glenda Miller | 24 | Rachel Harris & Margaret Rose Shaw |
| 10 | Jeff & Judy Haydel | 31 | Marsha Taylor & Mary Hannah Ruff |
| 17 | Gene & Stella Fair | | |

We are sad to say good-bye to **Jeff, Judy, Sam and Henry Haydel**. Jeff has a new job that will take them to Mobile.



The Haydels have made a huge impact on our family, and we will miss them terribly. They go with our best wishes and hope that they will return to Hattiesburg.

GROWING SPIRITUALLY:

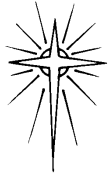
Read Oswald Chambers' *My Utmost for His Highest* for November 28, 2009, and you will be blessed. Read R.C. Sproul's *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, and you will be edified. Read Beth Moore's *Breaking Free: Discover the Victory of Total Surrender*, and you will grow spiritually. Attend Sunday School regularly, and you will be blessed, edified, and nurtured.

INVITING:

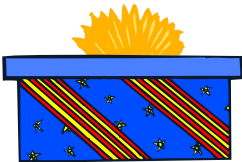
Please invite a friend to attend church with you during Advent, and especially on Christmas Eve. God will honor your invitation, and our congregation will be blessed. We serve a wonderful God and this is a wonderful church. Let's not keep it a secret!

SERVING CHRIST IN MISSION:

For more than seventy years, Presbyterians have expressed their faith, hope, and gratitude through the **Christmas Joy Offering**. This offering is shared equally by the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and Presbyterian-affiliated racial ethnic schools and colleges. Please give generously.



In October, \$670 was collected for the **Peacemaking Offering**. Of this total, 25% of these funds are retained for peacemaking work through our own congregation. The Session voted to donate Westminster's portion (\$167.68) to the **Domestic Abuse Shelter**. Another 25% is designated for peacemaking efforts in our presbytery and synod; and 50% is forwarded to the peacemaking ministry of the Presbyterian denomination. Thank you for your support of this multi-level ministry.



On December 1, **Jimmy Garraway** and **Steve Ramp** delivered 229 Christmas presents to our friends at **Boswell Regional Center**. The chaplain Brother Rudy, Program Director Lisa Bryant, Assistant Director Orlando Rankin, and Kathy Pittman received the presents with great joy and prayers of thanksgiving. They want Westminster to know that these gifts will make the Boswell residents very happy. Thanks to everyone who supported this annual project that is now 30 years old.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP:

NOW is the time to turn in your **pledge cards** for 2010. Extra cards are available in the narthex or from the ushers on Sundays. This year's budget of \$357,000 is only slightly higher (about 2%) than last year's so that we can focus on quickly retiring the debt on our wonderful new organ.



Status of Pledges for 2009

Pledges through 3 rd quarter	\$208,530
Receipts through 3 rd quarter	191,752
Deficit	<\$16,778>



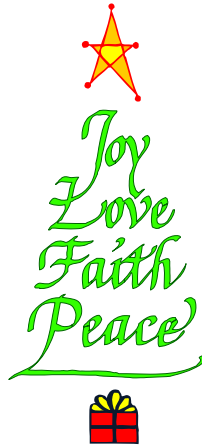
The church office will be closed Friday, December 25 for Christmas.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP: (continued)

To my Westminster family,

There are no words to adequately express my gratitude to you all during my recent back surgery. Your uplifting cards, your silent prayers, the numerous phone calls and the thoughtful gestures of food and flowers. I feel so fortunate to be part of such a caring church. Westminster with its incredible thoughtful style is an asset any member would cherish. See you soon.

Love, Pam Dossett



We recently received a substantial and unexpected contribution to the organ project from **Hayden and Janet Mitchell**. This kind and generous support confirms our decision to purchase the organ and spend our efforts carrying Christ into the world. Parts of Hayden's letter follow. When you see him, please tell him how grateful we are.

Dear Steve,

November 24, 2009

During this time of Thanksgiving, Janet and I realize that we have received many blessings and have much to be thankful for. One thing for which we are very grateful is that we have Christian friends like the Ramps and Cromarties who have strong religious values and beliefs and give generously of themselves and their resources to help improve our community and assist others who are less fortunate. Your good deeds and unselfish actions are an inspiration to many and a blessing to those in need. We read in the Hattiesburg American about Westminster's purchase of the organ from First Baptist Church. This is a very worthwhile project and we are thrilled that the organ will continue to inspire God's word for generations to come. Janet and I hope that you and your congregation enjoy uplifting music from this organ for many, many years.

Hayden and Janet Mitchell

Something you may not know: In the past, the doll representing Baby Jesus in Westminster's manger scene has been stolen a few times. Last year, a little girl who walks on 25th Avenue every day with her father noticed it was missing and offered one of her very own dolls as a replacement. This incident also inspired a member to pen the following poem. (Can you guess who wrote it?)



Theft of the Baby Jesus from the Manger Scene

Baby Jesus, once again, from the manger scene you have been taken,
You'll not be with Mary and Joseph, if perhaps you should awaken.
Do not be afraid; feel no alarm.

The one who took you may have meant no harm.
Maybe you will find yourself, instead,
Sleeping in a small girl child's bed.

Or, perhaps the thief was a convert to gangland tonight.
Perhaps theft to prove yourself is better than a fight.

I pray, young person, if that is the case,
That you would look into Baby Jesus' face.
Seek there to find the One who came from heaven above,
To demonstrate for us His perfect love.

He came down to earth to die on a cross, you see;
Because he had so much love for you and me.

Just a doll in a manger scene, you think?
The one it represents can change your life in a blink!
Jesus loves you this I know,
For the Bible tells me so!

Westminster Presbyterian Church
115 N 25th Avenue
Hattiesburg, MS 39401