

HIGHLAND CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 2016

Highland Church reaches out in the name of Jesus Christ building disciples with vision for ministry.

Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year! Mostly, because of what the Scriptures say in Luke 2:10 “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.” Good news of great joy for everybody!

An article in Outreach magazine reads,

The word *Advent* means “coming” or “arrival,” and the season is marked by expectation, waiting, anticipation, and longing. Advent is not just an extension of Christmas—it is a season that links the past, present, and future. Advent offers us the opportunity to share in the ancient longing for the coming of the Messiah, to celebrate His birth, and to be alert for His second coming. Advent looks back upon Christ’s coming in celebration, while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the coming of Christ’s kingdom when He returns for His people. Hope fulfilled in Jesus. And hope still to be completed in Jesus’ second coming. During Advent we wait for both—active, assured waiting.

As part of the church calendar in many denominations, there are some differences in the way people celebrate Advent. While the core is the same, some of the traditions and practices vary. One of the common traditions of Advent is the lighting of the candles on an Advent wreath. A circular evergreen wreath represents God’s unending love for us. And the lighting of five candles throughout the season—one for each of the four Sundays before Christmas and one on Christmas Eve—represents Jesus’ coming to a world lost in darkness. As the prophet Isaiah wrote, “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned” (Isaiah 9:2).

In a season often marked by frenzied busyness, Advent is an opportunity to set aside time to prepare our hearts and help us place our focus on a far greater story than our own—the story of God’s redeeming love for our world. It’s not a season of pretending or covering over—it is a season of digging deep into the reality of what it means that God sent His Son into the world. It is a season of expectation and preparation, an opportunity to align ourselves with God’s *presence* more than just the hectic season of *presents*. So wherever you are on your own spiritual journey, I invite you into this season. It’s a time that allows for questions and doubt and struggle as we take time to prepare our hearts for Christ’s coming...

As we unwrap each gift of Christmas over the next few weeks, my hope is that we discover together that we can trust in Immanuel, God with us. He is bigger than our greatest expectations or our deepest pains. His light shines in the darkness and bids us to draw near. As we do, we discover and realize the gifts He brings—but more so, we discover Him.

CPWM

CPWM met Monday, November 7th in the Fellowship Hall. We discussed the program and actions taken at the Regional Meeting held October 18th at Marion First CP Church. We also agreed on gifts for our senior adult members to be delivered after Thanksgiving.

We will not have a regular meeting in December.

Session Notes

At the November meeting, we voted/approved:

- Participate in the Gift to the King offering with donations going to a local need
 - Purchase a fax stick for copier
 - Pay fees and hotel for Bro. Bud to attend Ministers Conference Jan. 18-20 in Memphis
 - Purchase hearing devises for sanctuary
 - Purchase video monitor and speaker for Preschool Nursery room upstairs
 - No Sunday School on Christmas Day
 - Establish Missions Committee with Lora Rogers-Kerner serving as chairman and Velva Mullen as elder representative
 - Make a standard \$200/month donation to Paducah Cooperative Ministry
 - Have a new fence installed on lower parking lot side
 - Allow Melissa Dumes to spend up to \$500 for Christmas float and additional candy
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November Numbers

Stewardship Report as of November 28, 2016

Receipts	\$ 18,311.67
Disbursements	\$ 13,733.81

Attendance Record

Morning Worship

November 6 – 94

November 13 – 71

November 20 – 85

November 27 – 95

December Calendar

December 11 – Session meeting, 2:00 p.m.

December 18 – Youth Christmas program and

Gift to the King offering, 6:00 p.m.

December Elders Jeff Parker, Elaine Overton

December Ushers Steve and Diane Shrewsberry
Lori Kauffman, Ronnie Parker

Opportunities for Service and Giving

Paducah Cooperative Ministry Pantry

Peanut butter and plastic shopping bags

Gift to the King This year, we have a wonderful opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the residents of the **Jackson House** in Paducah. The staff of the Jackson House has set a goal to purchase every resident a two wheel folding multi-use shopping cart. The residents will be able to use their own cart to transport groceries and other items to their rooms. Members of our congregation who know residents of the Jackson House say these are much needed items and will be a tremendous aid in their daily chores.

Morningside Assisted Living Although volunteers are not needed on a regular basis, the Activities Director at Morningside has said that if you are interested in reading or crafting with the residents you are more than welcome to come. Also, always welcome would be singers and musicians. If you would be interested in this, call Jim Chapman at Morningside, 270-554-9173

Elder Elections Please be present Sunday, Dec. 11 as we vote on elders for the 2017-2019 years. Ordination/Installation will take place Dec. 18.

Christmas Eve Come and Go Communion

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

December Birthdays

5 - Lisa Parker
9 – David Russell
13 – Doris Lynn
14 – Donna Yates
16 – Bernice Belt
 Laura DeHart
 Sidney Milton
19 - Terrella Hancock
20 - Buddy Rushing
23 - Melissa Kilgore
25 - Clint Cunningham
26 - Johnny Overton
 Tony Dodd
 Allison Hasty
29 - Alyssa McKinney

December Anniversaries

16 - Tony and Bindu Finnell
31 – Bud and Pam Russell

12 Trends found in healthy churches

#12 Corporate prayer is intentional and prioritized.

This is the last of our installments as presented by Thom Rainer. If you are interested in reading more by Mr. Rainer, you can check for books at Lifeway or see Bro. Bud.