



The Spire

**Plantation Presbyterian Church
Plantation, FL December 2014**

ARE YOU READY?



Adoration of the Shepherds by Gerard van Honthorst, 1622

Pastor's Message...

So, how do you get ready for Christmas? Are you like some people who start planning as early as January? Do you start buying presents and ornaments when they are on sale hoping you won't get in the frantic shopping season? Or, maybe you are the exact opposite and wait until the day before

and pack it all in at once. No matter how you prepare you probably have figured out what works for you and that simply becomes your way of getting ready.

But that is Christmas. That is when we knock ourselves out trying to spend more money than we have, eating more junk food than we should and rushing around to accomplish more than we need. Christmas is about trees and wreaths and lights and all those other things that our culture pushes and our traditions demand. It is a tiring, hectic time but we look forward to it each year with all sorts of hope and expectations.

Getting ready for Christmas and getting ready for Christ are, oddly enough, entirely different things. Most people are getting ready for Christmas. They're shopping for presents to give and dropping hints for presents to receive. They're pulling decorations down from the attic, making travel plans, straightening up the house for all those travelers planning to visit, and looking forward to spending time with family. Except for the manger on the mantel and an hour set aside for church on Christmas Eve (which itself might be just another annual visit), not much of this preparation for Christmas has to do with the one whose birth the holiday is supposed to celebrate. I suppose that's because getting ready for Christ is a different matter altogether.

Preparations for Christmas take place all around us, while preparations for Christ occur mostly within; and for all the hustle and bustle, the former really are much easier. Unlike the decorations we take down after Christmas, the appearance we take on after Christ "stays up." It's permanent, because what changes is not the house we live in but the soul who lives there.

No wonder it's easier to get ready for Christmas than to get ready for Christ. The stakes are so much higher when we come to Jesus. It's the difference between a holiday and the holy. One is fleeting and ephemeral, the other is permanent and transforming. In preparing to meet the holy we must be willing to be transformed, and see the need for doing that. However culturally tamed and commercially transformed Christmas may have become, it was originally about the coming of Christ, the Savior of the world.

What about Jesus, the Savior of the world, how do we get ready for Him?

The Western Christian churches observe a time of getting ready for the coming of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas and we call it ADVENT. That word 'advent' comes from the Latin word *adventus* which is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*. *Parousia*; meaning presence, arrival, or official visit.

So we get ready for the coming of Christ from two different perspectives: one is what is going on all around us and the other is what is going on within us.

Here at Plantation Presbyterian Church we began preparing for the Nativity of Jesus on the last Saturday of November, when we Hung-the-Greens. And then on the last Sunday of November we began, through Worship, to ready ourselves. And, throughout the first three weeks of December we will continue to have different and exciting worshipping opportunities to ready ourselves.

Our Advent schedule describes the weekly special events and I would encourage you to attend each and every one. During our worship times we will explore the Greatest

Gift we get at Christmas: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. We will then all gather for our two special Worship Services on Christmas Eve. One Service will take place at 4:00 pm and our Traditional Candlelight Service at 11:00 pm.

This year let's set our hearts and minds on preparing for the nativity of Jesus with as much resolve as we prepare for our cultural Christmas. But keep in mind there is that other perspective which we can easily overlook: God's presence, arrival, or official visit, within us. How do we prepare and ready ourselves for that event? To help us answer that, we will take the next three Sundays to see what Mark, John and Luke have to say.

So ready yourself for Christmas as it is just around the corner; but remember that in the midst of all those gifts is a most precious one. It is the gift of Jesus who came and the one who died that you and I might live.

David



Sanchez Family



Christmas Eve Services
December 24, 2014
4:00 p.m. Family Service
11:00 p.m. Candlelight Service



Poinsettias

Order your poinsettias now. They will decorate the church for Sunday Morning December 21 and Christmas Eve. Dedicate your flower in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one, or to the Glory of God. Orders must be received by December 14. Poinsettias will be \$12 per plant. To order please complete the form in the church bulletin or call the church office.

Newsletter Contacts

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Next deadline is February 25, 2015.



Special Advent Gift for the Church

Plantation Presbyterian Church is very Blessed! Church members give of themselves by weeding the gardens, bringing items for the rummage sale, participating in church events, serving as an elder, deacon or member of a committee, and giving their weekly offerings. Everyone has also been very supportive of our mission projects at the Ann Storck Center and the Nancy J. Cotterman Center. But most of all we're family and care about each other and OUR church. For this we are truly thankful.

Please consider giving a gift to ourselves during this holiday season to help balance our 2014 budget. Help by choosing a gift tag at church beginning December 14 to help pay the weekly or monthly expense of postage, lawn maintenance, choir materials, Christian education materials, website costs, and more. Your contribution in any amount is greatly appreciated. By making a gift to the church, an ornament with your family name will be hung in the church plus you will receive a special homemade treat made especially by Becky Rountree from her grandmother's recipes. Let's watch as our sanctuary fills with ornaments by Christmas Eve.



The Giving Tree

The Christmas Giving Tree is set up at the rear of the Sanctuary and the congregation is once again called upon to help make the lives of the children at the Ann Storck Center and the Nancy J. Cotterman Sexual Treatment Center a little brighter this Christmas.

For Christmas, our church provides gifts for approximately 60 children from the Ann Storck Center and the Nancy J. Cotterman Center. The Giving Tree will have tags with a child's wish in the \$25 range. Tags can be secured on Sunday and gifts must be returned to church by December 14. If you feel you cannot shop for a gift but want to participate please make a financial donation to the Deacons. If you have any questions please contact Becky Rountree at routreelo@aol.com or 954-791-9139.



PPW Holiday Luncheon

All of the Presbyterian Woman and their spouses, significant others, and friends are invited to our Christmas Potluck Luncheon held in the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, December 20 at 12:00 Noon. There will be a special holiday performance by the Sweet Adeline's. They will be singing a special melody of Christmas songs. It is important to have a good attendance to support them. A reservation form will be in the Sunday bulletin or please contact Kathy Guariglio at 954-583-6346 if you are planning to attend. Please bring a \$5 gift and a food dish for sharing.



Carrie "B" Holiday Cruise

Come join everyone on a cruise to see the holiday lights on Sunday, December 21, 2014. This fellowship event is an evening for all ages. The cost is \$28 for adults and \$15 for children ages 3-12. Children under 3 are free. Please RSVP to Becky Rountree at routreelo@aol.com or call her at 954-791-9139. Car pooling can be worked out just let Becky know so she can arrange.



Lillian and Bob Potter Annual Children's Christmas Party

The Lillian and Bob Potter Annual Children's Christmas Party hosted by the Deacons is Saturday, December 13, 2014 at 11:00 a.m. This special party for the children and grandchildren of our church is organized by the Deacons. Bob and Lillian Potter started this tradition many years ago for the children of our church. Please RSVP to Deacon Maxine Lennon at 954-473-9333 or email her at maxtvl@aol.com. It is a fun party with food, crafts, and a visit from some very special holiday visitors.

Hanging of the Greens...



Anna Fletcher helps with the decorating.



Natasha and Anna Fletcher with Beth Doubleday decorate a tree in the sanctuary.



Jane Simons and Becky Snyder decorate the fellowship hall.



Sue Goldfarb and Sarah Dixon work on the windows in the sanctuary



Alan Jones, Paul Froehlich and Doug Doubleday



Thanksgiving Baskets

Thank you to everyone for bringing food or donating money for the Thanksgiving Baskets. Baskets were delivered to the Ann Storck Center for fifteen families and several families in the community. Gift certificates were also provided to each family to purchase a turkey. The Deacons appreciate everyone's generosity!



Fellowship Volunteers

Everyone enjoys the fellowship after church each Sunday but it doesn't happen without volunteers. Please consider volunteering for a Sunday to assist with set-up, clean-up and food preparation. With more people involved, it makes it easier for everyone. The sign-up sheet is at the back of the church. Food donations are welcomed any Sunday as well as any monetary donation. Please bring your contributions to the church kitchen before the service.

December Calendar of Events

- 13 Children's Holiday Party
- 14 Poinsettia Orders Due
- 14 Giving Tree Gifts Due
- 14 Deacon Meeting, 12:20 p.m.
- 18 PPW Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.
- 20 PPW Holiday Luncheon., Noon
- 21 Carrie "B" Cruise, 6 p.m.
- 21 Bob Beal's Student Piano Recital
- 24 Family Christmas Eve Service, 4
Christmas Eve Service, 11 p.m.

January Calendar of Events

- 5 Finance Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- 18 Deacon's Meeting, 12:20 p.m.
- 20 Session Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- 22 PPW Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.



**Mark Your Calendar
Annual Congregational Meeting
Sunday, February 8, 2015
Immediately Following Service**



Buddy Rountree, Nancy Ramirez, and Stefano Mazzoleni

Unseen Guest Luncheon

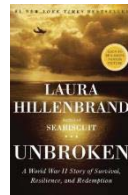
The Deacons would like to thank everyone who supported the Unseen Guest luncheon. Approximately \$2,700 was raised to assist people in our congregation and the community who need some extra help. We give a special thank you to Jimmy Snyder for cooking all of the turkeys and to Beth Doubleday, moderator of the Deacons, and all of the Deacons for providing a great meal! Money raised from this event helped to purchase the gift certificates for the Thanksgiving Baskets and to help people in need during the year.



Faye and Ed West with Zoey, the newest grandchild



Joyce Richardson, Sue Mazzoleni, and Eugene Richardson



The Proofreaders...

The book group will be meeting Sunday, January 11, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the book, *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand. *Unbroken* is a true story about Louie Zamperini and how he overcame so much in his journey through life.

He grew up in California in the 1920's and was a "hellraiser." As a teenager he emerged as a great runner and competed in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. While preparing for the 1940 Olympics, World War II began and he joined the Army Air Corps becoming a bombardier. In 1943, on a search mission, his plane crashed in the ocean. After 47 days adrift, he was captured by the Japanese and sent to a POW camp.

Zamperini's story is about heroism, cruelty, life, death, joy, suffering, remorselessness, and redemption.



Birthdays and Anniversaries December

- 1 Ann Bush
- 2 Ron Thompson
- 5 Dawn Moorman,
Norman Anderson, Jr.
- 6 Audrey Smith
- 8 Robert Minto
- 9 Natalia Sanchez
- 11 Anson Boodhai
- 13 Sonia Anderson
- 18 Al and Claire Will
- 19 Christopher Smith
- 22 Sara Mazzoleni
- 23 Dr. Rev. Eugene Richardson
- 23 Irvin and Eileen Jones
- 24 Benny and Tina Paulus
- 26 Maxine Lennon
- 27 Mary Heilman
- 28 Ron Albert, Melanie Moorman
- 29 Nandlal Boodhai, Greg Branom,
Virginia Fisher
- 30 Robert and Lorraine Edewaard

January

- 1 Kurt Newman
- 2 Kokovi Tete Benisson, Emily
Nardoni, Karen Nardoni
- 6 Donna Ryan
- 8 Peter and Lenora Shulman
- 10 Ruth McDonald
- 12 Olga Wood
- 17 Jane Simons
- 20 Pat Lawler
- 23 Mike McMillan



Ruth Magly



Connie Abel

Clean-Up Day

Many thanks to everyone who helped at clean-up day. Over twenty people washed windows, power sprayed, put down mulch and cleaned.



2015 Stewardship Campaign Update

Steward: Loving God with our Time, Talent and Treasure

The 2015 Stewardship campaign is underway, and we thank you for your pledge for 2015. If you have yet to make your 2015 pledge, you may do so by placing it in the offering plate today, or by mailing it to the church. The 2015 Stewardship campaign pledge cards are available, on the table, in the back of the church. Thank you for your continued support.

Year-End Contributions: Recording & Reporting

In order for your charitable contributions to be tax-deductible in 2014, they must be received by the church or postmarked by December 31, 2014. The 2014 contribution statements will be available to you on or around January 25, 2015. These will be placed on a table at the back of the Church. If you have any questions regarding year-end contributions, please contact Ann Robinson the Church Secretary, at 954-587-0830.

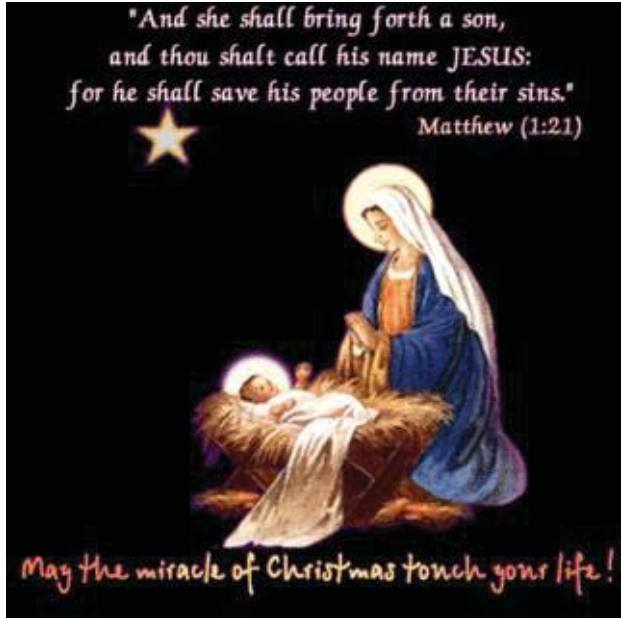


Online Stewardship News

Online giving is possible, for giving to our Church by visiting our website at: www.plantationpresbyterianchurch.com. Select the donate button, with the Green Heart and words: "Give Now." Once you click the Green Donate button, you will be taken to a secure webpage set-up through the Presbyterian Foundation. This service is also known as "the Presbyterian Mission Exchange." Once there you may make donations to any of three funds: Designated Funds, Faith Promise Giving, or Major Repair fund. You will also have the option to set up a recurring donation. When you have completed your donation, you will receive confirmation and a statement to use when filing your future taxes. If you have any questions regarding these items, please contact Ron Albert, Church Treasurer.



Check out Plantation Presbyterian Church's
website at
www.plantationpresbyterianchurch.com



Plantation Presbyterian Church
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