



# PRESBYTERIAN NEWS

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

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## From Tom's Study

*“Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’” Matthew 2:13*

Can you imagine having a dream where it seems clear your new born child is in imminent danger?

Such was the case for Joseph when he woke up one morning. No amount of coffee would overcome that kind of dream. Herod, the ruler of his land wanted to kill Joseph's child. I can't even imagine the terror. Of course many parents through history have known this kind of terror.

Immediately Joseph gathered up Mary and Jesus and together they moved to Egypt trusting that somehow they would find a way to survive in a foreign land along way from home. For Mary and Joseph moving to Egypt must have seemed as filled with just as much danger as staying home and facing Herod's soldiers. Everywhere they turned danger abound.

As we move through this Advent season what dangers await us? What might get in the way of us growing closer to our Triune God? What might we need to steer clear of so that we stay true to our calling? Where can we go for shelter when it seems that we might be overrun by our culture, our business, our friends, our work, our health? This Advent what are the dangers for us as we seek to focus on Christ and Christ's call upon our lives?

Of course we can ask these exact same questions for our life together as a church. What are the dangers for us a community? What distracts us from our call to be a blessing? What threatens to derail our impact on the world for God's Kingdom? What threatens to kill our faith?

Every year it seems our lives become busier. Every year we have more on our plate. Every year we try to juggle more opportunities. Every year the dangers abound, seeking to prevent the Christ child from growing in us.

As we go through this Advent Season let us learn from Joseph. Let us be aware of the dangers. Let us find safe places and safe times to nurture our faith. This Advent let Christ be born a bit more fully in us than ever before. This Advent let us name the dangers so that they lose their power over us. What is the “Herod” in your life that seeks to derail your journey of faith? Let us grow in awareness of the dangers around us, so that we can truly know the joy of Christ growing in our lives.

In Christ's Service – Pastor Abbott



**Help wanted:** The dynamic choir team is seeking new members! Candidates must enjoy singing and hanging out with fun people. Music reading skills are optional. No previous experience required. If you would like to check us out, we meet on Thursday evenings from 7:00 – 8:00. We have empty chairs begging to be filled.

Just in case anyone needs a little added inducement, the choir members were recently asked to share their motivation for joining the group. Here are a few of their responses:

“Because I like it and welcome the opportunity.”

“My employer encouraged me to join him in the choir. I liked it. I love to sing, and in particular with harmony. Now I miss it during breaks.”

“I love to sing and reconnect every Thursday and Sunday with fellow choir members.”

“I joined this choir because I LOVE to sing. I feel wonderfully connected to God and the Spirit moves me when I hear such beautiful music and songs that glorify God. It's inspiring and gives me melodies to sing throughout the weeks and days after learning our music.”

To join our group, simply contact Pat McKinney at 674-3183 or [patmckinney1@gmail.com](mailto:patmckinney1@gmail.com).



## Exciting Upcoming Events

**Pastoral Resident Housing Needed:** Beginning in January we will have a second pastoral resident working among our three congregations. Lorene Duin will be with us during the months of March and April. Lorene would like to live closer to our congregations than Holland where she calls home. Presently, she has housing arranged in Schoolcraft for January and Portage for February and March. It would be great if we could house her here during the month of April. If you have room in your house or if you plan to be gone in April and would be willing to let Lorene housesit please let us know at the church office.

**Interested in Learning about Church Membership?** If you find yourself wondering about the church give Pastor Abbott a call at 657-3788.

### Adult Small Groups

**Monday Night Study:** The Monday night study will take the month of December off. We will start up again on January 10<sup>th</sup>.

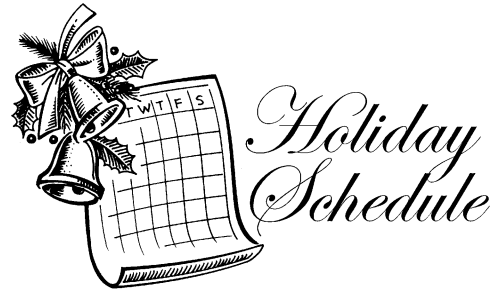
**Chancel Choir:** The choir practices on Thursday nights at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. All are welcome to come and join in the singing and the fun.

**Attention Men:** Men's breakfast will take place on Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Please note the date change due to Thanksgiving and Christmas. All men are invited and we would love to have you join us for this time of food, fellowship, and study.

### ADULT BIBLE STUDY

The Adult Bible Study class is beginning the Book of Acts. If you have been thinking about joining a bible study this would be the perfect time as we begin a new book. We will not meet the Sunday after Thanksgiving or during the time when worship is at 10:00 a.m.

Please join us at 9:30 on Sunday mornings in the library. Bring your Bible if you have one. This is a discussion type study. We try to dig a little deeper into the scripture so that we might have a better understand of the meaning.



**Sunday Worship Times:** There will be two services at 8:15 and 11:00 a.m. on December 5<sup>th</sup>. We will have one worship service at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup>. We will also have one service at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 25<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will return to the two worship schedule on January 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Sacrament of Communion:** We will celebrate communion at both services on Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, and at the 10:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve.

**Children's Christmas Program:** We all look forward to our young people leading us in worship. On December 12<sup>th</sup>, we will have one worship service at 10:00 a.m. so that we can celebrate Advent with our children. Don't miss this special time in our life together.

**Christmas Eve Services:** We will have a family candle lighting service at 6:00 p.m. and a communion candle lighting service at 10:00 p.m. These services are a wonderful time to invite friends and family to join us in worship.

**Christmas Morning Worship:** What better way to celebrate Christ's birth than in worship. We will have a wonderful time of gathering around God's Word and singing Carols at 10:00 a.m. on Christmas Morning. Come and join us.

**Invite a Friend:** One of the ways we can be a beacon in our community is by simply inviting people to join us in worship. People's spirits are thirsty. Let us invite them to the well that never runs dry. Make sure to offer to pick them up.

**Parking on Sundays:** If you don't mind walking a bit, we would encourage folks to park on the street leaving the parking lot for folks who have a hard time walking, visitors, and parents with a car full of kids.



## Deacons



Deacons are hosting Fellowship on Sunday, December 12 following Children's Service. Poinsettias will be in the sanctuary beginning Sunday, December 5.

## Mission Opportunities

**Valet Parking** is now available. If you need this service contact Pat Conner, 760-2076, prior to Sunday service and she will line up a driver for you. Just pull up in front of the church and your car will be parked for you. All drivers are approved by our Church Mutual insurance company.

**Commission Meetings:** Please check with your chairperson for meeting times in December. Some commissions will meet on Tuesday, December 14, at 6:30 p.m.

**Session & Deacon Meetings:** Session and Deacon meetings will take place on Tuesday, December 14, at 8:00 p.m. Please note this change to the second Tuesday instead of the third.

## Fellowship

**Monthly Potluck:** December 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. is the day and time. Don't miss it and please bring a friend, or two, or three, some food to share and your own table service.

**Voices of the Future Concert:** On Wednesday, December 8, at 1:00 p.m. the high school choir, "Voices of the Future" will give a concert in our Sanctuary. So why not come to Lunch with Friends at noon and stay around for the concert at 1:00. This is another great opportunity to invite your friends to join you.

## Youth Ministry

**Young Life:** Attention all high school people. Young Life has started and is meeting on most Monday nights. Check your Facebook or the Paw Paw Young Life Facebook page for the latest news and information. You can also talk to Hanna Abbott or John Slater at school.

**Middle School Youth Group:** A community youth group is beginning each 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday afternoons from 4:00-5:45 p.m. at Red Arrow Ministries. We look forward to seeing you on the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Sunday School:** Don't miss out on the fun every Sunday morning from 9:45 to 10:45. There is a class for both high school and middle school people.

**Eleanor's Pantry:** Don't forget to shop for the pantry when you are at the store. Or if you are able, help the pantry out with a financial gift. Looking for a gift for that special someone? Make a donation to the pantry in their honor. Everyone will be grateful.

**Joint Food Pantry:** If you have any questions about how you might help with the pantry please connect with Sue Miller (657-4601). I am sure we can find a niche for you.

**Tremendous Need:** We truly need people who are interested in learning how to run the sound system and the video projection system. If you have such an interest please connect with Sue Reynnells at 674-3195.

Are you looking for a place to serve? Are you looking for a place to use your gifts? Please be thinking about involvement in these local mission opportunities: *Lunch with Friends, Habitat for Humanity, Restorative Justice, Eleanor's Pantry, The Decatur Shelter and United Christian Services.* If you have any questions about any of these please contact Pastor Abbott at 657-3111.



Looking for a unique gift for friends and family?

You may

donate to Eleanor's Food Pantry in the name of a loved one then present him/her with a certificate detailing that gift.

See Marge McKee to purchase an Eleanor's Pantry gift certificate.



## Thanks

To all who helped prepare the November newsletter: Johnell Cuddeback Weintraub, Freida Durringer, Maizie Seeber and Barb Kruse. And to Jim vanWestrienen for folding Sunday bulletins.

## Needed: Nursery Volunteers and Abraham's Tent teachers!

Due to some changes in situations, I am finding myself short on volunteers to cover both nursery (early and late services) and teachers for Abraham's Tent. If you would be willing to help, please contact me asap as I am working on the January through May schedule. Remember, I will give you a lesson to teach for Abraham's Tent or you can plan a lesson of your own and there is a second person there to help you.

Also, I want to extend a HUGE thank you to all the volunteers that have given of their time and talents for the first part of the school year. I think the Abraham's Tent program has gotten off to a fantastic start! If you would like to help, please contact me as soon as you can at one of the following:

[Zamesel@yahoo.com](mailto:Zamesel@yahoo.com), 436-1944 (cell), 657-7803 (home)

Thank you for your consideration!  
God's Blessings,  
Danean Baker

12/01 Sue Miller  
12/02 Madelyn\* Randall  
12/02 Donna\* Zabonick  
12/02 Kathleen\* Lanphear  
12/02 Gregory Rhodes  
12/03 Beverly Hop  
12/03 David\* Conner  
12/03 Pamela\* Baney  
12/09 Jacob Baker  
12/10 Michael Davidson  
12/11 Alyssa VanDenBerg  
12/12 Freida\* Durringer  
12/12 Mary\* Martin  
12/12 Deborah Goodman  
12/12 Nicholas Hess  
12/12 Shane Walker  
12/13 Sally Schallhorn  
12/13 Maggie Miller  
12/15 Margo\* Anderson  
12/15 Sarah\* Wells  
12/16 Adam\* Wells  
12/17 Royal\* Haefner  
12/17 Travis Rhodes  
12/18 Maxine\* Brown  
12/18 Samuel\* Abbott  
12/19 Patricia\* Conner  
12/19 Jaime\* Pursley  
12/19 Joshua\* Frazier  
12/21 Brett Henson  
12/21 Drew\* Marcelletti  
12/21 Kenneth Dunkerly  
12/22 Donald Areaux  
12/24 Briar Butler  
12/26 Peg\* Brabb  
12/26 Nelson Lumm  
12/26 Erin Woodard  
12/27 Max Graham  
12/28 Thomas\* Garceau  
12/29 Nicole Walters  
12/30 Lynn\* Hess  
12/30 Travis Walker  
12/31 Margaret\* McNeil  
12/31 Jan Nowak-Lumm  
12/31 Timothy Walker

## December Anniversaries

12/08 Kathy & Bill Renbarger  
12/08 John & Lisa Taylor  
12/13 Orville Griffith and Marlene Tucker  
12/19 Alan & Katy Lanphear  
12/19 Daniel & Tammy Hulst  
12/20 Jerry & Sue Miller



## Children's Program Sunday, December 12, 10 a.m.

The title of the program directed by Danean Baker, Bill Welling & Pat McKinney, is "Live From Bethlehem."

## Stewardship Campaign Update

Thanks to your generous contributions, 2011 pledges have exceeded last year's and we can consider our stewardship campaign successful. We appreciate the sharing of dreams from our church family. Session will be planning a budget to implement those dreams for 2011. Thanks once more to everyone who shared their time, talents, hopes and dreams.

Cookie Walk and Craft Sale: St. Mark's Church will hold its annual Craft show and sale on Saturday, Dec. 4 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the lower level of the church. The sale offers the work of many hands, including jewelry, holiday decorations and gift items.

Red Cross Blood Drive: Knights of Columbus Hall on Wednesday, December 8 between noon and 5:45



# December 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 8:00 TOPS  Noon Lunch with Friends  7:00 Boy Scouts	2 Noon Rotary Club Meeting  7:00 Choir Rehearsal	3  Bonter Family 100 <sup>th</sup> Birthday 4-8	4  8:00 Men's Breakfast
5 7:15 Prayer Time 8:15 Worship 9:30 CE Classes 11:00 Worship Fellowship Pray and Play 4:00 Paw Paw Community Chorus Concert 4:00 Middle School Youth	6	7	8 8:00 TOPS Noon Lunch with Friends 1:00 Choir Performance for PW 6:30 Potluck 7:00 Boy Scouts	9 Noon Rotary Club Meeting  7:00 Choir Rehearsal	10	11
12 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Children's Christmas Program Fellowship Pray and Play	13	14 10:00 Sharenet  6:30 Commission Meetings 7:30 Worship 8:00 Session/Deacons Meetings	15 8:00 TOPS  Noon Lunch with Friends  7:00 Boy Scouts	16 Noon Rotary Club Meeting 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	17	18
19 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Fellowship Pray and Play 4:00 Middle School	20	21	22 8:00 TOPS	23	24 Christmas Eve  6:00 Family Service 10:00 Communion Candlelight Service	25  Christmas Day 10:00 Worship
26 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Fellowship Pray and Play	27	28 10:00 Sharenet	29	30	31	

**Emmanuel: Space for Hope**  
 Saturday, December 4 & Wednesday,  
 December 8 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
 Leader: Naomi Wenger  
 Suggested Donation: \$50, includes lunch  
 The Hermitage  
 11321 Dutch Settlement Rd. Three Rivers  
 269-244-8696  
[www.hermitagecommunity.org](http://www.hermitagecommunity.org)

Presbyterian Women are not meeting the fourth Wed. of December but will have a meeting on Dec. 8 at 10:30. Also on Dec. 8, the Voices of the Future from Paw Paw High School will perform in the Church sanctuary at 12:45.

First Presbyterian Church  
120 Pine St., Paw Paw, MI 49079

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### December Sermon Schedule

#### December 5 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent - Communion

**Scripture Reading:** Isaiah 11:1-10

**Sermon Title:** “Peace of Christ”

**Synopsis:** We say “Peace of Christ” to each other every Sunday. What does that mean? There is peace in who Christ is. Christ brings peace to the world. Christ will right the wrongs of the world.

#### December 12 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent – Children’s Christmas Program

#### December 19 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

**Scripture Reading:** Matthew 1:18-25

**Sermon Title:** “Faith through the Holy Spirit”

**Synopsis:** No matter what’s going on God is with us. We long for God’s presence in our lives. Through the Holy Spirit we have the faith to trust in the work of God in our lives.

#### December 24 – Christmas Eve Services at 6:00 & 10:00

**Communion at 10:00**

**Scripture Readings:** Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-20

**Sermon Title:** “Transformed by God’s Light”

**Synopsis:** God came to earth. God has lived among us. God continues to live in us and among us through the Holy Spirit. How does God’s presence bring light to our lives? How does God’s presence bring transformation?

#### December 25 – Nativity of Jesus

**Scripture Readings:** Isaiah 7:10-16, Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19, Romans 1:1-7, Matthew 1:18-25

**Sermon Title:** “God’s Weariness”

**Synopsis:** Isaiah suggests that God’s weariness with humanity led to acts of salvation. What about our lives might make God weary? How might we change to give God a gift this Christmas morn?

#### December 26 – First Sunday after Christmas

**Scripture Reading:** Isaiah 63:7-9, Psalm 148, Hebrews 2:10-18, Matthew 2:13-23

**Sermon Title:** “Faith Threatened”

**Synopsis:** What tears at your faith? What causes doubt in your mind? What leads you astray from the ways of Jesus? How can we protect ourselves from the dangers that threaten our faith?

## *A Christmas Prayer*

Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds and the wisdom of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clean hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

## **Community Choir Christmas Concert**

The Paw Paw Community Chorus, sponsored by the Paw Paw High School Choirs, will present their Annual Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 5 at 4 p.m. at the Paw Paw High School Performing Arts Center, located at 30609 Red Arrow Highway. The chorus is directed by Theresa Vaughn and accompanied on piano by Lisa Gardner.

The Chorus will perform both sacred and secular music. A few of the selections are

We hope you will attend this free concert.