



December 2015

Volume 26 Number 11

## MINISTER'S MUSINGS

*O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you  
aright?*

*Your people long to greet you, my hope, my  
heart's delight!*

*O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast,  
To do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.*

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You, written by Paul Gerhardt in 1653, asks the question we most want to know; how can we meet our Lord as we come to this season of Advent.

Do we meet Jesus at the holiday parties ripe with festive celebrations and cheer? This is certainly a time when we reconnect with family and friends. A time we don gay apparel and toast the New Year, but will we meet our Savior?

Do we meet Jesus at the shopping mall as we search for the perfect gift or the gift card with open ended giving? NO! We know Jesus is not found there. We know Jesus is found in love.

*Love caused your incarnation; love brought you  
down to me;*

*your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.*

*O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace  
in love, all loves excelling, our lost and fallen race.*

Let us remember the babe born in a manger, grows into our Savior and Lord. Jesus takes away our sin and pain. Jesus meets us where we are and welcomes us into the fellowship of God.

*You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and  
goodwill,*

*To bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be  
still.*

*In patient expectation we live for that great day  
when your renewed creation your glory shall  
display.*

We meet Jesus in the music of the season as it lifts our souls to praise and readies us for Jesus' birth.

We meet Jesus in our love of family that claims us as part of God's larger family.

We meet Jesus in the grace and mercy we abundantly receive through His death and resurrection.

We meet Jesus in the quiet of our hearts, in our reflection upon the Spirit of God moving in our lives.

**With all the staff of St. Andrew Church we pray you have a very blessed and joyful Christmas!!!**



**5:30 p.m. December 24**

Lessons and Carols  
followed by  
*Silent Night* in the courtyard

Childcare will be provided.



## HEART LINE

Please pray for these members and friends.

Helen Cooke  
Shirley Coleman  
Peg Ogg

Clare Pelich  
Lyle Silldorff  
Jud Van Gorder

David Beach (*former member*)  
Pam Derry (*Mary Zimmer's friend*)  
Steve Glaum (*Dorothy's son*)  
Jan Hunter (*Peg Ogg's daughter*)  
Family of Bill Peck (*friend of the Maacks*)  
Andrea (*Dee St. Clair's daughter*)  
Flynn and family (*Dee Hamill's grandson*)

## Ecumenical Prayer Vigil

The prayer vigil for peace in the Middle East continues with California praying on Monday, December 7. A prayer example follows:



*God of peace and hope, encourage those who seek to establish a fair and just peace in the Middle East. Bless their efforts as they work to end conflict. Lead those who engage in violence to put down their weapons and to live in peace with one another.*



## Bible Study

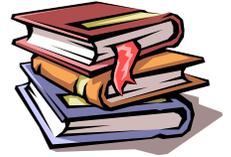
### “Come to the Waters”

The monthly meeting for Bible Study will be Monday, December 21, at 1:00 p.m. Please read Lesson 4 before coming to the meeting.

**Note Date Change:** Bible Study will be the third Monday, December 21, instead of the fourth Monday.

## ADULT EDUCATION

*Dr. Susan Mahan*



### Hubler Hall

**9:00 – 10:00 a.m., Sundays.**

On December 6 and 13 Adult Education will continue its study of the Acts of the Apostles and the early life of the Church controversies and successes.

On December 20 we will explore the rich traditions of Roman, Nordic and Celtic religions that are the foundation of much of modern Christmas. Yule logs, trees, angels, candles, Santa, Advent wreath and reindeer all make sense and can be an authentic part of a Christian Christmas.



Adult Education will not have class on December 27 and January 3rd.

For more information contact: Susan Mahan 320-6422 or [stmahan181@gmail.com](mailto:stmahan181@gmail.com)



## THE CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

A long holiday tradition of St. Andrew continues at **11:45 a.m. on Wednesday, December 9.** So invite your friends to join you for another spirit-filled holiday luncheon. We will be treated to a concert presented by the award-winning Aptos High School Choir.

The cost is \$10, but if you donate a salad it is free. If you would like to donate a salad or decorate a table, or make reservations, contact Marsha Gonzales.

# OUTREACH COMMITTEE

*Karla Norton, Sally Griffin*

*From the Presbyterian Mission Yearbook*

## **Jerusalem**

Many who have traveled to The Holy Land have purchased olive wood tree decorations. They are sold through Pal Craftaid. In 2002 this organization established a relationship with the Rawdat Ed-Zuhur School in Palestinian East Jerusalem, which admits both Christian and Muslim students, but is based on Christian principles and led by Christian Palestinians. It is an oasis amid the Israeli military occupation, checkpoints and separation walls. The 220 children are taught through an enhanced Palestinian Ministry of Education curriculum with English, French, computer skills and a period of dialogue each day which trains the children in the democratic process.

## **Santa Cruz al Salvador Packing Our Bags**

The January 2016 delegation members to El Salvador are packing their bags and getting excited about their upcoming trip. There are 11 participants going from Santa Cruz al Salvador churches, including 3 from this church.

We appreciate all the support from St. Andrew members and friends during the year. The Shadowbrook fundraiser was a huge success, raising \$1141.83 for our partners in El Salvador. And the Walk 4 Water event raised nearly \$10,000! As Christmas approaches, you may be wondering what to get that hard to buy for person. Why not consider giving a donation in the name of your loved one to Santa Cruz al Salvador with a beautiful Alternative Gift Card?

One of our biggest fundraisers of the year is our Prayer Partner program, in which we raise approximately \$9,000 each year to support 120 school children in Guillermo Ungo and 15 university students. Currently St. Andrew members sponsor 7 children. Our most recent list of scholarship recipients includes 29 more children, so if you are feeling the call to be a Prayer Partner please contact Karla Norton or Marian Langdon.

One of the things we do when we go on a delegation is take gift bags to our Prayer children and give them to them at a scholarship ceremony. It is a joyous occasion and one of the highlights of the trip. Suggested donation items include: crayons, colored pencils, erasers, flashlight, Spanish books, small toy, ball-point pens, nail clippers, card games, chapstick, hard candy (no chocolate), flip-flops, calculators, Spanish/English dictionary, and stickers. For boys you could also include a t-shirt, race car, black or blue socks. For girls, suggested items include a camisole, hair ties, lip gloss, and white knee-highs. Also, it would be nice to include a photo of you, your family, your pet(s), and a card with a personal note from you. We request that gifts be put in 1 gallon bags only. You can only imagine what it is like packing 120 gift bags in 11 suitcases! We have also been blessed to have been given 50 new dresses and 50 shorts and t-shirts by an organization called Dress a Girl/Dress a Dude.

Lastly, as we prepare for this very powerful experience, the delegation members covet your prayers, prayers for us and prayers for our friends in El Salvador. Stay tuned for more!



## **CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING**

The Christmas Joy Offering is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those in need.

The receipts from this Offering are distributed equally to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs and to Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries of the General Assembly Council to support Presbyterian racial ethnic education.

The offering will be dedicated **December 20**. Please mark your St. Andrew check: "Joy Offering".

## How Your Smart Phone Can Help You

*Kathy Rodden*

There are 7-Elevens in Tokyo. I know this because I stalk my friends. It's not technically stalking – they've asked me to do it; they've asked me to make sure that they get home safely each night – three single women who live alone. It's a responsibility I take seriously. We watch out for each other.

How? We each have an "app" (application or program) on our smart phones called Find My Friends. (That's the app we use. There are others.) Without having to call each other every day, or twice a day, I know that my best friends get to work and get home. That's it. A quick check of my phone and I know everyone is where they are supposed to be. It isn't invasive. It doesn't feel like Big Brother is watching me (although maybe he is), and it doesn't take more than a moment of my time.

We have one friend that just got the app. We've been trying to get her on board for a while. Now we just need to get her to leave her phone turned on so that the app will work... It also doesn't work if you leave your phone home when you leave the house. You get the idea.

And when one of my friends is traveling? Well that's just fun! I can live vicariously and learn something about China, or Germany, or anywhere, and that there are 7-Elevens in Tokyo. (I also saw where Disneyland is located in Japan.)

What do you think? Could you and a friend benefit from "stalking" each other?! It really does give my friends some peace of mind, knowing that someone is looking out for them.



## Advent Festival

*Marian Allen*

Everyone is invited to come to our **Advent Festival** following worship on **December 6**. We will meet in Hubler Hall as we join together during the Christmas season to focus on Christ's advent into our lives.

The workshop will give us an opportunity to create our own Advent wreath to take home and use when pausing each day to celebrate Christ's coming by lighting the appropriate candle. We will also make photo ornaments, sugar cone trees, and you can bring back last year's Yule log to decorate with fresh greenery and candles. Join us to sing Christmas carols and have a potluck meal with our church family and friends.

The church will provide ham and a cheese platter. **Please bring a salad or dessert to share (nothing that needs to be heated, please).** Bread, drinks and place service will also be provided.

The Outreach Committee will provide cards so that you can send Christmas wishes to a Veteran.

# Inspirations, Reflections

## SHARE THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

During this wonderful Christmas season, we pray that you will joyfully support some of your favorite church projects. Please prayerfully consider sharing with our larger community as God shared his son with the world.



The **Second Harvest** food barrel will be in the Narthex throughout the season.

**Santa Cruz al Salvador** had the **See's Candy sale** and the committee thanks everyone for their donation by buying candy. You may also support SCaS by committing to pray for a child. Another way to make a donation at any time of the year is to give a gift in a loved one's name or to say thank you to someone or for any other occasion. That person will receive a beautiful card saying that a donation has been received in their name. See Karla Norton or Marian Langdon if interested.

The Deacons are organizing **gifts for the Santa Cruz Skilled Nursing Center** and seek warm clothing, wrapped and labeled with size and whether for male or female. Please drop off donations in the office by December 20.

You can support kids in the **CASA** program by donating **\$40 for a gift card** or **embroidering names on the stockings** that will be given at the CASA Christmas party.



On December 6 we hope you will take a moment to write a note to a **Veteran**. Christmas cards will be provided at worship and the Advent Festival.

The **Christmas Joy Offering**, which supports retired clergy and also provides racial ethnic leadership development, will be collected Dec. 20.



CHRISTMAS  
POINSETTIAS

We are decorating the Sanctuary with poinsettias for Christmas. If you would like to place one in Honor or in Memory of a loved one, please contact Kathy in the church office with your request **by December 4**. The price this year is \$7.50 per plant.

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



*Kathy Gleaton, Director*

*Happy Birthday to all those celebrating in December.*

On December 2<sup>nd</sup> between 5pm and 8pm, preschool families once again will enjoy St. Andrew's hospitality with a gift of A Parent's Night Out.

St Andrew Church has shown the preschool families that the simple gift of time is the greatest gift of all. The families are so appreciative and overwhelmed by your gift; their smiles speak louder than words.

The school is decorated with a tree, ornaments and gifts but the love, joy and hope that surrounds us is what makes this the most wonderful time of year. Children are sharing their holiday traditions, food and family culture. We are learning to respect and cherish the diversity that makes each of us unique.

No matter the holiday customs, all families welcome a visit from Jolly ol' Saint Nick on party day!

The school will be closed for winter break from December 21<sup>st</sup> through January 1st. Have a wonderful holiday and a Happy New Year!



Former Member  
Clara Heer, August 14, 2015  
and  
The Rev. Ray Heer, November 3, 2015

### **Note Newsletter Deadline!**

Articles for the January newsletter must be submitted by December 10 (please note early deadline).



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*December 2015*



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Dr. Don Adkins, Music Director  
Dr. Susan Mahan, Adult Educator  
Ms. Kathy Rodden, Office Manager  
Ms. Melanie Elliott, Office Assistant  
Mrs. Marsha Gonzales, Congregational Care  
Mr. Sean Berger, Custodian

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Bunny Schmida, and Judy Zscheile

**Newsletter Deadline:** All articles and items for the newsletter are due in the church office the 15th day of the month prior to the month they will appear. The next deadline is December 10 for the January newsletter.

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