

November 23, 2009



A Season for Hospitality



The season of Advent is once again upon us! For those who aren't fluent in "Churchspeak," the word *advent* is derived from the Latin word for "coming toward" and is the time during which we prepare for the coming of Jesus symbolized by Christmas. Just as God came to dwell among us in the person of Christ over 2,000 years ago, God still comes into our lives today! As we move through the four Sundays leading up to Christmas, we prepare for this coming. Advent, then, is fundamentally a season of hospitality during which we get our hearts ready to welcome Jesus.

Think about the times you have received hospitality. When people are truly hospitable, they welcome you warmly into their home. They invite you to sit; they offer you something to drink; they sit with you, eager to talk to you and enjoy your company. They do everything they can to help you feel welcome, and they focus their attention on you. Mediocre hospitality is quite different. Less-hospitable hosts will make you feel hurried. They will treat you as a distraction from what they really want to be doing. Quite often, they will leave you sitting unattended while they do something else. Sometimes they will even follow you about the house, cleaning up every trace of your presence. For example, every time you set down a glass, they will pick it up and whisk it off to the dishwasher. Or am I the only one this happens to? In any event, no one wants to be hosted in this manner.

In keeping with these observations, there are a couple things we might note as we prepare our hearts for Jesus. First of all, hurry is the enemy. I know, we are all very busy; but being a good host and being hurried just don't go well together. Perhaps we need to do less. Although there are many good things we could do, it might be enough for us to focus on doing those things that are the most important. Maybe if we slow down a little, our spirits will have more space for Jesus; and we'll be able to sit with him and enjoy his presence. Secondly, our hospitality toward God includes hospitality toward others. When we are warm and gracious to other people, we are showing that same warmth to God. Remember Jesus saying, "What you did for the least of these, you did for me"? This is what he's talking about. Since all people are created in the image of God, our ability to be welcoming and loving toward our fellow humans is part of our hospitality toward God. We can also show hospitality to God by being open to the unexpected things that come our way: stopping to wonder at the beauty of a sunset, being ready to help a person in need, and looking at interruptions as opportunities to see something new or to experience God in a special circumstance. There are many ways that God comes to us!

These are hard times. We may not be able to buy as many presents or take part in all the holiday festivities to which we are accustomed. But God is still with us! God comes to us, eager to take up residence in our hearts. Jesus waits to gain entry into our lives through the circumstances and people we encounter and through the still small voice of the Holy Spirit. Advent is a season for hospitality. If we prepare ourselves, we can offer Jesus a warm welcome!

Pastor Eric



Feast of Carols and Pudding

Sunday, December 13, in the CFC following the Christmas concert

Enjoy fine food and fellowship

Menu: beef tenderloin, roasted red-skin potatoes, tossed salad, rolls and butter, bread pudding with raspberry sauce.

Reservations required. Please contact George Lawson at 434-8614 or email at Lawsongm@aol.com.

Cost: \$7 for adults; \$5 for children

The Path of Learning



Special Advent Program

Advent Begins

The season of Advent is the four Sundays before Christmas, when we get ready for the coming of the Christ into the world. **The Advent Event** is on the first Sunday of Advent, November 29, from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m., in the Community Room. This event is for people of all ages. There will be food, fellowship, singing, crafts, puppets, and more. Bring items such as candy, toiletries, and small toys to fill small bags for the children of families who will receive food baskets.

Adults will have the opportunity on December 6 from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. to learn how holidays are celebrated in Mexico, Korea, Scotland, and more, with members, Laura Torres, InYoung May, and Ann Gillies and Vitorine Alobwede. This class, titled *Hospitality in the Holidays*, will be held in the Adult Lounge. Come and share your family traditions as well. On December 13, Eric Pasanchin will lead a class on *The Christmas Story in Scripture*.

Children in grades K-5 will be doing workshops about the birth of Jesus in art, games, and drama during the Sunday school hour in December. On the Sunday following Christmas, all children will meet in the Lang Theater for a film about the birth story.

Children and Worship, for children of all ages, will focus on the story of the coming of the Christ on the four Sundays of December. This class, led by Barbara Dettenmayer, is held twice each Sunday, during the 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services.

Christmas Eve at the Manger

The 5 p.m. Christmas Eve service will be about 30 to 40 minutes in length and will feature the children acting out the story of Christmas. The Children's Choir will sing, Children's Chimes will play, and there will be readings and music by children and youth. If any children would like to help provide the prelude or the postlude, please contact Jeanne McIver or Megan Collins. Following the service, there will be birthday cupcakes as we celebrate Jesus' birthday.



A note to children: On Christmas Eve this year, you will be asked to come to the 5 p.m. service dressed as your favorite character from the Bible story of Jesus' birth. Will you be Mary? Joseph? An angel? A wise man/person? Or will you bring a doll to be the baby Jesus? Or you may want to bring your favorite stuffed animal.

Child care will be provided on Christmas Eve at the 8 p.m. service only. Please sign up to let us know how many children will be in the nursery on Christmas Eve. Also, the Comfort Space/Sanctuary Lounge is a place for families to take children out of the Sanctuary but still be in a service of worship. There are quiet games in this room for children and relaxing chairs for others.

Coming Attractions for Adult Education in 2010

Beginning January 10 and continuing through February 14, from 9:45 to 10:45 each Sunday, there were be two adult education offerings:

- Pat Elliott will lead the discussion of the book The Shack. Many of you have read the book and have been touched by its ideas. Come and talk about it with others.
- *Beginnings: An Introduction to Christian Faith* is a video presentation and the basis for discussion. This class will mirror the themes of the sermon series for the six weeks. The following themes will be featured: *Who is Jesus, and why should I care? Can I trust God? What happens when I die? How does God speak to me? How do I speak to God? Can I start again?*

WOW Resumes on January 6: Come and Celebrate Epiphany

And each Wednesday, from 6 to 8 p.m., come for dinner, worship, adult and children's classes, and children's choir and chimes.





Youth Ministry at Southminster

CHS students are invited to meet Megan and Robyn at 7:20 in East Commons for donuts every Friday morning!

High school youth are headed to the Columbus Zoo for their Christmas event on Saturday, December 5! We will leave the church at 3 p.m. At the zoo, there will be lights, activities, and, of course, animals. After the zoo, we will head to Lindsay Harris's home for hot chocolate and a gift exchange. Bring a gift, \$12 for zoo admission, \$1 for parking, and \$10 to cover dinner/snacks. You can spend the night at Lindsay's house or come home late Saturday evening. Let Megan know if you are coming and whether you are staying the night or coming home!

Youth Worship is Sunday, December 20, at 11 a.m. in the Community Room!

WOW is on break for the holidays, but we will start back up in January!

Date Night



Date Night at Southminster meets again on the second Friday of the month, December 11. Couples meet in the Community Room from 6:30 to 7 p.m. to talk about their "love languages" and then each couple goes out on a date. Childcare and activities for older children are provided free of charge, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Sign up with Pastor Megan.

Small Groups Are Coming!

This Lent Southminster will be focusing on small groups again, with a new study written by the program staff, focusing on spirituality. Current small groups and Presby groups, along with new groups created for Lent, will be encouraged to participate. Contact Pastor Megan today if you are interested in joining a new small group or if your current group would like more information.

Becoming the Parent God Wants You to Be

You've been waiting in line for over an hour for your child to sit on Santa's lap, and you have camera in hand for the annual photo. Your child spent hours preparing his list of items for Santa to bring to your house and can't wait to share them. Finally you and your child are next in line to meet with Santa. With a sense of relief, you place your child on Santa's lap and get ready to snap the picture. You listen as your child reads off his Christmas wish list to Santa. Patiently, Santa listens to your child and then says, "Wow! That's an amazing list of things that you **want**. I can tell that you really like all the new electronic gadgets. Would it be O.K. if Santa brings you something that you really **need**?" With a big smile on your child's face, he says, "Sure, Santa. You can bring me all the things that I need." Feeling excited that Santa will fulfill his promise and bring your child all that he wants, your child jumps off Santa's lap, runs into your arms, and says, "Santa is going to bring me everything I need. He said I can look for it under the Christmas tree on Christmas morning."

At this point we need to establish the difference between wants and needs. To a child, they want everything that is in the Toys R Us ad; they really think that they need everything. As a parent, we know that our children want more than they really need. It's our job to help them understand the difference between needs and wants and to clearly make a distinction between the two.

Let's get back to our story. Your child wakes up super excited on Christmas morning, runs into the family room, looks under the Christmas tree, and finds a small wrapped package from Santa. Bewildered, your child looks up at you and says, "Santa brought me only one present. He said he would bring me all that I needed. What happened?" You tell your child to open the gift and see what Santa has brought. Slowly your child opens the present, and inside the box is a very special leather-bound Bible with your child's name engraved on it. "A Bible," your child responds as he holds it up. "What's this about?" You quietly ask your child to turn in the Bible to Matthew 6:8 and you read, "for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." You ask your child to turn to Isaiah 58:11: "he will satisfy your needs." And Philippians 4:19: "And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

"Merry Christmas, my child. Santa has given you all that you need."
Peace and Merry Christmas to all, Priscilla Stapleton

M M, R & R (Men's Message, Read and Reflect)

In the Bible, we find a realistic, yet healthy, view of doubt as definitely serious but not terminal. Doubt is constructive to belief. Because faith in Christ is true and fears no question or challenge, doubt can be a stepping stone to a tougher, deeper faith.

Followers of Christ are not simply fair-weather believers. They are committed to truth, people who "think in believing, and believe in thinking," as Augustine expressed it. They are, therefore, like experienced pilots who can fly in bad weather as easily as in good, by night as well as by day, and upside down as well as right-side up. Faith's rainy days will come and go, and dark nights of the soul may threaten to overwhelm; but safe flying is possible for those who have a solid grasp of the instruments (God's truth and promises) and a realistic view about the storm and the stress of doubt.

Don Dameron

The Path of Stewardship

It's time to turn in your annual reports!

If you are the chairperson or moderator of a committee or organization in the church, please submit your annual report to the church office by the end of December. **Your report need only be a brief summary of your group's activity in 2009 and a look forward to your anticipated activities in 2010.** One or two paragraphs will suffice! Thank you.



Franchise Available. . .

Minimal effort for huge rewards. You can empower stressed friends and neighbors to take control of the financial and stewardship aspects of their lives for peace of mind. Your reward is seeing life-changing results in clients. A big bonus is the financial expertise you will gain. Turn-key operation has established brand, market share, marketing, and materials. Franchise requires a big heart and three hours a week for 14 weeks. You determine schedule: The proposed next offering is January 23 to April 24, 2010. Current franchise holder will provide coaching and on-site assistance. For more information on being the next **Financial Peace University** coordinator, contact Rusty May (912.5324).

Jerry's Corner

I've noticed that, on several occasions, there are unscheduled meetings in the Church. (Activities are to be scheduled with Carl Kienzle, Sexton.) Please be aware that the older parts of our facility (e.g., the Community Room and the classrooms) will not be heated this winter when we are not aware of activities there. If you want to have an impromptu meeting, bring your coat or select a room in the newer part of our facility. By not heating all parts of our facility on a 24/7 schedule (unless it gets really cold), we are able to save several thousand dollars in gas and electricity over a year's time.



Everyone can help with our utility bill. Please turn off all lights when you leave a room or hallway.

Just a friendly reminder: Whenever you are working with food in any kitchen or in the Coffee Corner, please use a disposable glove when handling any food, from potato chips to cookies.

Thanks for your support and understanding. Call me if you have any questions or concerns.

Jerry

Breakfast with Santa



**Saturday, December 5
9 a.m.,CFC**

Open to church members, neighbors and friends.
Sign up in the Narthex or church office now!

Please remember that the deadline for the Window is always the 15th of the month.

The Path of Worship



8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Sermon and Liturgical Schedule

December 6 Second Sunday of Advent; Communion

Hospitality to Creation
Matthew 2:1-8

4 p.m.: Service of Healing Prayer

December 13 Third Sunday of Advent
Pastor Megan preaching
Hospitality to One Another
Luke 1:39-56

December 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent
Hospitality to Strangers
Luke 2:1-7

Thursday,

December 24 **Christmas Eve**
5 p.m.: Family Service:
God Is Betting on You

8 p.m.: Lessons and Carols

11 p.m.: Lessons and Carols;

Communion

December 27 *Parents Just Don't Understand*
1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Luke 2:41-52

Home Communion

If you are currently serving or have formerly served as an elder or as a deacon and would like to serve communion to homebound members, please contact Bill Boyko, sb.boyko@sbcglobal.net or 433.8263.



Children's Dance Workshops at Southminster

Little ones (ages 18 months through two years) will focus on creative movement. Ages three through 13 years will spend two weeks on each of the fol-

lowing: tap, jazz, ballet, Hawaiian, and tumbling. The workshops, taught by Aleshia Hutchison of the Southminster Academy of Music and Arts, are held in half-hour increments on Wednesdays from 5:15 to 8 p.m. in Room 103. Classes are grouped by age and are open to the community. The cost is \$5 per class. To register, contact Aleshia at dancinlesh@yahoo.com.



Opportunities to Be Involved

The Path of Worship is seeking volunteers in ministry to help *keep the path lit*. We are asking for your prayerful discernment of the gifts God has given to you. Perhaps they are in the following areas:

Acolyte Coordinator. . .

The responsibility of this position is to coordinate and schedule the children's acolyte program. The Coordinator is not required to attend Worship Council meetings (but would be welcomed), and the program is self-managed by the participants after the schedule is released.

Committee Member, Southminster Academy of Music and Arts. . .

We are looking for three to five volunteers to assist in coordinating and overseeing the general activities for the Southminster Academy of Music and Arts (<http://www.sminster-academy.org/>). Volunteers will have a "vested interest" in the success of the Academy and will be able to assist in the development and expansion of this outreach program. This new committee will report to the Worship Council and will be responsible for sending one representative to its monthly meetings.

Sound and Light Coordinator. . .

We are seeking one person to coordinate the scheduling of sound booth personnel. This would include scheduling for Sunday services, weddings, and other special events. Attendance at Worship Council meetings is not mandatory. This responsibility takes an average of about two hours every six months. This program is self-managed by the participants after the schedule has been distributed.

Contact Rig Duncan (434.8088) or Bill Barlow (wbwiggy@ameritech.net) for more information.

The Path of Community



Remember in your prayers...

Devin Buroka (Joan Corless' great-grandson), Jim Fisher, Margaret Foster, Dee Gillespie, Dottie Johnson, Martha Kienzle, Doris and Bob Mays, Merle Noakes, Jackie Lindsey, Adele and Jim Pitsinger, Carl Putzier, Edith Rhodes, Netti Spurlock (Mary Strahler's mother), Gordon Taylor, Grant Taylor (Gordon and Liz Taylor's son), and Alan White (Tamara Laycox's stepfather)

Military: Ben Barlow-Qatar, (Jerry and Mary Stahley's son-in-law), Dustin Laycox-Iraq; Jason Nilsen-Korea (friend of Robyn Kleinschmidt); Patrick Yost and Adam Worthington (Betty Yost's grandsons); and Brian Vaughn-Germany (Charlotte Mort).

Living with cancer: Margaret Barclay, Carl Day, Roger Carlyle (Jackie Lindsey's father), Bob Kienzle, Jackie Nowack and Blake Williams (Kathy Johns' brother-in-law).

Our heartfelt sympathy:

To Peg Sperry and family in the death of Peg's sister, Pat Lampe, who died on October 27, 2009.

To the family of Midge Battin, who died on November, 1, 2009. Midge was a long-time member of Southminster, along with her husband, Don.

Congratulations and Blessings to Jill and Patrick Pink of Lincolnshire, IL parents of daughter, Samantha Jane Pink, born on October 27, 2009. The proud grandparents are Cheryl and Dick Hartman.



How can I thank you all? . . .

Going to the ER is *not* a ball!
Even tho' you're sick,
You want to look your best.
Remember, going to the hospital,
You don't get any rest.
You get settled in your room;
Then the tests begin.
You're examined from your toes
Clear up to your chin.
It all worked out, and all is fine.
Food was good when you had to dine.
Eric came and Sue did too.
Both are so loving and good and true.
Then at home, phone calls,
Flowers, and cards came too—
And a gardening group, what a crew!
You know you are beginning
To look your age
When the "Book of Life"
Reaches to that page.
But thank you all for caring for me.
I appreciate you one and all,
And I love thee!

Pat Custer

Thank You, Friends

I wish to thank all of the caring Church friends for their prayers, cards, phone calls, and offers of help during my hospital stay and recovery from surgery. Thank you, Pastor Sue, for the hospital and home visits and Pastor Eric and Pastor Megan for their hospital visits. I appreciate you all.

Dottie Johnson



Mercy Like Rain: A Service of Healing Prayer

"As the rain and the snow come down from heaven. . . so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth. . ."

Such is God's promise to each of us. In times of great joy and in times of great sorrow, God's word is a promise of mercy and new life. But how do we celebrate the mercy of God when we carry the weight of pain and suffering? Where is God's "mercy like rain" in our days of depression and sorrow?

Just like the bare branch, which in the midst of winter seems lifeless and dead but with the spring brings life-giving, spring-green buds, so is God's word for us. Please join us on Sunday, December 6, at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary for a time of quiet, a time of renewal, a time of healing as we worship, share the bread and the cup, pray together, and receive God's mercy like rain.

Grief Support Group

Finding healing through loss and grief is a difficult journey but one that finds support and encouragement in community. At Southminster we desire to help. If you are experiencing the difficulties of loss, we hope you will consider joining us. Our next gathering is Thursday, December 10, at 10 a.m. in the Coffee Corner. For more information, please contact Jane Hancock (433.0972).

Care Notes

Care Notes are now available at the Information Desk in the narthex as well as downstairs by the Church office. These small, full-color booklets bring messages of hope and compassion to those who are hurting. December offerings include the following: *Your First Christmas After a Loved One Dies*, *Six Tips for Coping With Grief at Christmas*, *How Christmas Memories Can Bring Healing to Your Grief*, *Feeling Depressed at Christmastime*, and *Ten Ways to Honor a Deceased Loved One at*

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Care Notes continued...

Christmas. Other booklets will focus on topics related to health, elder and family care, and issues around recovery. Special Care Notes designed for children and teens have also been ordered. Booklets are free of charge, but small envelopes will be available giving opportunity for donations. Money collected will help defray the cost and allow for regular addition of new care topics. This ministry is sponsored by the Prayer and Presence Committee.

Elderberries Corner

Elderberries, a fellowship group for 55-and-better Church members and friends, will meet for lunch at 11:30 a.m. on December 4. Please make your reservation by calling the Church office by December 2. We are asking you to bring a food item, not to exceed \$5, for a gift exchange. Do not wrap it but rather bring it in a grocery bag. Some suggestions for gifts are canned food, cookies, candies, and nuts. If you do not want to take home the gift you receive, you may donate it to the Food Pantry. There will be games, laughs, and a good time for all. See you then.



Marge Sarringar

Cooks for Christ

The gift of a prepared meal is appreciated at any time; but to an individual or family facing challenge, it provides even greater blessing. Cooks for Christ offers such support by providing a meal to members or friends of the Church who recently have been hospitalized, are recovering from illness, or have other special needs. This ministry, begun in _____, has now delivered over _____ meals. As we look to the New Year, the Cooks for Christ ministry team desires to expand and increase its effectiveness by establishing four cooking teams who would be responsible for preparing and delivering food three months of the year. If you have interest in helping on one of these teams, please call Maggie Jones (435.0535) or Gretchen Cleaves (885.2921).

The Path of Service

International Mission

Southminster is exploring potential international mission relationships for a mission trip in 2010-2011. Talk to Jodell Scholterbeck or Megan Collins if you would like to be a part of this time of exploration.

Alternative Gift Market Update

The Alternative Gift Market was held at Southminster on Saturday, November 7, and included volunteers from Southminster, Fairmont, and Centerville United Methodist. That weekend the market brought in over \$15,000 for humanitarian and environmental projects worldwide and locally here in Dayton. A huge thank you goes to the many volunteers who made this event come together and for all who shopped the market.

Christmas Basket Program

Oops! The Christmas Basket Program article in the November Window should have said that, in the event that more money is collected than is spent on food, the remaining money may be donated to the Food Pantry or to the Dayton Urban Ministry Center. If you want more information about this outreach program, please contact Janet Harris (885.0767) or Jane Kessler (439.0637).

Presbyterian Women of Southminster



Christmas Luncheon

The annual Presbyterian Women's Christmas luncheon will be on Wednesday, December 2, 11:30 a.m., at Champ's Restaurant. This is a wonderful time to greet your friends and to make some new ones. We will be ordering off of the menu. All women of the Church are welcomed to attend, and reservations are not required.

