



December 2011 Newsletter

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Deadline for January's newsletter is December 15.
Email to Deerfield@zoomtown.com.

WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM? BY PASTOR JACKIE

"The Word became flesh and made his home among us. We have seen his glory, glory like that of a father's only son, full of grace and truth...From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace; as the Law was given through Moses, so grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ." (John 1:14, 16)

Each year at about this time, I ponder what gifts I will give to my family and friends. Really, we have more than enough materially, and certainly more than we need to live a comfortable life. This year I want my gifts to be different. I want them to mean something...something heart-felt. I want to be able to "find" that heart-felt something! And so the search begins. I'm sure I echo the thoughts of all of us as we begin this Advent season of waiting, watching, and preparation for Christmas.

And what about Jesus? What can we possibly give Him? After having already received "grace upon grace," as a pure gift, what could we possibly give as a gift to the Christ Child this Christmas? Well, it just so happens that I have a great idea for us this year! But first I want to share with you a poem by Ann Weems:

THIS YEAR WILL BE DIFFERENT

Who among us does not have dreams that this year will be different?
Who among us does not intend to go peacefully, leisurely, carefully toward Bethlehem, for who among us likes to cope with the commercialism of Christmas which lures us to tinsel not only the tree but also our hearts?
Who among us intends to get caught up in tearing around and wearing down?
Who among us does not long for: gifts that give love? shopping in serenity? cards and presents sent off early? long evenings by the fireside with those we love? (the trimming devoid of any arguing about who's going to hang what where, the aroma of cinnamon and nutmeg mingling with the pine scent of the tree, and carols gently playing over our idyllic scene) and the children! The children cheerfully talking about giving instead of getting?
Who among us does not yearn for time for our hearts to ponder the Word of God? moments of kneeling and bursts of song? the peace of quiet calm for our spirit's journey?

This year we intend to follow the Star instead of the crowd.
But, of course, we always do intend our best.
(And sometimes best intentions tend to get the best of us!)
This year, when we find ourselves off the path again (and we invariably will!), let's not add yet another stress to our Advent days, that of "trying to do Christmas correctly!"
Instead, let's approach the birth of our Lord with *joyful* abandon!
And this year let's do what Mary did and rejoice in God, let's do what Joseph did and listen to our dreams,

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

let's do what the Wise Men did and go to worship,
let's do what the shepherds did and praise and glorify God
for all we have seen and heard!

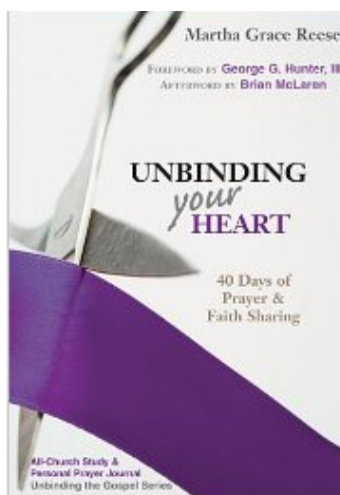
As for the Advent frantic pace, we don't have time for that.
We'll be too busy singing!
This year will be different!

"Kneeling in Bethlehem," pg.65-66
Ann Weems

...the greatest gift
we can give is the
gift of ourselves to
God

God's greatest present to us was wrapped up in a person, and we have seen his glory! Let's do the same! We already know that the greatest gift we can give is the gift of ourselves to God. There's a very important and concrete way we can do that this year. Here it is: beginning the second week in January, our church will begin a 6-week, all church small group study entitled "Unbinding the Heart," by Martha Grace Reese. This study contains a new way to look at and understand what it means to share our faith with each other and the world. **To give the gift of yourself to God, place your attendance at this study as a top priority in your life.** There will be opportunities for day, evening, and Sunday small groups. Our church leadership has already experienced the 8-week version of the study and some will be leading the small groups. It is crucial to have as many folks as we can... **I believe that our future as a church depends on it.** It will involve your time, your thoughts and discussion, and your prayers. It will also involve some reading and prayer journaling. I am already praying for you to be able to attend, and for our church to be able to embrace this group formation process of discipleship. (see details below)

It's true that we have all received from God "grace upon grace." Let's do something great for God, for our church, and for ourselves in 2012. God will be with us, so all things are possible. See you at church!



"Unbinding your Heart, 40 Days of Prayer & Faith Sharing"
(by Martha Grace Reese)

Based on a study of more than 12,000 congregations in 50 states, 49 denominations, and 8 countries, our author will help us to focus on real life evangelism! We will discuss "why do it?", read real examples of faith sharing, and analyze what is possible for us. During the study we will have the opportunity to move closer to God with a 40-day personal prayer journal, and we will be praying together each week. We will be able to share with each other our own experiences and feelings on evangelism, and relate our faith stories as well.

This study is much, much more than knocking on people's doors to tell them about Jesus. It is much, much more than our stereotypes of evangelism...it is about being informed, learning how to overcome obstacles, growing in our faith, and seeing new possibilities for church growth!

This is the study for everyone in our church to attend beginning the second week in January. Watch for sign-up Sunday, January 8th and get ready for an amazing experience together!

Risk Taking Missions

Berrywood—Giving Tree & Caroling



Berrywood Giving Tree: To participate in the Giving Tree, please take the decorated ornament noting the recipient and the gift request. This can be used as a gift tag. (Note: Leave the white paper tree on the tree and write your name on it so we can account for all of the gifts. If you have questions, please contact Julie Reed at jdr1@roadrunner.com 933-0471. The tree will also include SMM mittens/hats.

Berrywood Christmas

Caroling: We will be caroling at Berrywood on Wednesday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m. (meet at the church at 6:45 p.m.). Please bring some cookies/beverages, as we join our Berrywood friends after caroling for some Christmas cheer! At this time the gifts will be distributed.



Buckeye Alert!

Hope everyone is busy making and freezing those buckeye centers! We will meet to dip and pack them on Dec. 3 (Saturday) at 10 am in the church kitchen. Everyone welcome! We will work till done (or exhausted!).

A second dipping and packing session will be on Dec. 10 at noon, if needed.

Bring 12 oz. or larger bags of semi-sweet chocolate chips. Barb will provide waxed paper, tooth picks, paraffin and gift bags for packing. Barb will bring her double boiler--does anyone else have one they can bring? We will need at least two.



Scrip is an everyday gift certificate from stores we all shop at. We buy these gift certificates at a discount price and then resell them at face value. It's that simple. Scrip orders will be taken on December 11. Over \$1,000 has been earned this year, which has allowed us to add money to the pastor's discretionary fund (which gives the pastor money to work with when people come in to the church asking for help). You can also help the church year-round with a Kroger card and for every \$100 generates \$4 for our church without increasing your cost. See Karen Kenwell for more information (583-9746).

Children's Christmas Pageant & Community Dinner

Sunday, December 11

Join us for a special evening of food, fellowship and entertainment.

Come one, Come all!!

Exciting Breaking News

On the Channel 7 Evening News (our children) are reporting on some exciting happenings in the local area. Our children will share the story of the birth of Jesus.



Be present at 5:00pm to experience and witness this amazing story.

Christmas Community Dinner



Immediately following the pageant, we will be having our Free Community Dinner—a festive holiday dinner complete with ham, turkey and delicious desserts. Sign up to bring something, to help set up or clean-up or just to come and share conversation with our

neighbors. See Shem if you have any questions about the dinner.

Intentional Faith Development—Adult



Prayer Group

Tuesday evenings at
6:30 p.m.
Everyone is welcome!
For information,
contact Margie Burke.

Bible Study

Every Sunday, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m..
Topic: “Chronological Walk through
the Gospels.” Child care for young, up
to age 3 in the nursery; older children
in Room 107).

Craft/Bible Study Group

Monday, December 5, and Monday,
December 19, beginning at 6:30 p.m.
in the kitchen. Bring your craft to do
while we study “The Old Testament”
taught by Professor Amy-Jill Levine of
Vanderbilt University Divinity School.
Contact Barb Dixon at 683-0281 if you
have any questions.

Advent Bible Study: The Journey

Sunday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.
November 27 through December 18
Join us on a journey with Adam



Hamilton as he travels
on video from
Nazareth to Bethlehem
in this fascinating look
at the birth of Jesus
Christ. This study
combines book and
DVD. The DVD was
filmed in on location in
the Holy Land and contains 10-15
minute video vignettes of pastor and
best-selling author Adam Hamilton
retracing the actual path of Mary and
Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem. Also
includes a bonus segment on the Holy
Land today.

Contact Jackie or the office to get a
book. Child care for young, up to age
3 in the nursery; older children in

Room 107).

Special Advent Good Morning God!

December 10,
9:30-noon
Come when you
can for as long
as you can

Come join us!
What a way to
start the day—
spending one-on-
one time with God.



This Advent retreat will have a short
worship service followed by a time for
you to contemplate the “reason for the
season.” During the contemplative
time, you can experience the provided
reflective exercises, do some mandala
coloring, read your bible or bring
something that you would like to do.
We will end with a short sharing time.
Lead by Sandy Vogeles and Luke Copley.

Intentional Faith Development—Children

Children’s Sunday School

(Age 4 through grade 2)

Dec. 4 & 11, Children’s Pageant practice

Dec. 18, attend Sunday School. Children can be dropped off at 10:55 a.m. and
picked up immediately following worship.

Dec. 25, attend worship with parents

Children’s Bible Study

(Grades 3 – 6):

Dec. 4 & 11, Children’s Pageant practice

Dec. 18 & 25, attend worship with parents

Passionate Worship

(Sunday, 11:00 a.m.)

We continue with the “Cast of Christmas” series during Advent:

- December 4th – Luke 2:8-20. This is part of the familiar Christmas story! We will focus on “Angels and Shepherds: Heaven Came Down & Glory Filled My Soul.”
- December 11th – Luke 2:1-7. This is the first part of the Christmas story. We’ll take a closer look at Mary and Joseph and their obedient servant response to God.
- December 18th – Matthew 1:18-24. Matthew’s version of the Christmas story contains other details of the nativity. We will look to Jesus and explore the question, “What’s in a Name?”
- December 24th – Our family friendly service of Lessons and Carols begins at **6:30pm**. There will be children’s moments, candle lighting, the Christmas story, and singing!

“The 12 days of Christmas” worship (note time change):

- December 25th – Christmas Day combined service with St. Mary Magdalene at **10:00am**. Holy Communion will be served. (No Sunday School)
- January 1st – New Year’s Day Epiphany service with St. Mary Magdalene at **10:00am**. Holy Communion will be served. (No Sunday School)

December Birthdays

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2 - John Young | 19 - Lauren Reed |
| 4 - Cindy Delaney | 20 - Randy Webster |
| 10 - Penny Cesco | 28 - Tom Reed |
| 11 - Roy Dixon | 29 - Gail Prather |
| 17 - Luke Royer
Lesley Webster | 30 - David Marshall |

December Anniversaries

- 31—Terry & Cindy Delany

Prayer Concerns

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Wilson & O’Hara families | Diana Thomas |
| Eugene Baker | Wayne Fugate |
| Jim Whitt & family | Beth & Jack |
| Chris C | Westrich family |
| Elaine Goodman | Barb Loman & Angie |
| Karen Mason | Calvert |
| Rebecca Hershey | Kent Dennison |
| Shanna Hersey | |
| Stephanie Penny | |
| Greg Kenwell | |



Christmas Eve Service
Sat., Dec. 24, 6:30pm

Christmas Day Service
Sun., Dec. 25 at 10:00am

New Year’s Day Service
Sun., Jan. 1 at 10:00am

PLEASE!!
NOTE



**Deerfield United
Methodist Church**
Connecting to God, Serving Others

2757 West U.S. 22-3, Maineville, OH 45039
(513) 683-PRAY (7729) Fax: (513) 683-7829
11 AM Worship
Rev. Jackie Marshall, Pastor

Our Mission...Connecting to God, Serving Others

Our Vision...To be a *healthy congregation* who shares God's love, grace and power through:

- Radical Hospitality** - that is attractive, welcoming, and invitational,
- Passionate Worship** - where we offer inspirational community praise,
- Faith Forming Relationships, Experiences, and Education** - where we foster growth and transform into caring, active discipleship, and
- Risk Taking Mission and Service** - through which we interact with others by modeling Christ-like examples of compassion and service.