

FIRST MERIDIAN HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



FROM PASTOR BOB

December begins with Advent, celebrates Christmas, and looks with anticipation toward Epiphany. At least that is how it looks on the church calendar—but maybe not how the rest of the world looks at December. Have you ever thought about what it means that God came to earth in the form of a human being? God is after all bigger than we can imagine. Sounds scary or crazy right? That is what December in the Church is all about.

Advent begins with waiting. Developing the practice of waiting is hard to do in a society of instant gratification. We can get what we order on line the same day we ordered it. It seems crazy to some of us, but we expect it in today's world. Advent is the season we remind ourselves why we practice waiting, keeping at bay the voices that tell us that our waiting is fruitless. When we lose faith in our waiting, an immediate object of desire can distract us from the great calling to faithfully follow Christ. Waiting opens us up and sharpens our senses to the presence of God all around us. Without the practice of waiting, it would be too easy to miss the love of a mother for her child amidst all the violence. We could miss the compassion toward another in the midst of greed and self-centeredness. If we do not wait, we miss the love, grace, hope, peace, and joy God is bringing us every day.

Advent tells us love is coming! Not just any kind of love, but agape love, unconditional love, love that is full of grace, gratitude, and hope. There a Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young song titled *Carry On*. The refrain says: *Carry on. Love is coming. Love is coming to us all*. They may not have been talking about agape love, but it is a great phrase for Advent. Carry on in the midst of tragedy, loss, despair, hate, fear because we are celebrating the coming of the Love of God in the Person of Jesus Christ. Advent is a time of joyful anticipation. Advent is a time of confident hope. Why? Because love is coming! So carry on, love is coming to us all.

The driving force of Advent is hope. If we did not have anything to hope for, there would be no point to the season. The big hope is the Christ child that is born will bring justice

and peace to all creation and heal the rift between humanity and God. This big hope is filled with smaller daily hopes that can shape us as disciples of Christ. Hope shapes relationships; a life of hope sees the good in others and is full of forgiveness and generosity toward others. Hope shapes what we do. As hopeful people, we work with fairness and integrity. Hope shapes our inner peace. A hopeful person lets go of anxiety, need for control, grasping, and anger. Hope leads us to faithfulness and celebration.

Christmas is the largest celebration around the world. The angel said that Christmas would bring "*great joy...for all the people*". Is that true for you? Is Christmas more of a hassle than a source of happiness? Perhaps paying attention to Advent would help. If we slow down a little and take time to reflect on the purpose of Christmas, we will experience the joy and celebration of Christmas. The good news of Christmas is worth celebrating.



(continued on page 4)



Our next Messy Church is **Wednesday, December 12!** We'll be having a **Messy Christmas** celebration. This event will include our annual gingerbread house decorating event. We'll also be assigning and learning parts for a Christmas pageant, participating in Christmas themed crafts, and sharing a meal together!

Also, mark your calendars for **Sunday, December 16!** The 10 a.m. worship service will include a **Messy Christmas Pageant**, performed by the children from our Messy Church community.

If you have questions, please contact Ginger Lippert at (317) 439-6868 or ginger6111@yahoo.com. We look forward to getting messy with you at FMHPC!

Fishermen Outing: Gentlemen, we invite you to the next Fishermen Outing. We had a full bus of fun last time we did this, so sign up soon!

We will all meet at church at 6 p.m. on **December 6** to be picked up by the *Indy Brew Bus* to begin our tour of four Indianapolis craft breweries. Our driver and guide will be our own Pastor Bob. Yes, Sheriff Bobby is quite conversant on the brewing process and will be very happy to answer questions during our tour.

The special rate of \$25 for this tour gets you samples at each stop and the opportunity to purchase a growler or two, as there will be a cooler on the bus to keep them cold. Follow [this link \(http://bit.ly/2zysaeh\)](http://bit.ly/2zysaeh) to sign up and pay. It is fast and easy; any trouble, please call Jim Halsmer at (317) 966-0706.

Arrive at church at 6 p.m., return at 9:30 p.m. • One of the brewery stops will have food options • Learn more about the tour at indybrewbus.com • Invite a friend!

Thank you!

Your Deacons would like to say thanks to all who participated in the Giving Tree and College Care packages; the food pantry clients and students truly appreciate the support!

Equal Exchange/Fair Trade

FMH will place one final Equal Exchange/Fair Trade order for 2018 in a couple of weeks. If you'd like to place an order with us, send your list to Alexis (alexis@fmhpc.org) by **December 9**. View the complete product list at shop.equalexchange.coop.

Presbyterian Women's Christmas Luncheon

Ladies, you're invited to join in the festivities at Karen Licht's on Thursday, **December 13**, for our holiday pitch-in luncheon. Please arrive at 11:30 a.m. and bring a "white elephant" (wrapped) gift for our grab-bag game. When you RSVP to Karen at (317) 441-7512, let her know what dish you are bringing. **Please RSVP no later than Sunday, December 9.** You can wear your ugly Christmas sweater or wear your Christmas jewelry—it is up to you. It's all about having fun and starting the Christmas season with joy, laughter, food, fellowship, and a little craziness. Come and share the Joy of Christmas!

Food Pantry Needs

Needs for November/December are spaghetti (1 lb. box/bag) AND men's razors (disposable) and women's hygiene supplies. **REMINDER that the Pantry will NOT be open on December 22; it WILL be open on December 29.**

The graphic below represents giving as of November 15, 2018. Look for a Finance update in the Sunday bulletin later this month.



Epiphany Youth Celebration!

January 6 is Epiphany Sunday when we remember the three kings who sought out the Christ child from afar and kept him safe from King Herod. We are planning a special event with educational and fun activities for youth K–12. Maybe the three kings will visit us! Maybe there will be more than three!! Maybe the kids can join in a skit or put on costumes and act out the story of the Maji as they encounter Herod and seek out Mary and the Christ Child. Maybe this will be a really fun and interesting way to learn about generosity!

We will plan activities from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. (after Worship). We will be encouraging the youth to arrive by 9 a.m. to participate.

Put it on your (and your kids') calendar! Plans are still forming, and we need volunteers to help coordinate. Watch for further details. Call or email [Eric Moy](mailto:ericmoy@gmail.com) (317-341-0085; ericmoy@gmail.com) if you would like to help or have questions.



Poinsettia Orders/Dedications

It's time to place holiday Poinsettia orders and dedications.

Plants can be dedicated to the memory of a loved one, in tribute to someone, or to the Glory of God. Names will grace the back cover of the Christmas Eve bulletin; plants may be taken home following the Christmas Eve service.

The order form is on the small table outside the east entrance to the sanctuary. You can also email your order/dedication to the church office (fmhpc@live.com) and drop payment off in the collection plate or to the church office. Plants are \$10 each.

Please make checks out to FMHPC, and write "Poinsettia" on the memo line. Deadline to order is Monday, December 17.



FMH Youth Project – You Can Help!

Our Christian Education and Spiritual Development team is developing plans to provide more focused opportunities for our youth. The Epiphany Youth Celebration is one example. In January we plan to launch a special Sunday school, to be held during the Worship hour, especially for kids ages 8–13. We will need volunteer leadership to make this work! Our expectation is that each leader would have responsibility for Sunday planning about 4 Sundays over 6 months. If you would be willing to join the group of leaders who will teach this great group of kids, please let us know. We will make it easy for you. It is a great way to get to know our church kids better and help them along their faith journey!

Please consider volunteering to help. It is very important. Call or email [Eric Moy](mailto:ericmoy@gmail.com) (317-341-0085; ericmoy@gmail.com) if you would like to help or have questions.

("From Pastor Bob," continued from page 1)

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you. You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:10-11) If you have ever had a baby son or daughter placed into your arms, you realize everything has changed. Even if at first you do not realize it, it does not take long once you take a baby home to know your life will never be the same. Your whole life is consumed with loving and caring for the child. You experience feelings you never had before. You learn how to live out forgiveness and gratitude.

Advent prepares for the birth of Jesus. Mary was changed by Jesus' birth. We celebrate the birth of Jesus because it can change and transform us! The gift of love, hope, and joy God gives us in the birth of Christ can change how we live. We can live with love, hope, peace, joy, and grace in the midst of a world of hate, anger, fear, guilt, and despair. Our relationship with God can be transformed. Our relationships with others can change. We can celebrate love is coming to us all!

Think about it – Pray about it – Live it

Bob

Stewardship Sunday

Stewardship Sunday is **December 9**. Please join us, and check your U.S. mailbox the week of December 3 for a letter from your Stewardship Team. And please turn in your pledge card to the church office if you haven't done so already. THANK YOU!

THANK YOU FOR SERVING!

Offering:

signupgenius.com/go/30e084da5ae2da64-collecting1

Greeter:

signupgenius.com/go/20f0d48a4a628a4fe3-fmhgreeters

Communion:

signupgenius.com/go/30e084da5ae2da64-communion1

REPORT FROM SESSION

During the stated meeting of the session in November, the elders welcomed Miles Kappes to learn of the exterior restoration progress along with maintenance recommendations for us to consider as we move into future planning for the care of our building.

The session voted to approve the employee handbook prepared and recommended by the personnel committee.

We welcomed members of the Pastor Nominating Committee to hear updates on the process of calling a pastor.

Rebecca Zirnheld, Clerk of Session

REPORT FROM YOUR PNC

Your PNC has been pretty active again this month. We have contacted all the references of our top three candidates and really have a much better feel for who each candidate is and how they would fit in our church. We continue listening to the Holy Spirit for guidance as we plan to personally meet with the candidates in the coming months. We will hear them each preach in a neutral pulpit, meet them for an extended interview, and meet with them socially. Because of the Christmas season we have had to extend this process into January as our candidates need to be in their home churches for Advent. Please continue to pray with us for the next pastor of First Meridian Heights Presbyterian Church!

Katie Marlowe, Bruce White, Emily Padgett, Emily Hancock, John Fox, Dave Hughey, Cynn timer Halsmer

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						1 •Boy Scouts Troop Mtg., 10am to noon, Community Room
2 •Coffee & Conversation on Scripture, 9am, Community Room •Communion Worship Service, 10am, Sanctuary • GIVING TREE ITEMS DUE!	3 •B&G Mtg., 4:30pm, Parlor •Mission and Outreach Team Mtg., 6:30pm, Parlor	4	5	6 •Fishermen Outing, meet at FMH at 6pm	7	8 •Food Pantry, 8:45am
9 STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY •Coffee & Conversation on Scripture, 9am, Community Room •Deacons Mtg., 9am, Parlor •Worship Service, 10am, Sanctuary • FAIR TRADE ITEMS DUE!	10 •Communications/Marketing Team Mtg., 5:30pm, Parlor •Finance Mtg., 6:30pm, Parlor	11	12 •Messy Church, 5:30 to 7pm, Community Room	13 •PWO Christmas Luncheon at Karen Licht's House 11:30am	14	15 •Boy Scouts Troop Mtg. 10am to noon, Community Room
16 •Coffee & Conversation on Scripture, 9am, Community Room •Worship Service, 10am, Sanctuary, with Messy Christmas Pageant • DEADLINE FOR POINSETTIA ORDERS	17 •Session Mtg., 7 to 9pm, Library	18	19 •Women of Grace Dinner at Emily Hancock's House. Details TBA	20	21 • Content Due for January Newsletter	22
23 •Coffee & Conversation on Scripture, 9am, Community Room •Worship Service, 10am, Sanctuary	24 •Church Office Closed at Noon	25 •Church Office Closed Merry Christmas	26	27	28	29 •Food Pantry, 8:45am
30 •Coffee & Conversation on Scripture, 9am, Community Room •Worship Service, 10am, Sanctuary	31 •Church Office Closed at Noon <i>Happy New Year</i>					

First Meridian Heights Presbyterian Church
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 Rev. Bob McAulay (317) 513-5148 ☎ bob@fmhpc.org
 Custodian: Ron Elliott (765) 524-3516
 Assistant Custodian: Natasha Nix, (317) 603-7171
 Music Coordinator: Art Cantrell, theartofmusic@hotmail.com
 Business Administrator: Alexis Gonzales, alexis@fmhpc.org
 Administrative Assistant: Trish Hawkins, fmhpc@live.com

Our Mission Statement:
To serve, love and grow in the ever-widening circle of Christ's grace.

Submission deadline for JANUARY newsletter is Friday, December 21. Please submit content to the church office at fmhpc@live.com.



fmhpc.org



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