

NEW HORIZONS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December Newsletter



New Horizons PCUSA
9424 Everman Ave.
Overland, MO 63114

Important Dates for December

Human Rights Day	December 10
Christmas Eve	December 24
Christmas Day	December 25
New Years' Eve	December 31

Church Office Hours:
Tu, Th, F: 8:30am—2:00pm

Phone: (314) 427-0841

Fax: (314) 427-0568

Email: newhorizonspcusa@sbcglobal.net

Website: www.newhorizons-pcusa.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NewHorizonsPCUSA



NEW HORIZONS PC(USA)

News 'n Views

Seek ye the Lord, with heart, mind, and soul

Words from Rev. Mark



Lee Crisler
Faith Gillespie
Elaine & Tom Shanahan
Jeff Johnson
Frazier Family
Pat Rogers
Debbie Frazier
Jim Cochran
Lucille Yamnitz
Evelyn Reed
Doris Cochran
Kathryn Byrd
Edie Roberts
Marion Brewer
Lore Bailey
Laura Ringling
Nancy Yamnitz
Strothmann Family
Family & Friends of Esther Phillips

**The Prayer List is located in the Narthex.
Please write in prayer requests throughout the
month, and they will be added promptly.

Office Hours:

Tues, Thurs, Fri 8:30am—2pm

Pastor's Hours:

Tues & Thurs 10:00am—1pm

Office phone: (314) 427-0841
Pastor's home phone: (314) 395-8242
Pastor's cell phone: (314) 779-6940
Pastor's email: mark.strothmann@att.net

“The Reason...”

The reason for the season
The birth of Jesus Christ
The purpose for advent
The inception of his life
The joy of the Savior
The promise of his love
The praises that are due him
Whose name none is above
He is the reason . . .
For the season is upon us
Many are filled with glee
But that is not the case
For some of us, you see
There are women who can't conceive
No birth stories to celebrate; they grieve
Those who lost loved ones over the course of
the year
It's difficult to be of good cheer
Parents who stare at their kids' Christmas lists
As they wonder how they can afford even one
gift
The homeless—cold, searching for food under
lifted cans
The ones filled with excess on our privileged
lands
The military who protect us, far away from their
kin
Hoping and wishing to rejoin them again
The reason . . .
For the season is a time to reflect and consider
Just how much we are blessed, and for us to
remember
Not only the importance of “Emmanuel with us”
But his ministry of giving, of caring, of justice
Let us pray for those who are suffering and
weeping
Do what we can for those who are needing
A meal, a hug, a shoulder, a friend
And when the season is over, do it again and
again
Jesus was born! His love is not limited to this
season
So go and do likewise, for this is . . .
The reason.

Let Us Pray

“O Lord, we are grateful. Thank you for those
who give of themselves to show your love to all
people. Unite us in your service through Christ
our Lord. Amen. ”

Holiday Craft Market

Southampton Church welcomes you to join
them for the December Holiday Craft Market, If
you are a crafter or home sales representative
and would like to set up a table at the
Southampton Church during this event held
on Saturday, December 10, 2016 from 3-7
p.m. please contact Rev. Jillian Embrey
at pastor@southamptonchurch.org. Tables are
\$10 each.

Newsletter Deadline

Newsletter articles for the January Issue should
be submitted to **the office**
by December 25, 2015.

*Shanell T. Smith is a teaching elder in the PC
(USA) and assistant professor of New Testament
and Christian origins at Hartford Seminary.*

“Children of Advent”

“Why We Need To Be More Like Children To Really Understand Advent And Christmas”

The more time I spend with children, the more respect I have for parents. Anyone who's had their own kids or adopted will need no telling, but the sheer range of demands that children put on adults is astonishing. In addition to constantly demanding care and attention, children can be very costly in monetary and career terms.

As I watch my friends' children begin to grow up, I'm also aware of the awesome responsibility of parenthood. The pressure to keep them healthy, happy, well educated and broadly on the right path is immense. My admiration for parents gets even higher at this time of year.

Bombarded by advertisers at the time when money is tightest, at the time of year where it's hardest to go out and let them run around outside, it is amazing to witness families getting through the festive season in one piece.

In spite of all this, I can't think of a better model to approach the season of Advent and Christmas than those children I know.

In the western Christian liturgical calendar, Advent is the four weeks leading up to Christmas season itself. Then the Christmas season lasts until Twelfth Night (when Epiphany is celebrated on Jan 6th). I point this out not to be a pedant, but to demonstrate exactly how children teach us to celebrate.

Adults have mostly allowed the time of waiting and anticipating during Advent to slip away and a sort of mushy, secular, festive season to extend from mid-November 'til New Year's Day. Children don't seem to get drawn into this as easily, though. Give them an Advent calendar and they understand the significance of the festival itself.

They have something to count down to and they're going to count down, rather than start the celebrations early! Now, of course what

they may be looking forward to most is the presents they're going to receive on Christmas morning. This shouldn't take away from the fact that children teach us how to wait. They count down until the day itself and only then will their full joy be unleashed.

This is how Christians should approach Christmas. The festive season isn't just about some general sense of remembering baby Jesus. It's far more exciting, profound and even subversively radical than that.

What we mark at Christmas is the astonishing Christian claim that God so loved the world that He became human. This doctrine of Incarnation, unique among the Abrahamic faiths and astonishing to the pagan culture into which Jesus was born, is the heart of our faith.

Advent, then, isn't just another word for the first bit of the Christmas season, where we have the office Christmas party and make sure we've done all our shopping. No, no, no. The Christian Advent is a season where we watch and wait and anticipate not only our commemoration of Christmas itself, but that future time when God will complete the job of redemption begun in Bethlehem almost 2,000 years ago under a guiding star.

If we see Advent as the true season of anticipation and expectation, then it becomes clear why the sort of enthusiastic impatience of a child is the appropriate response to the good news which is birthed at Christmas.

In Matthew 18, we read that Jesus, "called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'"

This passage could be wrongly interpreted as meaning that we only need a basic grasp of the world and how faith works. That's not the conclusion to draw though. What Jesus is affirming here is the simple wonder of children. We can (and should) become educated in our faith. Theology isn't bad – in fact, it's necessary. The lesson is that learning and sophistication

mustn't crowd out the simple wonder and joy we see in its purest form in children.

I remember Advent as a child. As the days went by, they seemed to get slower as the anticipation grew. The haze of Carol concerts and parties couldn't deflect all the attention from the fact that the real celebration was with family, food and presents on the 25th. In the same way, there are many nice things about the run-up to Christmas. But let's not take our eyes off the main point of Advent – the anticipation of the biggest surprise in history – that God became human.

-Andy Walton

Questions to Ponder

As the year comes to a close, here are some questions to ponder this Advent and Christmas season:

1. What am I most proud of this year?
2. Where am I compared to where I thought I would be?
3. What projects have I completed?
4. What have I found most difficult this year?
5. What have I found easy?
6. What is currently holding me back?
7. Where can I improve?
8. What do my finances look like?
9. Can I improve my use of time?
10. How am I spending my free time?
11. How is my Health?
12. How are my personal relationships?
13. How is my relationship with God?
14. What I can do to improve those relationships?
15. Is there more I could be doing in terms of my mental and physical well being?
16. In what ways has fear held me back?
17. Where do I need to let go?
18. Who do I need to forgive?
19. What habits do I need to work on?
20. How can I be kinder to myself?
21. Where do I want to be this time next year?

Notes from Stewardship Comm.

Summary report on giving and expenses for 2016 through the months of September and October:

	<u>NOVEMBER</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
Receipts:		
General:	\$8,540.00	\$57,012.57
Rent	3,250.00	13,640.00
* Transfer	\$7,500.00	\$97,000.00
TOTAL	\$19,290.00	\$167,652.57
Expenses	\$6,836.28	\$147,731.03

*Transfer is money transferred from our investment accounts.

Let Us Pray

"Lord God, help us to rest in your unfailing love that casts out fear. Strengthen us to carry one another's burdens. Let your perfect love create within us joyful, prayerful and thankful hearts. In Christ's precious name we pray, Amen."

December Birthdays

Pat Franks	12/04
Al G. Yamnitz	12/06
Agnes Zimmerman	12/07
Bob Cochran	12/21
Peggy Lohnes	12/26
Erastus Gachingiri	12/30
George Albin, III	12/31



December Anniversaries

Wray & Doris Darr	12/28
Ray & Ann Highfill	12/28



happy anniversary

“Lessons of Advent”

I am a creature of habit. I love ritual and routine and the opportunity to experience something again and again. I feel like it helps me to dig deep and truly envelop myself in what someone has written, or created or cooked. It is one of the ways that you can tell what I value and what's important.

Maybe you are like me. Maybe cycles, patterns and habits are helpful to you and bring you joy this Advent season. Maybe you find comfort in doing the same things in the same way at this time of year. Who doesn't love returning to and reconsidering the stories of Mary, of angels, or the visions and promises found in Isaiah? Who doesn't love holding a candle in a dark sanctuary on Christmas Eve?

The fact that part of our Reformed tradition includes the reading of the lectionary, with the same scriptures at the same time of the year, year after year should speak volumes as to what we value and what we understand God to be asking of us. We believe that there is enormous value in reading and rereading God's word to us in scripture, because we trust that the Holy Spirit will join us in that reading, illumine new things to us each time and deepen our relationship with Christ in so doing.

It is curious to me, then, that when it comes to the important questions that individual congregations and committees are supposed to ask themselves on a cyclical basis, we tend to believe that process is boring, unhelpful or too routine.

In our lives outside the church walls, we know this to be the time of year when we celebrate or mourn all that this past year has brought and we are introspective in looking at what next year could hold. We examine relationships, finances, goals and the like.

When it comes to our lives inside the church walls, we err on the side of thinking that self examination and “why” questions are counterproductive to maintaining what we have and what we do as a congregation or a committee.

Advent teaches us that nothing could be farther from the truth. Asking questions about preparation and readiness to meet Christ in the most unexpected places is something we do each year. We should be applying the same sacred habit to our work as the Church.

Let us begin, again. Let us begin again at the start of this new liturgical year by asking ourselves the questions we neglect but could yield surprising results. Let us ask questions about why we do what we do with our time and our finances. Let us ask the purpose behind each action and each meeting to see if it truly elicits the kind of world-changing love and justice to which we are called.

Recently, I had the opportunity to co-lead a retreat for a Committee on Ministry of another presbytery. I was impressed that they take time to gather together to look at the year ahead and consider how they can best serve. They were ready to ask the “why” questions because they know the church and it's committees are and should be adaptable in responding to the worlds needs. They were willing to ask questions that might not have answers they were hoping for, or prompt discussions that they knew could lead them to another way of being and serving.

Might we all be ready to be surprised by our answers? We know that how we spend our time is evidence of what we value. If the answers to any of the “why are we doing this” questions sound at all like “because that's the way we've always done it” then it's well past time to cut that activity or committee meeting loose. The church certainly doesn't have time to lose in the coming year.

Let us embrace the opportunity to answer the question why, to articulate our motivation and explore new ways of doing what we're always supposed to be up to—loving and serving Christ through others. Let us begin, again.

Rev. Sarah Robbins is an at-large teaching elder in Pittsburgh Presbytery. She has served as pastor to two churches and currently serves on the Presbytery's COM as well as in leadership of the Unglued Church Project. She is married to a another teaching elder and together they have one child and two basset hounds.

Opportunities in PCUSA

Director of Children and Youth Ministries

LoveJoy United Presbyterian Church in Wood River, Illinois is seeking an enthusiastic individual for the half-time position of Director of Children and Youth Ministries who would be responsible for Christian Education programming, communication and activities for children and youth through college. Interested parties may contact the Church Administrator at 618-254-5880 to receive a copy of the Job Description. Applicants are asked to send resumes to LoveJoy United Presbyterian Church, Attention: Personnel Committee, 2550 Rock Hill Rd., Wood River IL 62095 or by email to vickie@LoveJoyupc.org.

Mission to Peru

Visit Peru and Experience Mission as Advocacy for Social Justice. The next Joining Hands Partnership Visit to Peru is May 27 to June 3, 2017. Application deadline is February 28, 2017. There are \$500 scholarships available. Deadline for scholarship application is December 31, 2016. For more information on how you can take part, please contact: Rev. Mark Strothmann by email at: mark.strothmann@att.net

New Horizons Newsletter

Don't forget that you are welcome and invited to submit items for the Monthly Newsletter here at New Horizons! Simply leave a submission on the office desk, in the After Hours Office Mailbox, or in the "Newsletter" box in the office mailroom!

NHPC Medical Equipment

Medical equipment can be incredibly expensive, even when insurance helps cover the cost. To save money, and time, you can instead borrow various medical devices from New Horizons. From wheelchairs and walkers to crutches and canes, just stop by the office and ask if we have what you need. Borrow it for as long as you want without all the hassle!

Ritenour Co-Care Volunteers

Now at the new location:
9516 rear Lackland Rd.
(back of the building!)

If you would like to do something to make our community stronger, come and spend a little time in the food pantry! We need help stocking the store (T,W,F,S from 8:30am-noon), and processing pallets of food (M and F from 1-3pm).

Operating Hours:

Monday	1 pm - 7 pm
Tuesday	8 am - 12 pm
Wednesday	8 am - 1 pm; 5—7pm
Friday	8 am - 4 pm
Saturday	8 am - 1 pm

Christmas Word Scramble

Can you unscramble these words from the Christmas story?

NEAMGR: _____
HEPSE: _____
WIENSEM: _____
REEHSDPH: _____
EABLST: _____
TLHEHBMEE: _____
GALNE: _____
MRHASSICT: _____
JUESS: _____
NTZAERHA: _____
GDLO: _____
RHMRY: _____
MSHESAI: _____
ATSR: _____
FESANNIERCKN: _____
BYAB: _____
IPNREEEKN: _____
SATOG: _____
HTISRC: _____
ABML: _____

Answers: manger, sheep, wisemen, shepherd, stable, Bethlehem, angel, Christmas, Jesus, Nazareth, gold, myrrh, messiah, star, frankincense, innkeeper, goats, Christ, lamb

December 2016 - New Horizons's Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 10:30am Worship 12:30pm Pendo Comm.	28 10:00am Free to be Me Al-Anon (JH)	29 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (JH)	30 8:30am Mission Sewing	1 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (FH) 7:00pm Choir	2 10:00am Freedom Al-Anon (JH)	3 10:00am Pendo Prayers in Sanct.
4 10:30am Worship 12:30pm Pendo Comm.	5 10:00am Free to be Me Al-Anon (JH)	6 10:00am PW Meeting 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (JH)	7 8:30am Mission Sewing	8 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (FH) 7:00pm Choir	9 10:00am Freedom Al-Anon (JH)	10 10:00am Pendo Prayers in Sanct.
11 10:30am Worship 12:00pm Mission Mtg 12:30pm Pendo Comm.	12 10:00am Free to be Me Al-Anon (JH)	13 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (JH)	14 8:30am Mission Sewing 6:30pm Session Mtg	15 5:30pm Worship Committee Meeting 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (FH) 7:00pm Choir	16 10:00am Freedom Al-Anon (JH)	17 10:00am Pendo Prayers in Sanct.
18 10:30am Worship 12:15pm Deacon Mtg 12:30pm Pendo Comm.	19 10:00am Free to be Me Al-Anon (JH)	20 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (JH)	21 8:30am Mission Sewing	22 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (FH) 7:00pm Choir	23 10:00am Freedom Al-Anon (JH)	24 10:00am Pendo Prayers in Sanct. 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service
25 10:30am Worship-Christmas Day Service 12:30pm Pendo Comm.	26 10:00am Free to be Me Al-Anon (JH)	27 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (JH)	28 8:30am Mission Sewing	29 7:00pm Narcotics Anon (FH) 7:00pm Choir	30 10:00am Freedom Al-Anon (JH)	31 10:00am Pendo Prayers in Sanct.