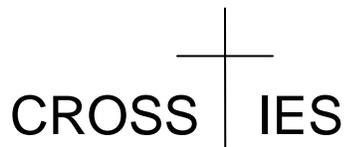


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TO CHRIST TO EACH OTHER TO THE WORLD

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December 2016 – January 2017

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Surviving the Holidays



Often during the holidays we see people stressed out, ill-tempered or depressed. If we admit it, that often describes us. The holidays are filled with almost impossible expectations. Part of these expectations are real and some imagined. They are also filled with memories— some good and some that wrench your heart. So some common sense advice:

- 1. Plan ahead. Don't over schedule. Budget both your time and your money. Also, realize that in some encounters, these will be stressful. Think it through ahead of time. You may want to just engage in a short, pleasant visit. There is an old saying: "Fish and visitors all start to stink after three days."*
- 2. Be around positive people, or if they are not positive, stay away. Positive people will lift your spirits. Negative people will only contribute to your depression.*
- 3. Engage in uplifting events- special worship services, shows, movies, music, sharing a meal or phone call with special friends. Any event that will lift your spirit.*
- 4. Giving: Gift giving is often over-done. Sometimes the most precious gift is time spent with someone. A visit to someone who is a shut-in will make your holiday and theirs special. For those who already have most everything, donate to a charity, your church, a homeless shelter, to those where it will make the most difference. Make the donation in the name of the person you want.*
- 5. Down time: plan for those times when you can rest, relax and recuperate. These can be spiritual times, reflecting on God's goodness in your life. Asking God to be present in your struggles. A walk in the woods. A stroll in the park. All this helps to heal the hurts of life and re-direct your life on a positive tract.*
- 6. Take care of yourself, not to be selfish, but to strengthen and nourish our lives. Don't over-indulge in food, drink or anything. You will regret it.*
- 7. Do something different: It may be something simple, like purchasing or making a special ornament for your tree in honor of someone, taking a trip, inviting someone to get together you have not seen in a while. Cross over comfortable boundaries with people and get to know someone new.*

A couple of scriptures that remind us of how we should approach the holidays:

"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete." – John 15:9-11

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things." – Galatians 5:22-23

Presbyterian Church of the Cross

Calendar

DECEMBER

Sat	3	PW Christmas Brunch	10:00 am
Sun	4	2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
		Sunday School	9:45 am
		Voices of Angels Practice	10:00 am
		Worship Service	11:00 am
		Advent Wreath	
		Congregational Meeting	
		SASTO NA Group	6:00 pm
M	5	Tutoring	4:00 pm
Tu	6	B Natural Classes	
W	7	Bible Study	12:00 noon
		Tutoring	4:00 pm
		B Natural Classes	
		Adult Choir Practice	6:30 pm
Sun	11	3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
		Deadline to return Xmas family gifts	
		Sunday School	9:45 am
		Voices of Angels Practice	10:00 am
		Worship Service	11:00 am
		Advent Wreath	
		SASTO NA Group	6:00 pm
M	12	Tutoring	4:00 pm
		B Natural Board of Directors Meeting	6:15 pm
Tu	13	B Natural Classroom Recitals	
W	14	Bible Study	12:00 noon
		Tutoring	4:00 pm
		B Natural Classroom Recitals	
		Adult Choir Practice	6:30 pm
		Session Meeting	7:00 pm
Sun	18	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
		Sunday School	9:45 am
		Voices of Angels Practice	10:00 am
		Festival of Lessons & Carols	11:00 am
		Advent Wreath	
		Children in Xmas Program Meet	5:00 pm
		Children's Xmas Program	6:00 pm
		Church Santa Party	6:15 pm
		SASTO NA Group (sanctuary)	6:00 pm
W	21	<i>Winter Begins</i>	
		Bible Study	12:00 noon
Sat	24	CHRISTMAS EVE	
		Christmas Eve Family Service	7:00 pm
Sun	25	CHRISTMAS DAY	
		Informal Christmas Service	11:00 am
		SHARING SUNDAY	
M	26	Church Office Closed	
W	28	Greensboro Kwanzaa Celebration	5:00 pm

JANUARY

Sun	1	NEW YEAR'S DAY	
		Sunday School	9:45 am
		Worship Service	11:00 am
		Communion	
		SASTO NA Group	6:00 pm
M	2	Church Office Closed	
W	4	Circle Meeting	10:00 am
		Bible Study	12:00 noon
		Adult Choir Practice	6:30 pm
Sun	8	Church School	9:45 am
		Voices of Angels Practice	10:00 am
		Worship Service	11:00 am
		SASTO NA Group	6:00 pm
W	11	Bible Study	12:00 noon
		Adult Choir Practice	6:30 pm
		Session Meeting	7:00 pm
Sun	15	Church School	9:45 am
		Voices of Angels Practice	10:00 am
		Worship Service	11:00 am
		SASTO NA Group	6:00 pm
M	16	MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY	
W	18	Bible Study	12:00 noon
		Adult Choir Practice	6:30 pm
Sun	22	SHARING SUNDAY	
		Church School	9:45 am
		Voices of Angels Practice	10:00 am
		Worship Service	11:00 am
		SASTO NA Group	6:00 pm
W	25	Bible Study	12:00 noon
		Adult Choir Practice	6:30 pm
Sun	29	Church School	9:45 am
		Voices of Angels Practice	10:00 am
		Worship Service	11:00 am
		SASTO NA Group	6:00 pm
W	27	Adult Choir Practice	6:30 pm



Christmas Gift Suggestions:
To your enemy, forgiveness
To your opponent, tolerance
To your friend, your heart
To a customer, service
To all, charity
To every child, a good example
To yourself, respect

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

Church Project: Adopting Families – Cards are available at church listing an item needed/wanted by a member of the two families we are sponsoring this year. Please select a card and return the purchased item to church no later than December 11. No need to wrap, just attach the card and place the item in a bag.

Presbyterian Women's Christmas Brunch – All ladies are invited to participate in the annual brunch on Saturday, December 3, at 10:00 am in the fellowship hall. Contact Sharon Ozment if you have any questions.

Advent Wreath - On each of the four Sundays of Advent, November 27-December 18, and also Christmas Eve, our youth will light the candles of the Advent Wreath during our worship services.

Festival of Lessons and Carols – December 18, 11:00 am. Join us in our annual celebration of Christmas in God's word and song. If you are interested in participating as a reader of one of the lessons, contact Gray at your earliest convenience.

Youth and Children's Unrehearsed Christmas Pageant and Church Party – December 18, 6:00 pm. All children and youth are invited to participate! Costumes will be available...come at 5:00 pm to get dressed. Following the pageant, a surprise visitor from the North Pole will be on hand to talk to the children and you are welcome to take pictures. Please bring some snacks and finger foods to share for refreshments.

Christmas Eve Service – December 24, 7:00 pm. A quiet, casual service to help us refocus from our secular activities to thoughts of our Lord. Please include this service in your plans and invite friends, family, and neighbors to come.

Christmas Day Worship Service – December 25, 11:00 am. This will be a brief, casual service. No Sunday School classes will be held.

Remember our special members – A list of those who are unable to be with us during services and activities is available on the information tables for anyone who would like to send a card.

HARSH WORDS

The past election has uplifted some ugly and harsh words. Realizing this, we as a church will always be accepting of anyone who comes in our midst. Anyone who seeks to be enriched by the love of God in this place is welcome. The invitation of Jesus to "Come, follow me" is an open-ended invitation, one that does not judge by nationality, race, income or other distinction. Our diversity is a blessing that enriches us and reminds us that we are all the Human Race and we are all God's children.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A congregational meeting will be held during the 11:00 am worship service on December 4 for the purpose of electing church officers to the Class of 2019.

MONEY MATTERS

The end of the year is fast approaching and that means taxes are, too. If you would like to get a year-to-date giving statement for consideration for your end of year giving, just get a message to the church office and one will be provided. **All donations which you want included on your 2016 statement must be received by January 1 and clearly marked for 2016.**

Offering envelopes for 2017 should soon be ready for you to pick up at church.

BIBLE STUDY CONTINUES

Our weekly Bible Study of the Gospel of John will continue on Wednesdays at 12:00 noon throughout December and January except for December 28 which has been cancelled. **Everyone** is invited to participate!

SHARING SUNDAY

Please remember that the 4th Sunday of each month has been designated as "Sharing Sunday", when we make a concerted effort to share our bounty with those less fortunate. The programs on which we focus:

- **Salem Presbytery Hunger Offering** which provides assistance locally, nationally and internationally. Please make checks payable to PCC, designate it for hunger, and return with the offering.
- **Greensboro Urban Ministry** for which we collect canned and dried foods, and especially dried beans and macaroni and cheese dinners.
- **Interactive Resource Center (IRC)** which needs travel-size personal hygiene items, toothbrushes and toothpaste, sun block, lip balm, bottled water, HE laundry detergent, art supplies, gently used towels and gently used tents.

COMMUNION

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be observed on Sunday, January 1, 2017, at the 11:00 am service.

PCC PEOPLE

We extend our love and sympathy to Shirley Wynn at the passing of her sister, Catherine.

Please keep in prayer Margaret Fox Guero, Elaine Buie, Bob Phoenix (Carlton's father), Kaye Peebles, Verdora Locklear, Sharon Jennell, Ruth Phillips, and others who are not well or recuperating.

Many thanks to Kelly Patterson, English Summers, and Jack and Jane Manley for the new plantings around the church.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
– Isaiah 9:6

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS



After the rush of Thanksgiving, Christmas and the various other events, we begin a new year and often resolve to change something in our lives that has been worrisome or harmful. It may involve losing those pounds we gained over the holidays, or quitting an addiction that has held us in its grasp for too long, or even as profound as starting a new relationship, moving to a new job. We all need to change something in our lives. It does us good physically and spiritually. At least half of Americans make New Year's resolutions, but only 8% keep them.

First, be reasonable. Set realistic goals. Unrealistic goals will only frustrate you.

On the other hand, dream big. Don't let your dreams be defeated because of past failures. Maybe the time wasn't right. Maybe you went at it all wrong.

Dream your dreams and create a plan to get there. Langston Hughes, the African American writer said: "Hold fast to dreams, because if dreams die, life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly."

You don't get from the bottom to the top in one leap. There are steps that you have to proceed up, one by one. Think about it. Create workable steps towards your dream. Then be willing to do the hard work to get there.

It's about growing into the person God intended. We are all created in God's image.

"When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

- I Corinthians 13:11-13



May you have the gladness of Christmas which is hope;
The spirit of Christmas which is peace;
The heart of Christmas which is love.