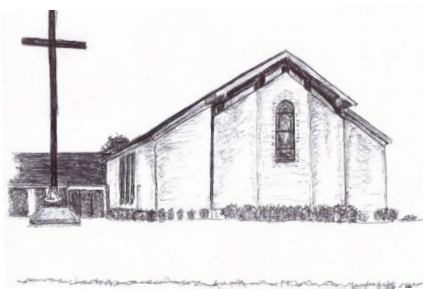


# Presby News

DECEMBER 2018



## FROM THE PASTOR . . .

During the Advent Season, our attention turns to the unique event of the incarnation, God becoming a human being. Prior to the Word becoming flesh, God had revealed Himself and His truth in several different ways: the law, the prophets, and the nation, Israel.

But in the person of Jesus Christ, He revealed Himself in a superior and unique way. As Christians, we believe that in order for us to obtain the fullest picture of who God really is, we must look at Jesus Christ. The good news which we celebrate as followers of the Jesus way is that God is like Jesus. In fact, He has always been like Jesus!

In order for the incarnation to occur, God needed some willing humans through whom to work out His purpose. And those two humans were Mary and Joseph.

Both Mary and Joseph seem to have experienced some apprehension in the early stages of finding out what God had in mind for them. If an angel appeared to any of us and spoke a message for us to follow, we would probably respond in a similar manner.

When the angel, Gabriel, first appeared to Mary and spoke his words of greeting, she at first was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting he was bringing. Gabriel assured her that there was no need to be afraid. He assured her that she had found favor with God and that she was to conceive a special child. The son she would give birth to was to be given the name of Jesus.

Mary naturally wondered how this could be since she was a virgin. The angel told her that this was going to be "a God thing." The Holy Spirit was going to work in her life and the child she would bear would in fact be the Son of God. He reminded her that absolutely nothing is impossible with God.

Luke's gospel tells us that upon hearing these words, Mary responded by saying: "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said."

Mary, though initially troubled, puzzled, and even afraid, submitted to God's plan and yielded herself to Him. By so doing, she gave to all of us a shining example of how we should respond to God when He asks us to do something hard to understand and somewhat confusing to our minds.

Joseph's response to finding out that Mary was pregnant before they had married was very similar. In order to protect Mary against public disgrace, he at first planned to divorce her. In that particular time, an engagement would be broken by a divorce.

But as he was mulling all of this over in his own mind, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. He told Joseph to lay all of his fears aside and to take Mary home as his wife--because Mary's pregnancy was due to the Holy Spirit's activity in her life. He is, also, informed that the baby to be born was to be called Jesus --because "He will save his people from their sins."

Joseph, after waking up from this unusual dream, did exactly as he had been instructed to do. He took Mary home as his wife. But their marriage was not consummated until after Jesus was born.

Joseph, like Mary, submitted to God's plan. In so doing, he gave us another inspiring example of how we should respond to God when He asks us to do something out of the ordinary.

The biblical text does not tell us everything about what followed their radical acts of obedience. But we can use a little imagination. Do you think that their neighbors, relatives, and friends simply believed Mary and Joseph when they reported how she had gotten pregnant? If we had been living back then, would we without questioning have believed this account of how she became pregnant in this unique way? I doubt that they were any more prone to believe this unique "God-thing" in the first century than we would be in the 21st century!

The radical acts of obedience by Mary and Joseph should challenge each of us to be faithful in doing whatever God requires of us--even if it exposes us to public disapproval, gossip, and shame.

I hope that we will ponder the examples left by Joseph and Mary and seek to be as obedient to God as they were.

May you have a blessed Christmas!

Jim

**JESUS**  
is the Reason  
for the  
**Season**



## FUN CHRISTMAS TRIVIA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (SEE BELOW)



1. Which author wrote the book, *A Christmas Carol*?
2. According to the song, what did my true love give to me on the seventh day of Christmas?
3. Which colorful and much sung-about Christmas character was invented by American ad writer Robert L. May in 1939?
4. What is the date of St. Stephens' Day?
5. Which Country is Eggnog said to have originated from?
6. Which popular Christmas song was composed by James Pierpont in 1857?
7. What are the names of the Three Wise Men (also known as the Three Kings)?
8. What is the name of the Dr. Seuss character who steals Christmas?
9. What is the name of George Bailey's guardian angel in the film *It's a Wonderful Life*?
10. Three of Santa's reindeer's names begin with the letter "D." Name them.
11. Which Christmas word means "turning of the sun?"
12. What star sign would you be if you were born on Christmas Day?
13. In Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, which was the first ghost to visit Ebenezer Scrooge?
14. What gift did the Little Drummer boy give to the newborn Christ?

Answers: 1. Charles Dickens, 2. Seven Swans A-Swimming, 3. Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, 4. The 26th of December, 5. England, 6. Jingle Bells, 7. Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar, 8. The Grinch, 9. Clarence, 10. Dancer, Dasher and Donner, 11. Yuletide, 12. Capricorn, 13. Jacob Marley, 14. He played a song for him on his drum.



*Our Sanctuary Choir will  
present a  
Christmas Concert  
Sunday, December 9, 2018  
During the Worship Service.  
Come join us for this  
special event.  
(Reception Following)*

# December Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Monitor	Communion Servers
<b>December 2</b>	Robert Kennedy	Jim Hockensmith	<b>Elder Liturgist:</b> Elizebette Kennedy <b>Communion Team:</b> Dirk & Annelize Benade
<b>December 9</b>	Annelize & Dirk Benade	Jim Smolenski	
<b>December 16</b>	Robert Kennedy Elizebette Kennedy	Jim Smolenski	
<b>December 23</b>	Jim Hockensmith	Bill Higgins	
<b>December 30</b>	Robert Kennedy	Bill Higgins	



Anniversaries  
and Birthdays

December 3 Charles Ellington  
December 3 Jim Heath  
December 6 Georgia McBurney  
December 8 Bill Higgins  
December 18 Gill & Dee Arnold  
December 19 Brandi Woolam  
December 22 Laverne Willson  
December 23 Carolyn Sterne  
December 24 Waylon Smith  
December 30 Helen McDaniel

## SPECIAL DATES

Dec. 2 First Sunday of Advent (*Hope*)  
Brookdale Worship at 9:00 am  
Communion Served

Dec. 9 Second Sunday of Advent (*Peace*)  
Choir Concert/Reception Following

Dec. 16 Third Sunday of Advent (*Joy*)

Dec. 23 Fourth Sunday of Advent (*Love*)  
Christmas Joy Offering

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Service, 6:00 pm

Dec. 25 Christmas Day (*Office Closed*)

Dec. 26 Prayer Meeting Cancelled

Jan. 1 New Year's Day (*Office Closed*)

Merry Christmas  
Blessings

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,  
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.  
Have a Blessed Day.

## **First Presbyterian Church**

357 Windermere Blvd. Phone: 318-443-7229

Alexandria, LA 71303 Fax: 318-443-5965

[office@alexandriafpc.org](mailto:office@alexandriafpc.org)

[www.alexandriafpc.org](http://www.alexandriafpc.org)

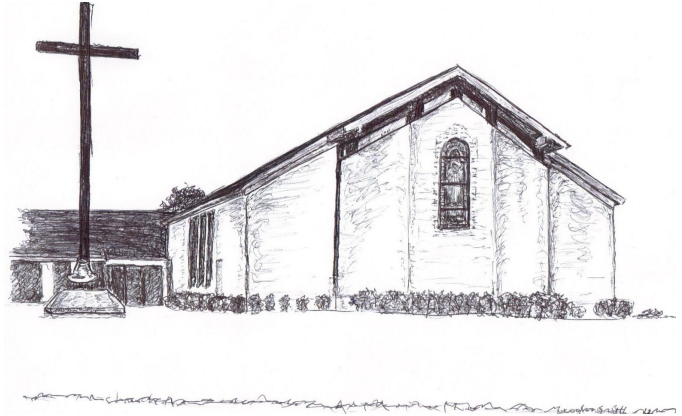
Jim Heath, *Stated Supply Pastor*

Aaron Rogers, *Choir Director*

Vacancy, *Pianist*

Carolyn Sterne, *Secretary*

Charles Bell, *Sexton*



### ***WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE***

3:00 pm Prayer Service

First Presbyterian Church

357 Windermere Blvd.

Alexandria, LA 71303

**Come experience God's love at First Presbyterian Church**

Sunday School—9:45 a.m., Worship—11:00 a.m.