



Christmas Cantata 2014

Bethlehem

an intimate cantata with chancel choir, soloists and instruments

Sunday, **December 14**

8:00am and 11:00am in Morris Hall

Sunday School at 9:30 am

Garber Family Christmas Party

Wednesday, **December 17**

5:45pm in Morris Hall

Christmas pageant presentation from Kids in Christ

Christmas Eve

December 24

4:00pm worship in Morris Hall

family friendly, special children's time, led by worship team

9:00pm worship in Morris Hall

candlelight service, intimate worship time led by piano

11:00pm worship in the Sanctuary

candlelight service, led by organ

1st Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, **December 28**

8:00am and 11:00am in the Sanctuary

(no service in Morris Hall)

Sunday School at 9:30am

Advent and Christmas at Garber

Alternative Christmas Giving 2014

Alternative Christmas Giving is a way to honor friends and loved ones with a gift that helps others. When you give an Alternative Gift, you receive a card that informs the recipient of the gift, the charity/mission project to which the gift is being made, and information about that project. There is also a place for you to personalize the card.

New this year is the process of purchasing your Alternative Giving cards. Cards will be available to purchase each Sunday in the Atrium and the Courtyard from November 30 to December 14. Cards will also be available in the Church Office during the week until December 19. You will address, personalize, and mail your own cards.

This year's Alternative Giving projects are Religious Community Services and Backpack Blessings, both serving Craven and surrounding counties, available in the following amounts:

Religious Community Services -- The RCS Food Pantry is stocked entirely by food drives and donations. Families may receive one week's food for at-home preparation.

- \$5 Feed a family of 2 for one (1) day from the Food Pantry at RCS
- \$20 Feed a family of 2 for five (5) days from the Food Pantry at RCS
- \$50 Feed a family of 6 for five (5) days from the Food Pantry at RCS
- \$100 Feed a family of 6 for ten (10) days from the Food Pantry at RCS

Backpack Blessings -- These food kits provide healthy food for children who experience food insecurity at home on the weekends. Items are kid-friendly and require little or no preparation.

- \$12 Backpack Blessings for one month/one child
- \$25 Backpack Blessings for two months/one child

The Garber Mission Committee thanks you in advance for your support of this project! Alternative Giving truly is a gift of love for both recipients – those whom you honor with the gift and those who receive the results of the gift!

Fall Fun for the Kingwood Kids!

The Kingswood Kids did a little shopping for this holiday season. . . but not for themselves! Each Kingswood Kid packed a shoe box for some boy or girl around the world through the Operation Christmas Child program. Thanks to the assistance of some of their bravest volunteers, the Kingswood Kids descended on the Dollar Tree to buy toys, games, school supplies, books, and personal hygiene items to send to children who might otherwise not get anything for Christmas! The kids then packed their boxes, complete with personal notes, and sent them on their way. We hope to hear where our boxes were delivered so that we can find that country (or countries!) on the map.

Kingswood Kids also made some pumpkin bread to be delivered to some of our senior adults who are lovingly visited each month by Sue Webb, our Senior Adult Coordinator. Kingswood Kids love to get in the kitchen!!

Praises to God for the Kingswood Kids' gestures of kindness for others and for their volunteers who are always ready to make memories!



The Annual Garber Giving Tree

Each year the Garber Mission Committee sponsors The Giving Tree for gifts to local school children. The children who receive these gifts are selected by their guidance counselors and would not have gifts, or many gifts, otherwise. We have specified to the counselors to select children who have not been recipients of our Giving Tree previously, where possible. This allows us to give to many children over the course of the years. However, we do defer to the counselors wisdom and needs in the selection process of children.

There will be 2 locations on our campus for the Giving Tree: one in the Narthex (Sanctuary side), one in the Atrium (Ministry Center side).

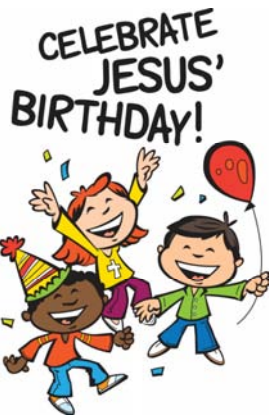
The process is simple:

1. Take a gift tag for a child; you can choose boy/girl, age/grade, toy or clothing
2. Purchase the gift indicated on the tag
3. Return the gift, *unwrapped, with the tag attached*, to either of the Giving Tree locations

It's that easy to help a child have a happy Christmas this year! We are supporting 60 children this year with our Giving Tree gifts – 20 per school from Ben D. Quinn, Bangert, and J T Barber Elementary Schools. Each child will receive 2 gifts – for total of 120 gifts for all children.

Whatever children God presents to us this year will be a blessing and a joy for which to purchase gifts! Please be sure you pray for the child as you buy for him/her and continue to pray throughout the holiday season! That will be the best gift you can possibly give!

Thank you for your support and generosity.



Garber Family Christmas Party! Wednesday, December 17th 5:45 p.m. Morris Hall

Join your Garber Family for a fun evening of fellowship, dinner, and our annual Nativity Pageant presented by our Wednesday Night Recharge! children. What a wonderful way to celebrate our ministry together with these children! Our meal will be prepared as a fund-raiser by our Student Ministry — all proceeds will go towards their summer mission trips. The price is a donation.

Join the fun!
Experience the love of a church family!



From the Pastor:

Advent? Christmas? Epiphany? What are these seasons? Seasons? I thought they were holidays. Well, yes, Christmas and Epiphany are days, but they also are seasons used by the Church to tell and to retell the Gospel from generation to generation. Truly we should remember, if we do not pass on the story of Jesus, the world will give our children and grandchildren different stories by which to shape and guide their lives and eternity.

Using the changing of time as a way to tell the entire Gospel story during each twelve months, the Church has designated seasons and special days. The Seasons are Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost. Embedded in the seasons are Christmas day, Epiphany day, Baptism of our Lord, Transfiguration, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, and the year closes with *Christ the King* Sunday. The year begins with the four Sundays prior to Christmas Day. The season between the first of those four Sundays (November 30 this year) and Christmas Day is called Advent (meaning *to come*).

With **Advent**, we begin the Christian year in a posture of waiting and preparing. As a season, it recalls the promise of God to complete the restoration of all things in the coming of the Messiah. It is not focused upon Christmas, but upon the completion of the Messiah's work of which we say in the Creed, "he shall come again to judge the quick and dead." Because that day will be a day of judgment, Advent is a season of penitential preparation. It is to Christmas day what Lent is to Easter day. That is why both Advent and Lent are signified by the color purple. Some have even called Advent the "little Lent." As we prepare for the coming (advent) of Jesus Christ. We learn from those who waited before his first advent.

In the keeping of Advent, there are helpful practices. From December 1 through December 24, you could use an Advent wreath as we will at our Church. On the first Sunday of Advent (November 30 this year), light one candle. The next Sunday light two; the next, three; then four. Try singing Advent carols instead of Christmas carols. Look for songs about Christ coming as King. Look for songs about how to wait. "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" is an Advent Song. So too is "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." Other songs combine the themes of Advent with those of Christmas. "Joy to the World" is among them.

Advent gives way to **Christmas**. In our Christian story, though the people looked for consummation of all things in the coming of Israel's Messiah, God's work unfolded more slowly, and a baby was born in a stable. The Christmas season begins on Dec. 25 and lasts twelve days. In this season, we tell the story of God becoming a human being. The color for worship is white; the mood is celebration. How wonderful is the good news that the Virgin's child is none other than Emmanuel, God with us. Although calendared for 12 days, Christmas is too powerful of an event to be contained in twelve days. Therefore it pushes forward into Advent or even into the season after Pentecost. We must learn to be patient, however and to wait, to let anticipation build. Unlike people of a thousand years ago, we set up the tree well before December 24. Unfortunately, that means some of us remove all our Christian symbols before the twelve days are over. As your family keeps Christmas consider keeping some decorations until Epiphany, January 6, and so celebrate all 12 days. You will, of course, give and receive gifts. You may want to adjust that practice to include care for someone in need (Matthew 25:31f). Use of the Creche (manger scene) is particularly appropriate. So also are Christmas songs.

Epiphany is January 6, and the season continues until Ash Wednesday (Lent). The color is green. An "epiphany" is a manifestation of someone or something. As Jesus was manifested to the gentile magi (January 6), as he was manifested to Israel in his baptism by John (first Sunday), and as he was manifested to his disciples in his transfiguration (last Sunday), who Jesus is became more clear as did God's love for all the world. If you are using a manger scene at home, on January 6 add the wise men and sing "The First Noel" or "We Three Kings."

Keeping the seasons tells the story of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In worship with the church and at home, observing seasons gives us another way to pass on the faith to our families and friends.

Blessings,

David A. Banks



Paradox, the dictionary defines it as an apparently contradictory statement that may nonetheless be true. The Bible is replete with paradox. “When I am weak, then I am strong,” the Apostle said. Or in 1 Corinthians 3:18, “Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise.”

Consider these portions from Michael Card's song entitled “God's Own Fool” which is built upon *paradox*.

Seems I've imagined him all of my life, As the wisest of all of mankind.
But if God's holy wisdom is foolish to men, He must have seemed out of his mind.

We in our foolishness thought we were wise. He played the fool and opened our eyes.
We in our weakness believed we were strong; He became helpless to show we were wrong.

So we follow God's own fool, As only the foolish can tell.
Believe the unbelievable; Come be a fool as well.

The coming seasons offer us **paradox**. An ancient hymn writer named Ephraim Syrus, (c. 350 A.D.) who was a favorite of John Wesley, also sang of the power of **paradox**. From his Hymns on the Nativity we read these lines:

It was by Power from Him that Mary was able to bear in Her bosom Him that bears up all things! She gave Him milk from Himself that prepared it, she gave Him food from Himself that made it! He gave milk unto Mary as God; again He sucked it from her as the Son of Man. Her hands bare Him in that He had emptied His strength; and her arm embraced Him, in that He had made Himself small. (Hymn III)

A wonder is Thy Mother. The Lord entered her, and became a servant; the Word entered her, and became silent within her; thunder entered her, and His voice was still; the shepherd of all entered her; He became a lamb in her. The Belly of Thy Mother changed the order of things, O Thou that orderest all! The rich went in, He came out poor; the High one went in, He came out lowly. Brightness went into her and clothed Himself, and came forth a despised form. (Hymn VIII)

We come to see Thee as God, and, lo! Thou art a man; we come to see Thee as man, and there shineth forth the light of Thy Godhead! (Hymn VIII)

A decade ago, Mark Lowry wrote a popular Christmas song, “Mary Did You Know.” It too depends upon **paradox**.

Mary, did you know?
The child whom you delivered, Would one day deliver you.

In the days of Caesar Augustus, that ruler of Rome, a census and tax were ordered (Luke 2). As that king would make himself rich by bringing all people into his debt, another King would make himself poor in order to forgive the debts of all people (Ephraim Syrus, Hymn IV). In this season may our eyes be opened to see the truth and power hidden in **paradox**.





Russia Mission Trip Planned In 2015!!!!

On April 2, 2015, Garber UMC will sponsor a team who will travel to our two sponsored orphanages in Kovalyova and Makariev for a 10-day mission trip. Both orphanages are located in the Kostroma Region, northwest of Moscow. Garber has sponsored these orphanages for over 10 years, and we are thankful that God has blessed us with another opportunity to visit them and share God's love.

How can you help????

In January, look for the 2nd Annual Envelope Fundraiser!!! Last year, our Garber family helped raise \$9,234 towards the April 2014 Russia Trip. This year, our goal is \$10,000. It's the easiest fundraiser in the world! Just take an envelope that is labeled with a specific amount (ranging from \$1 - \$200). Fill it, and return it! That's it!! YOU will be helping your love reach all the way across the ocean to children who need to know that someone cares about them.....

Look for more details in the January newsletter! In the meantime, please begin praying that God will handpick just the right team to do His work in Russia

MOSAIC NEWS

Christmas is just around the corner and Advent starts the last Sunday of November. MOSAIC is going to bring in the season of ADVENT with a special Reflection Booklet for anyone interested while copies last. Please look for these in the narthex and atrium on the first Sunday of Advent, November 30.

*Join us for our **Christmas Party** on Sunday, December 14, 2014*

Bring your favorite finger food to Room 123.



We will enjoy Christmas punch and goodies from 3:00 - 5:00 and be entertained

*by **The Down-East Dulcimers.***



Sacrament of Baptism

Lucy McNeill Hudson was baptized by Pastor David on Sunday, October 19 in the Sanctuary. Proud parents are Ben and Anne Spottswood Hudson. The Hudson's live at 2208 Steeplechase Drive.



Anna Huntley Arnette was baptized by Pastor David on Sunday, October 26 in the Sanctuary. Aaron and Lauren are Anna Huntley's proud parents. Anna Huntley's older brother is Stroud. The Arnette's live at 4516 Carteret Drive

Garber staff wishes each of you God's
gifts of peace, joy, love and hope
today and everyday.

The church office will be closed for Christmas and New Year's on Dec. 26, 27 and Jan. 1.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Garber staff!

May God bless you,
David A. Barber

Joy To All!
Lana ☺

Blessings and Joy,
Sue W. Webb

May your
holidays be
filled with love,
laughter, joy and
thankfulness for the many
blessings God has given!
- Alyssa

Blessings,

Mary

Merry Christmas!
- Matthew

Happy Holidays!
Susan

Blessings to you!
Ruthie

Peace,
Beth

Mae

God bless you and yours
☺

Matt

Hope everyone has
a wonderful and
Merry Christmas
TJ Barber



Peggy Barber

Carolyn

Many Blessings,
Patti



ThanksGIVING

Support RCS on November 23rd!

Come join us on Sunday November 23rd as we give thanks to God for all He is and all He has done for us. Bring canned goods or other food items with you to worship or Sunday School on the 23rd to support RCS and those families who are in need of food during this season. In our thanksgiving, let us not forget to be generous to those who are in need around us.

Needed items include: cereal, mac & cheese, pasta, ramen noodles, Hamburger Helper, canned spaghetti sauce, spaghetti O's, Ravioli, etc., rice, and always canned meats.

Greening of the Church

Sunday, November 30 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

It is a time honored tradition by many to have the congregation “green” or adorn the church for the season of Advent; the season of waiting for the Christ child to come. Our congregation has not done this together in a few years, and we are excited to offer the opportunity for everyone to come and help!

The greening should be simplistic, using evergreens, holly, and Christian symbols throughout the Sanctuary and other worship areas. As part of our time together, we will begin with a short time of worship where we will learn about the traditions and symbolism of the greening and ask God for his blessing on our Advent preparations and subsequent season of waiting.

Our Garber worship committee will have the needed items out of storage and/or purchased, ready for groups to work together to get everything in its proper place. Lots of hands will make easy work, and we should all be finished by 5:00 p.m. All ages can help!



Garber United Methodist Church

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www.connect2garber.com

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