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From the Pastor's Heart

A Christmas Truce

Luke 2:14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.

One of my favorite stories took place on Christmas Eve in 1914 on the Western front during the First World War.

In the final weeks of 1914, British and German troops were engaged off and on in battle, as they were entrenched a few hundred yards apart on the Western Front. With Christmas approaching the young soldiers were ready for relief.

It began on the night of Christmas Eve, when German soldiers lit candles on their Christmas trees---not a good war time move, as the enemy could easily spot their position, and call in artillery. British soldiers responded by shooting off rockets and lighting bonfires.

The German's responded by singing Christmas carols, inviting the British to join in. One British soldier called out: "We rather die than sing in German." A German soldier responded: "If we had to listen to you sing in German it would kill us too!"

Throughout the camp each camp listened to the other sing. The next morning hundreds of British and German soldiers left their trenches to meet the enemy in no man's land, where they shook hands and exchanged gifts of food, candy, and tobacco. Some traded names and addresses. Meanwhile a soccer game was played between the shell holes and the barbed wire.

Both the British and German Generals spoke out against the truce, fearing that such fraternization would sap the troops' will to fight. It didn't, the fighting sadly resumed the very next day. Eventually, ten million people would lose their lives in World War I. But on this single day two enemies put aside their differences long enough to practice peace.

What an inspiring story. Can you imagine, what would happen if we called a truce at least for this season? Imagine if husband and wives would do this, and brothers and sisters and co-workers, and church members.

What if we made a determined effort to live in peace with one another, even the most contentious of us, at least for this season?

If we would try it, we might begin to experience long term what those embattled soldiers did for one day, and what the angels promised the shepherds on that first Christmas night: Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will towards men.

May the peace that surpasses all understanding guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

Pastor Steve

Poinsettias

The church would be happy to have a poinsettia in the sanctuary on Christmas Eve in memory of your loved ones. Call the church office by noon on Tuesday the 19th with the information as you want it to appear in the bulletin. Please have your plant to the church by noon on Friday the 22nd. Plants should be taken home after the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.



Wassail December 17th

It is a First Christian Church traditional that we get together in December and visit with our church family while we have a snack and a drink of Wassail. Please come to Campbell Hall at 9:30 am on December 17th. The church has a Christmas tree in the narthex and Campbell Hall if you want to get your family or friends together and snap a photo with your phone or camera.



Wassail Christmas Reception

Sunday, December 17th at 9:30 am in Campbell Hall

Christmas Eve Service Times, December 24th

Combined Christmas Celebration at 9:30 am

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service at 7 pm

New Year's Eve, December 31st

Combined Service at 9:30 am



All men are invited to the Men's Breakfast on Saturday, January 6th at 7 am. Men...this would be a great way to start off the new year!

Thank You Notes

📬 Thank you to all who donated cookies, candy, and other items for the Cookie Walk; we had a good variety. Also thanks all who helped with the set-up on Friday and sales on Saturday.



Charlotte Castle and Raelyne Lane

📬 I want to thank Pastor Hayes and Richard Eident for visiting me while I was in the hospital. Also, a big thanks to all those who sent cards and lifted up prayers during my hospital stay and surgery.

Joyce Camfield

- | | |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Louise Wiley |
| 5 | Ronald Kerans |
| 9 | Wilma Newlin |
| 10 | Lincoln Scott |
| 11 | Steve Hayes |
| 13 | Conlan Armer |
| 16 | Nick Maninfior |
| 17 | Logun Ault |
| 18 | Dan Cunningham |
| 19 | Raelyne Lane |
| 21 | Nathan Morgan |
| 26 | Maxine Arthur |
| 27 | Bill Landrus, Lane Wofford |
| 30 | Carol Englund, John Armstrong |
| _____ | |
| 30 | Roger and Stephany Rives |



Church Life

Friday, December 15

6-8 pm FCC will provide the Live Nativity at Peterson Park

Sunday, December 17

8:30 am Traditional Worship

9:30 am Wassail in Campbell Hall

10:30 am Contemporary Worship

5-7 pm F/R Christmas Party

Monday, December 18

10-11:30 am Staff Meeting

No Christian Ed Meeting

Tuesday, December 19

7 am Prayer Time

Wednesday, December 20

No "Crafts Are Us" Group

5:15 pm Bell Choir Practice

6 pm Mid-Week Program

6 pm Choir Practice

Thursday, December 21

6 pm Praise Team Practice

Sunday, December 24

9:30 am One Worship Service

7 pm Candlelight Communion Service

Monday, December 25 (office closed)

Happy Birthday Jesus

Tuesday, December 26 (office closed)

10 am Pre-Pack at the Food Center

Wednesday, December 27

No "Crafts Are Us" Group

No Bell or Choir Practice

No Mid-Week Program (will resume January 10th)

Thursday, December 28

6 pm Praise Team Practice

Sunday, December 31

9:30 am One Worship Service

Monday, January 1 (office closed)

Tuesday, January 2

7 am Prayer Time

Wednesday, January 3

9 am "Crafts Are Us" Group

5 pm De-Decorate from Christmas

No Bell or Choir Practice

No Mid-Week Program

Thursday, January 4 (next newsletter mailed)

6 pm Praise Team Practice

Saturday, January 6

7 am Men's Breakfast

Church Attendance

Dec. 3rd — Traditional: 108, Contemporary: 75 = 183

Dec. 10th — Traditional: 104, Contemporary: 90 = 194



Building Fund balance:
\$259,781.68



Board Splinters 12/11

Elders: next meeting will be January 29th at 7 pm.

Deaconesses: they raised \$1,200 from the Cookie Walk, the Ladies Dinner was a success, the Wassail will be Sunday at 9:30 am and the 2018 Deaconess Schedule is being prepared.

Minister: the "Names of God" sermon series was a great success, currently doing a series entitled "Christmas in a Word" and working on New Year's series entitled "Nothing But the Truth." The GFL class will begin on January 7th and has 7 enrolled at the time.

Associate Minister: helped pack food for the Back Pack Program, took youth to the Sky Zone for a Glow Night, the youth did an awesome job serving at the church Thanksgiving Dinner along with Dolo who provided the entertainment, the Small Group study is finished, has started a small group study on Sunday mornings with some Lake Land College students and is continuing his studies at LCU.

Elementary Minister: she had 9 in Sunday School last week, Wednesday nights is "Celebrate the Reason for the Season" and will start a new 12 week study on the Books of the Bible.

Worship: they had a great turn out for Deck the Halls, worked on December specials, finished planning the Christmas Eve services and the Live Nativity at Peterson Park, the De-decorate will be January 3rd at 5 pm and next meeting will be January 8th at 5:30 pm in the bride's room.

Trustees: 2018 Officers: Steve Ballinger, chair and Ron Hatfield, secretary.

Seniors Minister: attended the Thanksgiving Dinner, taught 4 HIS classes, helped serve at the Ladies Supper, attended the Men's breakfast, made 7 home visits, 4 hospital visits and 2 nursing home visits.

New Business: hired Dolo Wishard as the Elementary Minister, added Caley VanDeventer to the Worship Committee and added Marilyn Purcell as a deaconess for a 3 year term starting January 1, 2018.

Snowbirds...just a reminder the Post Office will NOT forward or hold the newsletter while you are gone. You must call the church office with your address change.

Serving Communion

Sunday, December 17

8:30 am — John Armstrong, Steve Ballinger, John Greathouse, Don Inman, Tom Dickerson, Carroll Gibbons, Steve Lane, Jack Little

10:30 am — Herb Ault, Max Betty, Donica Brand, Josh Recker

Sunday, December 24

9:30 am — John Armstrong, Steve Ballinger, John Greathouse, Don Inman, Jack Browning, Tim Buford, Dan Cunningham, Tom Dickerson

Sunday, January 31

9:30 am — Dennis Goings, Amy Maninfor, Nick Maninfor, Bob Morgan

Return Service Requested

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Associate Pastor: Steve Morgan