

Beckley Disciples News

December 2019

A Global Mission Church

Gone Fishin'

Simeon was a PUSHer. Not in the pejorative sense we understand it. Rather, Simeon was a man who Prayed Until Something Happens. God had revealed to His servant that he would live until he had seen the Consolation of Israel. So, day and night, he spent his time in the Temple praying for the time to come.

When the day came of the Messiah Lord's arrival, it did so in a most remarkable way. You could not have picked two more unlikely parents for this One than Joseph and Mary. Nevertheless, as they stepped into the Temple, the Spirit whispered to Simeon: "Here He is!"

I have asked the congregation to covenant with me for a thirty day PUSH. From November 24 through December 24 I am asking member and friend of

First Christian Church as part of their daily prayer time to ask one question: "What can I do to help my church grow?"

First, if we do this, our Lord is going to speak to each of us regarding our God-given gift. He will make it clear what we are to be doing individually, so that in our personally discipleship we are bearing fruit for the Master.

Second, if we do this, God will unite us in the plan for growth He has in mind for First Christian Church. This will require our obedience, as we strive for Kingdom Potential, as well as an attitude for rolling up our sleeves and being busy about God's work.

Each of us, as a member of the Body of Christ, has a role to play in the life of our



church. When we come together, and focus on God's vision for us, then we can change people's lives, and impact both community and church in ways we never imagined.

I hope you will join me in being a PUSHer for the next thirty days. It will require discipline, so that the Spirit will overcome all the doubt the devil whispers in your ear. Together we do our part to witness Christ.

Faithfully,

DRS

Advent/Christmas Activities

Advent begins on December 1, and we will kick-off the season with our annual *Hanging of the Greens* service. This will remind us of the meaning the various symbols used throughout the Christmas season. We will also use that Sunday to begin lighting the Advent Candles at the beginning of each worship service through Christmas eve. Our annual church wide Christmas celebration is scheduled for Sunday, December 15, and details on this are later in the newsletter. Plan now to attend with a special guest or two. We will wrap-up our Christmas celebrations on Tuesday, December 24, with our service of Carols, Communion and Candlelight. This is our first welcoming of the Christ-child into the world. Join us for these celebrations, and make them part of your Christmas tradition. Finally, included with the newsletter is a devotional guide for you to use during this season. We pray it will help you focus on the One who truly is the season: Jesus Christ.



Outreach Endeavors

God has provided our church with a number of activities for sharing His love with those around us. In early November, we packed 29 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, and delivered them to our local distribution point. Money was available for the postage. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this project.

I have Angels from Mabscott Elementary School to be adopted for Christmas. If you would like one, please see me as soon as possible. Each child has a list of items they would like, including gift, clothes, etc. I do need all the Angels to be back to the church by December 15, so that

we can take them to the school for final preparation. If you have any questions don't hesitate to ask.

We are going the extra mile to share Christ's love with all the children at the Mabscott school this year. At Thanksgiving, we distributed 1 pound canned hams to each student as they went home for the Thanksgiving break. Not much is done at Thanksgiving, so this was a much needed gesture.

Then, as the children leave for Christmas break, we are providing each one with a food box, which have been purchased through Food Lion.



Again, to families in need, this is a special way to share with them the truth that we love them and Jesus loves them.

Tammy Runion,
Director of Outreach and Education.

Celebrating Faith

As we come to the Advent/Christmas season, our church has a variety of special services for you to enjoy. On December 1, we will have our annual *Hanging of the Greens* service, where we remember the meaning of the various symbols we use throughout the season.

I know you will be blessed on December 15. The choir will be presenting *The Christmas Song* during the worship service. They have worked long and hard on

this music, and I know it will touch your heart. Immediately following the service will be our church wide Christmas dinner, with everything provided. Make sure you invite someone to join you for the day.

Finally, on Christmas Eve we will have our service of Carols, Communion and Candlelight. This begins at 8:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. What a fitting way for us to welcome



the arrival of the Christ child.

During our traditional Christmas choir break, we will have special music presented by members and guests.

Yvonne Seay,
Director of Worship

Christmas Offering

Our last denominational special offering for 2019 is the Christmas offering, which is received December 15 & 22. These monies go to provide additional support for the various Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The Christian Church in West Virginia (now sharing in ministry with the Region of Pennsylvania) is under the leadership of the

Rev. Dr. Thaddaeus B. Allen. A variety of ministries are offered through our Region, including: Summer church camps, Men's & Women's fellowship gatherings and retreats, oversight of candidates for ministry, and search and call. We have had Thad in Beckley on numerous occasions and he always brings a good word to us.



We will have a Minute-for-Mission to help interpret this offering, special envelopes for your gifts, and our goal for this year is \$500.

News for the Pews

Christmas Celebration

Our church wide Christmas celebration has been scheduled for Sunday, December 15. The day will begin with the choir performing *The Christmas Song* during the morning worship. Our dinner will immediately follow in the Fellowship Hall. Everything will be provided this year (although Nancy may contact a few about making desserts). We will need numbers so we can adequately prepare for the dinner. There will be a sign-up sheet in the bulletin, or you may call the church office. Please invite guests for the day, they will surely be blessed. The deadline for giving numbers is Wednesday, December 11.

Staff Update

God has blessed our congregation with a variety of gifted leaders, who freely share their time and talents. At the November meeting, the General Board approved the following staff title/portfolio changes. Yvonne Seay is now our Director of Worship. She will be working with Don to help plan the worship service, giving thoughts to special services, as well as ways better to engage the congregation in worship, as well as attracting younger folks to worship. Tammy Runion is now our Director of Outreach & Education. Much of her work has focused on outreach areas like the Backpack Ministry, Operation Christmas Child and the Angel Tree Ministry, so we are just recognizing this important work. Tammy will continue to handle Children's Church for us, and work with Don on other outreach endeavors. Both ladies bring Spirit-inspired hearts to our church, and while they are already here, we believe with these new responsibilities, they will help us move forward in our life as church.

Office Notes

There are some happenings in the church office as well. Don will be on vacation from November 29 through December 7. If there is a pastoral need during this time, please call either the church office or the parsonage. He will have his cell phone, and checks in with Nancy each evening. Beginning November 25, Nancy is shifting her Thursday to Friday at the church. New office hours are: Monday 9:00—1:00, Tuesday & Friday 9:00—1:30. Please note the church office will be closed December 24 & 25 for the Christmas holiday, and January 1 for New Year's. Don will be available via his cell phone during that time.

Newsletter Changes

The start of a new year are going to bring some changes to the church newsletter. The January edition will remain stand alone, to provide the format of annual reports from our departments and staff. We will then have five additional issues per year: February-March; April-May; June, July, August; September-October; November-December. We are pleased to email this to anyone, if you are will provide us an email address. Copies will be mailed only to shut-ins and out of town folks. Copies are available for pick-up in the narthex, and the newsletter is always available online at the church website.

Volunteers Needed

The Beckley Christmas Parade is scheduled for Saturday, December 7, beginning at 11:00 a.m. We are going to be open and inviting folks in following the parade. We need donations of chocolate chip cookies and brownies, and either hot chocolate or money to buy it. We do need people to help with this event from about 10:00 to



1:00. This year will be on a donation basis, with proceeds going to support our Angel Tree efforts. This is a way for us to not only show Christmas cheer, but Jesus' love to our Beckley neighbors. If you can help, please see Nancy.

Worship Leaders

Throughout the month of December we are asking for volunteers to serve as worship leaders for 2020. This not only gives the opportunity for more folks to be involved in worship, but also helps preserve Don's voice. Helps are available in the office. We do schedule a worship leader for every Sunday now, so the number of times a person will serve will depend on the number of volunteers. If you have questions, please talk to Don or Yvonne.

Christmas Poinsettias

Once again this year we are asking folks to consider a memorial donation in lieu of a poinsettia at Christmas. You may make these gifts in memory or honor of a loved one, and designate it to support one of our "extra" ministries. These include: the Food Pantry, Operation Backpack, Care Baskets, the Carpenter's Corner, our Radio/TV broadcast, or anywhere you desire. A form will be in the newsletter beginning December 1, or you may call the church office. The deadline for these to be in the Christmas Sunday bulletin (22nd) is December 18.

First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Church Staff:

Donald R. Snyder, Senior Minister
Tammy Runion, Director of Outreach
and Education
Yvonne Seay, Director of Worship
Becky Leach, Organist
Nancy Snyder, Office Assistant
Barbara Adkins, Bookkeeper
Angelo Martin, Custodian

Sermon Scriptures

December 1	<i>Hanging of the Greens</i>
December 8	Luke 1: 18-20
December 15	<i>The Christmas Song</i>
December 22	Luke 1: 35-38
December 24	Luke 2: 15-16
December 29	Luke 2: 29-32

Serving in December

Elders: **1**—Chuck & Carolyn Turner; **8**—Mark Tredway & Nancy Snyder; **15**—Bill File, III & Yvonne Seay; **22**—John & Lee File; **29**—Mike Vaughan & Richard Flowers.

Deacons: Ed Crouse, Roger & Charlotte Hutchens, Carol Buklad, Garrett & Tammy Runion.

Communion Prep & Clean-up: **1**—Jean Ann Mearns & Connie Ross; **8 & 15**—Casey Baber & Lanny Okes; **22 & 29**—John & Lee File

Worship Leader: **8**—Paula Shrewsberry; **15**—Kristin Canterbury; **22**—Yvonne Seay; **29**—Nancy Snyder

Head Usher: Rod Baber

Outside Communion: John File

In the Hospital in November

Eugene Leach, Don Snyder

Prayer Concerns

Luke tells us that Simeon and Anna spent day and night in the Temple praying, especially for the arrival of the One who would be the consolation of Israel. As you spend time in prayer, please lift up these sisters and brothers in the Lord.

Randy Adkins, Carolyn Bailey, Susan Bailey, Jayne Chafin, Clela Cox, Woody & Patty Dacal, Taylor Dacal, Jane Flowers, Pat Freeman, Kevin & Susan Fry, Airlene Jarrell, John Jordan, Nancy Kittle, Eugene Leach, Donna Jean Poleck, Meg Prince, Derek Ross, Paula Shrewsberry, Pat Trader, Gloria Tucker, Kevin Winfree, Zachary Wood.

In the heart of Beckley, with a heart for the Gospel.