



First Presbyterian Church of Richmond

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The Connection



The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Richmond December 2013 Vol. 112 No 12



Friday & Saturday, December 13 – 14
5:30 – 8:30 PM
Invite your friends and neighbors



11:00 PM ~ December 24th



**New Year's Eve
Worship Service**

9:00 PM ~ December 31st

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Fellow Ministers,

Eight years ago I had big hopes for a Christmas Eve service. It was my first Christmas in Richmond. People told me that FPCR didn't draw a huge crowd for that service, but every other church where I had served had large holiday celebrations. December 24 came, and I realized that Christmas Eve really wasn't that big here, although those who attended did have fun reliving the first Christmas!

The next year I was brainstorming with some church leaders, and we came up with the idea of a living nativity on the Barrett Avenue lawn with some cookies and hot beverages as a gift to our neighborhood. We had more people helping than had come to the Christmas Eve service the year before, and we had a lot of visitors from the community!

The following year people got creative and added a Bethlehem Street Market. Year after year this event has grown with hundreds of people attending and helping. Now we celebrate two nights in a row to accommodate all the visitors. We have live nativity, crafts, food, stories, dramas, music, and more. All this happened because our church wanted to do something for our community.

If you haven't signed up to help with Back to Bethlehem, there are still some opportunities for you to serve. Put your name on one of the lists in Sanford Hall. Join in the fun at the decoration party on Saturday, November 30 from 9 AM – noon. Grab a stack of postcards and pass them out to friends, neighbors, and people you meet on the street. Talk to Kathy Cichanowski for more great ways to get involved.

I'm excited to see what God will do through our church family this Advent season.

And, by the way, we still celebrate on Christmas Eve. This year we have a meaningful candlelight communion service at 11 PM in our sanctuary on December 24.

Blessings,

Pastor Jim

THE GIFT OF CLEAN WATER

Give the gift of life this Christmas by donating to the Clean Water Projects our church is supporting in Asia. Phebe Shen leaves for Indonesia in January. Khamside & Saeng Keola leave for Laos in February. They will be involved in several well projects. The cost of one well can be as low as \$500.

And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.

Matthew 10:42



10:30 AM SERMONS

December 1, 2013

Luke 1:5-25
Zechariah

December 8, 2013

Luke 1:39-45
Elizabeth

December 15, 2013

Matthew 1:18-25
Joseph

December 22, 2013

Scripture Readings &
Christmas Music Celebration

December 29, 2013

Hebrew 2:10-18
Steve Niccolls

Family News

A correction to last months Connection. Both Claudine Hughes and Kathy Cichanowski are taking two year terms not one year. I was getting a head of myself on the calendar.



Congratualtions to Daniel Andueza and Maria Ramerez on the birth of Eva, who joined her extended family that includes big sister Diana and uncles Jose & Marcelino and aunts Lidia & Lourdes and cousin Citlaly, on October 28. The Keola family also welcomes Adrian Jonathan (AJ) Keola, born to Linda on November 4. AJ joins his big sister Kaylee. Keep these and our other expectant parents in your prayers.

Brenda Motomura wished to thank our dear church family for your outpouring of love, care, and prayers for her as she recovers from arm surgery.

Our condolences to the following families who have lost someone dear to them this month. To Billie Moss and her children on the loss of Floyd, who

passed away on November 12, they were long time members and had a major part in redecorating the sanctuary in 1988. To Tom and Yuni Kam and their extended family on the death of their 15 year old grandson, he died in his sleep on November 17. Also we offer condolences to the Hawk-Pratty family on the passing of Geoff on November 19. Keep all these families in your prayers

The Connection is a monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church of Richmond, 3415 Barrett Ave., Richmond, California, 94805, and (510)234-0954. Editor: Emily Niccolls; Mailing Team: Emily Niccolls. Joe Green and Lynda Wheeler.

Copy deadline is the 10th of each month for the following month's publication.

Jim Wheeler, *Pastor*

Alcenir Oliveira, *Pastor to Portuguese-language Ministry*

Khamside Keola, *CLP to Khmu Ministry*

Phoebe Chen, *Pastor to Mandarin-language Ministry*

Steven R. Niccolls, *Lay Preacher Drive-In Ministry*

Barbara Lockie-Brown, *Director of Music Ministries*

Emily Niccolls, *Administrative Assistant*

Cathy Nance, *CLP to Youth and Their Families*

Mike Jefferson, *Custodian*

Chanthong Vilaysak, *Gardener*

Drive-In December

Elder: Joe Green

Sound: Don Landis

Driver: Bennie Wilson

Greeters: Cliff Williams & Alice Strain

Communion: Pastor Jim

Coffee Hour December

1: Kathy Cichanowski

8: Thiago & Lias, Cida

15: Karine & Elaine

22: Christmas Cookie Exchange

29: Mária & Cleo

PEACE Wreath

What you need:

- Paint (blue and green)
- Paint brush
- Embroidery hoop
- 24 wooden clothespins
- Scissors
- Craft foam (white, red and green)
- Glue
- 3 white feathers
- Floral wire (two pieces)

What you do:

1. Paint the hoop blue and the clothespins green. When dry, attach clothespins around the hoop.
2. Cut a dove shape (slightly wider than the hoop's diameter) out of white foam. Glue on feathers.
3. Pierce the beak with a scissors tip. Slide a piece of wire through the slit to make an olive branch.
4. From green foam, cut out two leaves. Attach them to each end of the wire.
5. From red foam, cut out the letters P E A C E. Glue them onto clothespins.
6. Place dove in center of hoop. Glue its head and tail to clothespins.
7. Attach wire to the back and hang up your wreath.



PUZZLE

A Child is Born

Jesus received many different names — even before he was born. Isaiah 9:6 (NIV) prophesies about four of these names.

Directions: Unscramble the words on the name tags below. (Hint: The first letter is capitalized.)

MY NAME IS
gyhMti

dGo

MY NAME IS
lerWnofud

esnruooCl

MY NAME IS
vreIEnsitga

eahFrt

MY NAME IS
niPcre
_____ of

aPcee

DRIVE-IN MINISTRY

Dear Friends

The Advent season is filled with traditions. One of the traditions that this church has is the Christmas Eve Candlelight service. It is probably my favorite worship service of the year. I love the Christmas hymns and the reading of the Christmas story. It is truly a time of great hope and joy.

At the end with the sanctuary darkened, we take the Christ candle from the Advent wreath and then share the light of the candle to the members of the congregation. It calls to mind two Bible verses. The first one from Isaiah 9:2 "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light." As the light spreads throughout the sanctuary and the dark room begins to lighten up it is an amazing sight. Truly as the light from the Christ candle spreads we see a great light.

The other verse that scene calls to mind is Jesus' call to "... let your light shine before men that they might see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven." (Matt. 5:16) I would encourage all of you who can attend to come to this year's Christmas Eve service. But even if you cannot come, I would like to challenge all of us to take the events of Christmas and make them your light that you shine before a world of darkness.

See you in the parking lot,

Steve

Quote of the Month

A good conscience is a continual Christmas.

Benjamin Franklin

December Scripture

Dec. 1 Luke 1: 5-25

Dec. 8 Isa. 11:1-10

Dec. 15 Lk. 1:46-55

Dec. 22 Matt. 1:18-25

*Dec. 24 11PM Candlelight Service
at 34th Street Sanctuary*

(various passages)

Dec. 29 Heb. 2:10-18

DEACONS

Christmas Poinsettias

Each year the Board of Deacons order poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary. During the holiday season the Deacons will deliver the poinsettias to our Friends at Home (those in our church family who can no longer physically attend church). Míria Oliveira will be taking sign-ups in Sanford Hall Sunday, December 1st and December 8th for those who want to provide a poinsettia for this Christmas tradition. The cost is \$10.00 and a written dedication of choice (“In memory of... In celebration of...” for example) will appear in the church bulletin.



Every Friday of the month six bags of food are distributed to needy families in the Richmond community. The following are some of items that make up a bag of groceries for the needy: **canned fruit**, breakfast cereal, peanut butter, jelly, spaghetti, pasta sauce, canned soup and cups of soup, tuna, packages of pasta or macaroni and cheese, canned meat, rice, beans, and honey. Items can be brought to the church office during office hours. Tom Welton is our deacon in charge of the pantry. He does all the preparation of the bags each week and distributes them on Friday morning. If you have any questions regarding this loving ministry ask a deacon.

Flower Calendar

The flower calendar for 2014 is available just outside the church office. Please consider donating flowers to celebrate important events such as birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, etc. Flowers are now \$60.00 (tax included). Miría Oliveira is the deacon to contact regarding flower orders. She will be sending reminders to each person donating flowers.

Deacons on Call for December – contact office for phone numbers

<i>December 1–7</i>	<i>Sarah Obasi & Miria Oliveira</i>
<i>December 8 – 14</i>	<i>Lidia Andueza & Tom Welton</i>
<i>December 15–21</i>	<i>Peggy Williams & Ebude Nwosibe</i>
<i>Decemebr 22 – 28</i>	<i>All Deacons (Call Claudine Hughes)</i>
<i>December 29 – January 4</i>	<i>Nona Pepino & Rob Henderson</i>



Session Notes

There was no Session meeting in November, the next meeting will be December 6 when Session and Deacons meet for their annual joint meeting.

PRAYER ♥ CARE ♥ SHARE

Sunday, December 1, 12:00 pm, Fireside Room

Dale Fisher came in September to teach us an exciting way to care for people and share Jesus with them. Now it's time to refresh our memory and use our new skills! Grab your coffee and snacks and meet in Fireside as Pastor Jim reviews the Prayer, Care, Share techniques. We will use this method to begin to reach out to our neighbors surrounding the church. We will be inviting them to our Back to Bethlehem and doing a prayer walk. This will begin our outreach as we want to be a caring church to those around us.

We encourage everyone who came to Prayer, Care, Share to attend this brief review. If you didn't get a chance to attend the workshop in month, feel free to come and learn. We are excited to see how God will use these techniques to bring more people to know Him!



Back to Bethlehem Postcards

In an act of faith, we have 2500 postcards that we would like to distribute to our friends, family and the surrounding communities. Please take many from the pews and pass out to co-workers, acquaintances, neighbors, people in the grocery check-out line, anyone and everyone! Also consider giving an hour of time to walk a portion of the neighborhood to hang postcards on doors. This does not involve talking with the occupant, just hanging the postcard. Talk with Kathy Cichanowski or Katrina Croda for more info.

Cookie Decorating - Dec. 21 at 10:00 am

Hannah Taylor loves baking Christmas cookies and wants to share the joy with her church family. Please join us on Saturday, Dec. 21 at 10:00 am to decorate Christmas cookies! The cookies can be taken home to enjoy. All ages are welcome! Contact Hannah Taylor or Katrina Croda for more info.



BACK TO BETHLEHEM: DECEMBER 13 AND 14

It's just a few days away! If you haven't already signed up to be part of our church's family Christmas, there's still lots of places where you're needed.

WHO is needed: actors for the outdoor Nativity (no speaking), the Bethlehem village, and the mini dramas (speaking parts); readers for Storytime, especially in Portuguese; Animal wranglers, Costume help; Greeters, especially in Portuguese and Spanish. We especially need help setting up all of the activities on Wednesday, 12/11 and Thursday, 12/12, and taking them down and cleaning up on Saturday evening, 12/14.

WHAT is needed:

DONATIONS OF FINGER FOOD items such as:

- Frozen items like boxes of mini quiches, taquitos, mini corn dogs, bags of chicken pieces, small sausages, Bagel bites, etc.
- Small sandwiches, crackers and cheese, chips
- Fresh fruit and vegetables cut up
- Cookies, cupcakes
- Any other finger food
- Money towards the food (mark pew envelope and put in collection plate or turn a check in to the office)

All items should be brought to the church on **either Friday, 12/13 or Saturday, 12/14 for that day.**

LOAN OF MANGER SCENES

Any portrayal of the manger scene from a small ornament to a large set can be part of our display. Please be sure your name is on the box so it can be returned. Items should be brought to the church no later than **Thursday, December 12.**

WHATEVER YOU CAN DO OR BRING, PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE SHEETS ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN SANFORD HALL. THIS HELPS US KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT IN ADVANCE.

If you need more information on any of the volunteer slots or items, check the sign up sheets for the name of the person in charge and give them a call.

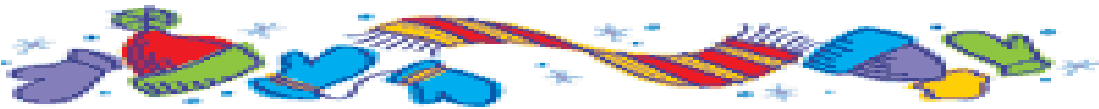
***Come and join the family for our Christmas gift to the community.
It's a way to serve with a smile and a blessing for all involved.***

December Prayer List

1. Carol Rowson
2. Eric & Rachel Ruhe
3. Joseph & Phyllis Ryus
4. George Sapp
5. Marty Sapp & Kathy Lara
6. Sharon Saylor
7. H.J. & Elaine Scott
8. John & Debra Scott, Natalie,
Joseph & Gregory
9. Altair & Jorgeta Silva, & Iury
10. Manuel & Abelia Silva
11. Edson & Jussandra Silva, Sara
& João
12. Gleison & Maxyllene Silva,
Guilyan & Glacy
13. Janser & Fernanda Silva
14. Romulo Silva & Miriam Barbosa,
Samantha & Felipe
15. Shelby Skelton
16. The Session of FPCR
17. França Carvalho, retiring Elder
18. Marina Farinha, retiring Elder
19. Jim Lockie-Brown, retiring Elder
20. The Board of Deacons
21. Claudine Hughes, Deacon
22. Nona Pepino, retiring Deacon
23. Míria Oliveira, Deacon
24. Peggy Williams, Deacon
25. Happy Birthday, Jesus!
26. Board of Trustees
27. Mike Chavez, retiring Trustee
28. Jose Ku, retiring Trustee
29. Greg Peino, retiring Trustee
30. Yuni Kam, retiring Trustee
31. Safe and Blessed New Year
for all!



If you would like to activate the prayer chain or put a request or praise in the bulletin please contact Emily at the church office 234-0954 or firstpresrichmond@sbcglobal.net. Prayer requests can also be left on the church website, www.pcrichmond.org



Worship
Through
Giving



Current Operating Funds ~ FINANCIAL STATEMENT For year ending October 31, 2013

*Receipts	\$252,276
Disbursements	<u>264,548</u>
Over/Under Expenses	<12,273>
10/12 of 2013 Budget	\$281,393

**Current receipts do not include \$60,840.55 transferred from other funds to cover a previous deficit.*