

The Beacon

December 2021

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**CHRISTMAS
EVE SERVICE**

6:00 P.M.

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Christmas Day is not far away. Little ones on Christmas morning will be filled with the excitement of finding toys, gadgets, and all sorts of things under the Christmas tree. When Trish and I lived on Alta Vista Street in Charlottesville after we were first married, our little next-door guy expressed his unrestrained excitement to us on Christmas morning saying, "Santa has done came!"

Perhaps you remember your parents asking you what you'd like for Christmas. That's ok but probably not the most practical in some ways. Mom and dad posed that exact question to me one year, and without hesitation, I said I wanted a pony. Both got quiet ... immediately. I'm sure they were surprised and probably were wondering how are we going to get a pony under the Christmas tree. Well, I didn't get a pony, but I did get a big silver and red bicycle with a light and a horn.



Christmas Day is fun as we watch kids find their gifts, whatever they are, and put them aside to play with the box out of which their gifts came.

Kids are not the only ones who receive gifts. We all do. For us as Christians, we set aside and honor Christmas Day as the birth of Jesus. We revere this day as the day God gave the ultimate gift, His son. Perhaps the birth story of Christ is read in the early morning to the family as we sit around the tree of gifts. Maybe it's read at the table of feast when all are present. It doesn't matter when it's read as long as it's read.

As the church, God has tremendously blessed us in so many ways. As we have passed through another year with some bumps in the road, we have so much ahead of us that we can anticipate and say in short, "God provides." Soon we will be in our new sanctuary. That's a gift. We will have a grand opening of which you can be a part. Please, receive this gift from the Lord with a thankful heart to God and with love of each other. God gave His son. In turn, let us give our very own best and nothing else.

God gives us opportunities to learn from His word, from fellowship, from reaching our community, and from our own personal alone time with Him. Let us get involved. Indeed, there is place for all at Hillcrest!

Merry Christmas, "Santa has done came!"

Clarke

CALLED BUSINESS

MEETING DECEMBER 12

There will be a brief called business meeting immediately following the worship service on Sunday December 12. The agenda is to: 1) vote on a motion from the Nominating Committee and 2) vote on a motion from the Deacons to affirm Juanita Lynn as deacon beginning in 2022 for a three-year term of service. A complete copy of the Nominating Committee report is available in the atrium or by contacting the church office.

NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL

CLASS

Each Sunday I teach a class for "students" (participants) who are inquisitive, willing to invest a little outside study time, and who are hungry to learn. While study is focused, the class atmosphere is casual, conversational, and relaxed. The class begins at 9:45 and we follow weekly scriptures of the Revised Common Lectionary, which can be found at: <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu>.

Come join us and feel free to bring refreshments such as coffee and donuts.

לחיים

Clarke

(434) 962-7992

CHRISTMAS BOX MINISTRY

Things are moving along with the Christmas Box Ministry. November was a very busy with no let up in sight moving into December. In November's newsletter, I gave a lot of information about what was

needed, times and dates for volunteering, etc. You have been very responsive and we are right on schedule. Thank you. It all began with a visit to Costco on November 1st by Jim Willis, Bob Davis and me. A huge haul of items was purchased and brought back to church. Myrtle Willis has worked her magic and gotten several friends involved. Donations of various products have been donated. The deacons gathered on Sunday November 7th to construct and wrap boxes. On November 3rd and 10th many came out to construct and wrap boxes. The spirit was amazing! Pictures are on the church website and they capture the fun and love of everyone.

Saint Paul's Episcopal has donated \$500.00 and the Hanover Christian Firewood Ministry has donated \$1,000.00. Burkwood Swim & Racquet Club has adopted two families to donate everything to. Our other partners are Duncan Memorial UMC (Ashland), Enon UMC, Grace Presbyterian Church, Lebanon UMC, and New Song UMC totaling seven churches and two local groups combining resources for this community ministry.

In all, there are 28 families, and two are completely taken care of by Burkwood. The other 26 are taken care of by Hillcrest and the other six churches. Tangible goods are given by the six churches and Hillcrest supplies the consumable goods to 26 families.

Beginning December 1st at 10:30 a.m., we will gather in the Fellowship Hall to begin packing the wrapped boxes with all the gifts gathered to this point. Each

family's quantities of items are determined by the size of the family. The items purchased will be divided up and packed. A second packing session will take place on Wednesday, December 8th at 10:30 a.m. and a third session will be at 6:30 p.m. on that same day. Hopefully that will complete the packing. All the other gifts from the other churches will be brought to Hillcrest before December 18th with deliveries of boxes to the families on December 18th.

Please keep the dates December 1st and 8th in mind to come and participate in this ministry. Also, we need two teams of two or more people from Hillcrest to deliver to two or more families on December 18th in the morning. Consider volunteering and let me know so you will be added to the delivery schedule.

Thank you for all your work, time and financial donations for the Christmas Box Ministry. Each family's gifts cost averages \$165.00 per family. That includes a ½ ham to each family. This ministry truly is a blessing to these families.

Merry Christmas Everyone!

Jerry Edwards

Ministry Organizer

LOTTIE MOON POST

OFFICE

The Lottie Moon Christmas Card Post Office is back in business! Please bring your church family Christmas cards to the drop-off area in the atrium to exchange with other church members who are regular attenders.

Cards will be sorted every Sunday by cheerful volunteers and will be ready for you to pick-up for your family. Suggested postage donation is ten cents per card and proceeds will be given to international missions. The post office will accept cards from November 28 - December 24. Merry Christmas!

BACKPACK MINISTRY

Currently we are serving 24 students weekly. Inventory is still holding up but in January we will begin purchasing to stock up for the spring. Saint Paul's Episcopal continues to be a valuable partner in this ministry along with another donor who personally donates. Please consider a financial donation designated to this ministry to help rebuild food supply inventory for the spring. As always, thank you for all the past support you have provided.

Jerry Edwards
Ministry Organizer

MUSIC NOTES

Customs go a long way to make the holidays special, Angels, Bells, Candles, Carols, Cards, Christmas trees, Creche, Feast, Gifts, Holly, Mistletoe, Poinsettias, Reindeer, Santa Claus, Stockings, Turkey, Yule Log, Wreath, etc.

Advent is a tradition or custom that we observe in church, but it is a wonderful opportunity to nurture family prayer as well; a *Circle of Love* refers to both the Advent Wreath and the family gathered around it. When we gather in His name, Christ lives in our midst, present as we light each candle on that circle of love and glowing in each heart gathered around it.

Week I - Faith -- God, we are blessed with the gift of faith, and we thank you for that gift. As we light this candle, help us to trust in you and say "yes" to you with all our hearts. Amen

Week II - Hope -- God, in faith we find hope. As we light the candles of faith and hope, we remember and believe in your promises to us. We give you all our struggles this day. May we always find our hope and help in your Son, Jesus. Amen

Week III - Joy -- God, as we light these candles, we thank you for all the blessings in our lives. You have done great things for us. In you we find faith, hope and great joy. We thank you especially for the gift of our family and the joy we share. Amen

Week IV - Peace -- God, you have given us faith, hope and joy. Forgive us for all the times we have made hurtful choices. In you we find true peace. Help us to live the peace of your Son in our hearts, in our family and in our world. Amen

Christmas - Love -- Jesus, be born in our hearts today and fill us with your love. As we light these candles, we celebrate your birth. You are the light of the world, our hope and our joy. You came into a world of darkness and sin to save us. Because of you, we are now called children of the light. Help us to live lives worthy of your love.

GOOD NEWS! 'To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the messiah, the Lord.
Luke 2:11

The Lord Jesus was born to enfold us all in a great circle of His redeeming love. May you and your whole family rejoice and be glad in this good news all year long. (from *Family Devotions for Advent* by Caroline Pignat)

Remember to mark your calendars and invite your family and friends to join us on December 19 for our 11:00 am worship service. Choir will be sharing *Take Me Back to Bethlehem*.

Merry Christmas to you all.

Mary Jane...MOM

HAVE YOU EVER DREAMED OF OWNING A CHURCH PEW?

If so, please let the New Sanctuary Building Committee (NBSC) know. Per the Hanover County code, the pews in the current sanctuary must be removed before an occupancy permit will be issued for the new sanctuary. With that in mind, we would like to offer the pews free of charge to our church members; the only catch is you must arrange removal and pick up.

The deadline for pew removal is the end of January.

Thank you.

Jason Lipinski and Trish Hawkins
Co-chairs, NSBC

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Danny Wiesner (12-1)
Morgan Painter (12-2)
Ann Marie Regensburg (12-2)
Joan Duszynski (12-4)
Courtney Frasier (12-5)
Gabe Lipinski (12-6)
Lane Griffith (12-6)
Sharon Duling (12-7)
Nell Zaun (12-10)
Shane Duszynski (12-10)
Linda Painter (12-12)
Chris Mahanes (12-12)
Jacque Althizer (12-13)
Justin Payne (12-14)
Ken Jones (12-21)
Martha Adams (12-21)
H.O. Tyree (12-24)
Joshua Seal (12-26)
Angela Miller (12-27)
Charlie Crisp (12-29)
Clarke Hawkins (12-29)

GENERAL FUND RESULTS

General Fund Balance as of September 1	\$42,391.10
September Receipts (Egiving and regular)	\$10,198.55
September Expenditures	\$18,600.67
Balance as of October 1	\$33,988.98