

# Cross



DECEMBER 2011

## CONNECTIONS

A PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, SARASOTA, FL



### *Worship Services and Events at Christmas*

#### **Friday, December 16**

*Christmas Concert*

*7:30 p.m. Sanctuary*

#### **Sunday, December 18, Fourth Sunday of Advent**

*Worship Service*

*8:30 a.m. Sanctuary*

*New Song Service*

*9:00 a.m. Fellowship Hall*

*Spanish Worship Service*

*9:30 a.m. Chapel*

*Worship Service*

*11:00 a.m. Sanctuary*

#### **Wednesday, December 21**

*Longest Night Service*

*7:00 p.m. Chapel*

#### **Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve**

*Nativity Service (Bi-lingual)*

*4:00 p.m. Sanctuary*

*Candlelight Service*

*7:00 p.m. Sanctuary*

*(with First Choir and guest harpist)*

*Candlelight/*

*Communion Service*

*9:00 p.m. Sanctuary*

*(with First Choir and guest harpist)*

#### **Sunday, December 25, Christmas**

*Worship Service*

*10:30 a.m. Combined Service in  
Sanctuary*

#### **Sunday, January 1**

*Spanish Worship Service*

*9:30 a.m. Chapel*

*Worship Service*

*10:30 a.m. Combined Service in  
Sanctuary*



# Christ's Time Invades Our Time

In the Greek culture, there are two kinds of time. The first is very familiar to us; it's called "chronological time." This time gives numbers on the calendar, dates, births, deaths, family histories, dates of past celebrations and dates that appear on the calendar for the coming year. Chronological time moves sequentially.

However, in biblical literature there is also "kairos time." Kairos time is God's time. Kairos is a time designed by God that changes our lives and changes the course of human history.

When the Scripture in the Gospel of Luke says, "While they were there, (Mary and Joseph, in Bethlehem) the time came for the baby to be born," this is a reference to "kairos time." From this moment onward life was transformed. Everything changed. It was a "kairos moment." God in Christ came into our world, into our history, and into our lives.

The time came, and time changed. You and I know that in Christ there has been a "kairos moment," for our lives have never been the same since we realized the invasion of God's Son into our daily activities. May our hearts be open to a new infusion of Christ's love into Sarasota's time zone.

In Christ's love,




# Love Notes



Dear FPC Friends,

Thank you for your prayers, visits, cards, calls, and the wonderful "We Care" poster (How did you know I love purple?). I'm recovering well from surgery, working hard at therapy, and looking forwards to seeing everyone soon.

Bettie Blake

Dear Church Family,

Please accept my overwhelming thanks for all your good wishes during my recent illness.

The beautiful card is always in sight - and - reminds me to do my daily exercises.

Again - I thank you.

Jo Weiss

*Many homebound or ill members and friends send Jean McKown, long time member, a love note in appreciation of her sending them the Sunday bulletin every week. This ministry is a part of the deacons and one that Jean enjoys thoroughly. If you know someone who would enjoy receiving a Sunday bulletin sent to them please call the church office (955-8119).*

# Preschool News

by Clare Carter, Director

There are so many moments in a day that are overlooked. Thanksgiving is a wonderful time to notice the seemingly insignificant moments and give thanks for them. It is such a gift to see the world through the eyes of a child. There is something new and wonderful every day. Dan McCurdy helped the preschool produce a Thanksgiving slide show that captured ordinary moments that were truly beautiful. Thanks, Dan! As special as the slide show was, watching the children sing was magical. We have so much to be thankful for! You will want to mark your calendars for our Christmas program which will be held in the sanctuary on December 15 and 16 at 11:40 a.m. Please join us for this special event.

We would like to send a special thank you to all of the preschool and church families who have already contributed to our annual fund. One of the reasons we are able to have such a wonderful preschool is because of the generosity of First Presbyterian Church and friends and family like you. We are truly grateful for all of your continued support.

Peace, and Merry Christmas! ☺

**Interim Pastor/Head of Staff: The Reverend Dr. John Ross**

**Associate Pastor: The Reverend Clayton Thomas**  
**Director of Music Ministries: Jack M. Levick**

**Pastor for Spanish Ministries: The Reverend Julio Travieso**  
**Intern for Youth & Families: Daniel McCurdy**



PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN

## December Gathering Holiday Traditions Around the World

On December 6th, Tuesday, the Presbyterian Women are sponsoring a program open to all church members and guests. If you like Christmas music with a twist of jazz by Dr. Tom Andrews at the piano, come at 11:30 a.m. At 12 noon we will eat lunch. Punch, coffee, tea, green salad, and dessert will be served for \$2.00. Bring a sandwich if you like. The program, Holiday Traditions Around the World, will begin at 1:00 p.m. after a brief installation of new officers. The countries described will be Palestine by the Rev. Maurice Luker, Holland by Jeanetta Mouncey, Sweden by the Rev. Ron Miller, Germany by Victoria Guenther, Scotland by Wendy Miller, Kenya by Mary Ellen Miller and Alina Kipchumba. The Esther Circle will present a skit on the Spanish speaking countries. Please come and bring an unwrapped gift for migrant children at Beth El Mission. To make a reservation call the church office (955-8119) by noon on Monday, December 5.

## January Gathering An Appalachian Adventure

Are you looking for something different to do? Do you like to walk and hike? Come join the PW women on Tuesday January 3rd and hear about Bunny Schneider's 27 year adventure as she and three friends hiked the Appalachian Trail. The punch and social hour begins at 11:30 a.m. followed by lunch. Bring your own sandwich. The cost is \$2.00 for coffee and dessert. The program will begin at 1:00 p.m. To make a reservation call the office (955-8119) by Friday, December 30. All church members and friends are invited to lunch with us. ☞

## Awesome, Stupendous, Colossal Yard Sale

Saturday, March 17, 2012 at  
First Presbyterian Church

Please save items to donate. The good sellers are glassware, pots and pans, dishes, kitchen wares, lamps, toys, sporting goods, collectibles, books, jewelry and accessories, purses, costumes, holiday décor, pictures and artwork, tools, children's and teen clothing (no adult clothing, please). ☞

## Youth & Children Rehearsals for Nativity Service

by Dan McCurdy, Intern Youth & Families

Our Nativity Service will be held on December 24, Christmas Eve, at 4:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Children and youth will be helping to lead the worship service. Starting December 4, all who wish to participate should be at Fellowship Hall at 9:50 a.m. to get their parts and costumes. Practices will be held during the Sunday school hour each Sunday leading up to the final dress rehearsal on Thursday, December 22 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Preschoolers (age 4) through high school students are encouraged to share their talents in this beautiful Nativity Service. ☞

## Thinking About the Kenya Mission Trip?

by Marvin & Mary Ellen Miller

Another wonderful trip has been planned--one that can change your life in a positive way. The dates of February 16 to March 2, 2012 seem to be a long way off, but when one looks at the calendar, it is only about 10 weeks away.

If you have even been thinking about being a part of this wonderful experience, please inform Marvin and Mary Ellen Miller at 941-379-4436 or mlandme@verizon.net. ☞

## From the Library

by Natalie Smith, Librarian

Have you seen the new library space? If you haven't seen it, it is on the second floor of the administration building, directly across from the elevator. A door has been added to the wall, so that, upon exiting the elevator, you are looking directly into the library. What a lovely sight! Construction changes, new lighting, paint and carpet make the library a space that is very welcoming. We are deeply grateful to Kathleen Harmon for making the new library space possible.

We will need additional funding in order to add the shelving and furnishings. Hopefully, this will be accomplished in the near future. In the meantime, several groups are using the library for meetings. We hope this will continue after the library is completed, as the space is convenient as well as attractive.

Stop by and take a look. The present library is still active and functioning, so come see what books and materials might be of interest to you. ☞

# Report from the Pastor Nominating Committee

by Carol Papa, Chair

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) was elected on October 9 and began meeting that very week. We are excited to begin the next phase of our transition period in calling a new senior pastor, and we will keep you informed of our progress on a regular basis.


There are three stages to the search process:

- Determine the requirements for the position of senior pastor.
- Conduct a broad and thorough search, screening the responses to a final set of candidates.
- Evaluate the candidates and make a selection to be presented to the congregation.

The process can take anywhere from nine months to two years to complete. We ask for your continued prayers throughout the entire process! At this point, the PNC is in the first stage and is just beginning to fill out the Church Information Form (CIF) – the standard and required form used by the PC(USA). Once the CIF is completed, it must be approved by our session and then the Committee on Ministry of the Peace River Presbytery before it can be sent to candidates.


The PNC knows that you may have questions along the way, and we will answer them to the best of our ability while fully respecting the confidentiality of future candidates. Please feel free to contact any of the people below. Victor Garraus is bilingual for those members of our congregation who might be more comfortable with communicating in Spanish.

Ellen Forbes  
Jean Fulton  
Victor Garraus  
Emilie Kimbrough

Adam Martin  
Marvin Miller  
Carol Papa, Chair  
Kay Steinman  
Cord Van Nostrand,  
Co-Chair 

## Fair Trade the Perfect Gift



Come visit the Fair Trade kiosk and pick up great hostess gifts and stocking stuffers: chocolate mint candy bars, green mint or peppermint tea, flavored coffees, olive oil and za'atar, almonds, and much more. 



## Helping Others Through Grief

by Cheryl Track, Parish Nurse

It can be tough to know what to say or do when someone you care about is grieving. It's common to feel helpless, awkward, or unsure. You may be afraid of intruding, saying the wrong thing, or making the person feel even worse. Don't let discomfort prevent you from reaching out to someone who is grieving. Now, more than ever, your support is needed. You don't need to have answers or give advice. The most important thing you can do for a grieving person is to simply be there. Your support and caring presence will help them cope with the pain and begin to heal. Jesus has won the victory over suffering and death, yet these are very real and painful experiences for us. The Bible reminds us that even Jesus wept at the death of His dear friend Lazarus (John 11:35).

### What to say to someone who has lost a loved one

- Acknowledge the situation. Example: "I heard that your \_\_\_\_\_ died." Use the word "died." That will show that you are more open to talk about how the person really feels.
- Express your concern. Example: "I'm sorry to hear that this happened to you."
- Be genuine in your communication and don't hide your feelings. Example: "I'm not sure what to say, but I want you to know I care."
- Offer your support. Example: "Tell me what I can do for you."
- Ask how he or she feels, and don't assume you know how the bereaved person feels on any given day.

Source: American Cancer Society

### Comments to avoid when comforting the bereaved

- "I know how you feel." One can never know how another may feel.
- "It's part of God's plan." This phrase can make people angry and they often respond with, "What plan? Nobody told me about any plan."
- "Look at what you have to be thankful for." They know they have things to be thankful for, but right now they are not important.
- "He's in a better place now." The bereaved may or may not believe this. Keep your beliefs to yourself unless asked.
- "This is behind you now; it's time to get on with your life." Sometimes the bereaved are resistant to getting on with life because they feel this means "forgetting" their loved one. In addition, moving on is easier said than done. Grief has a mind of its own and works at its own pace.

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## Helping Others Through Grief

(continued from page 4)

- “You should” or “You will” are statements that are too directive. Instead you could begin your comments with “Have you thought about...?” or “You might...?”

Source: American Hospice Foundation


Our faith offers tangible help when all else gives way. May we speak and live these words Job spoke from the depth of his misery “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth. After my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God” (Job 19:25-26).

If you have any concerns about grief or loss, please contact me, 320-3828. 

## Church Garden

On Saturday November 20 twenty-two members gathered to prepare our corner lot to be a church garden. The purpose of the garden is to:

1. Honor creation.
2. Provide sacred space for members to “tend to Eden.”
3. Raise awareness about organic gardening and provide fresh food for the church and the community in need.

If you are interested in planting in or tending to the garden contact Carolyn Simmons at 924-0215. 




## Home for the Holidays

by Edith Phillips, Family Promise, Co-Coordinator

“Oh, there’s no place like home for the holidays!” we sing with gusto, laced with a warm touch of nostalgia. But what about those who don’t have a home in which to set up a tree, or prepare a holiday feast? Every time I spend time with a homeless family enrolled in the Family Promise program, I return home with a heart overflowing with thanksgiving for God’s blessing of shelter, rather sheepish that most of the time I take that monumental blessing for granted. Do you?

It is with a grateful heart that I consider my long time membership in a faith community that practices hospitality under so many guises. Our congregation fulfills the scripture, I Peter 4: 9-10: “Practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another.” Our service of presence, food and shelter to the selected homeless families is performed through “the strength which God supplies; in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.” And with special appreciation, we (Rachel Martin, George Chorba, Linda Buckley, and I) ask God’s richest blessings upon you who so generously gave of your prayers, time, talents, and resources to the two families who stayed with us from October 30 - November 6. There were 46 volunteers and a total of 290 hours, requiring no small feat of coordination. In response to a questionnaire for things that stood out at our church, the families noted: “spacious rooms” and “dinner with the Spanish Congregation.”

For you who have not yet become involved, talk to those who have served in this way. I think they will agree that it has been a meaningful experience. Our next hosting week is February 12-19, 2012. However, prior to that date, please remember Family Promise in your “Thoughtful Giving” booklet, for those who “won’t be home for the holidays.” 

## Angel Tree

by Linda Hollen

Angel Tree is a program for children who have a parent in prison. Angel Tree provides gifts for children on behalf of their parent as a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ and to strengthen the relationship between the child and their incarcerated parent.

Please join us for the Angel Tree Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 14. Dinner, crafts and a spirit filled Christmas skit will precede the distribution of the presents in the name of the imprisoned parent. Volunteers are needed for last minute shopping, party set up, and greeters for families on the night of the event. Contact Linda Hollen 377-9862. ☎

## Got Your Ticket?



Experience the spirit of the holidays with a festive concert performed by our choir, guest soloists and members of the Sarasota Orchestra on Friday, December 16, 7:30 p.m. at the church. Featured will be John Rutter's popular "Gloria" and carol arrangements with audience participation, brass ensemble, percussion and organ. Tickets in advance are \$15.00 and can be picked up in the church office. Tickets at the door are \$20.00. ☎

## Automated Funds Transfer

We are offering a convenient way to give to our church - giving by automatic funds transfer. If you would like the convenience of direct payment of your pledge call Lisa Garcia in the church office (955-8119) to get started. You can choose to have a designated amount sent to the church once per month or break it into two payments per month. The first withdrawal will be January 3, 2012.

*Remember: Giving to God is an act of worship. Whether you put your weekly offering in the plate, give a gift of stock, or give online, always dedicate your gift to God during the morning worship and be sure to use the yellow prayer card for prayer requests and thanksgiving.* ☎

## Giving Envelopes

On Sundays, December 11 and 18, Lisa Garcia, Finance Manager, will have tables set up outside for you to pick up your 2012 envelopes. To save in the cost of mailing please make every effort to visit Lisa and pick up your envelopes and say hello. ☎

## Christmas Poinsettias

The most joyous season of the year is rapidly approaching and our thoughts turn to holiday traditions. It is a tradition at First Presbyterian Church (USA) to decorate the church with poinsettias for Christmas. Plants may be ordered in memory of or in honor of loved ones. **To assure quantities, all orders are to be submitted by December 11.** Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church with "poinsettia" in the memo. Order forms may be turned into the office. The poinsettias are \$9.00 each.

Number of poinsettias at \$9.00 each \_\_\_\_\_ Amount paid \_\_\_\_\_

Paid by check #: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount by Cash \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

IN HONOR OF \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one:

I will pick up my poinsettia(s) after the 9:00 pm Christmas Eve Service

\* please pick up no later than Dec. 25

I wish to donate my poinsettias to the homebound.

I wish to help deliver to the homebound.





# Birthdays

1	Jill Cardinal	10	Laverne Borst			
	Joe Davis		Margarita Contreras			
	Trisha Dempsey		Louis Wery			
	Michelle Dugger	11	Lorenzo Mills			
	Evan Eastmoore		Helen Thomas	21	Jim Burgess	28
	Drew Stuart		Taylor Weitzel		Lee Oldenburgh	
3	Wendy Anderson	12	Rolando Garcci	22	Kent Bartruff	
	Bill Yackey		Bob Hultz		Marion Hughes	
4	Teri Baldwin	13	Patrick Duggan		Joan Reibman	
	Connie Brussee		Robin John		Carol Smith	
	David Cook		Jeff Steiner		Jackson Watrobsky	
	Bette Lou Cookson	14	Sindy Burggraf	23	Jim Camastro	
	Jim Young		Shawn Geenen		Meg Lowman	29
5	John Burgess		Ginny Haydon		Austin McKinley	
	Charlie Cleland		Ron Short		Ann Proctor	
	German Diaz	15	Harry Dodge	24	Chuck Duddingston	
	Christine Sunseri		T.J. Wishart		Sawyer Dunn	
	Lamar Watson	16	Sandy Altman		Mike Furtick	30
6	Ryan Chapdelain		Kristin Galindo		Katie Hart	
7	Merle Chorba		Beulah Tidwell		Heather Lamb	31
	Doris Hackett	17	Sheri Kortright		Jo Jo Morrison	
	Anne Hathaway		Shannon Smith		Charles Proctor	
	Bonnie Wallace	18	Virginia Kirkpatrick		Bob Wrobel	
	Ed Williams		Natalie Smith	25	John Herrli	
8	Lisa Ciralo	19	Lois Fruehwald	26	Arianna Dulaney	
	Todd Yeomans		Rob Kimbrough, Jr.		Lilly Icard	
9	Lacey Anderson		Dan McCurdy	27	Bruce Blomgren	
	Rachel DeWyngaert		Taylor Muldoon		Alesha Hacker	
	Rhonda Hawkins	20	Douglas Lauber		Fields Thomas	
	Linda Mancini		Chad Papa			
	Richard Reibman		David Schmaltz			
	Delores Zulauf		Joan Scott			

# Anniversaries

2	Harold & Phyllis DuBois	20	Cullen & Katy Sabin
3	Charlie & Sandy Everly	21	Jim & Wendy Hazlett
	Duane & Doris Harff	23	Jack & Beverly Koach
4	Delbert & Letha Brower	25	Brian & Lois Bowen
	Paul & Macky Groen	26	Ike & Lorena Linhares
5	Allen & Barbara Atkins	27	Bob & Jane Messimer
	Dale & Bonnie Ferguson		Greg & Carol Ann Kalish
9	Ron & Karen Saba		Rob & Amber Day
10	Merle & Beverley Lilly		Tim & Susan O'Leary
	David & Heather Anderson	28	Kent & Jane Bartruff
12	Brad & Jan Gaubatz	30	Merv & Sandy Altman
	Donald & Kay Davis		John & Velma Yost
16	Jim & Bobbie Dean		Neal & Diane Price
	George & Joann Kerekes		
	John & Linda Parks		
	Jack & Phyllis Kennette		
17	Dave & Dana Campbell		

**Cross Connections** is a monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota, Florida Volume 29 Issue #12. Please submit articles for the next issue by December 15, 2011

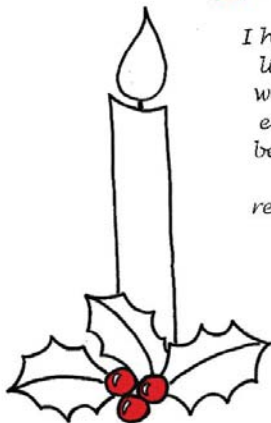
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## Thoughtful Giving



*I have come as  
light into the  
world, so that  
everyone who  
believes in me  
should not  
remain in the  
darkness.  
John 12:46*

*First Presbyterian Church  
Sarasota, FL  
2011*

## Christmas Shopping With Thoughtful Giving

You can finish your Christmas shopping and support the ministries of First Presbyterian Church! Please stop by the display in the courtyard on Sunday mornings to learn more about the Thoughtful Giving Program.