

# January 2017



Baptism of the Lord  
**January 8th**



Session Mtg  
Date to be Announced



January 6

Happy New Year! There are many thoughts/ memories that those words conjure up in my mind. Excitement surrounding my first New Year's Eve Party, excitement that I can now sleep through New Year's Eve parties.

There is only one memory of New Year's Eve that I wish to re-enact. A few years ago I had the joy of attending a New Year's Eve Celebration at a Sudanese church in Des Moines, Iowa. My good friend and sister in Christ, Ekram Kachu invited me. The gathering began at 6 PM in the sanctuary. There were many speakers preaching the Word of God and the music was amazing. The church was filled with people of all ages. At 8 PM, we gathered for dinner, returning to the sanctuary at 10. I had been asked to "bring a word of encouragement", no longer than 15 minutes. I'm afraid I stumbled over myself, but I did manage to speak a few words about holding fast to their faith and choosing role models wisely. At midnight we shouted Happy New Year and sang songs until almost 1:00. Slowly the people began to return to their homes in various parts of the city.

These are American citizens who came as immigrants to our country because of religious persecution. Most had spent years in refugee camps prior to coming to America. Their faith was strong that God was with them. That God would sustain them through the difficult times of learning American English, and adjusting to our way of life. The hopes of a better life in America is much harder than they anticipated. Many of their children are losing sight of God in the midst of school friends who have so much, yet speak of God so little.

They come from a culture where you gathered all day to hear the Word of God preached amidst resounding music and shared meals. Services began mid-



morning and ended as the sun began to sink. They were hungry for the privilege of gathering with other believers and sharing what God was doing in their lives.

I am asking that you be in prayer with me that the faith of these Sudanese peoples would come to America. I have often thought that we need missionaries from Africa to come to America instead of the other way around. Pray that American Christians are not a bad influence on them. We are so accustomed to Christianity being the primary religion that we do not know what it means to have your livelihood and even your life threatened for proclaiming Christ as the Son of God. Let this be the year of Thanksgiving to God for all of our blessings. Let this be the year that we acknowledge God's activity in our own lives. Let this be the year that we reach out with fervent prayer for the Holy Spirit to be active and alive in our own hearts.

Your Sister in Christ

Pastor Grace

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## Christian Education

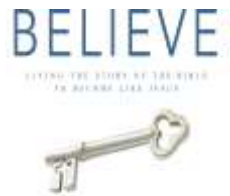
By Barb Mayfield

### Sunday School

It's never too late to join Sunday School

Join us for Sunday School!!

Adult Sunday School meets on Sunday mornings starting at 9:00 a.m. in the classroom next to the upstairs kitchen. We are using a study titled: "Believe." This video based curriculum covers the basic beliefs of the Christian faith. It is written for new as well as "old" believers. We are spending two weeks on each lesson. Books and study guides are available. Please join us!



### Oasis

Oasis will begin on January 11<sup>th</sup> after taking a break over Christmas. The Christmas Celebration on December 14<sup>th</sup> was a great time as we learned

about Christmas Around the World. Thank you to all who contributed food for the delicious meal and to the Presbyterian Women for the generous contribution towards gifts for the children.

Thank you to all who continue to lead, serve, donate and pray, making our Oasis ministry possible. A new sign-up sheet for preparing meals is on the counter in the fellowship room.

\*Oasis Starts January 11<sup>th</sup>

Due to plumbing renovation the date may need to change

## Three Weeks Only

Jan18-Feb 1 Wednesday Nights Pastor Grace will lead a 3 week topical study Adults join Oasis for dinner and worship then meet for a time of study and conversation.

## January Library Corner

By Laraine MacLauchlan

Not much is happening at the library. Just wish everyone a Happy New Year and we will see you at the library in February on the first Wednesday of the month.



## Presbyterian Women

By Jane Bishop

The Mary-Martha Circle will meet next in March.



## Thrift Shop Schedule for January

Thrift Shop Schedule for January  
Sat. Jan. 7..Donna & Barbara..Cashier  
Sat. Jan.14..Libby.....Tags  
Sat. Jan 21..Barbara.....Tags  
**NOTICE CONGREGATION!! FOOD PANTRY!!**



February is the month for our church to provide TWO WORKERS each Monday and Friday--9:45-12:00, and on the second Tuesday, Feb. 14 at 9:30 when the truck comes.

MEN AND WOMEN: There will be a sign-up sheet in the library!!

## Worship Committee

By Terry Langston

We are packing up and sending off old choir robes that have not been worn in years. The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, in the city of Blantyre (Blantyre Synod) Malawi, Africa had asked for donations of robes. I am so excited to know that they will finally be worn and appreciated again.

We celebrated Christmas Eve with communion by intinction served by Pastor David Lawrence and Pastor Grace Hammer. The celebration of the birth of Jesus continued on Christmas Day with Lessons and Carols and singing Happy Birthday to Jesus. Joy to the World!

On January 1st, we will gather together at the Delphi Presbyterian Church at 9:30am to worship, with Pastor Catherine Moran leading us.

## Clerk of Session

By Laraine MacLaughlan

January Session meeting date to be announced.

## Stewardship/Missions

By Joe Mayfield

"So... 2017 is here whether we want it or not. Making New Year's Resolutions seldom works, so what can we do to make a difference in the new year? I believe each of us should start with this prayer, "**Lord show me what you would have me do.**" If we pray this sincerely and pledge ourselves to it, the Lord will clearly and without exception, make clear to each of us our gifts and talents. He wants all of us to be an integral part of the future progress of this (our church)!

For a financial summary we have income year to date of 82,017 dollars and expenses for the same period of 73,482 dollars.

If you have not turned in a pledge card yet, or have just now decided to do one for the first time, please do so as soon as you can, we will be tallying up the numbers in January.

2016 was a year of preparation, 2017 will be a year of action! Stay tuned and be ready to help with your gifts and talents!"

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## Additional Thoughts.....

### **Free refills**

God's kingdom is like free refills at a restaurant. Wait – *what?!*

Jesus used common, everyday items to explain the kingdom of God; we can too! The kingdom is like free refills. Still thirsty after one soda or coffee? Get another – no charge. In fact, the kingdom of God is better than free refills because you don't even have to pay for the first glass.

It's like having a parent buy you a favorite meal when you're young. You sit back and savor it without the price crossing your mind. That's okay, because the generous giver loves you and wants to be with you.

Sure, that's simplistic, but so are Jesus' parables. Overanalyze them and they may fall apart. But ponder the single point each makes, maybe get a chuckle and an *a-ha!* out of it, and that parable has done its job. So grab another free refill – of your beverage and of God's love!

—Heidi Mann



**Choir Practice 9:30; Worship 10:15; Sunday School as announced**


***Flora Presbyterian Church***

***January 2017***

**B=Birthday N=Nursery SR=Scripture Readers U=Ushers**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6 <i>B=Kathy King</i>	7
8 N=Susan Hollis SR=Terry Langston SR=Mark Good U=Kevin &Martha Clark	9	10	11 <i>* Oasis Begins!!!</i>	12 <i>B=Brenton Lee Jackson</i>	13	14
15 N=Susan Hollis SR=Barbara Wilkinson SR=Susan Hollis U=Bob and Ann Brown	16	17	18	19	20 <i>B=Jane Bishop</i>	21
22 N=Susan Hollis SR=Laurie Brower SR=Gerry Hollis U=Bob & Ann Brown	23 <i>B= Terry Langston</i>	24 Pulse article deadline 10a.m.	25	26	27	28
29 N=Susan Hollis SR=Sally Schmidt SR=Tammy Moss U=Terry Langston U= Marlene Smith <i>*Worship Committee</i>	30	31				

\* meeting after church



# Light OF THE World

In a world full of sin and darkness, how can we find our way?  
Discover Jesus' answer in John 8:12, NIV.

*Directions: Use the key to fill in the missing vowels.  
Then read the completed Bible verse.*

**KEY:** A E I O

" \_ M TH \_ L \_ GHT \_ F  
TH \_ W \_ RLD. WH \_ \_ V \_ R  
F \_ LL \_ WS M \_ W \_ LL N \_ V \_ R  
W \_ LK \_ N D \_ RKN \_ SS."

J \_ \_ HN 8:12, NIV

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