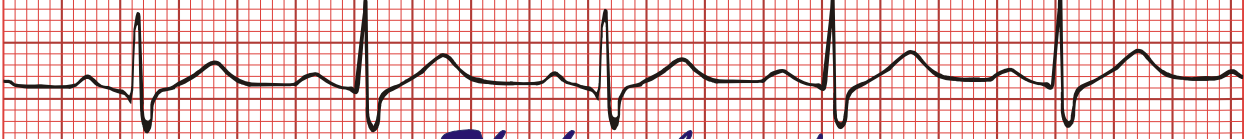
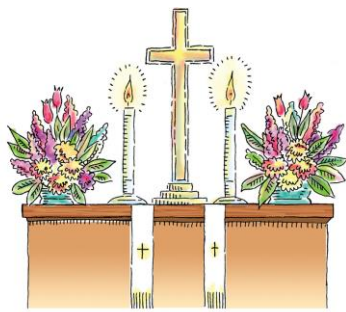


PULSE



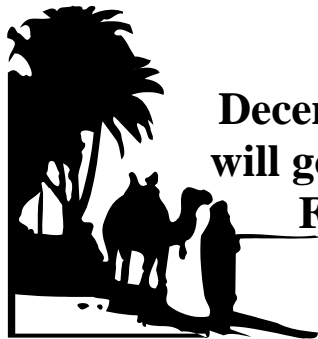
*The heartbeat of
Flora Presbyterian Church*

December, 2013



Speaker Schedule

December 1 – Diana McCracken
December 8 – Carrie Munson
December 15 – Louis Sandos
December 22 – Carrie Munson
December 29 – Carrie Munson



**December 18, Oasis children
will go Christmas Caroling at
Flora Senior Citizen
Apartments**



**Ordination and
Installation of Elders
will be during worship
on December 15**



**Rev. Ellis Gasser will
lead us in a Candlelight
Communion Service on
Christmas Eve**

The Man Who Hated Christmas

By Nancy W. Gavin

It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past ten years.

It all began because my husband Mike hated Christmas. Oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it – overspending and the frantic running around at the last minute to get a tie for Uncle Harry and the dusting powder for Grandma – the gifts given in desperation because you couldn't think of anything else.

Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties and so forth. I reached for something special just for Mike. The inspiration came in an unusual way.

Our son Kevin, who was 12 that year, was on the wrestling team at the school he attended. Shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church. These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their spiffy blue and gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes.

As the match began, I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear, a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears. It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford.

Well, we ended up walloping them. We took every weight class. Mike, seated beside me, shook his head sadly, "I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them." Mike loved kids – all kids. He so enjoyed coaching little league football, baseball and lacrosse. That's when the idea for his present came.

That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes, and sent them anonymously to the inner-city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed a small, white envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done, and that this was his gift from me.

Mike's smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year. And that same bright smile lit up succeeding years. For each Christmas, I followed the tradition – one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a check to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on.

The white envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last thing opened on Christmas morning, and our children – ignoring their new toys – would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents. As the children grew, the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the small, white envelope never lost its allure.

The story doesn't end there. You see, we lost Mike last year due to dreaded cancer. When Christmas rolled around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. But Christmas Eve found me placing an envelope on the tree. And the next morning, I found it was magically joined by three more. Unbeknownst to the others, each of our three children had for the first time placed a white envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing to take down that special envelope.

Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit will always be with us.

[This Christmas story was originally published in the December 14, 1982 issue of Woman's Day magazine and inspired the creation of [The White Envelope Project](#), a caring nonprofit organization dedicated to developing the next generation of givers, civic leaders, and philanthropists. May this inspirational story remind us all of the true meaning of Christmas and giving during the holidays and throughout the year.]

Birthday **Nursery** **Scripture Readers** **Ushers**

December, 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Susan Scholl Terry Langston Ann Brown Mark & Denise Good 1 st Sun of Advent Diana McCracken, Gst Spkr	2	3 Janis Burns	4 6:00 PM Oasis	5 Kent King	6	7 Libby Sparks
8 Mike Kearns Jenne McMillin Susan Scholl Laraine MacLauchlan Gerry Hollis Laurie Brower Sally Schmidt 2 nd Sun of Advent Christmas Joy Offering Carrie Munson, Gst Spkr	9	10	11 6:00 PM Oasis	12 Julie Catron 7:00 PM Lafayette Gr Banquet Gathering	13	14
15 Susan Scholl Tammy Moss Barb Mayfield David & Rhoda Katz 3 rd Sun of Advent Christmas Joy Offering Installation of Elders Louis Sandos, Gst Spkr Session meets after worship	16	17	18 6:00 PM Oasis - Caroling at Senior Apartments	19	20	21
22 Betty Peterson Susan Scholl Janis Burns Bill Kearns Dick & Jane Bishop 4 th Sun of Advent Christmas Joy Offering Carrie Munson, Gst Spkr	23 Bill Kearns	24 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service – Ushers – Marshall & Patsy McCammack	25	26	27	28
29 Susan Scholl Marlene Smith Dale Snipes Kevin & Martha Clark Carrie Munson, Gst Spkr	30 Kevin Clark	31				

Christian Education

by Tammy Moss

Sunday School

We are enjoying a study of "People of Purpose" – choosing personalities of the New Testament and reflecting on the life lessons contained in God's Word. Please join us in the dining room from 9:15 to 10:00 AM.



Thrift Shop Schedule for December

Sat. Dec 7.....Laraine MacLauchlan..... tags
Sat. Dec 14..... Libby Sparks..... sacker
Fri. Dec 27.....Jane Bishop..... sort/mark

Worship Committee

by Kevin Clark



Pulpit fill for month of December:

December 1 – Louis Sandos
December 8 – Carrie Munson
December 15 – Louis Sandos
December 22 – Carrie Munson
December 29 – Carrie Munson

Oasis ~



The Hayride at the Kratz's on October 30 was well attended and enjoyed by all.

On November 9th several children and adults raked leaves at the Flora Senior Center as a service project.



On December 18 we will go Christmas caroling at the Flora Senior Citizen Apartments. Oasis will continue through December 18 and reconvene on



"HERE WE COME H-CAROLING!"
January 15, 2014.

If you are able to help prepare, serve, and/or clean-up a meal, please talk to Laurie Brower or Ken Cox.

If you would like to donate towards the cost of meals and other special events, designate "Oasis" in the memo line on your check to the church.



We will have Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion service at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, December 24. Rev. Gasser will lead us.



Clerk of Session

by Laurie Brower



Session Meeting

Next Session meeting is December 15th following worship.

Update on Interim Pastor:
First interview with Interim Pastor was held on November 22nd. Two more applications have been received but interviews have not been scheduled yet.



Presbyterian Women

by Jane Bishop



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

The Mary-Martha Circle met on November 19 for the last meeting in 2013. Over \$1,000.00 was distributed to various mission causes from our share of Thrift Shop earnings. The first meeting in 2014 will be March 18, but our work will go on each month at the Thrift Shop, and in February at the Food Pantry also.

2013 Thank Offering

Our thoughtful and generous congregation contributed \$701.00 this year!! Eliza Clokey would be proud of us.



Ordination service for new elder, Ron Austin, will be during worship on December 15. The elders to be installed on that date are Ron Austin-Class of 2014, Barb Mayfield-Class of 2015, and Terry Langston and Joe Mayfield-Class of 2016.

Christmas Joy Offering will be received on December 8, 15, and 22.



Christmas
Joy Offering



Christmas Baskets

The Flora Presbyterian Church will continue its tradition with helping families at Christmas again this year. We have 12 families for whom we are currently purchasing gifts and food . If the spirit is moving you to help in some way, there will be additional information announced at church or contact Terry Langston. Let us show the love of Christ for those that we have been given and spread the joy and blessings of our Lord and Savior.



What to give?

To your enemy, forgiveness.
To an opponent, tolerance.
To a friend, your heart.
To a customer, service.
To all men, charity.
To every child, a good example.
To yourself, respect.

-Oren Arnold



Beautiful lights of Christmas
everywhere you go.
Beautiful lights of Christmas
shining o'er the snow.
In every window shining
and all the town around,
Beautiful lights of Christmas
everywhere around.

Even traffic signals take on a special glow,
Green and red shine brightly in the evening snow.

Christmas trees in every window
sending forth their cheer,
Lets you know that Christmas Day
is drawing very near.

Up above a star shines bright,
lighting up the wintry night,
Listen closely you seem to hear,
angel voices sweet and clear,
Singing in the wintry night,
while the Christmas stars shine bright.

No other time in all the year,
little children hold more dear.
Grant us through the coming year,
love and peace we hold most dear.

That another year we all may see,
people everywhere happy and free.
Then the beautiful lights of Christmas
will shine all the world around,
Beautiful lights of Christmas
everywhere abound.

*Charlene Ferguson
December, 1960*



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
vrelEnsitga _____
eahFrt _____

MY NAME IS
niPcre _____ of
aPcee _____



Answers: Mighty God, Wonderful Counselor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace

First Class Mail

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