

# **PULSE**

*The heartbeat of  
Flora Presbyterian Church*

**DECEMBER 2017**



*Christmas Eve*

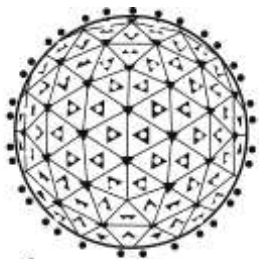
Candlelight  
Service W/  
Communion  
December  
24<sup>th</sup>



Oasis  
Christmas  
Celebration  
Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>



**MERRY  
CHRISTMAS**



*New Year's Eve*

Service  
@  
Delphi  
9:30 AM



Advent Season  
Love  
Hope  
Joy  
Peace  
Christ

# What is the meaning of Christmas?

While on vacation I watched a few Hallmark Christmas movies. The common theme was the search for the 'real' meaning of Christmas. At the end it was discovered that being with family and shopping for those you love is the true meaning. (UGH!)

While in seminary I met several Chinese students, who were working on their MBA. I asked them their understanding of Christmas. They confidently announced that it was a successful marketing scheme which encouraged people to spend money thereby improving the profit margins of businesses before the end of the year. (Good grief!)

I asked some teenagers what they knew about Christmas. It all revolved around presents, parents getting a day off from work, and seeing relatives. (Heavy sigh)

Is it Santa Claus and trees or is there more to this holiday? It is more than just a holiday. It is a Holy Day. Nowhere in the Bible does it say when Jesus was born other than it was during the census ordered by Augustus Caesar. The year has been calculated as early as 3 BC and could have been in September or October. Yet the early church chose December 25<sup>th</sup> as the date to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. God with us... Emmanuel. Born in humble circumstances while, the world busily worried over the politics of the day and the inconveniences of an overcrowded city. Who had time to worry about just another couple that had come to town? Who has time these days to remember that night in Bethlehem?

I pray that each one who reads this will take time each day of Advent to remember. To sit down and read the Scriptures each day. Read the accounts from Matthew and from Luke. Make notes about what new insights the Holy Spirit is showing you.

It is truly a miracle that the Creator of the Universe wants a relationship with us. And



because of His great love for each of us He came to live among us. I think we can give Him some attention and truly remember His birthday.

Your sister in Christ,  
Pastor Grace

## Christian Education

by Barbara Wilkinson



### **Sunday School - Just Walk Across the Room**

This book lays out the knowledge we need to know and need to live in our daily lives. It reminds us that we need to not only put ourselves in our family's lives, in our friend's lives, co-worker's lives and the lives of the unsaved, but to casually and lovingly insert God into conversations. Not to be pushy, but mention God, as you are led by the Holy Spirit. This means we need to be attuned to the Holy Spirit. Everyone of else needs to ask God every morning to help us be sensitive to others, and then rely on the Holy Spirit to let us know when it is the right time to introduce them to God. Follow their lead; if they do not want to hear anymore, then we are done. We are done - until they are ready. Bill Hybels gives us 5 steps we can use in telling others about Christ. These are 5 steps Jesus used with the Woman at the Well. The first is to Bridge the Gap. Do not do anything to be intimidating. Accept them for who they are. Second, a conversation can be started by asking questions. Jesus used something they had in common. They were both at the well for water. He asked her for water. Then he continued by telling her he could give her living water. The third step is to be patient. Jesus knew he could not deal with the woman's sins. She first had to be a believer. Step five is don't let them "drag" you to conversations that will take you away from planting God's seed. The woman at the well changed the subject to where people think they should worship. Jesus' response was it no longer matters where you worship. What matters is if you believe in me. The final step is to give hope. Jesus gave the hope of the living water.

Bill also reminds us that Matthew deliberately gave parties with his old friends (tax collectors) and with his new Christians friends. They mingled and discussed their own backgrounds, giving Jesus's Disciples the chance to talk about the Love of God. Bill warns us when mingling with Christians and non-Christians always have

more non-Christians than you have Christians. You do not want the non-Christians to feel like they are "ganged-up" on.

Please Join us at 9:00 for Adult Sunday School. The next study we are planning is "The Framework for Poverty", to better enable us to accept, understand and lead others to Christ.

**Children's Sunday School** We will no longer be holding Sunday School for the Teens and Elementary Grade School Children. There has not been any interest. We will review Children's Sunday School in the future.

**Oasis** will be having a Christmas Celebration on December 13. Again, Oasis will start at 6:00 in the Dining Hall with a meal. Parents of Oasis children and the Sunday Congregation are also invited to join us. After the meal we will adjourn to the Sanctuary for Worship, Singing, a Bible Trivia Game and the 4th Graders will be receiving their traditional bibles.



Oasis Children have made the Bulletin Covers for Sunday Worship during the Advent Season. This church is so blessed to have these young children involved in our Worship of God.

### Congregational Life

by Sally Schmidt, Tammy Moss

Congregational Life Committee met on Sunday, 11/19/17. With the additional volunteers, we now have 8 members for the committee. Thank you to all of you who have volunteered to help.

We will be having a planning meeting in February, 2018.

### Presbyterian Women

by Jane Bishop

The Mary-Martha Circle will not meet until March for our regular Bible Study. However, we will need to meet occasionally for a business meeting, and, of course, will be keeping our work schedule in the thrift shop.



**Thrift Shop Schedule for December**

Sat. Dec. 16...Jane Bishop...Tags  
Thurs. Dec. 28...Donna Sholty...Sort & Mark

**Stewardship and Missions**

*by Joe Mayfield*

Thanks to everyone for coming to our Stewardship luncheon on November 19th. Very good food and fellowship and no cooking! 2018 will be an exciting year as we try to "venture outside of comfort our zone", improve our worship service, figure out ways to serve the community and ultimately be a church that matters. We can do this!!

December is always a busy month with activities, family gatherings, shopping, gift wrapping and of course eating. It is also a time to help the less fortunate. We traditionally do that with our Christmas baskets locally, and our JOY offering for the world. This year our Christmas basket program has 5 families. Details about that will start on December 3rd. We will have our Christmas baskets ready for the families on Saturday Dec 16th. The JOY offering will be taken on December 3rd, December 10th and December 17th. Thank you so much for your faithful giving to this in the past.

Finally a quick financial update for the 10 months ending Oct 31st.: Income from all sources: \$87,967, Expenses for the same period: \$103,856. For income and expenses related only to budget items these are the totals for the 10 month period: INCOME: \$66,342 EXPENSES: \$85,218.

As you can see we have a busy December and would love to have "all hands on deck" each Sunday to enjoy one another, help with activities and ultimately further his kingdom around us, while bringing glory to God in the process.

Merry Christmas!!

**Worship Committee**

*by Terry Langston*

Our annual Christmas Eve candlelight service and communion will be at 7:00PM, on Sunday, December 24th.

If you have any additions or corrections to the memorial/ in honor of Christmas name list, please let me know.

Thank you to everyone that helped with "Hanging the Greens"!

Channel 2 will be present and recording our services for the month of December. Thank you to Mike and Judy Hoffman for this community service



**Usher Schedule**

- Dec 3 Laurie Brower, Sally Schmidt
- Dec 10 Barbara Wilkinson & Marlene Smith
- Dec. 17 Bob and Ann Brown
- Dec. 24 Joe and Tammy Moss
- Dec. 31 ??????????????????



**Nursery Volunteer for December**

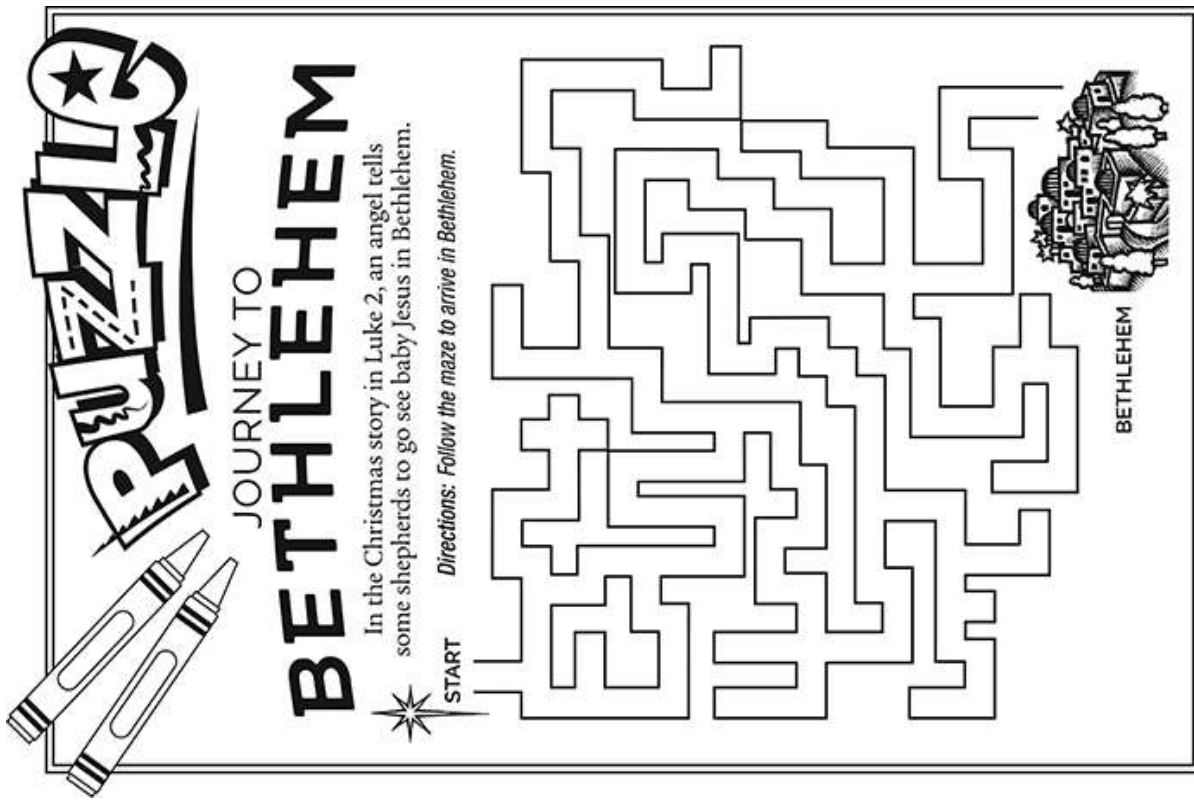
Donna Sholty

**Scripture Readers for December**

- Dec 3 Marlene Smith, Susan Hollis
- Dec 10 Joe Moss, Kevin Clark
- Dec. 17 Ann Brown, Barb Mayfield
- Dec. 24 Joe Mayfield, Ann Brown
- Dec. 31 Tammy Moss, ??????????????

**Session Leaders**

- Laraine MacLauchlan- Clerk
- Terry Langston- Worship
- Tammy Moss & Sally Schmidt-  
Congregational Life
- Barbara Wilkinson- Christian Ed.
- Joe Mayfield- Trustee



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**First Class Mail**



December  
2017

**Worship 10:15; Sunday School 9:00**

*Flora Presbyterian Church*

**B=Birthday**

**Scripture Readers and Usher Schedule on Page 4**

**SS-Sunday School**

*December 2017*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Advent-Love  B=Janis Beck	4  B=Pastor Grace	5  B=Kent King	6 Oasis	7  B=Libby Sparks	8  B=Mike Kearns B=Jenne McMillin	9
10 Advent-Hope	11	12  B=Julie Catron	13 Oasis Christmas Celebration  	14	15	16
17 Advent-Joy Session Meeting 1PM	18	19	20  No Oasis	21	22  B=Betty Peterson	23  B=Bill Kearns
24 Advent-Peace Christmas Eve Communion Service 7PM 31 New Year's Eve Service @ Delphi 9:30a.m.	25 Christmas  	26	27  No Oasis	28	29	30  B=Kevin Clark



# **A Letter From Pastor Grace**

## **Progress & Change**

For some time, the 6 Presbyterian Churches of Carroll County have been seeking ways to enhance the leadership, membership and ministry of their individual congregations. Out of our monthly meetings under the leadership of Rev. David Lawrence both Sessions of Delphi PC and Flora PC have voted to move forward in a cooperative venture.

Let me begin by stating that this is in the early planning stages. Nothing is changing for several months.

I have been asked to serve as pastor for both Flora and Delphi Presbyterian Churches. This means that I will no longer be the full-time pastor of Flora but will be part time at both.

It has been determined that elders should be appointed as part of a liaison team from each church. (A minimum of 2 from each) These 4 will meet with me and with their respective Sessions to review how things are going, what additions or edits need to be made to the relationship and to see how we may cooperatively serve our communities. These elders would be responsible for visitation in their own congregations and will receive additional training. I will be moderating both Session's meetings and presiding over the sacraments of baptism and communion.

The most obvious pro for Flora is a reduction in expenses as pastoral expenses will be split between the 2 congregations.

Delphi will benefit from the continuity of leadership.

There are many other benefits and there are some drawbacks. The Session and I are in full agreement that this is the best way to move forward. The next Session meeting is Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>. I encourage you take your questions and concerns to your elders. We are each happy to talk to you about this new phase of ministry. We won't have all the answers but we are willing find out.

Continue to pray for me and for the Session as we strive together to do God's will here and in the future for the Kingdom of God.

Your sister in Christ,  
Pastor Grace