

Springwater CURRENTS

Springwater Presbyterian Church
24553 Springwater Rd
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www.springwater-pres.org

A Place of worship, nurture and service for God's people of all ages

December 2010

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December Birthdays

Kathy Scott	12/06
Danika Odell	12/12
Bill Leonard	12/14
Dana Shibley	12/15
Kevin Kirby	12/22
Madelyn Engler	12/23
Valerie Ballantyne	12/26
Jim Roden	12/28



Happy Anniversary
Eileen & Rick Parfrey 12/16

Sunday Schedule

No Sunday School during
Advent and Christmas

10:15 AM Hymn Sing

10:30 Worship

11:15 Fellowship

Deadline for next
newsletter:

January 5

*January's newsletter will be
published January 9, be-
cause of the holidays.*

CALENDAR

December 1: *Knit Nite* (4:30 to 6:00), **Advent E-vent** (meal and activity 6:00 to 8:00)

December 2: session budget meeting (6:00)

December 5: greening of the church immediately following worship (light lunch); volunteer at Eastminster warming shelter

December 8: **Advent E-vent** (meal and activity 6:00 to 8:00)

December 11: *Festival of Choirs*, Estacada Jr. High auditorium, 7 pm

December 12: caroling party (meet at church at 4:00, potluck supper at MacKinnon's following the singing)

December 14: volunteer at the Eastminster warming shelter

December 15: **Advent E-vent** (meal and activity 6:00 to 8:00)

December 19: celebration of the Lord's Supper; children act out the Christmas story immediately following worship (light lunch)

December 22: **Advent E-vent** (meal and activity 6:00 to 8:00)

December 24: Service of Lessons and Carols, 7:30 p.m.

December 29: session meeting to prepare for annual congregational meeting, 6:00

January 2: celebration of the Lord's Supper during worship, volunteer at Eastminster warming shelter

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Is it not enough to have both a calendar year (January to December) and a school year (September to June)? How is it that the church finds it necessary to add another type of calendar?

A Short Answer to the Year

The short answer is that the church calendar is the discipline we use to cover the whole spectrum of God's story of salvation. It's an immense story, running from creation through the history of the Hebrew people through the life and ministry of Jesus and the founding of his church, all the way to the end of the world. No wonder it takes three cycles of liturgical years to tell it, each from the perspective of a different gospel!

Maybe you aren't used to thinking of the Bible as "God's story of salvation." In his book, *Stories of God*, John Shea writes, "God is the plot. God is what happens to the people in the story."

In its own peculiar way, this makes sense. *God* is what happens to Abram, minding his own business, until God calls him to leave home. *God* is what happens to David minding the sheep, until Samuel pours oil on his head and sends him off to battle giants of one kind and another. *God* is what happens to Mary, minding her wedding plans, until the angel Gabriel comes courting on God's behalf.

A Longer Answer

That God acted is important enough. But *why* God acted is even more important. John Shea again: "The love of God demands he be wherever his creation is."

It is this which makes God's salvation story also our story.

Because we believe the ultimate meaning of our lives is best interpreted in the context of God's story, we observe the cycles of the church year. Each season has its own mood. Advent with its anticipation and patience, Lent with its somber penitence, Eastertide with its amazement and joy. These seasons are separated by ordinary time, so named for "ordinands" (numbers), not for being uneventful.

Within the seasons, there are even movements. Advent begins with the end of the world and moves toward "God with us." Lent moves us through stages of penitence, helping us let our regrets die in order to embrace the promised new life. Easter season moves us through the implications of that new life. All of this moves us toward the culmination at year end, affirming that Christ is, indeed, Ruler of All.

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Isn't That Enough?

There is another reason for rehearsing these stories and movements, year after year and season after season. When we can put our story next to God's story of salvation, we recognize the seasons in our lives. Recognizing these seasons helps to give meaning to our lives—the movements and losses and repeated resurrections.

Perhaps you remember Good Friday seasons in your life. It is reassuring to know Easter *will* come. The anticipation and expectancy seasons in your life might remind you of Advent, with its hoped-for God-With-Us.

Whatever your current "season," it is helpful to remember its scope: that God is always acting for our redemption. This is a God who can be trusted.

See you in church.

Eileen

Let's celebrate Christian Education at Springwater!

As Advent brings us to the start of another Christian year at Springwater, I would like you to join me in saying "Thank You" to all those who taught, led and attended various Christian Education activities in 2010. We may be small in terms of our head count and the size of our facility, but we are large with the Holy Spirit and our desire to know Christ and grow in our spiritual practice.

During 2010 we were again able to offer a variety of CE opportunities including separate Sunday school classes for young children, older children, youth and adults. We also offered seasonal intergenerational activities, vacation bible school and classes from visiting teachers.

During the weeks leading up to Consecration Sunday this year you heard the term "Spiritual Practice" used a number of times. My own spiritual practice has evolved and grown during my time at Springwater. My involvement in Sunday school classes and other Christian Education events has been and continues to be an important and influential part of my regular spiritual practice.

So, if you are looking for ways to nurture and grow your spiritual practice, I invite you and your family to join us for Advent activities on Wednesday evenings and for Sunday School when we resume in January.

Peter Sturman

CE Committee chair



CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION

Advent With Children

Many families with younger children treasure this time for its excitement. But sometimes the kids just about drive you nuts with their excitement! There is a way to focus this excitement and to reduce some of the commercialized drive to “gimme” and “I want” that erupts this time of year.

Did you know that Spanish uses the same word for both “patience” and “hope”? This might be one way to explain to children the sense of anticipation they experience during this pre-Christmas season of Advent.

In this season of darkness, the simple gesture of lighting a candle seems to signal hope of growing light. Perhaps that is why the Christian church has observed Advent by adding one more lighted candle each week for the month before Christmas.

Many families observe a short and simple time together, usually around the supper table, as they light one more candle during each week of Advent. Our congregation provides Advent calendars for the children. Paper doors are lifted each day to reveal a symbol or Bible verse to help you tell the Advent and Christmas story with the children. Consider using these to tell the Christmas story.

With older children, you may wish to remember the Advent themes mentioned during the Children’s Time in Sunday’s worship. Week 1 is about alertness and urgency. Week 2 is about hope. Week 3 is about patience and strength. Week 4 is in-the-flesh, or showing up.

There are many beautiful Christmas books available on the library table in fellowship hall.



From the Liturgical Arts Committee— *and Debbie Ingamells*

As Advent approaches, we become more aware of family, both with us and in our hearts. As one of the Wednesday night spiritual practices (AKA: liturgical arts workshops) we are needing family photos. We need all sorts of families represented, single parents with children, sibling groups, significant others, historical photos of your family, current pics with you and your loved ones etc. We are going to photo copy these and return them to you. Please label them! We'll need these in the next 2 weeks, so as you sort thru things for your Christmas cards or photo albums, think of our need here at church. These can be placed in Eileen's or Debbie's box in the office. Any size less than a 8x10 will work. You do not need to be present at the Wednesday night activity, but that means that someone else will be creating your masterpiece (using the photo copy of course). I appreciate your help in making this Advent a blessing at Springwater church.



Advent for Adults

To help you have a more meaningful Advent, pick up and use an Advent devotional book or booklet from the library table in fellowship hall.

Some of these materials are for you to keep, some have been in circulation through the congregation for several seasons. Help yourself get ready for Christmas.

Holiday Blues

Are you filled with excitement and joy at the thought of Christmas? Or are anxiety and dread more descriptive of how you feel? If the thought of the winter holidays depresses you, you are not alone.

There are any number of reasons for the Holiday Blues--the long hours of winter darkness; fatigue; stressful family dynamics; grief over loss of loved ones; financial situations that limit our ability to give. One of the biggest contributors is the unrealistic expectations we have about what constitutes the perfect Christmas, or nostalgia about how it "used to be".

Here are a few ideas on how to cope with the Holiday Blues:

First, accept your feeling of depression as a legitimate feeling. Rejecting or suppressing it only makes it worse. Go easy on yourself. Many of us feel the same way.

Second, take care of your body. Eat healthy, avoid too much alcohol (a chemical depressant), get some exercise. Spend some time outdoors in the fresh air and light (lack of light can contribute to depression). Get your rest.

Third, take care of your "heart". Focus on the present rather than pining for the past or worrying about the future. Here is a self-caring meditation: Sit with your eyes closed and focus on your breathing for a few minutes. Then, think of some aspect about yourself that is hard to accept. Imagine someone that loves you forgiving you for this hard to accept aspect. Try this out for 5 or 10 minutes a few times a week and see what happens.

Practice pleasure. Pleasure and joy are enemies of depression. Eat some chocolate, Listen to your favorite music. Read a good book (have you read 'The Best Christmas Pageant Ever?') or watch a movie. Put up some holiday lights, just for yourself if for no other reason.

Fourth, take care of your spirit. Emphasize the spiritual aspects of the season. Attend a special service. Practice gratitude. Do a small kindness for someone else. Get a gift for one of our Christmas families.

If you find yourself feeling down for more than 2 weeks, get help. Don't try to tough it out on your own. Call your doctor, or have a friend do it for you. There are treatment options available for clinical depression that can make a world of difference in your outlook.

Have a Peaceful Christmas and a Hopeful New Year,

Cindy W.

From the Shelter and Habitat Committee . . .

Last month in these pages our Buildings and Grounds Committee was introduced as a part of how life in our congregation is structured. This is “the rest of the story” about that committee, in our own words and with a slightly different purpose. Think of the committee as an organ in the organism called SPC. We scouted out the area and found for us all shelter from the elements over 100 years ago. Now we focus on keeping up our buildings so that the shelter function keeps current with resources in the local “habitat” and especially in winter we try to save energy (= \$).

We converted from oil to a gas furnace for last winter and found a lower cost supplier of propane in the spring. Many of you helped purchase new windows lately and they are already helping keep us warmer with less fuel cost. The folding door at the bottom of the stairs was re-installed this fall and with a new latch at the top is doing a lot to keep warmed air in the classrooms downstairs. This latest change got made just before the cold snap came Thanksgiving week.

One of our tasks is to control temperature to meet needs of the SPC body. That is often hard because sometimes the whole body shows up and needs the whole space while at other times only one of the organs (committees) is there and for only a shorter number of minutes. The tool for these adjustments is the THERMOSTAT and it is smarter than most of us. When it sprouted the “hands off!” sign lately that was a signal that it was not behaving well. We think it was because well-meaning parts of the body goofed up the system. Our B. & G. Committee needs to be the clearinghouse for information on the heating needs so as to find the most comfort with the least waste. So do not consider that this thermostat is like your own. Do not feel free to adjust it. But if you must do so then also notify Gilbert, Wilma or Eileen ASAP with a careful detailing of what you changed, when and why.

Finally, a hint about the future: We are currently exploring an option of an added heat source that could warm the fellowship hall using electricity to squeeze heat out of the outside air and place it into that room just before a committee or other organ of the SPC body needs it for a meeting. Small heat pumps are available now that would save three or four fold on energy use compared to plug-in electric heaters. If any of you have experience with these new devices (called ductless, mini-splits) at home or work please let us know. Fuel cost for each bit of heat it delivers would be much less than for propane. We think that is good stewardship and quite neighborly, too, given the way climate change can be influenced here but felt in habitats around the world.

Gilbert Shibley, for the Committee



The tool for these adjustments is the THERMOSTAT and it is smarter than most of us. ... Do not feel free to adjust it.



Springwater Presbyterian Church Committee Structure

Session and Committee Structure— Organizational Chart.

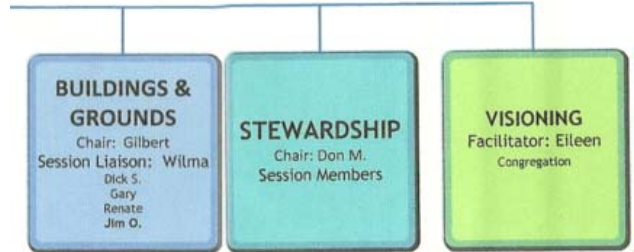
Please refer to the chart in November’s newsletter to see how the Stewardship Committee fits into the whole of the church’s structure.

Stewardship Committee, structure and function

The stewardship committee for this year was comprised of the Session members with Don MacKinnon serving as chairman. We continued to focus on the concept of stewardship as a spiritual act of worship, dedicating yourself in total to Christ’s service rather than simply giving money to the church.

Helping us during the year has been our accounts receivable person , Gwen Shearer and accounts payable, Debbie Ingamells. Mary Johnson led our audit committee. Their valuable help is much appreciated.

We have just completed our stewardship drive with Consecration Sunday and will be developing next year’s budget in December.



Stewardship

Another Consecration Sunday has just concluded with good results. The children’s time, Moment for Mission and Eileen’s sermons were focused on the inspirational theme “Generosity as a Spiritual Practice”. Those who were present at the Consecration Sunday Service placed their cards in the heart shaped basket on the communion table. For many of us this is a very spiritual act at the end of the service. Results of the pledges given on Sunday were very good. Twenty four pledges totaled \$63,844. This included 1 new pledge and 11 step up increases. It is hoped that when the pledges come in from those who were not at church, we will meet or exceed last years pledge amount of \$73,892.

If you were unable to attend the Consecration Sunday service and would like to receive a pledge card, contact Gwen Shearer or Don MacKinnon.

A special thanks to all who helped with the pledge campaign this year. Generosity is truly a Spiritual Practice. Also a big thanks to all who helped with the pot luck and those who participated in the program, Kathleen , Marilyn, Jim, Judy, Nona and all who attended.

Don MacKinnon

If you were unable to attend the Consecration Sunday service and would like to receive a pledge card, contact Gwen Shearer or Don MacKinnon.



CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING



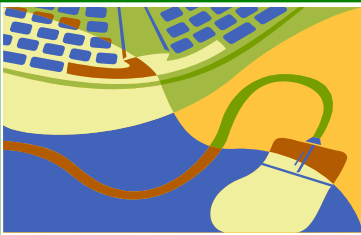
The *Christmas Joy Offering* recognizes the faithfulness of current and retired church workers through its gifts to the Assistance Program.

Every year during this season, the Presbyterian Church USA receives an offering for two benefits. Called *Christmas Joy Offering*, half of the offering assists retired and active church workers and their families.

The offering began in the 1930s in the Southern church, as a way of supplementing what was often inadequate retirement income and medical insurance for former ministers, missionaries, and church workers. The Northern church began receiving this offering in the 1960s, before the two churches merged in the 1980s.

At some point in their lives, many ministers, other church workers, and their families need help beyond what the Benefits Plan and personal resources can provide. Some need relatively limited, yet critical, assistance—to afford a hearing aid, for instance, to continue a ministry. Others may need more substantial, ongoing support—to help make ends meet during retirement, for example, after a lifetime of ministering for modest pay. The *Christmas Joy Offering* recognizes the faithfulness of current and retired church workers through its gifts to the Assistance Program, which in turn helps these individuals and families through difficult times by providing shared, emergency, and other types of grants. The Assistance Program depends entirely on gifts and bequests, including half of the *Christmas Joy Offering*. Last year, the offering funded more than 800 grants to individuals and families.

The other half of the *Christmas Joy Offering* supports Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education. Some of the schools that have benefited from this offering in the past include Cook Native American Ministries in Tempe, Arizona and Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka, Alaska. The offering provides scholarships to deserving students as well as help with basic operating costs of the schools. These institutions develop leaders in the church and in society, and they enable students to discover and pursue their professional goals.



Online shopping means convenience and savings for you and a donation to Springwater Presbyterian all at the same time!

Take advantage of discounts, coupons, and rebates from your favorite merchants by logging on to

www.springwater-pres.org

and click on the **amazon.com** logo to gain access to over 800 stores at prices similar to or better than what you'll find at Walmart! Every time you make a purchase on the Amazon website Springwater receives a donation equal to **4%-15%** of the price of your item!

For questions please call:

Kathy Scott (503) 630-4739
or
Rick Parfrey (503) 638-0109

Support Springwater by shopping online for Christmas

About a month ago, the congregation was presented information on how online shopping could also bring in money for our congregation. It's a simple matter of shopping online through our church's website at <http://www.springwater-pres.org>.

You start out by visiting our church's home page. (see the link above) You can check out the event calendar, read sermons or newsletters while you are there. **To shop**, you can click on the amazon.com connection at the upper left edge of the page and it will take you to Amazon, where you can buy almost anything you want.

Because you went to Amazon through the church site, you are automatically included in this program. Amazon will give a percentage of your purchase price back to the church. They send the amount monthly by a direct deposit into the church's bank account. We only have to watch the donations come in.

Some members of the congregation have been doing this for about 5 months now. We haven't made a huge amount yet, but if we all participated, the amount of the donation would grow and build.

If you wonder what you could buy online, the choices are endless. Last year, I purchased most of my gifts from online stores. I bought books, clothing, computer peripherals, tablecloths and matching napkins for a special dinner, yarn and knitting books, shoes for myself and some bedding. I also used the internet to send some chocolate and fruit gifts as "thank you" for dinners and events we were invited to.

Are you uncertain about how this could work for you? Please call either Rick Parfrey (503.638.0109) or Kathy Scott (503.630.4739). We would be happy to answer questions or walk you through the process.

This is a great way to bring extra money into the church while saving you a lot of driving and time.

Are you planning to sign up to buy gifts for our Christmas families? Think about doing it online.

LECTIONARY READINGS

The image of a door will accompany us as we explore the Advent preaching text, “Enter Into God’s Promises.” Door imagery is used frequently in scripture, especially during this season of transition from darkness to the Light of God’s Son. In this season, God signals that the waiting is about to end, our anticipation is about to bear fruit.

An open door is literally the place of transition from one “place” to another, while a door standing ajar is a universal signal of welcome and hospitality. An opening door is an anticipatory gesture, showing our openness to God’s work of salvation.

What does our door image invite you to this season?

November 28 (HINGE): Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44; Isaiah 2:1-5

December 5 (OPENING): Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12; Isaiah 11:1-10

December 12 (THRESHOLD): James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11; Isaiah 35:1-10

December 19 (JAMB; celebration of the Lord’s Supper): Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25; Isaiah 7:10-16

December 26 (NO EXIT): Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23; Isaiah 63:7-9

January 2 (ACCESS): Jeremiah 31:7-14; John 1:1-18; Jeremiah 31:7-14

January 9 (BAPTISM OF THE LORD): This will be a service of scripture and song centering on Jesus’ baptism. The lectionary texts are Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17

Springwater
Currents

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