

www.gspcmobile.org \* (251)432-1749 \* 300 Government Street, Mobile, Alabama 36602

## As Time Goes By

by Ryan Jensen  
Director of Discipleship Formation

A few weeks ago, Laura and I rented a Toyota Prius for travel between Mobile and Shelbyville, Tennessee. We wanted to save the wear and tear on the family VW Jetta and, given the uncertainty of fuel costs, figured that a hybrid car would be the best way to go. It turns out that the Prius was a lot more spacious than I anticipated. Calling my sister while on the road, I also discovered that Laura and I were averaging thirty more miles to the gallon. I liked that. And I liked that car. I liked it enough that I imagined purchasing one in the near future.

This is, of course, not the only thing I would like. Back in Austin, friends in an adjacent apartment possessed a Nintendo Wii. Thinking that I was far past the age of video gaming, I was reluctant to accept a request to “come down and try it out.” (The last video game system with which I had any familiarity was the Sega Master System — a video game equivalent to the Ford Edsel). Yet, by going down and playing a couple of games, it turned out that I liked the Wii. I liked it enough that I imagined buying one. It is, after all, the only video game system which promotes any kind of physical fitness. What else does one need to know?

Now a home owner, there are many other things I would like to have. I would like a new roof, new paint inside and out, a screened-in porch (for those pesky mosquitoes), new furniture, a back deck, etc. I would also like to lose weight and be able to run a half marathon in less than two hours. Much less, actually. I would also like to read more books. I would like to be a better preacher and a more effective evangelist. “He preached the best sermon I ever heard *and* had a part in bringing in 50 new members just this month!” people might say.

As this list of stuff grows, I recall the lyrics to the tune mentioned above, “This day and age we're living in, gives cause for apprehension, with speed and new invention, and things like fourth dimension.”



With consideration to such apprehension, worry and concern, we might as well add a vacation, a day at the spa, and/or a nap to our “like to have” lists.

During the season of Advent, we are bombarded with even more apprehension. There are sales, promotions, and friends who send us into fits with their exclamations of, “I purchased and wrapped my last gift *weeks* ago.” Apprehension can develop further when we remember that Christmas is only a week away and that much of the season of Advent is already behind us. Three candles are burning and the fourth is soon to come! So...HD televisions? Video game systems? A new car? What do we really *need* as the birth of Christ approaches?

“You must remember this, a kiss is just a kiss, a sigh is just a sigh. The fundamental things apply, as time goes by.” A nice reminder, right? Nevertheless, can the simplicity and idealism in those lyrics apply to the complexities of the modern day? I hope so. When it comes to faith, it seems to me that we need things of simplicity and idealism this time of year. We need to have faith in a God that can save us from the never-ending cycles of consumerism and accumulation. We need a God who reminds us why life is worth the effort. We need a God who will carry us through all the muck and mire of the messes that we and others create.

I do not think there is anything wrong with wanting things. It is just that we, as disciples of Christ, need to remember that needs and wants are not necessarily the same. We need the One who comes to us through a gift that is vulnerable, fragile, and free. We need a community of faith through whom God shares this gift with all. Getting to a place where we *want* these same things will surely provide more than we can imagine. We must remember this: the fundamental things apply, as Advent goes by.

# Christian Education

Amanda Murray  
Director of Children's Ministries

- Congratulations to the children on a fabulous Christmas Pageant! Everyone did a superb job! Thank you so much to Wanda Lawrence for putting so much love, time, and work into the pageant. We truly appreciate all of your time and efforts.
- The children have presently raised over \$200.00 for the Ministry of Hope Crisis Nursery! Way to go!!
- Thank you to the Ericson Family for hosting a fun Children's Christmas Party. We had a great time.
- There is **no Sunday School December 21st or 28th**. Please, join us for the Christmas Brunch on the 21st and for Coffee and Donuts on the 28th.
- Thank you to everyone who participated in the Advent Workshops.
- The Children's Ministry of GSPC is giving a gift to every family with children ages infant to 5th grade this year. The gift is one that can be used everyday of the year and bring faith and devotion into your households. Please see Ms. Amanda this Sunday so she may wish you a Merry Christmas and give you a special gift for your entire family to enjoy. It is GSPC's way of saying Merry Christmas and Happy and Faithful New Year.

Kara Olson  
Director of Youth & CE

- Come celebrate the Christmas Season at our PYC Christmas Lock-In! Meet at the church at 5:30 p.m. for dinner! We will then decorate Fellowship Hall for the Coffee Club Christmas Party and fill the goody bags! Then the PYC festivities begin! Dirty Santa Gift Exchange (bring a small gift to exchange with others in the youth group), holiday games, and general fun! The next morning we will serve Coffee Club and then go home (and sleep!) Let's celebrate the holidays and help others in the process! See you there!
- What does PYC January look like??
  - January 4<sup>th</sup> - Combined Sunday School Epiphany Party! (No evening PYC)
  - January 11<sup>th</sup> - Planning for the semester 5:30 p.m.

## The Angel Band

## The Children's Christmas Pageant



The Children's & Cherub Choirs performed a rousing show Sunday night at GSPC. David Ericson as Joseph and Isobel Crumb as Mary opened the Bible story told in Luke 2:1-20. The pews were packed well over half-full of parents, siblings, grandparents, and visitors listening to the tale sung and spoken by our children. The full-scale production included Kara Olson working the spotlight, James Tamblyn providing the sound, Amanda Murray creating special audio effects to emphasize special moments, and the ever-versatile Terry Maddox at the piano. Wanda Lawrence, Becky Maddox, and Charlotte Naylor kept the many animals, angels, townspeople, registrants, Three Kings and shepherds in good order as they performed their parts. The audience joined in the singing with hymns before and after the play. All in all, it was a fantastic evening! **Special thanks to** Shelia Smith for the delicious dinner, to Brian and Charlotte Naylor and Wanda Lawrence for creating Bethlehem, and to all the parents who participated along the way, making this wonderful production possible!

### IN OUR PRAYERS AT NURSING HOMES AND IN THE HOSPITAL

**Allen Memorial:** Mary Marvin Anderson

**Somerby of W. Mobile:** Kitty Harris

**Gordon Oaks:** Thyrsa Jones (room 239)

**Westminster Village:** Ben Hutson (room 562)

**Cogburn (Dauphin Con.):** Winnie Counts,  
and David & Betty Mechler

**Mobile Infirmary:** Blair Newman

**Mobile Nursing & Rehabilitation:** Molly Crown  
(room 325), ph # 706-1146

*Honor your  
loved one  
with a  
Sunday  
Sanctuary  
Flower  
arrangement.  
Contact  
Sara Bryan  
at 422-1315  
for available  
2009 dates.*

### Lectionary Readings for December 21

2 Sam. 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:47-55 or Ps. 89:1-4, 19-26;  
Rom. 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

### Lectionary Readings for December 24 Christmas Eve

Isa. 9:2-7; Ps. 96; Titus 2:11-14;  
Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

### Lectionary Reading for December 25 Nativity of Jesus Christ / Christmas

*Dawn:* Isa. 62:6-12 Ps. 97; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20  
*Day:* Isa. 52:7-10; Ps. 98; Heb. 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14

### Lectionary Readings for December 28

Isa. 61:10-62:3; Ps. 148; Gal. 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

# Presbyterian Women



The Sewing Circle will continue to meet at 1:00 p.m. on Thursdays through the holiday season, with the exception of Christmas Day and New Years' Day (both fall on Thursday).

The circle is **no longer** needing old sheets for bandage rolling **unless** a new volunteer would like to take on the rolling duties. If so, please call Charlotte Naylor at 473-6965.



Thanks to Beth Majure, Holly Carrigan, Donna Misra, Allison Peebles, Beth Walmsley, Denise Lamby, and Santa himself, for making the Haven Christmas Party a huge holiday success. Thanks to the congregation and the Oakleigh Garden District for all of the gifts that were distributed amongst 19 guests at the Haven. The joy that comes from giving was experienced by all.

Also, thank you to all the PW volunteers who stayed after the meeting and wrapped the gifts.

## Congregational Life

### GSPC Homecoming!!!

**P**lease save the date for Homecoming at GSPC! This year's event will take place on **Sunday, January 25**.

We will begin after worship with a wonderful meal prepared by our own Shelia Smith, followed by a video presentation and personal accounts that will represent the past, present and future life of GSPC.

### Staff Christmas Gifts

**As is our tradition, members of the Staff Committee will be collecting donations to be divided among members of our church staff, expressing our congregation's appreciation for the many ways each of them is part of GSPC's mission and ministry. Gifts may be given to any member of the Staff Committee or left in the church office designated "Staff Christmas".**

**Staff Committee:** Mark Wyatt, Chair, Laurie Shorter, Shelley Hood, Chip Herrington, Jeanie Lindsey, Anita Winn, Charles Jones

**An update from Nancy Dimmock on the financial status of her work in Lesotho (due to space this letter was condensed)**

Dear Martha and Gill,

...The main reason I'm writing is tell you about the situation at the Ministry of Insured Salvation (MIS) orphan care center. I am just out of a Board meeting and we are really "scraping the bottom of the barrel" financially...I wanted to give you an update on MIS and ask about your (GSPC's) intentions regarding promised support? They have a new website, [www.mislesotho.org](http://www.mislesotho.org), that gives good background information and some pictures. LOTS of great stuff is going on at the center. A little medical room has been outfitted and organized. A pediatric nurse comes 3 days a week...Despite the fence not being closed on one side, they have plowed a big field for maize, planted a big vegetable garden and seeded a big patch with grass. Now we need some rain; please pray (the rains are a month late already.) We have hired 2 more caregivers and 2 more cooks. It is still a huge job (there are 108 kids at the moment). The bad news is that Dorcas Aid, who has been underwriting the cost of feeding the children (\$3500/month) will stop after the December payment. And the Canadian church that has been supporting the salaries of caregivers will stop this month (with no warning). We don't see where the support will come from after that, but we continue to trust Jehovah Jireh, who loves these kids even more than we do. (I just did the math on the monthly feeding support and with 100+ kids in the program, it works out to \$35/child/month or about \$1.00/day....

Thanks for your help, and we look forward to hearing from you about this when you get a chance.

Love, Nancy

What are the best 500 gifts you can give? A copy of **Simply Divine, A Second Helping** cookbook, over 200 pages of GSPC special recipes. Only \$15.00 and wrapped with a bow for easy gift giving. \$4 to ship, **mailing deadline is December 19th**. Make checks to Presbyterian Women. Please contact Dorothy Morrison, 621-0831 if you have any questions.

## Mission

### Calling All Bakers!

### Coffee Club Christmas party

**Tuesday, December 23rd**

**at 7:00 a.m.** in Fellowship

Hall. For all of you who

like to bake, we need

cookies, candy and cakes

for the homeless we serve.

Goodies may be dropped

off at the church by

Monday, December 22.



### Note cards & Prints of the GSPC Watercolor



The Mission Committee received from Jerome Fisher, the artist of the watercolor painting in the foyer, 20 ~16 x 20 print reproductions with certificates of

authenticity of the work and several hundred note cards that are now available for purchase. Auto-graphed print can be purchased for \$100. Note cards are available for \$1 each.

Proceeds from the sales will be donated to two world Presbyterian missions: the work of Frank & Nancy Dimmock in Lesotho, and to the on going work of Dan & Elizabeth Turk in Madagascar.



**Join Us for Christmas Brunch and Lessons & Carols!**

- **What is your favorite GSPC Holiday Memory?**
- **Does your family have neat Holiday traditions?**

**This year make GSPC's delicious Christmas Brunch and Lessons and Carols worship service part of your family Christmas tradition! Join us at 9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall for food and fellowship as we celebrate the season together!**

**Sunday 9:30 a.m.**

**Dec. 21st**

**Brunch is followed by a Lessons and Carols music Service at 10:45 a.m.**