

# First Edition

published bi-weekly for the members and friends of the church

December 7, 2011 • Volume 26, No. 24



**Todd Jones**  
Pastor

## My Dear Friends,

As Christmas approaches and we are moving through Advent with the Gospel of Luke, I would call your attention to three short verses in Luke's first chapter. Mary has been visited by the Angel Gabriel, who has announced to her that she will give birth to a child, a child who "will be great, and will be called the Son of the most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of

his ancestor David." The Church calls this moment The Annunciation, and Fred Buechner muses that the angels in heaven held their breath at how Mary would respond! Mary's response becomes a model for Christian discipleship ever after, so much so that New Testament scholar Beverly Gaventa calls her "the first disciple." "Here am I," Mary said, "the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." According to Luke, Mary left Nazareth almost immediately after receiving this life-giving, life-changing word and went to visit Zechariah and Elizabeth. The meeting between these family members, Mary and Elizabeth, is one of sheer delight. Luke puts it like this: "When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit."

Elizabeth, Mary's older cousin, pregnant herself at an advanced age, exclaims, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by her Lord" (Luke 1:42-45). Note that in three short verses, the word "blessed" is used no less than three times. I would love to use this moment to reflect upon God's blessings. For Mary, to be "blessed" by God meant that she would soon become the object of whispers and rumors in her own town of Nazareth. And it meant that she still faced the task of telling Joseph that she was with child, knowing that it was not his child. It would mean giving birth to the child in a manger stall, as there would be no room in the inn for them. Being "blessed" would also mean soon fleeing to Egypt when Herod would seek to kill the child who would be King. And it would one day mean standing by as her son hung helpless from a cross.

We use the word "blessing" and "blessed" usually to mean some special favor from the hand of God. We pray to be blessed with good health, or with healthy children, or a good job or the right life partner. We tend to think of blessings in terms of how they will enhance and

enrich our lives. We are tempted to pray for blessings that will bring us joy, comfort, security, health and wealth. But here Mary is "blessed" in ways that will only bring her challenge and heartache and a complete upheaval of her life. Mary's blessedness will not bring her wealth, status, security or even happiness. Mary's blessedness is found in being elected by God to bear the Divine Son. Her blessedness comes in being chosen to be a vital part of God's plan. William Barclay calls this "the paradox of blessedness." "The piercing truth is that God does not choose a person for ease and comfort and selfish joy but for a task that will take all that head and heart and hand can bring to it." Mary is blessed by God to be a blessing to the world, but this was not an easy calling, not one that would bring her comfort and approval from others. This is very much like Abraham in the Book of Genesis, who is promised by God that he will be blessed to be a blessing; that through him God will bless all the families of the world. Yet it meant the end of the life Abraham had known and the beginning of an arduous adventure where he would have to learn to trust God.

Consider what Jesus said about those who are "blessed" in Luke's Sermon on the Plain. "Blessed are you who are poor." "Blessed are you who are hungry now." "Blessed are you who weep now." Apparently Jesus was talking about something different from what we are often tempted quickly to pray for or to label "blessed." Jesus realized that blessings come from God, and are given so that we can serve God more faithfully and effectively. God's blessings are not given to bring us comfort or ease so much as they are given to strengthen and to deepen us as human beings. God blesses us so that we might become greater blessings to the world. God blesses us so that we might share our blessings and multiply God's gifts entrusted to us. And sometimes we have no idea what is or is not "blessed" when it comes to us. It is only through perspective and time that we learn that some of the things we regarded as burdens turned out by God's grace to be some of the greatest blessings of our lives. Meanwhile, we are called to "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." I often return to the lovely poem that I learned from my father as a child:

I walked a mile with pleasure, she chatted all the way,  
But left me none the wiser, for all she had to say.  
I walked a mile with sorrow, and not a word said she,  
But oh, the things I learned from her when sorrow walked with me.  
May God bless you in this wonderful season. And may wisdom and strength come to you through the blessings God gives!

With Love and Prayers,

*Todd*

# The Mission of First Presbyterian Church, Nashville

To know Christ, to make Him known, and to exhibit His love through worship, education, and service.



## Sympathy

The First Presbyterian Church family extends prayers and sympathy to the following people and to other members of their family during their time of loss.



John Thomison on the death of his brother, **Robert Locke Thomison**, who died on November 13. Sympathy to nephew, John & Rena Thomison, Jr., Robert & Deborah Thomison, great-nephew, John (Katherine) Thomison III & Andrew Thomison.

Sympathy to friends & family of **Merle Davis**, who died on November 19.

Liz & Ryan Hackett on the death of Liz's father, **Richard Grey Mayson, Sr.**, who died on November 19. Sympathy to grandchildren, Krista & Robbie Allison & Bella Elizabeth Hackett.

Helen & Cabot Hyde on the death of Helen's father, **Alonzo Hester Lee, Jr.**, who died on November 21. Sympathy to grandchildren, Carter, Cabot & Mary Lee Hyde.

Barbara & George Wilkins on the death of Barbara's mother, **Alta Cunningham Sanford**, who died on November 24. Sympathy to grandchildren, Teresa Kearns & Laura Wilkins.

*If any member of the church desires the Christian support of a Stephen Minister, call Sandra Randleman at 298-9502. Stephen Ministers are trained lay ministers of the church.*

**Radio broadcast of Sunday worship airs at 4:00 P.M. each Sunday on WAMB 1200 AM and 99.3 FM.**

## Congratulations

The First Presbyterian Church family congratulates these members.



Lauren and Frank Blair IV on the birth of their daughter, **Elizabeth Hensley Blair**, who was born on November 15. Congratulations to grandfather, Frank W. Blair III.

## The Sacrament of Baptism

In the presence of family, the congregation of First Presbyterian Church and God, the following persons claimed God's covenant promise through the Sacrament of Baptism.



Anna Margaret & Dillan Brackman presented their daughter, **Ella Claire Brackman**, for baptism on November 20. Assisting Elders were Charlotte Ann & Joe Michael Edwards.

Elizabeth & Steven Chatham presented their son, **John McCord Chatham**, for baptism on November 20. Assisting Elder was Roxie Gibson.

Elizabeth & Rodger Smith presented their daughter, **Emma Jean Smith**, for baptism on November 23. Assisting Elder was Jami Hill.

Kelly & Lucien Parsons presented their daughter, **Elizabeth Van Deren Parsons**, for baptism on November 27. Assisting Elder was Jerry Breast.

## Parents Night Out Dates

December 10 & 17 from 6:00 to 10:00 P.M. \$10 per child. All events for ages 3½ – 6th grade. Contact Emily (298-9583 or emunoz@fpcnashville.org) for reservations.

<p><b>THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> <b>DECEMBER 11, 2011</b></p> <p><b>Sermon</b> "The Song of Zechariah: The Day that Shall Dawn from on High"</p> <p><b>Scripture Readings</b> Malachi 5:2-5 Luke 1:67-80</p> <p><b>Todd Jones</b> Pastor</p>	<p><b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> <b>DECEMBER 18, 2011</b></p> <p><b>Sermon</b> "The Song of Mary: Magnifying the Lord"</p> <p><b>Scripture Readings</b> I Samuel 2:1-10 Luke 1:39-56</p> <p><b>Todd Jones</b> Pastor</p>	<p><b>CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SERVICE</b> <b>DECEMBER 24, 2011</b></p> <p><b>Sermon</b> "The Angels' Song: Glory to God in the Highest!"</p> <p><b>Scripture Readings</b> Isaiah 9:2-7 Luke 2:1-20</p> <p><b>Todd Jones</b> Pastor</p>	<p><b>CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE</b> <b>DECEMBER 25, 2011</b></p> <p><b>Sermon</b> "The Song of Simeon: Mine Eyes Have Seen Thy Salvation"</p> <p><b>Scripture Readings</b> Isaiah 60:1-3 Luke 2:21-35</p> <p><b>Todd Jones</b> Pastor</p>
--	---	---	---

## What is the Christmas Joy Offering?

A cherished Presbyterian tradition, the Christmas Joy Offering is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Because Advent and Christmas shine a light not only on our world's greatest hope but also on our world's greatest need, the PC(USA) provides this opportunity for congregations to support causes designed to bring Good News of Great Joy to the poor in circumstance or spirit.

Through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions the Christmas Joy Offering honors the faithfulness of current and retired church workers in their hour of greatest need by providing funds to help them through life's challenging circumstances. And thanks to the enduring legacy of the Christmas Joy Offering, students of Presbyterian racial ethnic schools and colleges may receive much-needed scholarship assistance while their schools may get help with basic operating costs.

At the worship services on Sunday, December 18, envelopes will be located in the pews for giving to the Christmas Joy Offering. Please take advantage of this opportunity to help many of our fellow Presbyterians in need.



## The Millikin University Choir Performs Free Concert at FPC!

*Tuesday, January 10, at 7:00 P.M.*

From the pure sounds of the Renaissance to the robust qualities of major choral/orchestral works, the Millikin University Choir celebrates a broad variety of styles and genres.

The choir has performed in such remarkable settings as the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and Cathedral Santo Domingo, the first cathedral in the New World. They have sung invitation concerts in England at York Minster, Canterbury Cathedral and Norwich Cathedral. But their performance schedule has also included such unusual locations as St. Vincent's School for the Handicapped, in Port au Prince, Haiti and street performances in Santiago, Dominican Republic.



## Great Christmas Gift for the Younger Children on Your List

**12 weeks for only \$50 • New semester begins Monday, January 9 or Thursday, January 12**



Musikgarten is a music and motion class for children from newborn-3½ years. The two classes that will be offered both days are "Family Music for Babies" for parents and their newborn to 18-month child, and "Family Music for Toddlers" for parents and their 18-month to 3½-year-old. The "Family Music for Babies" class teaches parents how to play musically with their baby and the "Family Music for Toddlers" includes singing, chanting, moving, dancing, listening and playing simple instruments.

The classes carry a supply fee for each child, to cover the cost of a CD, a family activity guide and musical instruments. Susan Kirby and Kelly Posey will be the teachers for these classes. You may register at <http://fpcnashville.org/onlineregistration.htm>.

**MUSIK  
GARTEN**  
*Teaching Music. Understanding Children*

## ADULT & FAMILY



### Mission Opportunities

#### Cuba Spring 2012

**Dates:** April or May

**Cost:** \$1,800 (estimated); \$1,000 deposit due December 31.

**Brief Details:** Light work projects and relational visits with partner church.

**Trip Leaders:** Mike & Pam Shampain

#### Rwanda July 2012

**Dates:** July 11-27

**Cost:** \$4,600 (estimated); \$1,500 deposit due January 31; requires vaccinations.

**Brief Details:** Construction on brick church and visits to mission projects supported by FPC; Kenyan safari included; children must be age 12 to participate.

**Trip Leader:** Dr. Bob LaGrone

#### Haiti February 2013

**Dates:** February 16-22 (over Presidents' Day weekend)

**Cost:** \$1,300 (estimated); \$800 deposit due September 1, 2012; requires vaccinations.

**Brief Details:** Medical personnel to offer pediatric or family practice medicine, dental or eye care in clinics; non-medical participants needed to assist in processing patients and work on re-construction projects with partner agencies affected by earthquake; expect rugged conditions.

**Trip Leader:** Michael Baron

**Questions?** Contact Patricia Heim (298-9593 or [adultmissions@fpcnashville.org](mailto:adultmissions@fpcnashville.org)) if you are interested in learning more or would like an application form. Online registration for trips is available from the church homepage on the web ([www.fpcnashville.org](http://www.fpcnashville.org)).

**Scholarship Assistance** is available to FPC members for all FPC-sponsored trips by contacting Sandra Randleman (298-9502 or [srandleman@fpcnashville.org](mailto:srandleman@fpcnashville.org)).

Read about missions at FPC online — mission trips abroad, local mission opportunities, stories, pictures and more.

Visit <http://missions.fpcnashville.org>.

## Praying the Psalms of Lament as We Seek Healing for our Grieving

You are invited to participate in a grief support group beginning on Wednesday, January 25, at First Presbyterian Church. The grief support group will combine prayer with a study of the psalms of lament and explore how we, like the psalmists, can express our feelings and our petitions for help to God, as we place our trust and hope in God and seek His healing.

The grief support group will be offered by Dr. Sandra Randleman and will meet for four weeks, January 25 through February 15, from 6:00 until 7:30 P.M. in Vance Hall. If you have family members, friends or neighbors who you think would benefit from a grief support group, please invite them to join us. For more information, contact Sandra (298-9502 or [srandleman@fpcnashville.org](mailto:srandleman@fpcnashville.org)).

## Older Adult Caregivers Support Group

If you are currently caring for an aging spouse, parent or other loved one and feel stressed, overwhelmed, or isolated due to your caregiving situation, or if you would just like to



learn more about community resources, our Older Adult Caregivers Support Group is designed to be a safe place where you can share your experiences and learn from others in similar situations. The group is open to FPC member and non-member caregivers, so feel free to bring a friend. We will meet on Wednesday, December 28, from 11:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. in the Witherspoon Room (CC-130) on the first floor of the Ministry Wing. Questions? Call Sandra Randleman at 298-9502.

## Year-End Contributions

Giving to the church during the month of December is historically the highest of any month during the year. As you consider end-of-the-year giving toward or above your pledge, please contact Cindy Bozman (298-9507) before December 16 for any special assistance you may need.

Extra giving early in the month will allow the church to pay its mission obligations in time for Christmas and will provide stock transactions time to be completed during the calendar year.

## Parish Dinner & Family Bingo Night

Your family is invited to an FPC multi-parish fellowship covered dinner and bingo night, on Sundays, January 8 and 15, 5:00-7:00 P.M. Bring your favorite dish to share (enough to feed eight). No desserts, please! Nursery care is available by calling Ginny (383-1815) to make reservations. Look for your invitation in the mail for more details!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Wednesday Advent Breakfasts

**December 14 — Speaker: Stuart Gordon**

**December 21 — Speaker: Bill Caruso**

The ever-popular Advent breakfasts are back this Advent season. Join your church family from 7:00 to 7:45 A.M. these Wednesday mornings in Courtenay Hall for a full breakfast. We begin our day with inspiring words of the season from our friends and special guest speakers. Breakfast is \$3.

### Christmas Concert: “Emmanuel: God With Us”

**Sunday, December 11 • 4:00 P.M. • Sanctuary**

Raphael Bundage conducts the FPC Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra. This Christmas concert features portions of *Hodie* by Ralph Vaughn Williams and music by composers Mack Wilberg and Arthur Harris, as well as a carol sing-a-long in the Sanctuary. The concert is free and open to the public. For more information about this and other concerts at First Presbyterian Church, contact Daphne Garey (298-9517 or [music@fpcnashville.org](mailto:music@fpcnashville.org)).

### College Christmas Party

**Sunday, December 18 • 7:00-9:00 P.M.**

The annual college Christmas party will be held at the home of Kelly Borchers and Lauren Kaewart (803 Montrose Avenue). Open house for all college students and those who have been out for a while. It will be great to get everyone together!

### Christmas Eve Family Service

**Saturday, December 24, 2011 • 5:00 PM**

Children from 4 to 94 will thrill to the simple joy and beauty of this family Christmas service. Carols, scripture and children's choirs help us welcome the new baby Jesus. Nursery care is available for 3 years old and under.

### Service of Lessons & Carols

**Saturday, December 24 • Sanctuary • 8:00 & 11:00 P.M.**

**Pre-service music starts at 7:40 & 10:40 P.M.**

Dr. Todd Jones will deliver the Christmas Eve sermon *The Angels' Song: Glory to God in the Highest!* The story of our redemption in Christ Jesus will be told through the nine traditional lessons, carols and anthems. The service will have music after each of the lessons, including congregational hymns and anthems by the Sanctuary Choir. Give yourself a gift this Christmas and be refreshed by the beautiful candlelight of Christmas Eve. This year, we will have 20 minutes of pre-service music. So come early and enjoy a musical treat. No nursery care today.

### Return Gifts for Foster Children by December 11



Please remember to return all gifts and cards to the church no later than Sunday, December 11. Contact Sarah White or Sue Fort White (383-5400 or [sue.fort.white@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:sue.fort.white@vanderbilt.edu)) with questions.

## Boy Scout Christmas Tree Sale

Boy Scout Troop 217 has been FPC's troop since 1956. The tree lot is located by the Tyne Boulevard parking lot area (where Crud Day is held). This annual sale starts at noon on the Friday after Thanksgiving; it is the only fundraiser the troop uses. This year, the tree varieties will be Fraser Firs, Scotch Pines and Blue Spruces (only Frasers were offered last year). You will also find 24" and 36" wreaths, mailbox decorations and pine roping/garland by the foot. Discount coupons worth \$5 are available to FPC members and friends; they may be found in church literature areas and at Oak Hill School (or bring a bulletin after church, or this article). Hours of operation are:



**Weekdays: 4:00 to 9:00 P.M.; Saturdays: 8:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. • Sundays: Noon to 9:00 P.M.**

## Christmas Again...

So many happy memories. Family gathered together, a beautiful tree, special worship celebrations. But it isn't that way this year. And your heart aches to think about it.



During this season and beyond, a Stephen Minister would like to be there for you. Your Stephen Minister will care for you, listen to you and help you find the resources to make it through this time of pain.

If any member of the church desires the Christian support of a Stephen Minister, call Sandra Randleman (298-9502).

## Room In The Inn Volunteer Needs

Room In The Inn has openings for the weeks of January 11 and 18 as well as February 1 and 15. Please see the sign-up board in Courtenay Hall to fill one of the openings. The roles range from driving the church bus, to staying overnight with the guests, to making sandwiches for lunch or washing the linens used by the guests.

Families with children are welcome anytime to greet our guests upon arrival or just chat over dinner or to help serve and clean-up on Wednesday night. Contact Hal Sauer, Martin Terrien or George Armistead with questions about serving.

## First Friends Older Adult Ministry



### ■ Celebrate Christmas at the Opryland Hotel: Thursday,

**December 15, 3:30-8:30 P.M.** — If you would like to see the reconstructed Opryland Hotel after the 2010 flood, and enjoy its splendor of Christmas lights and magic without the hassle of traffic and costly parking, join the First Friends' excursion via Grey Lines Tour bus for only \$10 per person. We will depart the church at 3:30 P.M., be delivered at the Hotel entrance, and have four (4) hours to explore on our own, returning to the church at 8:30 P.M. The Christmas Wonderland will be filled with Christmas displays, poinsettia trees, music, strolling cartoon characters, a craft show, a carriage ride, a ride on a boat, food (from gourmet dining to simple fare), shopping and lights (2 million lights to be exact).

■ **Come S-T-R-E-T-C-H with First Friends every Friday at 10:30 A.M.** — The Gathering Place, \$5 per session. No reservations necessary.

For more information or reservations, contact Ginny Barber (298-9509 or [gbarber@fpcnashville.org](mailto:gbarber@fpcnashville.org)).

## Two Opportunities for College Students

- **Passion 2012 Conference in the Georgia Dome** on January 2-5. College students from around the country gather to hear Francis Chan and John Piper, and worship with the David Crowder Band, Chris Tomlin, Lecrae and more.
- A week of mission at the **San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation** in Globe, Arizona. The dates are May 20-27.

You may sign-up online at [www.the530.org](http://www.the530.org), or by contacting Jay ([jdenton@fpcnashville.org](mailto:jdenton@fpcnashville.org)) or Linda ([lmorphis@fpcnashville.org](mailto:lmorphis@fpcnashville.org)). Scholarship assistance is available.



## Music Discussion Class and Pre-Concert Lectures

### Music Discussion Class

This discussion-based class is intended for anyone interested in learning more about the major works that FPC's choirs perform. You do not need to be musically-inclined or literate in order to attend. The classes will be very informal, and you do not have to attend every class since each class will focus on a specific topic or section of music. Although there will be some information given — background for the piece, composer biographies, text translations where applicable, some basic music theory — the classes are intended to be discussion-based.

The FPC choirs have two major performances this year: a holiday concert on Sunday, December 11, at 4:00 P.M., which will feature Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Hodie*, and a concert on Sunday, January 22, at 2:00 P.M. featuring Mozart's *Requiem*. There will be two separate classes for each concert, each occurring for four weeks during the Sunday School hour. **Hodie:** December 11. **Requiem:** January 1, 8, 15 and 22. Classes will be held upstairs at the Cheek House.

If you are interested in either class, please email Justin Near, [justinnear@gmail.com](mailto:justinnear@gmail.com), so she can send you a reminder as the concert dates near. You may also simply show up to any of the classes — it would be great to see you there!

### Pre-Concert Lecture

All concert attendees are welcome to attend a brief 15-20 minute pre-concert lecture beginning 30 minutes prior to both the *Hodie* and *Requiem* concerts. The "Emmanuel, God With Us" lecture will begin at 3:30 P.M. on Sunday, December 11, and will focus on Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Hodie*. The Mozart's *Requiem* lecture will begin at 1:30 P.M. on Sunday, January 22. Each lecture will provide concert-goers with relevant background information on the composer and the primary work being performed. The lectures will be held in the Chapel.

### Teacher Biography

An active church musician, Justin Near is an alto in the Sanctuary Choir and in the past has performed with the Ringtones handbell choir and as a French horn soloist at FPC. Justin holds two degrees from Marshall University — a B.F.A. in Music Theory and French Horn Performance, as well as a B.A. in Latin. Several years ago, while a receptionist and an archivist for the Nashville Symphony, Justin began pursuing a Masters degree in Theological Studies at Lipscomb University which was temporarily put aside to raise her family. In the near future, she hopes to continue her education, focusing on major symphonic religious works and their profound, long-lasting effects on humanity.

---

## 1st-6th Graders and Their Families are Serving Together this Year!

Eight events with various agencies have already taken place, with quite a few more coming down the pike in December and January (see details in Looking Ahead). These gatherings are a great time for parents to model their faith for their children, for families to spend time together, to get to know other FPC families and to be the hands and feet of God in the world — while having a really fun time together!

Eighteen children and parents served as dining room hosts at Loaves & Fishes on November 12, greeting guests and handing out tickets, taking the census, managing the drink and dessert stations, visiting with guests and cleaning up afterwards. It was a day of hard work, learning new jobs and much warm welcome!

On November 16, 28 parents and children gathered to host our Room In The Inn guests at FPC, making up beds, preparing sack lunches, creating goody bags, serving and cleaning up dinner and welcoming and visiting with guests. The enthusiasm was contagious!

The Next Door was the site for cookie baking and decorating and a yummy dinner of soup and grilled cheese on November 19 — all hosted by FPC families in community with women there. This is always a great place to spend the day, with lots of good conversation and fun!



---

## Follow Todd Jones Through the Holy Lands and More!

A trip to the Holy Land, beginning in Jordan and then proceeding to Israel will be offered to our members on a trip that leaves on October 29, 2012, and will be returning on November 10, 2012. Our Pastor, Todd Jones, will be our leader, and will offer Bible studies and devotions to augment our excellent tour directors provided by Educational Opportunities, who have been leading church tours to Israel and Jordan for decades. This will be Todd's third trip to Israel, and is being sponsored by our Congregational Fellowship Committee.

In Jordan we will visit some of the ancient wonders of the world, including Mt. Nebo and Petra. After seeing the major sites in Jordan, the main part of our tour will be in Israel, beginning in Galilee, where Jesus began His ministry. The group will visit Cana, where Jesus performed His first miracle at a wedding feast, and Nazareth, His hometown. We will also visit Capernaum, Tiberius, the lovely Chapel of the Loaves and Fishes, the Mount of the Beatitudes along the Sea of Galilee, and actually travel on the sea that plays such a prominent role in the Gospels. The tour will include a stop in Jericho, and the mouth of the Jordan River where Jesus was baptized by John. We will visit the Dead Sea, and the Qumran Caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were hidden. We will ascend Masada, the site of one of Israel's most heroic stands against the Romans.

We will then proceed to Jerusalem, where we will visit the site of the first and second Temples, and have the opportunity to pray at the Wailing Wall. We will spend time in the Garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives, from which magnificent vistas of Jerusalem can be seen. In Bethany we

will recall the raising of Lazarus, and then return to the city which holds so much Biblical history. We will go to Bethlehem and pray in the Church of the Nativity. We will celebrate the Lord's Supper at the Garden Tomb, and also enjoy a full day of leisure in Jerusalem. The trip will involve a lot of walking.

The cost of the Jordan and Israel portion of the trip will be \$3,498 per person. This includes airfare from Nashville, first class hotel lodging, breakfast and dinner each day, transportation, visas, taxes and entry to all activities, based on double occupancy. For the really adventurous, Educational Opportunities is also providing an eight-day extension to Egypt. It will return on November 18, 2012. The group will go to Cairo and visits the Cairo Museum and the Pyramids of Giza. Next, the tour flies to Luxor and boards a cruise boat on the Nile River, visiting the Necropolis of Thebes and the Temple of Philae. The cost of the eight-day extension is \$1,398. For more information, contact Emily Eberle (292-2120

or [emilyeberle@comcast.net](mailto:emilyeberle@comcast.net)), Chair of our Congregational Fellowship Committee, or Lynn Elliott (298-9504 or [lelliott@fpcnashville.org](mailto:lelliott@fpcnashville.org)).



---

# Looking Ahead *in Children's Ministry*

**Serving Together:** Please consider “giving presence” to our brothers and sisters in Christ this Advent season. Events are designed for 1st–6th grade children and their families to put their faith in action together. Sign ups are easy on the Children’s web page — if you can’t attend, please consider donating food.

- December 17 and 31, from 10:45–1:30 P.M. — Work at Loaves & Fishes to serve a hot lunch to people who are homeless.
- December 21, from 4:30–7:15 P.M. — Serve guests who are homeless through Room In The Inn on the FPC campus.
- December 23, from 8:30–11:00 A.M. — Work at the Martha O’Bryan Center to unload the Second Harvest food truck and re-stock the food pantry.
- January 2, from 1:00–3:00 P.M. — Read books with the children at Preston Taylor Ministries.
- Christmas Eve, 5:00 P.M. — Family worship service. The Nursery will open at 4:00 P.M. for children ages 3 and younger.

**Milestones:** A ministry of faith formation and celebration for children and their families.

- Exploring the Sacrament of Baptism — On Sunday, January 8, 1st Graders and their parents will meet in the Sanctuary from 9:45–10:45 A.M. to begin this Milestone. Pastor Todd will lead this special time.

---

## Reflect. Anticipate. Savor.

The children and families of FPC gathered on Sunday, November 13, to prepare for the beginning of the Advent season with a celebration of light and giving in community with others! As we filled care packages for college students from the Martha O’Bryan community, created cards for the Men of Valor prison ministry and assembled family Advent devotions, children and families spent time together in fellowship. Presbyterian Women graciously provided seasonal treats for the occasion.



*Give Light — Songs of the Season* is a family Advent devotion to help families gather together and find holy moments throughout the season, as we anticipate the celebration of Christmas, the day of our Savior’s birth!

May God bless our community of faith throughout this holy season, as we gather close to the manger to await the birth of Jesus. O Holy Night!

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light...” (Luke 1:78–79)



---

**Our 4-year-olds in the Faith and Hope Sunday School classes** have just completed a series of lessons as part of Milestone 5: *Worshiping Together — Learning About the Idea of Stewardship*. These little ones explore how stewardship is taking care of God’s world, themselves, each other and the gifts they are given. They experience caring and sharing as they prepare and deliver a snack for another Sunday School class. They practice being good stewards of pennies they receive, deciding how many to spend, how many to save and how many to give back to God (a large number find their way back into the offering plate). At the end of the milestone, every child receives a Stu Bear book and a bank to take home as a reminder of what they have learned. Four-year-olds are cheerful givers and naturals at caring and sharing!

---

---

# BOOKmarks



*“BookMarks, our FPC bookstore, is all stocked up for Christmas. We have Advent calendars, daily devotionals, Christmas decorations, gift items and a great selection of books for children and adults. Our pastors have made some special recommendations for this Advent season — come check us out!”*

*Kathy Gaston, Manager*

## ❑ **Todd Jones — *The Journey***

Journey with Adam Hamilton as he travels from Nazareth to Bethlehem in this fascinating look at the birth of Jesus. Using historical information, archaeological findings and personal reflection, Hamilton illuminate this most amazing moment in history. We follow the footsteps of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and others, gaining insight into our own journey with Christ.

## ❑ **Sandra Randleman — *A Geography of God: Exploring the Christian Journey***

Michael Lindvall, the Pastor of The Brick Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, describes the life of a Christian as a journey of three parts. The first part is entitled, “Leaving for Home,” and reminds us that we set out on our journey only because God is seeking us and coaxing us onto the way. The second part is, “The Way,” and discusses our way as found through God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The third part of the book is entitled, “Life on the Road,” and describes that which sustains us and challenges us as we travel our Christian journeys. Dr. Lindvall offers the wisdom of those who have taken the road before us and found far more than they ever sought.

## ❑ **Mark DeVries — *What’s the Least I Can Believe and Still Be a Christian?***

Brentwood United Methodist Church pastor and author Martin Thielen has compiled a list of ten things Christians need to believe — and ten things they don’t — to “qualify” as Christians. This lively and engaging book will be a help to seekers as well as a comfort to believers who may find themselves questioning some of the assumptions they grew up with.

## ❑ **Sam Cooper — *God Is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas***

*God Is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas* is a compilation of excerpts from his sermons, letters, and other writings (many of them while he was in prison) in the form of devotional readings for Advent and Christmas. It could be just what we need to appreciate the blessedness of waiting — something our culture discourages with all its might. Or, as Pastor Bonhoeffer puts it: “Whoever does not know the austere blessedness of waiting — that is, of hopefully doing without — will never experience the full blessing of fulfillment.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer has managed to get himself quoted in more sermons than most anyone else who died at the age of 39. It is no wonder. He was a German Lutheran pastor who recognized the cult of the Fuhrer as the idolatry that it was. One of the early advocates of what became the Confessing Church movement, he became involved in an attempt to assassinate Hitler. For his part in the conspiracy he was hanged only a few weeks before the prison where he spent his last days was liberated.

## ❑ **Stuart Gordon — *Yearning: Living Between How It Is and How It Ought to Be***

If you are looking for pick-me-up for Christmas, this probably isn’t the book for you. However, if you face Christmas with loneliness, disappointment or dread, it may be. Does God want us fulfilled? Popular psychology says we should be fulfilled. Advertisements tease us with dozens of ways we can be fulfilled. Many preachers and books promise Christian fulfillment. But in this surprising (and surprisingly liberating) book, Craig Barnes suggests we were not created to be whole or complete.

With a fresh reading of the early chapters of Genesis, Craig says that much of our pain and disillusionment arises from wrong expectations of the gospel and of life. But he does not merely help us face reality. He helps us see how our needs and limitations are gifts, the best opportunities we have to receive God’s grace. Because of that, *Yearning* may be the most honest and the most helpful book you will read this year.

**The bookstore is open each Sunday morning from 9:30 A.M. to 12:00 noon. The bookstore is located across the hall from Courtenay Hall and Courtenay Lounge.**

---

## Haiti Mission Team Reports

On Saturday, October 8, a group of people met at the airport to travel together to Haiti. This was the second FPC sponsored mission trip to Port au Prince since the devastating earthquake in January of 2010. For those who were visiting Haiti for the first time, the poverty and evidence of the destructive force of the quake were startling and overwhelming. For those returning to Haiti, there was evidence of improvement.

Much of the rubble had been removed from main thoroughfares. Some of the tent cities, and all of the tents pitched in the medians of main streets, were gone. There were new solar powered traffic lights making travel times much more predictable. The water tanks and trucks have been replaced with public pumps providing a clean and reliable water source. These pumps were perhaps the most welcome of all the improvements to date since they are helping to mitigate the impact of Cholera that was re-introduced to Haiti by UN troops just after our mission team left Haiti last year.



During last year's mission trip, Haiti was in the middle of an election campaign and the sense of tension generated by that upcoming event was an evident concern. The election has passed and the resulting riots are over for the time being. The new president seems to be making a real effort to improve conditions for the Haitian people. His government has promised free public elementary education through grade six for all children. This is a huge project and is another sign that there are positive and noticeable changes.

It was a busy and enjoyable week. We were the guests of Haiti Outreach Mission (HOM). Our team helped to paint and wire a medical clinic that is being built in the HOM compound at Cite Soleil by a partnership of Haitian doctors, HOM and Samaritan's Purse. We also helped pour



concrete for a single family home and provided dental surgery to 68 patients.

On Sunday we worshiped with 600 Haitians at the church in the HOM compound at Terre Noire. The service began at 6:00 A.M. and continued until 8:00 A.M. We had Sunday School on the roof, with the clouds draping the mountains that surround Port au Prince on three sides. We toured the city in the afternoon. The National Palace sits wrecked, its cupola pancaked onto the top of the building beneath, still surrounded by manicured lawns and a very tall iron fence. The National Cathedral has been totally looted. Even the stained glass from the windows has been carried away, leaving a shell that brings to mind nothing so much as the looted and ruined abbeys of Tudor England.

Monday we were awakened by roosters crowing, dogs barking and people moving about. Haitians start the day early, usually before first light, to take advantage of the relative cool of the morning. The children started arriving at school around 6:00 A.M. in their neat red uniform dresses and shirts, white hair ribbons and polished shoes. Our workday started at 7:00 A.M. and ended around 2:00 P.M. After showers and a lunch of peanut butter or tuna, we were off to visit other mission compounds and other parts of the country.

Read the rest of the story online at <http://missions.fpcnashville.org>. Just click the Haiti trip link in the 2011 Calendar of Trips and Activities.



## Pack Your Flexibility...

Anyone who participates in a FPC-sponsored mission trip always sees this item listed first and last on all packing lists. Maybe it's not so much about being flexible, but recognizing that you have just been put into the game by the most amazing coach ever and that this coach has the most incredible winning streak of all. His play calling is so far superior to anything we could muster that we cannot help but be thrilled by the chance to be on the team even if it's just as the team's water boy.

And so it was for the 2011 medical mission team that travelled to the western edge of the Dominican Republic this past November. The team included folks from FPC and other churches in three states, first-timers and returning participants, and even one non-medical member proving that God can do anything with and through us!



Our scripture passages for this trip came from Colossians 3:1-17 and focused on living as those made alive in Christ. Clearly a medical team focuses on improving the physical health of those for whom they care, but in the context of scripture the team was challenged to move beyond their everyday routines while they served the Dominicans. Certainly performing surgeries in suites lacking all the specialized personnel and supplies found in U.S. healthcare facilities generated its own unique set of challenges. Likewise,

seeing patients in need of primary and dental care under a shade tree in a remote village created a very lively healthcare delivery environment indeed.

Learning to do things differently is not a reason to send mission teams. Like our Dominican host organization, Solid Rock Missions, we seek to glorify God in partnership with others by ministering spiritually, physically, and socially to those in need, in the name of Jesus. It is not easy when a 30-day supply of ibuprofen may be all that can be offered in the case of chronic pain that becomes routine with a long life of farming, or knowing that all the patients who wanted care on a given day could not be seen, or that the lack of working X-ray equipment meant no treatment for a patient.

But God's blessings don't necessarily appear in pretty gift-wrapped boxes. They come in the form of the relief in a mother's eyes as she holds a feverish child knowing that someone cares as much as she about her baby's health and future, or the excitement of someone

getting reading glasses so they can clearly see the instructions for the medicine just prescribed for their high blood pressure or a lingering infection. Indeed the greatest blessing is when we see our brothers and sisters as God's creation who share the same hopes and dreams as ourselves and our families. When we clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience and love, we began to understand better the perfect harmony that is possible when we adopt God's will for our lives.



This year's team included two surgeons, two dentists, a primary care physician, and the ever vital team of anesthesiologists and nurses. Nearly 500 patients were seen in the barrio clinics held in areas surrounding San Juan de la Maguana. Our dentists extracted upwards of 25-30 teeth each day and our surgeons performed close to 30 procedures and provided consults for an equal or greater number of patients at the clinic. Perhaps the most flexible of all things done on the mission trip involved the sterilization of a Dewalt cordless drill from the guesthouse that was needed for an ortho surgery to implant a plate and screws. It largely survived the flash sterilization reaching temps of 270 degrees with minimal damage — wonder if the bent handle will be covered under warranty?

Read the rest of the story online at <http://missions.fpcnashville.org>. If you are interested in serving on any of these future teams (medical, construction, or clean water), please contact the Missions Office of the church.

### 2011 Dominican Republic Medical Mission Team

Jon Alderman, Carey Black, Jim Cato, Alison Davis, Patricia Heim, Doug Holliday, Angela Jones, Jeff King, Jill Parker, Holly Pegram, Crea Sielbeck, Stuart Smith, Matt Speyer and Stacy Walton.

First Presbyterian Church  
4815 Franklin Road  
Nashville, Tennessee 37220

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit Org  
U S Postage  
P A I D  
Nashville, TN  
Permit No. 27.

First Presbyterian Church  
4815 Franklin Road  
Nashville, Tennessee 37220  
www.fpcnashville.org

**Dated church material**

Please deliver by December 10, 2011

**Pastors**

Todd Jones

*Pastor*

Sam Cooper

*Executive Pastor*

Mark DeVries

*Pastor to Youth & Their Families*

Stuart Gordon

*Pastor for Discipleship*

Sandra Randleman

*Pastor for Congregational Care & Mission*

Tom Walker

*Parish Associate*

Bill Bryant

*Pastor Emeritus*

Arch MacNair

*Associate Pastor Emeritus*

**Program Staff**

Brenda Geise

*Older Adult Ministry*

*Coordinator*

Deb O'Brien

*Director of Children's Ministry*

Letitia Green

*Director of Recreation*

Katy Miller

*Youth Program Coordinator*

Karen Fitts

*Nursery Coordinator*

Raphael Bundage

*Conductor, Sanctuary Choir*

Keith Moore

*Conductor, Sanctuary Chorale*

Susan Kirby

*Administrator of Worship*

*& Music Ministries*

Rhonda Swanson

*Assistant Organist*

Amelia Watson

*Coordinator of Parish Ministry*

**Schools**

Brenda Lutz

*Director, FPC Early Preschool*

Jennifer Hinote

*Head of School,*

*Oak Hill School*

**Administration**

Cindy Bozman

*Finance Manager*

Zonia Nunley

*Property Manager*

Carl Womack

*Food Service Director*

Lynn Elliott

*Pastor's Assistant*

Eric Skinner

*Communications Coordinator*

## Youth Happenings

### Sunday School on December 11 and December 18:

- **7th grade** meets in The Gathering Place.
- **8th grade** meets in the Youth Room.
- **9th grade** meets in room #105, downstairs in the Enrichment Center.
- **10th grade** meets in room #100, downstairs in the Enrichment Center.
- **11th grade** meets in room #102, downstairs in the Enrichment Center.
- **12th grade** meets in room #101, downstairs in the Enrichment Center.

### There will be no Sunday School on December 25.

**Sunday Worship:** 8:30 and 11:00 services in the sanctuary every Sunday, and "the 5:30" in the Enrichment Center in the evening. Families, please join us at one of these worship services each Sunday.

### 11th Grade Cookies & Cocoa Study

**Break:** Sunday, December 11, 4:00-5:30 P.M. in the Tyne House.

### 9th Grade Christmas Carolling:

Monday, December 19, 6:30 P.M. at the Dobb's home. Please bring \$5 for dinner.

**2012 Mission Trip Registrations are open!** To sign up for Spring Break, Alaska, Great Escape or New Orleans, visit [firstpresbyterianyouth.com/register](http://firstpresbyterianyouth.com/register). Questions or need scholarship information? Contact Katy Miller ([kmiller@fpcnashville.org](mailto:kmiller@fpcnashville.org) or 298-9570).

**Youth Newsletter:** If your family isn't receiving the monthly Youth Newsletter in your email, please let Katy Miller know (298-9570 or [kmiller@fpcnashville.org](mailto:kmiller@fpcnashville.org)).

To register for these events, visit us at [firstpresbyterianyouth.com/register](http://firstpresbyterianyouth.com/register)

the  
5:30

sunday evening worship at fpc  
the enrichment center @ 5:30 p.m.