



The Messenger

2014 THEME: "ARE YOU READY"
(DECEMBER 2014)

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* ARTICLES NEED TO BE
SUBMITTED TO PETE BY
THE LAST SUNDAY OF
THE MONTH - FOR NEXT
MONTH'S PUBLICATION.

Carl's Comments - Reverend Carl Thompson

As we begin the Christmas season I just want to drop a short note in this newsletter. It is hard to believe that at the end of this month I will be completing ten years as your Pastor. It seems like just yesterday I was meeting with your pastoral nominating committee. I committed to three years if the congregation could put up with me that long. As you know we have to do a one year contract each year since I am designated as a Stated Supply. We renewed that contract last month.

The years have gone by so very, very fast. Evelyn and I have made a lot of great friends here in the congregation and in the community. We have lost several of these friends over the years either through those going on to their heavenly reward, or moving from the community for family support reason.

We truly miss the fellowship of these wonderful people -- losing them has taken a toll on our hearts. The "Good News" of the advent season is that this is not permanent, we will see these wonderful people again in the Kingdom of God, thanks to the birth of a baby in a manger in Bethlehem.



Because of this tremendous event we have a new sense of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy. Our world and our lives have been transformed because of this joyous event. I pray that you truly enjoy the celebration of Christmas this year in its true sense and remember these words, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace."

As we begin a New Year together Evelyn and I want to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. *Evelyn and Carl*



Calendar of Events

Worship Services at 10:00 AM
Adult Sunday School each Sunday at 9:00 A.M.

- **Tuesdays** - Men's Prayer Breakfast at 8 A.M.
- **Tuesdays** - Games/ Fellowship at 10 A.M.
- **Wednesdays** - Choir Rehearsal at 5:30 P.M.
- **Dec. 7** - Communion Sunday
- **Dec. 24** - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 6:00PM
- **Dec. 25** - The Birth of our Savior / Christmas Day
- **Dec. 28** - Guest Preacher, Dr. Sam Lanham



Advent Candles



- 1st CANDLE – (purple) **THE CANDLE OF HOPE**
- 2nd CANDLE – (purple) **THE CANDLE OF PEACE**
- 3rd CANDLE – (pink) **THE CANDLE OF JOY**
- 4th CANDLE – (purple) **THE CANDLE OF LOVE**
- 5th CANDLE – (white) **“CHRIST CANDLE”**

Advent - Prepare the Way

by John Piper at desiringGod.org

“He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.” (Luke 1:16-17)

What John the Baptist did for Israel, Advent can do for us. Don’t let Christmas find you unprepared.

I mean *spiritually* unprepared. Its joy and impact will be so much greater if you are ready!

That you might be prepared . . .

First, meditate on the fact that we need a *Savior*. Christmas is an indictment before it becomes a delight. It will not have its intended effect until we feel desperately the need for a Savior. Let these short Advent meditations help awaken in you a bit-sweet sense of need for the Savior.



Second, engage in sober self-examination. Advent is to Christmas what Lent is to Easter. “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!” Let every heart *prepare him room . . .* by cleaning house.

Third, build God-centered anticipation and expectancy and excitement into your home — especially for the children. If you are excited about Christ, they will be too. If you can only make Christmas exciting with material things, how will the children get a thirst for God? Bend the efforts of your imagination to make the wonder of the King’s arrival visible for the children.

Fourth, be much in the Scriptures, and memorize the great passages! “Is not my word like fire, says the Lord!” Gather ‘round that fire this Advent season. It is warm. It is sparkling with colors of grace. It is healing for a thousand hurts. It is light for dark nights.

Common Lectionary Readings (Carl will change topics at times due to requests or other circumstances)

	2nd Sunday of Advent - Dec 7	3rd Sunday of Advent - Dec 14	4th Sunday of Advent - Dec 21	Christmas Eve - Dec 24	1st Sunday after Christmas - Dec 28
First Reading	Isa 40: 1-11	Isa 61:1-4, 8-11	2 Sam 7:1-11, 16	Isa 9: 2-7	Isa 61:10-62:3
Psalm	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	Psalm 126	Psalm 89:1-4,19-26	Psalm 96	Psalm 148
Sec. Reading	2 Peter 3:8-15a	1 Thess 5:16-24	Rom 16:25-27	Titus 2:11-14	Gal 4:4-7
Gospel	Mark 1: 1-8	John 1:6-8, 19-28	Luke 1:26-38	Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)	Luke 2:22- 40

December Birthdays

- Mike Moore 3
- Evelyn Duque 22
- Jesus Christ 25
- Carol Booher 27
- Gidget Todd 31

About our Members and Friends

Jack Cooper had brain surgery on May 27th to remove a GMB tumor. He continues chemotherapy (5 on and 21 days off). He has been approved for a new treatment (NOV TTF-100A) which uses constant electrical impulses from a helmet into the brain. He will be “plugged-in” at home and carry a battery backpack when out. Pray for treatment success and peace for Jack and Jackie.

Tommie Thompson will go back for another extensive back surgery on Dec. 9th in San Antonio. The first surgery lasted 9 hours. This could be as long. Dawn will be with Tommie all week. (Her cell 512-653-6834.)

Stan Staples is experiencing back pain and mobility issues.

Jim Arner has leg pain and other complicating issues.

Rip VanWinkle has been slowed by back issues and is looking for a solution.

JoAnn, Bobbie Dickerson’s daughter-in-law, has breast cancer. She is now more than half way through her 8 weeks of radiation. The radiation effects have been difficult. Pray for effective treatment and restoration of health.

Pray for the many **soldiers** that are continuing to be deployed. This time of the year is especially difficult for both the soldier and the family.

Church Business by Cindy Pennington



* Congregational Meeting

Four elders were elected at the Congregational Meeting held Sunday, November 23, 2014.

Barclay McCort will serve a one-year term to fill the vacancy created when Bev Jones, Class of 2015, moved to North Carolina. Barclay previously served as elder for the Presbyterian Church of Salado from 2005-2006, when she served as Clerk of the Session, and also served from 1997-1999.



John Booher, Nancy Healey, and Chine Ray were elected to three-year terms as elders of the Class of 2017. John and his wife, Carol, joined the church in 2012. Nancy Healey is currently serving as elder. Chine Ray previously served as elder in the Class of 2002.



The newly-elected elders are scheduled to be installed at the January 11, 2015 worship service. Please continue to keep members of the Session and its work in your prayers.

* Personnel / Worship

The Session approved the 2015 contract with Rev. Carl V. Thompson, Jr., and it has been submitted to Grace Presbytery. Rev. Thompson's shoulder surgery is scheduled for the last week of the year; his schedule will be minimized accordingly through mid-February.

Jean Teal has graciously agreed to serve as choir director for 2015, and the Session approved her continued service.



* Finance

Pledge Forms are due back by Dec. 7. Returning your form will assist Mike Moore, Treasurer, in more accurately projecting income for 2015.

Pledge Forms were distributed to church members November 23 and mailed to members not in attendance. If you are a friend of the church or frequent attender, and would like to complete a form, there is a supply of blank forms in the narthex. Thank you!

Adult Education News

Under Wraps: The Gift We Never Expected is the title of our Advent lessons for the four Sundays in December. Each Sunday the lesson looks in depth at one of God's characteristics that is evidenced in the Old Testament and then revealed through Jesus Christ. We invite you to celebrate the Advent Season with us through this study.



Coming in January--

The Fruit of the Spirit:

What is it?

Who needs it?

Why?

Join us in the New Year as we examine the answers to these questions.

Shirley Pinkston

Today was the absolute worst day ever
And don't try to convince me that
There's something good in every day
Because, when you take a closer look,
This world is a pretty evil place.

Even if

Some goodness does shine through once in a while
Satisfaction and happiness don't last.

And it's not true that

It's all in the mind and heart

Because

True happiness can be attained
Only if one's surroundings are good

It's not true that good exists

I'm sure that you can agree that

The reality

Creates

My attitude

It's all beyond my control

And you'll never in a million years hear me say that

Today was a very good day

Now .. read this passage from bottom to top.

Lord, During this Advent Season grant me an UP attitude because this tremendous event gives me a new sense of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy. In Jesus Name Amen

Hanging of the Greens plus After Church Social - 11/23/2014



My finger is trapped.

Worker and supervisors.



Jim has the upside down nativity set.



Chili, Soup, Louisiana Gumbo and Fixings.