



Focus

December 2016

www.daleheightspc.org

A Message from Pastor Roger

Dale Heights Staff

Pastor:
Reverend Roger Roberts

**Office Manager &
Director of Music:**
Maggie Rogers

Financial Secretary:
Dick Corey

Custodian:
Rick Geiger

Dale Heights Session

Moderator
Reverend Roger Roberts

Clerk
Sandy Weigt

Roy Lembcke
Gale Oakes
Caroline Pope
Rick Shannon
Wendy Weber

Christmas: Gone Full Circle

Another Christmas Season is upon us. In fact, it's already in full swing. Even while Halloween decorations were still on display in stores, Christmas items made their appearance, with decorated trees lining store aisles, amidst a host of Santas, reindeer, and other symbols of the season. A local radio station that usually plays "oldies" pop songs began blaring non-stop Christmas holiday music is mid-November. Too much too soon, I say! Yet, who can blame merchants and the media for catering to a huge market of holiday shoppers and the many who'll do some serious spending, hoping to have an emotional lift through the "Christmas spirit?"

What's obviously missing from the Christmas holiday demonstrations and decorations is the emphasis on the Christian meaning of this most popular holiday. I can recall the days when Perry Como and other entertainers actually sang traditional carols about the birth of Christ on their TV specials. Now it's entirely possible for a newcomer to our American culture to wonder about the origin of this December holiday season. It's possible for Christians to feel a bit shy about interrupting this secular merriment by wishing "Merry Christmas" instead of "Happy Holidays."

But actually, the Christian celebration of the birth of Christ at this season of the year began as an interruption of the pagan celebration of Winter Solstice, replete with candles and evergreen decorations. Our first and second century forebearers in the faith didn't want the pagans to have all the fun! The celebration of the birth of Christ had slow and modest beginnings, and only Reformers like Martin Luther began to give Christmas much emphasis at all. Easter, the celebration of Jesus' resurrection, was always the Christians' main celebratory event.

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So now it seems that pagan, at least secular celebrations of Christmas, i.e. the Holidays, are getting the most “mileage” out of these December days and weeks. It seems that things have gone full circle. But as followers of Christ, we can, like the earliest church, enjoy this season as a time to celebrate, not Winter Solstice, but the birth of Christ into the world as the Light of the World. We can party also, as we experience the joy of family and friends together for meals and all sorts of get-togethers. We can also enjoy sharing gifts with one another, as a reminder of the One who gave himself for us as the greatest Gift of all.

May God bless you this Christmas 2016 with the deepest peace and joy made possible through Christ Jesus! It’s a joy to serve as your pastor, and Jan and I thank you for all your loving expressions to us this Christmas Season.

Yours in his love and service,

—*Pastor Roger*

December 4 Second Sunday of Advent

Liturgist: Jennifer Jones

Ushers: Roy Lembcke, Gale Oakes, Wendy Weber

Reader: Barb Fleishman

December 11 Third Sunday of Advent

Liturgist: Mike Holland

Ushers: Bonnie Savonne, Otty Schaefer

Readers: Jennifer Jones & Jack Rose

December 18 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Liturgist: Janice Krall

Ushers: Janice Krall, Rick Shannon, Vreni Straubhaar

Readers: Wendy Weber & Jane Williams

December 24 Christmas Eve

Liturgist: Sandy Weigt

Ushers: TBD

Readers: Margie & Alicia Shumate

December 25 Christmas Day/Lessons & Carols

Liturgist: Roy Lembcke

Ushers: Mike Holland, Elizabeth Ndafooka, Nathan Tripp

December New Beginnings

The December New Beginnings Lunch will be Tuesday, December 20 at 11:30 at Prairie Café, 3109 Pheasant Branch Rd, Middleton.

Please call or e-mail Mary Towne at 692-3885 or marytowne45@gmail.com for reservations.

Winter Weather Cancellation Policy

Although we prefer not to have to cancel worship, sometimes winter weather makes it necessary. If the decision is made to cancel worship, Maggie will send an email and change the answering machine by 8:30 a.m. on Sunday morning to indicate the cancellation. If you are at all unsure about whether or not to come to church, please check your email or call the church.

Above all, play it safe.

Church Women United

On December 2, 2016, CWU will host a presentation titled "The Urban League Today", presented by Dr. Ruben Anthony, at New Beginnings Alliance Church, 602 Acewood Blvd, Madison. Coffee and Gathering begins at 9am, with the presentation beginning at 10am.

Thank you to all who donated items for the "Open Doors for Refugees" program! They have been packed carefully and turned over to the program for immediate availability. May God bless you for your generosity.

—Ellie Metzloff, Key Woman

December Birthdays

December 2	Ruby Meyer
December 13	Vreni Straubhaar
December 18	Jamie Engebregtsen
December 22	Ray Miller
December 25	Dick Corey
December 28	Marian Todd
December 29	Caroline Pope

December Anniversary

December 16	Otty & Larry Schaefer
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Many thanks to the following people who purchased poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary this Advent season: Bonnie Savonne, Vreni Straubhaar, Otty Schaefer, Edi Chan, Sandy Weigt, Jennifer Jones, Margie Shumate, Gale Oakes, Gerry Klump, Wendy Weber, Pastor Roger Roberts, Elizabeth Ndafooka, Rick Shannon, Barb Fleishman, Ellie Metzloff, and Marcia Holman. Thanks also to Jim & Angie Lundgren who purchased three pots in honor of their children.

Thanks also to Elizabeth Ndafooka and Mike Holland for arranging the flowers each week.

Remember to take your poinsettia home after the Christmas Eve or Christmas Day service.



Lessons & Carols

Our annual Lessons & Carols service on December 25 needs 9 readers. The lessons will be read from your place in the pews (please stand if possible) and will alternate with carols. The sign-up sheet will be in the Concourse on December 4. This is a great opportunity to participate in the service by sharing your voice!

Advent/Christmas Display

The Worship & Music Committee is inviting members of the congregation to share Advent/Christmas items for display on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Please bring items on December 18 and take them home on Christmas Day.

Thank you!

Emergency Cards

As we draw closer to a new year, it's time to update emergency cards. We ask that all attendees fill out a card. Cards will be passed out on December Sundays and should be returned to the office. If you would like yours mailed, please send an email to the office (office@daleheightspc.org). With the purchase of an AED (defibrillator) unit, a question has been added to the emergency cards regarding your wishes for AED use in the event that it becomes necessary. Please direct any questions to the office. All information contained on the cards will be kept strictly confidential.



December *Outreach* News

Your Outreach committee would like to shake things up a bit during this season of Advent and offer two suggestions to support the work of the Presbyterian Church here in the US and around the world. It is reassuring and meaningful that the Presbyterian Church (USA) is deeply rooted in a tradition of generosity.

How about looking at two possibilities to give thanks for our many rich blessings and to benefit others?

The Christmas Joy Offering

Giving to our Christmas Joy Offering provides opportunity for you to participate in the ministry of Jesus Christ as it connects with the special mission of the greater church for racial ethnic education and leadership development, and church worker assistance.

Jesus reminds us in Luke 10:25-37 that our neighbors are more than just the people living on our street. Our neighbors are virtually everywhere. Contributions to this offering support Presbyterians around the world in the effort to address concerns impacting their communities.

50% of the Offering is for providing assistance for students to attend Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges to pursue their professional and leadership goals.

The other 50% is for offering financial assistance for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.



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December *Outreach* News, cont.

Presbyterian Giving Catalog

The Presbyterian Giving Catalog offers many ways of “alternative giving” that support people around the world. Gifts are priced to make it possible for anyone to give. Larger items are perfect for group contributions. The catalog’s visual experience makes it a great way to teach kids about alternative giving and the impact their gifts can make. You can make a gift in the name of that hard-to-shop-for person in your life as well!

Possible gifts: a family of chickens for \$25, one share of a cow for \$45, a cute little piglet for \$40, a bag of seeds for \$30, farming tools for \$10, supplies for displaced students for \$30, the Women’s Empowerment Project for \$100, or Peace Camp for \$150! How about a bicycle for a pastor for \$75?

Please listen for more information during the Minute for Mission, or check the gathering space for what and how to give. Thanks for considering sharing in gratitude for the gift of life through Jesus Christ and the many gifts with which we have been richly blessed!



Check out our website:

www.daleheightspc.org

Sunday Schedule

9:00-10:00am

Adult Christian Education

10:00am

Worship

11:00am

Fellowship

Dale Heights

Mission Statement:

Our open-minded congregation affirms and celebrates God's gifts of love and grace. We seek to share God's love by inviting others to join us in following Jesus and by serving those in need in our community and world.

Dale Heights Presbyterian Church

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