

The Pinecrest Precentor

Volume XXIII, December 2016

Rhett Carson, Senior Pastor

From Our Senior Pastor:

Dear Pinecrest Family,

Christmas is just around the corner, and the only thing you'll probably see more than Christmas trees, lights, and presents is stressed out people. Perhaps you are one of them.

Why is everyone so stressed? I believe it's because they want Christmas to be perfect. They want everyone and themselves to wear the perfect outfit, eat the perfect meal, give/receive the perfect gift. They don't want Christmas to be ruined for anyone.

Well, if you are one of those stressed-out people. Take a deep breath. I've got some good news for you. You can't ruin Christmas. Christmas has already happened. The gift of God's own son Jesus Christ arrived over 2,000 years ago. All we are doing in a few days is continuing the celebration that began with angels and shepherds out in a field. Angels who proclaimed: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

This is what makes Christmas so amazing and special. If we remember this then we can really enjoy this season and occasion instead of stressing about all the details. Everyone has already been given the perfect gift.

Merry Christmas!

Rhett Carson, Senior Pastor

Intercessory Prayer

The families of Irene Eckenrode and Foy Maxwell at their passing, Carolyn Evans, Nancy Boyea, Bill Owens, Andrew Brunson, Eleanor Richardson, Barbara Feather, Anna Wilson

Christmas Card Exchange Box

The box is in the atrium. Save postage by bringing your cards and filing them in the box. Don't forget to check for cards for yourself!

Next **Precentor deadline** is Sunday, January 15, 2017

Christmas Covered Dish Dinner at the Pastor's House

Everyone is invited to attend a Covered Dish Dinner at Rhett and Kathy Carson's house on Sunday, December 18 at 5:30PM. Just bring a side dish or dessert and come for a great time of holiday food and fellowship. Please sign-up in the atrium.

Christmas Eve Communion and Candlelight Service - 6:00 P.M., Saturday, December 24

Bi-Annual Missions Conference

The Pinecrest Missions Committee plans a 2017 missions conference for January. Mark your calendars for Wednesday, January 4 and Sunday, January 8.

The conference will begin with a potluck supper at 5:30PM on January 4. A missionary will speak following the supper. Then Sunday, January 8 will be a very full day. Ken Lotze, an ARP Connect missionary, will speak at the 8:30AM and 11AM worship services. Emma and Colby Pike, World Witness Missionaries to Scotland and Andrew and Jenna Lotze, future missionaries to Senegal, will speak at 9:30AM at the combined Sunday School class. The 11AM service will be followed by a special missions luncheon in Evans Hall. The conference will continue at the 6PM service. Paul Patrick, RUF leader at Erskine College will be the main speaker. Josh Grimm, RUF leader at Queen's College in Charlotte, will give an update of his work. The conference will conclude with a reception, following the service where everyone can visit with the missionaries.

Plan on attending all of these events to stay informed about the work of these missionaries, who are supported by Pinecrest ARP Church members.

Snow Tubing Trip

Meet at the church at 12:30PM on Tuesday, January 17 to go to Zip 'N Slip in Mars Hill. We will tube from 2-4PM, go to eat pizza, and return to the church by 7PM. Cost: \$15/person which includes 2 hours of tubing and pizza. Please sign up in the atrium and let us know how many you will bring. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. For release forms, please go to www.zipnslip.com.

Here's "The Rest of the Story" of Our Women's New Organization:

Our 2017 Women's Board (WOCM) will be a President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Mission Coordinator, one co-chair from each Team and our Circle Leaders. You can find all their names and phone numbers in the following publications:

- The WOCM Yearbook (due out in January for EVERY woman of the congregation)
- On the Women's Bulletin Board in Evans Hall
- The Pinecrest website (pinecrestchurch.com)
- In our 2017 Church Phone Directory

The board will meet January, March, June and August on the first Tuesday of the month at 10 AM in the church library.

Our circles (4) will remain as the heart of our women's ministry. So we earnestly hope you can find one that fits your schedule as these small groups will provide you with more blessings and fellowship than words can describe!

How will all these groups work together when you have a need? Let's go through an example to explain. Let's say you are scheduled for a surgery and as a single member of Pinecrest, you know that you might need:

- a ride to and from the hospital;
- meals for a couple of days;
- ride to first four re-habs before you're able to drive again.

So you would contact the Chairman of the Visiting Team (Susan Sanders) for transportation, Kathy Carson for meals and of course, if all else fails, contact Pastor Carson to point you in the right direction!

Our teams will help all of us come together as we serve the needs of our congregation, our church and eventually out to our community. So even though this is our women's organization at Pinecrest we will work hand-in-hand with all members of our church as many men have volunteered. It is a church wide ministry that grows our faith, fellowship and service for the glory of God.

We hope each and every one of you, no matter your age, your limitations, and your work schedules will find a way to join our church volunteers in shining the light of God's grace on our fellow church members, into our community and with our missionaries "to the ends of the earth."

~ Thank you. Sue Brogi

Want to Pray? Please contact our church office about being added to our e-mail prayer lists to pray for urgent prayer needs in our church family.

Want to Be Prayed For? Please contact the church office or speak to a pastor/ elder about being added to the church prayer lists or having the elders pray over you.

Thanks

Many, many thanks to all who participated in the Children's Christmas Program! The congregation thoroughly enjoyed the children's sweet presentation. Our thanks to Sarabeth DeLuca and to everyone who helped.

The Box

To my 5 year-old way of thinking, the Sears Christmas catalog was the best mail we got all year. It only took a few days and the pages of the toy section were well dog-eared. She cheerfully sat on the upper left hand corner of her page, the perfect doll for me. No, she didn't walk, say the Lord's Prayer, drink a bottle, giggle or sing. She just needed to be loved. I couldn't read any of her write-up or price but I knew that any doll that grand had to be very expensive which meant it not likely she would find her way to my house. But, just in case, I named her Mary Elizabeth.

I was home and hid behind Mom's apron when the Sears delivery man brought three boxes to our door, one quite big, the other two medium. The Sears man paid and gone, Mom casually carried the boxes to the seldom used front room and totally ignored my barrage of questions concerning them. When my sisters came in from school I excitedly escorted them to the front room to behold the new boxes. I can't recall them being overly excited. Surely there were no words on the boxes to indicate their content or they would have read them to me. When Daddy finally came home that evening I escorted him to the mysterious treasure as well. While he feigned ignorance to my questions he likely did show interest in the boxes as Daddy was always nosey about Christmas presents.

Well, let me tell you, in the forthcoming days I found plenty of things to do in that seldom used front room just to be near and keep an eye on that big box in particular. If not playing in there, I would go in frequently to visit, ah, check on the box. I recall watching as Daddy had to work to fit it in the Chrysler trunk along with all other needs going to Grandpa's for Christmas. At Grandpa's, to accommodate the Christmas tree, the couch had been set slanted across the corner. They leaned MY box (even if the contents were not for me, by this time I was very attached to the box itself) in the corner behind the couch. It was, after all, much too big to slip under the tree. I spent much time sitting sidewise on the couch just to be near and watch MY box.

Finally! Christmas morning. After we all had a festive breakfast, the dishes were done, we were all dressed, hair combed, teeth brushed, Daddy carried Grandma downstairs from her sick bed (one of my few memories of a precious Grandmother), the family all gathered to share our Christmas love and joy by the exchanging of gifts. Being the youngest, I got open mine first. It was then that the big box was finally lifted over the couch and presented to . . . me! I'm sure Daddy, with his ever ready pocket knife, helped me get it open and then there she was, my Mary Elizabeth. She was instantly my best friend, my companion, my confidant, my longed for younger sibling, and my little girl that helped train me for living dolls that God would bring into my life some fifty years later. She'd have a place at the table beside me and my bed partner would have to scunch over to make room for her.

We often hear of children that have more fun playing with the box than the present, but not until I sat to write this piece did it ever occur to me to wonder what ever became of that box I had doted on the past weeks. I have no idea if it was burned up or saved to store various items. I had no further interest or use for it. Mary Elizabeth certainly wasn't going back in it. Never again did she ride in the trunk.

Now, we all have various sorts of boxes that we store or tote about with us. But the one we all have in common is this flesh and blood body that houses who we really are, our soul, our spirit. Someday, either by death or rapture, we will be done with the box, freed from it

just as I lifted Mary Elizabeth from her brown cardboard one. We will have no more use for that which we so carefully nurtured, fed, clothed, toned, and fretted over. At Christmas we celebrate Jesus leaving his heavenly home to come live among us as the perfect man. At our death we leave our earthly body, box, to go live with Jesus IF we have trusted in his atoning sacrifice for our sin. Just think, no more aches and pains, no more dieting, no more exercising to get fit, no more worries, no more restless nights, the list goes on and on. We will be in His presence, have a place at His table, and, if needed, space in a bed. 'Tis hard to realize that I have had Mary Elizabeth more than sixty years now, still have her, but that's nothing compared to how long Jesus will keep us with him. There will be no end to it! And to that I shout, "HALLELUJAH!" O come, let us adore him.

~Merry Christmas, Martha Scott

2016 Contributions All contributions for 2016 should be postmarked and dated no later than December 31, 2016. All monies should be received by the financial secretary by January 1 for 2016 credit. Contribution statements will be available as soon as possible following the January 1 date, but no later than January 31, 2017. In order to reduce the expense of postage, statements will be printed, but not mailed. Please call the church office to have your statement mailed. You may pick up your statement at the church as soon as they are available.

2017 Offering Envelopes Your envelopes are available for pick up in the atrium. Use of offering envelopes is encouraged to ensure accuracy and efficiency in tracking your contributions. Please call the church office if you wish to have your envelopes mailed to you.

2017 Pinecrest Flower Calendar is posted outside the sanctuary doors. Please sign up early for your special dates!

January Birthdays

- 1 Cynthia Sherer
- 5 Barbara Hughes, Betsy McKee & Joy Young
- 9 Barbara Herdina
- 14 Victoria Cambron, Frances Ramsey
- 15 Mickey Horner, Margo Pugliese
- 16 Ron McKnight
- 19 Seth Swift
- 22 Josh Shelton
- 26 Carol Partyka
- 28 Ann Brice, Alvin Brickley

29 Joseph Sherer

30 Eben Carson

Year-to-Date Income as of November 30, 2016

Income	Expense	Surplus
\$327,168	\$319,286	\$7,882

The Twelve Days of Christmas ~ is believed to date back to the religious upheavals of 17th Century England. When the Puritans came to power they suppressed Christmas and Christmas carols. Eventually, when the season was restored Catholics still weren't allowed to practice their faith, so parents used coded nonsense songs to teach their children the basic doctrine.

- In The Twelve Days of Christmas, "My true love" refers to God.
- The partridge - Christ. The pear tree represents the cross.
- Two turtle doves - the Old and New Testaments.
- Three French hens - the three great gifts of faith, hope and love.
- Four calling birds - the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- Five gold rings - the first five books of the Old Testament. These books were treated by the Jews with great reverence.
- Six geese a-laying - eggs are a symbol of new life. The laying geese stand for the six days of creation.
- Seven swans a-swimming - the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophesy, service, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership, mercy.
- Eight maids a-milking - the eight Beatitudes of Jesus.
- Nine ladies dancing - the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.
- Ten lords a-leaping - The Ten Commandments.
- Eleven pipers piping - The 11 apostles who remained faithful to Jesus.
- Twelve drummers drumming - The 12 vital beliefs of the Apostles' Creed.

This article appeared in a Scottish newspaper

Interfaith Assistance Ministry

December food focus: hams, turkeys, turkey breasts, chickens peas, green beans, cranberry sauce, gravy, stuffing, yams, potatoes, pie crusts and fillings, cake mixes

January food focus: canned pasta, macaroni & cheese, canned fruit and vegetables, coffee

Clothing closet focus: blankets and warm clothing and socks in all sizes for adults and children, men's work boots are always needed.

Youth & Children's Calendar

Kids Bible Club - Thursdays beginning at 3:30PM on January 12

Snow Tubing Trip - Meet at church at 12:30PM, Tuesday, January 17

PINECREST CALENDAR

SUNDAYS

8:30 am Early Morning Worship
9:30 am Sunday Morning Bible Study for all ages
10:55 am Worship Service/Children's Church
12:00 pm Coffee Hour
6:00 pm Evening Worship

WEEKLY MEETINGS & EVENTS

Monday 4:15 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal
Tuesday 2:30 pm Sonshine Small Group -1st & 3rd
Wednesday 11:00 am Prayer Meeting - 1st & 3rd
7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
Thursday 12:00 pm Sunday Bulletin Deadline
7:00 pm Men's Bible Study - 2nd & 3rd
Saturday 9:00 am Men's Prayer Group

DECEMBER EVENTS

Friday, 12/16

9:00 am Pinecrest Travelers Trip to Greenville - meet at church

Sunday, 12/18

5:30 pm Christmas Covered Dish at the Pastor's House - 129 Boyd Drive, Flat Rock

Christmas Eve, Saturday, 12/24

6:00 pm Communion and Candlelight Service

Christmas Day, Sunday, 12/25

10:55 am Worship Service

NO Early Worship Service or Evening Worship Service on December 25

JANUARY CALENDAR

Sunday, 1/1

Communion at both Morning Services

NO Evening Worship Service

Monday, 1/2

11:00 am Congregational, Worship & Social Concerns Team

Tuesday, 1/3

10:00 am WOCM Board Meeting Wednesday, 1/4

5:30 pm Missions Conference and First Wednesday Potluck

Missions Conference Sunday, 1/8

Mission Speakers at both morning services and at the combined Sunday School Class

12:00 pm Missions Conference Luncheon

6:00 pm Evening Worship Service

Missions Conference Reception

Tuesday, 1/10

12:30 pm Circle 2 Meeting - Library

6:30 pm Joint Meeting of Session and Diaconate

Wednesday, 1/11

1:15 pm Circle 3 Meeting – Library

Thursday, 1/12

3:30 pm Bible Club resumes

7:00 pm Circle 5 - Carson Home

Sunday, 1/15

The Precentor Deadline

Tuesday, 1/17

12:30 pm Snow Tubing Trip

1:00 pm Circle 4 Meeting - Carolina Village