



## First Press

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## December 2020

### From the Pastor's Desk



***I was there to hear your borning cry; I'll be there when you are old. I rejoiced the day you were baptized to see your life unfold.***

On December 2, 2020 I experienced the joy of hearing the low, rumbling cry of my hour-old granddaughter for the first time. Never had I anticipated this moment, so I harbored no great or unrealistic expectations. One does not necessarily plan to be a grandparent or plan to become old though the parents had longed for a child. Finn is now with us in spirit as well as in the flesh reminding me of another Baby. The Baby born to Mary and Joseph was long expected and planned for in the cry of the prophets.

The hymn (#488 in Glory To God) is primarily a part of the baptismal service. I see in it the glimmer of the Nativity of Our Lord as well and the assuring words of the prophets, the Psalmist,

*(Continued on pg. 3)*

### November Events



### All Saint's Sunday



## SESSION MEETING UPDATE

### A Stated Meeting of the Session was held on Nov. 11, 2020. Highlights include:

**Finance**—Fulton presented a projected budget based on 2020 income and expenses. We discussed returning to a pledge approach to giving, as knowing what income to expect would be a great advantage in planning for next year. We agreed to encourage the congregation to complete a pledge card and scheduled a return of those and a dedication of them for December 6th.

**Buildings & Grounds**—Lynda reported that the damaged tile and stained carpet in the sanctuary have been replaced thanks to the hard work of Sue Simon and Rick Smith (Brycen's grandfather). Outside, bushes have been planted along the back walkway and retainer stones have been put in place (Thank you Bruce Vineyard). Also the tree in the front is in the process of being removed. Terry Coyne is working to get the lawn mower in good running shape and ready to sell. Interior clean-up and movement have continued, as the Adult Sunday School Class has moved to another room, the credenza has been reunited with the desk in the office, and the parlor has been updated.

**Worship**—Kay reported that we continue to average around 40 people per Sunday at our services. She noted that we had 50 total for Polka Sunday (41 in person and 9 on Zoom) and 48 for All Saint's Day (43 in person and 5 on Zoom). She advised that the Committee is limiting decorations and the time for hanging of the greens this year, as small gatherings and social distancing are still necessities. Planning is in progress for the Christmas Eve Service with options such as having an outdoor venue and using LED lights rather than candles being considered.

**Spiritual Direction**—As Church School teachers need to be approved by the Session, Robin made a motion to approve Erin Sims as a teacher for our children's "Young Disciples" Class and she was approved unanimously.

**Communication/Technology**—Robin and Johnnie completed the purchase of updated technology for livestreaming that was approved by the Session and it is now all in place. Johnnie is getting positive feedback from the folks attending via Zoom. We have 27 members in our private Church Family Facebook Group who are enjoying sharing what is happening in our personal and church lives, along with funny jokes and positive messages.

**Moderator's Report**--Rev. Kathy focused on planning for next year and beyond. The Session agreed to return to an Elder of the month policy to ensure that someone is responsible for specific chores such as the opening and closing of the building on Sundays. The Session also set tentative dates for the ordination and installation of elders and a trustee (January 10) and the church's annual meeting (January 17th) and were asked to think about officer training, the composition and structure of teams, and pastoral leadership models.

December 4 & 5 Shop Online at Kendra Scott and use the code GIVEBACK8800 to donate 20% of your total to Body of Christ Clinic For more information go to: <http://bodyofchristclinicgiveback.splashthat.com/>



## Pastor's Desk (cont.)

the gospel writers and the letter scribes. For centuries that stretched into millennia, humans were being prepared for the arrival of the Infant Jesus. All the while in the background, God the Father and Creator was watching over us and preparing the world for the arrival of the Messiah. As the commentary on the hymn says, baptism is a once in a lifetime event. The birth of Our Lord and Savior led to his baptism by his cousin John on the banks of the River Jordan. The Jordan bore witness to a history of liberation from the oppressive forces of this world. 2020 is no exception. The Hebrews crossed in safety after long years of enslavement and a challenging journey. They were saved to find a new hope in the promise of land across the hills. God was with them all the time watching and guiding in the background, evidenced by a cloud and fire, seen by Moses in mountain meetings and carried on a throne to the new Temple. The Ark of the Covenant was captured and seems to have never been recovered. God has no need of material relics to relate to us. He gave us Jesus to hear our boding cry and be with us when we are old.

**On this day of December, the third of the month, I am privileged to share good news with you of a birth attended by angels.**

*2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)  
<sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own town to register.*

*<sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. <sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped*

*him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*

*<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."*

*<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,*

*<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

*<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."*

*Excerpted from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 2*

Peace and joy to you in this season of new life,

Rev. Kathy Vineyard, HR

## FINANCIAL DATA JAN- NOV 29, 2020

### Profit & Loss

Total Income	\$71,649.80
Total Expense	\$53,367.55
Net Income	\$18,282.25

