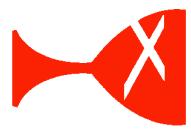


## In This Issue...

- Ask the Pastor: Are Christmas Trees Contrary to the Bible?
- Is Your Cup Half Full?
- Birthdays and Anniversaries for December AND January

Volume 62

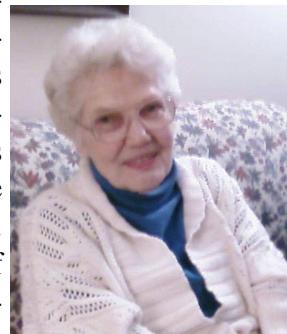
December, 2011



## IN MEMORIAM, RUTH ADAMS AND LOLA BETHEL

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was recently saddened with the deaths of two long-time members of the congregation, Lola Bethel and Ruth Adams. Memorial services were held for Lola on November 2, and for Ruth on November 13.

**Ruth Adams** joined First Christian in 1966, when she and her family relocated to the Marietta for her late husband, Eugene, a USAF pilot during World War II, to take a position at Lockheed as an aerospace engineer. Active in the Cobb County Music Teachers Association, Ruth taught piano, and became organist and pianist at the church. Having a B.A. in English from what is now the University of Oklahoma, she also organized the church library and served as church librarian for many years. She served as an elder, Sunday School teacher, member of the Chancel Choir, leader of the Disciples Women's organization, and in several other capacities. In 2007 she moved to Indianapolis, Ind., to be near her daughter, Rev. Dr. Debbie Phelps. There she attended Southport Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).



A person of many interests, Ruth relished gardening, bird-watching, and genealogy, keeping up with her many friends on *Facebook*. A life-long Disciple, Ruth, 90, lived her faith. She leaves behind her three daughters (Nancy Raley; Becky Haschke; Debbie Phelps), a son (Alan), four grandchildren, one great-grandson, two nephews, many cousins, extended family members, and, of course, her church family.

A close friend of Ruth, **Lola Bethel** came to First Christian in 1977, eleven years after Ruth, having been transferred to Marietta as a Hospital Purchasing Agent for IMI. She retired here and became an irreplaceable presence in the congregation, leading the Worship Team for fourteen years, singing in the Chancel Choir, teach-

ing the Friendship Sunday School, leading worship at Atherton Place, Marietta, and directing the Prayer Ministry of the church. She was also active in the Disciples Women's ministry, and served on the board of Christmount Conference Center, Black Mountain, N.C., the denomination's retreat center. Active to the end, Lola died at Wellstar Kennestone Hospital on October 30, at age 90. She is survived by her two daughters (Cherri Ezell; Judy Maynard) and three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren, and the congregation of First Christian.

We shall truly miss Ruth and Lola. "Blessed are the dead who die from now on in the Lord . . . they will rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them" (Rev. 14:13).



We are a family worshipping and serving God.  
We accept, inspire and empower for Christian service.

The HARINGER

News of First Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ) of Marietta

## Upcoming Sermons

**December 4, 2011**

Rev. Jerry Gladson

**December 11, 2011**

Rev. Donna Kremer

**December 18, 2011**

Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata

**December 25, 2011**

Rev. Jeff Shimizu

**January 1, 2012**

Rev. Donna Kremer

**January 8, 2012**

Rev. Jeff Shimizu

**January 15, 2012**

Rev. Kimberly Russell

**January 22, 2012**

Rev. Jeff Shimizu

**January 29, 2012**

Rev. Jerry Gladson

## Conversations

### (a mid-week Bible Study)

**November 30, 2011**

Looking Toward Advent

**December 7, 2011**

Looking Toward Advent

**December 14, 2011**

Looking Toward Advent

**December 21, 2011**

Looking Toward Advent

**December 28, 2011**

NO CONVERSATIONS

 **ANGELS OF CHRISTMAS** is the Chancel Choir's Christmas Cantata to be presented at the Worship Hour on December 18. *Soulfire* and the Choir are joining together to bring in the celebration of the Christ Child in word and music.

Following their presentation that morning, the Chancel Choir will also journey to Atherton Place, where they will present the *Angels of Christmas*.

## **THERE WILL BE CHURCH ON CHRISTMAS DAY AND NEW YEARS DAY!**

 There will be worship service on Christmas Day at 11:00 am and on New Year's Day at 11:00 am.

There is no Sunday School on these days, so sleep in a little but join us for worship!

## *Christmas Eve*

 There is going to be a community event held at the church from 2:00 - 4:30. This is for children and families. There will be music, cookies and games.

Our multi-congregational Christmas Eve service will be held at 5:00 in the sanctuary. There will be participation from several of the congregations that worship at First Christian Church !

# Is Your Glass Half Full? You May Be Healthier!

This holiday season, put a smile where your mouth is. **Optimism** is extremely important to one's overall well-being. When surrounded by people who rank low on the optimism scale, we immediately feel our energy drain. Optimism is the embodiment of **hope** and can provide lasting effects.

When we use optimism to our advantage, our health ultimately benefits. Numerous studies confirm that the more cynical and pessimistic individuals have significant greater risk for poor health and even death. Maintaining your optimism, however, is not always easy. Here are some suggestions you may find helpful:

- Set your own positive standards and live up to them without letting negativity affect you.
- No matter how rough the day becomes, allow awareness to set in and discipline yourself to produce positivity
- Set aside time for meditation and prayer. The Psalms are a good source of uplifting inspiration

As you learn to maintain your optimism, you will find it easier to assert positivity and divert negativity. So next time life hands you lemons, visualize your glass half full because it may just keep you healthier in the long run.



Rev. Donna Kremer

"An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."

Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

~Luke 2:9-12

## Sunday School

9:45 a.m. Sunday

## Worship & Communion

11:00 a.m. Sunday

## Spanish Service

3:00 p.m. Sunday

## St. Luke's Anglican Church

4:00 p.m. Sunday

## AA Meeting

5:00 p.m. Wednesday

## English Bible Study

6:30 p.m. Wednesday

## Spanish Bible Study

7:30 p.m. Wednesday

## Gambler's Anonymous Meeting

7:45 p.m.

## Choir Practice

7:30 p.m. Wednesday

## Food Pantry

9 a.m.-12 p.m. Monday

9 a.m.-12 p.m. Saturday

**ELDERS SCHEDULE  
DECEMBER**

- 4- **Donna Kremer**  
**Brenda Stoyko**
- 11- **Peter Chung**  
**Brenda Stoyko**
- 18- **Peter Chung**  
**Donna Kremer**
- 25- **Paddy Kern**  
**Sherwood Smith**



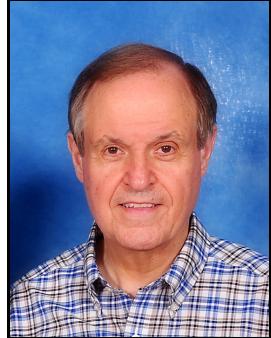
“In the courageous standing of uncertainty, faith shows most visibly its dynamic character.”

“Faith as the state of being ultimately concerned implies love, namely, the desire and urge toward the reunion of the separated.”

— Paul Tillich,  
*Dynamics of Faith*

## A CHRISTMAS REVOLT

According to all the news reports, Black Friday and Black Saturday were record-breaking successes for the marketplace. “Black” Friday (November 25 this year) and “Black” Saturday (November 26) get their names because they are commercial days of critical sales to help businesses finish the year in the *black*. These two days kick off the shopping for Christmas. In one shop---a small antique store---I saw a clock that showed the days, hours, minutes, and seconds until Christmas.



Rev. Dr. Jerry Gladson

I can’t help but think how far all this economic pressure is from the real spirit of the Advent Season. One of the things I’ve actually come to “dread” about Christmas is the pressure to shop and find gifts for almost everyone you can think of. Along the way, I’ve met a few people who “rate” the gift they receive according to its cash value and adjust their opinion of the giver on this basis. I think, to the contrary, gifts should be given from the heart, not because of social and economic pressure, and not on a timed schedule.

The real spirit of Christmas, if you reduce it to its essence, is giving. God gave. God sent Jesus in the form of a tiny baby. Matthew depicts the magi or wise men bringing “gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh” to the infant Jesus (Matthew 2:11). This story is not the only source of the practice of giving gifts at this time of the year, but certainly one of them. These gifts no doubt sprang from grateful hearts, and a willingness to give back something.

While I’m in no way opposed to giving gifts to each other at Christmas, I wonder sometimes what it would happen if you informed the usual recipients of such gifts that this year you are giving the equivalent of the cost of all your gifts to your church, an appropriate charity, or even to help homeless families find a place to live. Would you be socially ostracized? Create a family rift? Turn all your friends against you?

Maybe some year, I’ll try it and see.

## Ask the Pastor

# NEW LANDSCAPES FOR MINISTRY THE GEORGIA REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) keynoted the opening worship of the 162nd Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Georgia, November 11-12, at New Hope Christian Church, Lawrenceville, GA. Churches from all over Georgia sent delegates to this meeting.

Delegates and visitors from churches heard annual reports from the Christian College of Georgia, the educational wing of the Georgia denomination, by Dr. Bob Harris, the Mission for Biblical Literacy, directed by Rev. John Novikoff, the Regional Administration, led by Dr. Ray Miles, who is retiring from the Regional Ministry December 31. Director of Women's Ministries, Rev. Betty Brewer-Calvert, brought the Assembly up to date on activities of the Disciples Women, and Rev. Troy Tatum reviewed the Youth Ministry program of the Region.

At a Saturday morning business session, delegates considered and adopted the New Order of Ministry, prepared by the General Church. Among other changes, this New Order shifts the terminology of the Licensed (unordained) Ministry to the Commissioned Ministry. The Clergy Sexual Abuse Prevention document was also adopted. The budget adopted for 2012 shows a \$2900 deficit, which will be consolidated during the year. Total budget for the Region is \$588,809.

New Officers for the Region were installed, including Lainie Jenkins, as Moderator; Jabari Butler, Moderator-Elect; Maria Brock, First Vice-Moderator; Pam Gunter, Secretary. Rev. Jabari Butler continues as the Georgia representative to the General Board, which meets in Indianapolis, IND.

Upon the retirement of Dr. Ray Miles, it was announced that Rev. Bob and Rev. Dr. Karen Frank-Plumlee will arrive in January to serve as Co-Interim Regional Ministers.

Joe and Paddy Kern, Barbara Eason Drs. Jerry and Laura Gladson, and Rev. Kimberly Russell, represented First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Marietta at this important meeting.

A friend told me that Christmas trees are against the Bible, and I shouldn't have one in my home. Are Christmas trees contrary to the Bible?

---CONFUSED IN ATLANTA

*DEAR CONFUSED,*

No, Christmas trees are not forbidden in the Bible. Your friend probably quoted Jeremiah 10:2-4 in support of this claim. These verses refer to ancient idol construction, not the decorating of a "Christmas tree."

Erecting a tree for a holiday such as Christmas arose in sixteenth century Eastern Europe, and from their spread to the rest of the world. The custom, at first more general, quickly attached itself to Christmas. Thus, the tree has been adopted from a secular celebration and made to express Christian symbolism. The star placed on its uppermost bough, for instance, stands for the star guiding the magi to the baby Jesus. All symbols for our faith are ultimately taken over from secular and religious settings and given new meaning. Having a Christmas tree is an affirmation of Christian faith, not its denial.

*If you have a question you'd like to ask the pastor, send it by letter to First Christian Church, 569 Frasier St., Marietta 30360, or email it to: fccmarietta@comcast.com. Your privacy will be honored.*



**Additions and updates to the  
Prayer List include:**

Ben Anderson (brother George passed away), Jim Farris and family, Venn Heerman, Family of Travis Morlock, Shirley Muns, Kimberly Russell, Ken Russell

*You may request a complete prayer list from the office and request to have yourself or a loved one placed on the prayer list.*



**DECEMBER**

**Birthdays**

- 2- Deborah Gray
- 9- Kevin Williamson
- 10- Matthew Ferguson
- 10- Ryan Hoffman
- 13- Stuart Juhani
- 20- Mary Griswell
- 20- Jessica Nettles
- 22- Venn Heerman
- 25- Ray Powell
- 25- Jeannie Hull
- 27- CaSondra Massey
- 27- Marty Williamson

**Anniversaries**

- 1- Robbie & Mike Colquitt
- 13- Nancy & Sean Warner
- 14- Philip & Stacey Young
- 27- Jerry & Laura Gladson
- 30- Charlotte & Roy Ferguson

**IF I HAD ONLY BEEN THERE!**

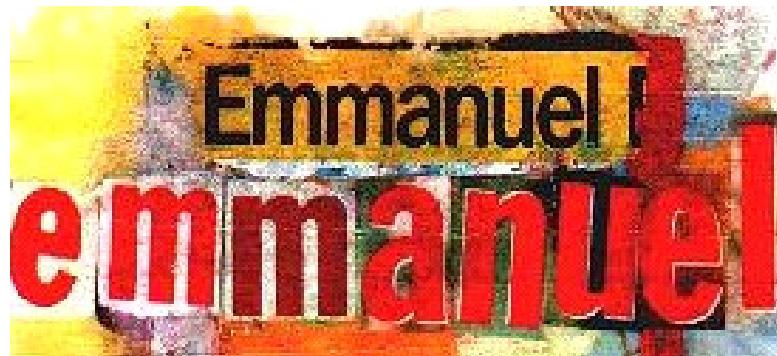
There are some of us...who think to ourselves, "If I had only been there! How quick would I have been to help the Baby.

I would have washed His linen. How happy I would have been to go with the shepherds to see the Lord lying in the manger!"

Yes, we would. We say that because we know how great Christ is, but if we had been there at that time, we would have done no better than the people of Bethlehem...Why don't we do it now?

We have Christ in our neighbor.

-Martin Luther



**Immanuel or Emmanuel or Imanu'el**  
(Hebrew אֵמֹמָנֶל "God [is] with us")  
consists of two Hebrew words: אֵל ('El, meaning 'God')  
and עַמְּךָ (Immānū, meaning 'with us');  
Standard Hebrew '**Immanu'el**',  
Tiberian Hebrew '**Immānū'el**').  
It is a theophoric name used in the Bible in  
Isaiah 7:14 and Isaiah 8:8.

It appears once in the Christian New Testament:  
in Matthew's quotation of Isaiah 7:14.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immanuel>

## FINANCIAL PICTURE SHOWS IMPROVEMENT

In a national (and world) climate filled with bad financial news, our financial health at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) showed a little improvement during November. One month does not a church budget make, but in November we received **\$12,010 in our General Fund**, an account used to cover all the expenses of operating our facilities, remunerating our staff, and other expenses, and **\$1,290 in our Building Fund**. The Building Fund goes to retire the church mortgage. Churches, it seems, are like hospitals. They keep adding on and renovating, and thus seem always to have a mortgage around. The **total amount for these two funds was \$13,300**. We really need \$15,000 per month to stay even, but the \$13,300 is a great improvement over most recent months.

Your church encourages you to remember our mission here at Fairground and Frasier Streets, and give liberally---and regularly---to the church. The church Board and the staff are exceedingly careful in how the gifts are used. If all do their part---no matter how small it may seem---there will be enough to continue moving forward in the mission God has given us. *"God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance"* (2 Corinthians 9:8).

## Financial Picture

## RECOVERY MINISTRY

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETING 5:00 PM  
CHURCH LIBRARY

Most people know the holidays can be a period of emotional highs and lows. Loneliness, anxiety, happiness and sadness are common feelings, sometimes experienced in startling succession. The bad news is the holiday blues can trigger relapse for people recovering from alcoholism and other drug addiction. The good news is the blues can be remedied by planning ahead. Why do the blues hit during this otherwise festive season? Doing too much or too little and being separated from loved ones at this special time can lead to sadness during the holiday season.

Whether you're in recovery or not, developing a holiday plan to help prevent the blues, one that will confront unpleasant memories before they threaten your holiday experience. Your plan should include improved self-care, enhanced support from others; such as your recovery network, and of course quality time with your church family.



Warren Taylor

## JANUARY

### Birthdays

- |     |                      |
|-----|----------------------|
| 1-  | Diane Hollenbach     |
| 1-  | Jacqueline Johnson   |
| 1-  | Ben Anderson         |
| 3-  | Brenda Walls         |
| 11- | Sarah Sturdivant     |
| 12- | Lindsey Hall         |
| 14- | Russell Jones        |
| 16- | David Huiner         |
| 16- | Gina Juhan           |
| 19- | Jeff Johnson         |
| 22- | Jenna Wright         |
| 22- | Dominique Brailsford |
| 24- | Isabell Touchstone   |
| 24- | Janette Huff         |
| 24- | Jeanette Pinston     |
| 25- | Carliegh Bishop      |
| 27- | Bonny Deal           |
| 28- | Dean Phelps          |
| 29- | Cathi Heerman        |
| 29- | Alexis Gooden        |
| 31- | Philip Young         |
| 31- | Luis Villarreal      |

### Anniversaries

- |     |                        |
|-----|------------------------|
| 3-  | Peter & Jennifer Chung |
| 24- | Jose & Dianey Vera     |
| 27- | Morris & Sara Smith    |

"It is the present living generation that gives character and spirit to the next. Hence the paramount importance of accomplished and energetic teachers in forming the taste the manners and the character of the coming age."

— Alexander Campbell



569 Frasier Street  
Marietta, GA 30060  
(2 blocks north of Cobb County Civic Center)  
Phone: (770) 428-3125  
Fax: (678) 384-2839  
Email: fccmarietta@comcast.net  
[www.fccmarietta.org](http://www.fccmarietta.org)

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## Pastoral Staff

John T. Lee	<i>Minister Emeritus †</i>
Jeff Shimizu	<i>Minister</i>
Donna Kremer	<i>Minister</i>
Jerry Gladson	<i>Minister Emeritus</i>
Warren Taylor	<i>Minister of Recovery</i>
Eduardo Villarreal	<i>Hispanic Minister</i>

## Church Staff

Tommy Russell	<i>Administrative Assistant</i>
Sherwood Smith	<i>Food Pantry Director</i>
Sean Warner	<i>Worship Leader</i>
Wilma Zalabak	<i>Choir Director/Organist</i>