



## *Ponderings from a Rocker*

Here we are in the season of Advent. It seems that each year these four weeks leading up to Christmas move faster and faster. But I think that Advent is one of those gifts given to us Christians and is a call for us to slow down---to pause---to even take moments of rest. (I know that I am preaching to myself as I need to slow down and pause as well.) Advent invites us to reflect upon the coming of the Christ child as well as the presence of God in our lives and world. It is also a time for us to consider the return of Jesus and how we are preparing for that event.

The color of Advent is purple (the same as Lent), which is the color for royalty and repentance. Typically the hymns and music are in minor keys and more contemplative in their message. The scripture in the season does not have shepherds and a baby---but instead focus on being prepared and ready for the coming of the Lord.

One way to approach Advent is to consider it to be a Spiritual Practice. To take those moments in our days and weeks leading up to Christmas to pause, to be silent, to ponder the incompleteness of our world which still faces conflict and violence, suffering on so many levels as well as the darkness waiting for the True Light to come in. Advent is a time to practice patience and kindness, gentleness and goodness---maybe even to the stranger in our midst. Advent is a season to see the humanity of one another and also to recognize the image of Christ in one another.

Here at Central we have all kinds of events and activities. Yes, it is a busy schedule with things happening for all ages. You do not need to feel obligated to attend everything. But choose what will help you in this Advent time to prepare for the coming of the Lord. Maybe it is being in worship each of the Sundays and to hear the words of scripture that call us to be prepared. Maybe it is to be in fellowship on Wednesday nights and to find a sense of community as we share a meal together, go caroling, and share in the Nativity story. Maybe the Longest Night Service on Wednesday, Dec 20 is what you need to acknowledge the grief and pain of this world in the midst of the angel's invitation to rejoice. You are invited to join your church family to go to Speedway in Lights on Thursday, December 14th or Monday, December 18. (More information in Newsletter) Maybe it is the Christmas Eve services---as we sing carols, and hear the Christmas story and sit in the dimness and watch the candle light fill the worship space.

I hope that you will take this season as a gift to you and your family. To receive it with gentleness and wonder as we draw closer to Christmas Day. As the season of Christmas approaches, may you and your family and friends, as well as all of the church family here at Central be blessed as we prepare for the Lord's return, and celebrate our God who breaks into our world and moves into our neighborhood.

Happy Advent, my friends!

Ann

Special Organ Music for Advent

Joy Briggs will be playing 15 minutes of Advent and Christmas music prior to the start of morning worship in the Sanctuary on December 10 and December 24. Please come a little early and enjoy 15 peaceful minutes during your hectic holidays. It will be one of the most pleasurable “Make Room for Jesus” moments this season.



**Sermons:**

December 10	Life in the Wilderness	Isaiah 40; Mark 1:1-8	Sanctuary
December 17	The Light is Coming	John 1:6-8, 19-28	Central Hall
December 24	Holy Encounters	Luke 1:26-38	Sanctuary
December 31	Be The Church		Central Hall

**Wednesday Night Supper Menus:**

December 6 - chili mac bake, salad, dessert (activity - caroling)  
 December 13 - baked potato & chili with all the fixings (no practice Christmas play - great fun!)  
 December 20 - Breakfast for dinner (longest night service)  
 Then, we'll take a break until January 10th.

**NEEDED: Photographer**

Are you a photographer and willing to help us update the pictures of our children that line the hallway to the kitchen? We have a group of new kids and many of those who are pictured on the wall are in high school or middle school. We would set up a time to have our families with children here to get each child's photo. If you are willing to do this, or if you know someone who might be able to do this, please talk to Ann Aichinger about how to proceed.



**Advent Organ Meditation:** December 10, 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Joy Briggs will be playing Advent and Christmas music for about 45 minutes on the 3-manual, 41 rank Randall Dyer organ. Take this time to reflect on the meaning of Christ's birth and to prepare our hearts for his coming.

**OH! WHAT FUN IT IS TO RIDE...**through the Speedway in Lights on the church bus! Ann Aichinger has volunteered to drive the bus. We can take 14 people each night, children of child seat age must be in child seats. The bus will leave the church parking lot at 5:30 p.m. Please sign up for either December 14th or December 18th by contacting Kim or by signing up in the church office. No cost, but you may make a donation to the church!



**ADVENT Devotionals** are now available in the church office or at worship on the entry table. If you need your copy mailed, please contact Kim Profitt (276-669-3157)

**AMEn Christmas Concert: Saturday, December 16, 3 p.m.**

We are excited to welcome the Appalachian Men's Ensemble (AMEn) for their concert, "Christmas Around the World," a musical journey around the globe in search of holiday cheer. The public is invited to attend on Saturday, Dec 16 at 3 p.m. in the Central Presbyterian Church Sanctuary. A second performance will be that evening at 7:30 p.m. at Gray United Methodist Church, 2108 Oak Street in Gray, TN.



The Appalachian Men's Ensemble includes singers from across the Tri-Cities region and is committed to engaging audiences through musical precision, passion, and commonality. With a dual sense of spirited fraternity and professional excellence, AMEn aims to bring a variety of choral music to our community, and to educate, inspire, and entertain audiences through its activities. The ensemble is conducted by artistic director Dr. Noah DeLong. Our own Whit Morison is a part of this group. "This program explores a rich variety of Christmas musical traditions from around the world," said DeLong. "We hope audience members will be both entertained and enlightened by attending one of our upcoming concerts."

Donations will be accepted at the door, with suggested amounts of \$10 for adults and \$5 for students. The Appalachian Men's Ensemble is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. So make plans now to join us as we celebrate this season together.



**Pancakes and Pajamas**

Youth and Kids Event

**Sunday, December 10th**  
**5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.**

Donations Appreciated  
\$15 for 1-2 kids  
\$25 for families with  
3 or more kids



## Calendar

### December 6 - December 20

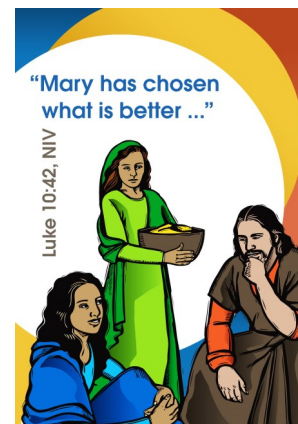
Wednesday, December 6	<b>Central Life delivered</b>	
	1:30 p.m.	Widows' Grief Group
	5:30 p.m.	Dinner (caroling)
	7:00 p.m.	Choir practice
Thursday, December 7	9:00 a.m.	Meals on Wheels
	9:00 a.m.	Backpack delivery
	4:00 p.m.	Care & Concern meeting
Sunday, December 10	9:00 a.m.	Adult Sunday School
	9:45 a.m.	Advent music in Sanctuary
	10:00 a.m.	Worship - Sanctuary
	3:00 p.m.	Advent organ concert - Sanctuary
	5-7 p.m.	PJ's and Pancakes - youth & children
Tuesday, December 12	11:00 a.m.	Presbyterian Women
	6:00 p.m.	Journey's End - State Street Bristol
	7:00 p.m.	Central Life Gamers - Central Hall
Wednesday, December 13	4:00 p.m.	Finance Committee meeting
	5:30 p.m.	Dinner - No Rehearsal Christmas Program
Thursday, December 14	9:00 a.m.	Backpack packing
Friday, December 15	12:00 p.m.	APPLE Christmas Program
Saturday, December 16	3:00 p.m.	AMEn concert - Sanctuary
Sunday, December 17	9:00 a.m.	Adult Sunday School
	10:00 a.m.	Worship - Central Hall
	11:00 a.m.	Youth Group Christmas Party
Tuesday, December 19	12:00 p.m.	Staff Meeting - Christmas luncheon
	7:00 p.m.	Session meeting
Wednesday, December 20	<b>Central Life delivered</b>	
	1:30 p.m.	Widows' Grief Group
	5:30 p.m.	Dinner - Longest Night Service
	7:00 p.m.	Choir Practice

To: All Presbyterian Women

Monthly Bible Study Meeting on Tuesday, December 12, 11:00 a.m. in the small dining room.

From our *Study Book of Sacred Encounters*, Lesson 4, *Mary and Martha encounter Jesus*. Led by Pastor Ann Aichinger.

Your Co-moderators: Mary Ann Blevins and Thais Sikora



## The Beginning of Advent

by Rev. Todd Jenkins

'Twas the beginning of Advent  
and all through the Church  
our hope was dying —we'd given up on the search.  
It wasn't so much that Christ wasn't invited,  
but after nearly 2,000 years we were no longer excited.  
Oh, we knew what was coming---no doubt about that.  
November brought the first  
of an unending series of pains  
with carefully orchestrated advertising campaigns.  
There were gadgets and dolls and all sorts of toys;  
enough to seduce the most devout girls and boys.  
Unfortunately, it seemed,  
no one was completely exempt  
from this seasonal virus that did all of us tempt.  
The priests and prophets and certainly the kings  
were all so consumed with the desire for "things!"

It was rare, if at all, that you'd hear of the reason  
for the origin and meaning of this holy-day season.  
A baby, it seems, once had been born,  
in the mid-east somewhere  
- the first holy-day morn.  
But what does that mean for folks like us,  
who've lost ourselves in the hoopla and fuss?  
Can we re-learn the art of wondering and waiting,  
of hoping and praying, and anticipating?  
Can we let go of all the things and the stuff?  
Can we open our hands and our hearts long enough?  
Can we open our eyes and open our ears?  
Can we find him again after all of these years?  
Will this year be different from all the rest?  
Will we be able to offer him all of our best?  
So many questions, unanswered thus far,  
as wise ones seeking the home of the star.  
Where do we begin - how do we start  
to make for the child a place in our heart?



Rev. Todd Jenkins is the pastor at First Presbyterian, Greenville, TN. He wrote it on Thanksgiving, 1994

Perhaps we begin by letting go  
of our limits on hope,  
and of all the things that we know.  
Let go of the shopping,  
of the chaos and fuss;  
let go of the searching, let Christmas find us.  
And that was the trouble - it was all "old hat"  
We open our hearts, our hands and our eyes,  
to see the king coming  
in our own neighbors' cries  
We look without seeking  
what we think we have earned,  
but rather we're looking  
for relationships spurned.  
With him he BRINGS  
wholeness and newness of life  
for brother and sister, for husband and wife.

The Christ-child comes not by our skill,  
but rather he comes by the Creator's will.  
We can't make him come  
with parties and bright trees,  
but only by getting down on our knees.  
He'll come if we wait amidst our affliction,  
Coming in spite of, and not by our restriction.  
His coming will happen  
- of this there's no doubt.  
The question is whether we'll be in or out.  
"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."  
Do you have the courage to peer  
through the lock?  
A basket on your porch, a child in your reach.  
a baby to love, to feed, and to teach.

He'll grow in wisdom as God's only Son.  
How far will we follow this radical one?  
He'll lead us to challenge  
the way that things are.  
He'll lead us to follow a single bright star.  
But that will come later if we're still around.  
The question for now:  
Is the child to be found?  
Can we block out commercials,  
the hype and the malls?  
Can we find solitude in our holy halls?  
Can we find hope, keep alert, stay awake?  
Can we receive the child for ours and God's  
sake?  
From on high with the caroling host as he  
sees us,  
He yearns to read on our lips the prayer:  
Come Lord Jesus!

As Advent begins,  
all these questions make plea.  
The only true answer:  
We will see, we will see.

**YOUTH SCHEDULE!!**

Wednesday, December 6	Dinner and Christmas Caroling	5:30 -7 p.m.
Sunday, December 10	Pancakes and Pajamas Youth and Kid Event	5-7 p.m.
Wednesday, December 13	Dinner and No Rehearsal Christmas Pageant	5:30 -7 p.m.
Sunday, December 17	Youth Group Christmas Party	11 a.m.-noon
Wednesday, December 20	Dinner and Longest Night Service	5:30-7 p.m.

We will take a break from youth activities beginning after December 20th and will resume again on Sunday, January 7th!

It is time to sign up for Montreat youth conferences. The Montreat Conference for rising 9<sup>th</sup>-graduated seniors is June 2-8. The Middle School conference which is held at Maryville College is July 17-21. Talk to Josie about getting signed up. There is a \$150 (high school) or \$200 (middle school) non-refundable deposit to hold your place. If you have any financial issues, please speak with Ann Aichinger.

**SNOW POLICY FOR CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN**

Always check the website, Facebook, and your email for last minute changes and updates. The policy Central is:

Information will be posted at [www.CentralPresBristol.org](http://www.CentralPresBristol.org) and on the Central Presbyterian Church Facebook page as well as sent out by email to the church family;

If Bristol, VA schools are closed (or are dismissed early), large group weekday activities at the church likely will be cancelled, including Presbyterian Women and Wednesday Night Activities, Committees, Music Rehearsals, Small Groups, etc. Please contact your leader to decide whether to meet or not;

10:00 a.m. Sunday Worship will almost always be held. Come if you can get here safely, but be aware that the parking lot can be extremely slick even when roads are clear.

Before coming to church when the weather is challenging, always check the above sources or call the church office (276-669-3157) for updated information.



**Pastoral Concerns:**

Bessie Kitts is having heart valve surgery in December;  
Mike Ellis is having knee replacement surgery December 13;  
Diana White is having knee replacement surgery on January 11;  
Bob Ingram as he continues with health issues;  
Frances Van Dyke;  
Heather Kiser;  
Woody McGlothlin is waiting to see if he's a candidate for a lung transplant;  
Larry Surber is undergoing treatment for leukemia;  
Retta Vance has chronic bronchitis and is at home.



**We extend our deepest sympathy to:**

Family and friends of Sally Stevenson McWorthy, who passed away recently.

**Continued Prayers for:**

Randy Broyles, Doris Crabtree, Bob and Becky Ingram, Jim & Joan Keith, Missy McCord, Niki McGrew, Alice Owenby, Jean Thomason, Ed Updyke, and Linda Wise.

*Please call the church office (276-669-3157) with any pastoral concerns., and please feel free to contact Ann Aichinger or any of the Elders through email, Facebook, or by phone.*

**Maxine Howell - address correction.**

c/o Brenda Boozer, 3904 Waldorf Ct, High Point, NC 27265



**Memorial Gifts**

In memory of Mary Kay English, given by Retta Vance  
In memory of Mary Kay English, given by Angela Hopkins & Family

**Job Opportunity!**

Vickie Salyer has reluctantly given her notice and will no longer be working in our nursery. If you know of anyone who is great with children and would like to apply for the part-time position (Sunday mornings 8:45 - 11:15 and Wednesday evenings 5:30 - 7:00 pm, plus special times as needed.) Please contact Ann Aichinger or Kim Proffitt.

331 Euclid Avenue  
Bristol, VA 24201  
Phone: 276-669-3157  
Fax: 276-669-7362  
E-mail: [office.cpc@bvu.net](mailto:office.cpc@bvu.net)

## How to Keep in Touch:

[www.facebook.com/CPCBristol](https://www.facebook.com/CPCBristol): You do not have to sign-in or log on. Just click “not now” and the site will pop up. Scroll down to find the latest message.

[www.CentralPresBristol.org](http://www.CentralPresBristol.org): Click on “View Sermons” then scroll down to see Pastor Ann’s videos for each day.

## Options for giving to the work and ministry of Central Presbyterian:

- \* You can give in a check, or cash, in the offering plate, dropped by the office, or mailed to:

**Central Presbyterian Church**  
**331 Euclid Avenue**  
**Bristol, VA 24201-4013**



- \* You can give through your online banking to Central.
- \* You can set up an automatic deposit from your account; please talk with the Finance Director on how to do this.
- \* You can TEXT to **CentralPres** (no spaces and Capital C and P) to **73256**. You will be directed to make your donation through Realm.
- \* Use the QR Code to connect to the website and the “Give Online” link.
- \* You can give one time, or regularly, through your **Realm Connect** profile.



## How to contact us:

Ann Aichinger, Pastor	<a href="mailto:ann.cpc@bvu.net">ann.cpc@bvu.net</a>
Robert Campbelle, Music Director	<a href="mailto:robertcampbelle@gmail.com">robertcampbelle@gmail.com</a>
Joy Smith-Briggs, Organist	<a href="mailto:gvbjoyb@btes.tv">gvbjoyb@btes.tv</a>
Josie Russell, Youth & Young Adult Dir. Social Media Coordinator	<a href="mailto:josieannusell@gmail.com">josieannusell@gmail.com</a>
Kim Profitt, Administrative Assistant, Newsletter Editor	<a href="mailto:office.cpc@bvu.net">office.cpc@bvu.net</a>
Kim Profitt, Finance Director	<a href="mailto:finance.cpc@bvu.net">finance.cpc@bvu.net</a>
Jeremy Kline, Kitchen Coordinator	
Michelle Blankenship, Dir. of APPLE Academy	<a href="mailto:applepreschool@yahoo.com">applepreschool@yahoo.com</a>
Vickie Salyer, Nursery Staff	

## Office Hours:

The current office hours are:

9:00 to 3:00 Monday—Friday

Please call 276-669-3157 for office hour changes and updates.



*Serve the Lord with Gladness*