

December 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

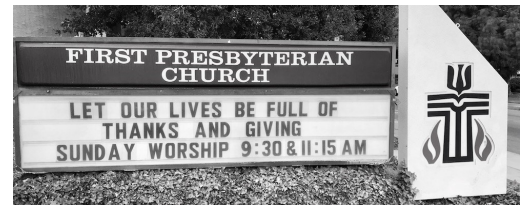
THE NEWHALL PRESS



The NEWHALL PRESS seeks to bring the gift of community and connection to the members and friends of the FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEWHALL through an attractively constructed, magazine-style monthly NEWSLETTER.

PASTOR COLUMN DECEMBER 2017

Our sign outside the church currently reads, "Let our lives be full of Thanks and Giving!" and this week someone came into my office bearing gifts for Phil and me, with the comment, "I'm full of thanks for your giving!" Turkey Day is a time to stop before the rush to Christmas, gather with friends and family, and reaffirm our affection and love for one another. May yours be full of love and drumsticks.



And soon we will enter Advent, a time of preparation, a time of consideration of the wonder of God coming to us sinners, because for God, love trumps all sin. It is a time to "wonder as we wander" about the nature of God and how we're preparing to celebrate the greatest gift of all time, God being born among us.

A number of years ago I took my whole family camping in Yosemite. We set up our camp right by a river in the higher country of Yosemite in the wilderness. Brian was late, as he was finalizing Dennis' adoption that first day. They joined us later that evening; we had already set up our tents, unrolled our sleeping bags, organized food, and settled in playing games.

Later as Brian and Dennis (then 13, now 30+) joined us, we were laughing and goofing with each other as we sat around the campfire. When they arrived we roared with joy and hugs all around. We spent the week playing games—some competitive football which I have to hear about every year as our two young sons whupped us! daring each other to cross the icy river, celebrating my (then) two granddaughters' birthdays around the campfire with S'mores. It was a great week, and it comes up almost every holiday.

We will always remember that occasion. When John wrote his gospel, he told of the coming of Christ in terms every camper understands. He wrote, ". . . and the word became flesh and dwelt among us . . ." Dwelt among us can also be translated, "He pitched His tent next to our tent." In modern terminology we would say, "He moved in next door," or maybe, "our campsite."

The Peace and Joy of the Season
Abound in your Life,

Pastor Bill

December Events

- CHRISTMAS SONG CONCERT Masters College
Dec 2 see Church Life
- CHRISTMAS CHURCH WORK DAY
Dec. 2 9am - noon; 1pm to 3pm
- NEW MEMBERS MEET & GREET
Dec. 3 Between Services
- TREE TRIMMING & ADVENT DINNER
Dec. 3 5:00 P.M.
- DEACON & ELDER CHRISTMAS PARTY
Dec 8
- MASTERS CHORALE
Dec 9
- CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT
Dec 10 4:00 P.M.
- NUTCRACKER BALLET
Dec 17 see Church Life
- CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT
Dec. 19 4:00 P.M.
- CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
Dec 24 10am & 5, 7, 9 P.M.
- REGAN LIBRARY
Dec 30 see Church Life

Recurring Church Events:

- BOOK BUDDIES
2nd Thursdays 4:00 P.M.
- CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL
Thursdays 7:30 P.M.
- COMMUNION
1st Sundays 9:30/11:15 A.M.
- EVERTHIRST (Band) REHEARSAL
Thursdays 6:30 P.M.
- HANDCRAFTERS
2nd & 4th Tues. 10:00 A.M.
- LADIES' NIGHT OUT
Last Tuesdays 6:30 P.M.
- MEN'S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY
Thursdays -IHOP 7:30 A.M.
- BIBLE BOYS
Mondays 5:30 P.M.
- MIDDAY BIBLE STUDY
Fridays 11:00 A.M.
- NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
3rd Sunday
- PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN CIRCLES
See Schedule Page 9
- RECYCLING
1st Sundays of Calendar Quarter
- RING TONES REHEARSAL
Sundays 2:00 P.M.
- STANDING TOGETHER
2nd Wednesdays 7:00 P.M.
- YOUTH GROUP
Sundays 9:30 A.M. & 6:00 P.M.

Cont. on page 2



December 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Leadership Meetings:

ADULT EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1st Wednesdays 7:00 P.M.

BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

1st Mondays 7:00 P.M.

CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE

1st Mondays 7:00 P.M.

CHURCH LIFE COMMITTEE

1st Wednesdays 7:00 P.M.

DEACONS

1st Mondays 7:00 P.M.

FUTURES COMMITTEE

2nd Tuesdays

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

1st Tuesdays 7:00 P.M.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

2nd Wednesdays 7:00 P.M.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

1st Fridays 8:00 A.M.

SESSION

3rd Tuesdays 7:00 P.M.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

4th Wednesdays 6:30 P.M.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

2nd Tuesdays 10:00 A.M.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

1st Tuesdays 7:00 P.M.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

2nd Wednesdays 7:00 P.M.

Future Events:

SANTA BARBARA MISSION

CONFERENCE Feb 2

YOUTH MISSION - PUERTO RICO

Apr. 2-6

AMOR HOMEBUILDING IN TJ

Apr. 13 -15

COWBOY CHURCH

Apr. 22 8:00 A.M.



The Church Life Committee promotes fellowship and fun activities for the church family by providing a variety of church, community, cultural and special events throughout the year.

Upcoming Church Life Events:

Masters College Christmas Song Concert December 2 at 2pm

Santa Clarita Master Chorale December 9 at 7pm

The Nutcracker Ballet December 17 at 2pm

Reagan Library December 30

Signup on the patio between services or contact Church Life

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS - OVER-80S

Dec 10 Jerre Crosier

Dec 14 Jim Creighton

Dec 14 Dorothy Koons



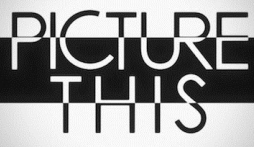
Senior Lunch - Wednesday, December 20

Fellowship Hall, 11:30 a.m., \$7.00



All seniors are invited to attend a festive Christmas lunch. Kevin McDonald, the Santa Clarita Valley Senior Center CEO, will speak briefly about the new center that is being built and acknowledge our church's contribution toward it made through the Mission Committee.

Please sign up on Sundays at the nametag table or phone the Church Office at 259-0555 by Monday, December 18, to make a reservation.



Kathy Rakness welcomes the miracle of a new grandson

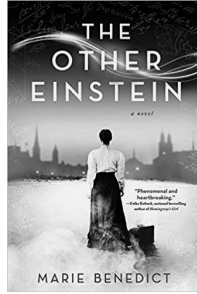
Connor Rakness, born October 25, 2017 in Culver City, California to Geoff and Caroline Rakness. He is little brother to Caleb Rakness, age 5.



BOOK BUDDIES

Book Buddies meet Thursday December 14th. "The Other Einstein" by Marie Benedict will be the book discussed. This novel is about the extraordinary woman who married and worked with one of the greatest scientists in history.

Discussion and Salad Supper at Ellie Fuller's home at 25035 Greenmill Ave. Newhall RSVP 661-259-4983 be the book discussed.



HANDCRAFTERS

Every 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month (December 12 & 26), at 10 a.m., people gather in the Evans Room to share their crafting skills, their interests, and their accomplishments.



We are the *Handcrafters*, and everyone is welcome!



The Deacons of First Presbyterian Church of Newhall, following the example of Jesus Christ, are committed to provide supportive services and care to the community of faith.

Haven't you noticed that Christmas decorations are out in September?

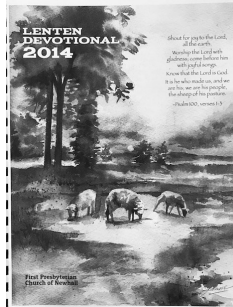
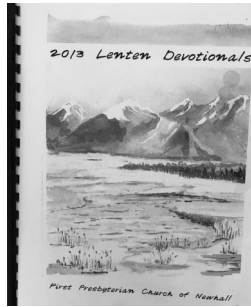
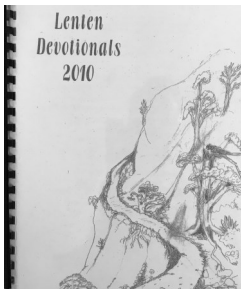
Valentine's day decor is out in November??

Well, we already have to think about Lent as Easter comes early next year.

Please prayerfully consider your Lenten Devotional entries when you write on our topic:

Serve the Lord with Gladness: What does that mean to you??

Entries this year will be due on **January 28, 2018!**



LENTEN DEVOTIONAL 2018 SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS

What it means to you to serve the Lord with gladness? _____

What Bible Verse best describes the feelings you have regarding your service to God? _____

Prayer for the day _____

The Lenten writings are due on January 28, 2018. We need at least 47 entries. Please submit a Word document sent as an attachment to Terri DeYoung by email at: lentenbook@presby-newhall.org If you do not have access to a computer, you may give your entry to Terri at church after first service or leave with Bob at the church office.



The Worship and Music Committee will strive with God's guidance and grace, to create Christ-centered worship experiences, inspiring God's people as they respond to the Word proclaimed in prayer, glorious music, scripture, sacrament and message.

Christmas Choir Concert, December 10

Are you ready for some "Stargazing"? Then come hear the First Presbyterian Newhall Church Chancel Choir and the Ojai Community Chorus sing about the stars and the delights of heaven during the annual Christmas Concert.

Mark your calendars for December 10, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in our sanctuary. We will provide our usual mix of sacred and secular music with the assistance of Chris Kimbler, piano; John Boyd, bass; and James Antunez, drums.

We are excited to sing a portion of John Rutter's "Magnificat" as part of this program. Our gentlemen will let you in on a little secret about their "Christmas Tree". And, you'll certainly hear some Jingle Bells ring while the snow falls somewhere in California, and we imagine snow in our beautiful city of Newhall.

See you in all your finery at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 10, 2017. Bring your family and friends for a great afternoon of music.

Merry Christmas!



The Stewardship Committee will strive to build stewardship disciples of our church family by: *transforming the hearts of believers to reflect the image of Christ*, to become generous "as Christ is generous in being rich toward God" in the stewardship of all our gifts; to empower God's Kingdom work to be fully staffed, funded and shared throughout our community, country and world; and, as a committee, to monitor the fiscal responsibilities of our church ministry.

2018 PLEDGE DRIVE ~ A SHARED EFFORT - By Sue Stanger, Elder

The Stewardship Committee wishes to take this opportunity to thank the Chancel Choir for supporting the 2018 Pledge Drive by preparing the four inspiring anthems that enriched the services during October. The guest soloists, Kimi Gomez (11), Hailey Aune (8), and trumpeter Andres Salazar (19) truly blessed us with their talent and willingness to perform with the choir.

They deeply touched our hearts. It is experiences like these that help our youngsters grow in their love of music and to use their talent to glorify God.

The choir is also busily preparing for their annual Christmas Concert, which will take place on Sunday afternoon, December 10 at 4:00 p.m. in the church sanctuary. The Ojai Community Chorus will once again join the Chancel Choir in performing both sacred and secular music of the season. So mark your calendars, invite friends, neighbors, and family members and plan to get into the Christmas spirit.



Presbyterian Women, as forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, commit ourselves: To nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study, to support the mission of the Church worldwide, to work for justice and peace, and to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's Kingdom.



PW MISSION PROJECT FOR DECEMBER

“Help the Children” thanks you for your generous donations of soup and other canned and boxed goods.

In December we will focus on baking mixes and supplies for sweet treats. Please put your donations on the shelves in the Evans Room.

PW appreciates your support in our mission project. Thank you!

PW CIRCLES - ALL WOMEN ARE WELCOME!

- Elizabeth:** Stephanie Linn (259-3914 - First & Third Tuesdays of the month at 11:30 a.m. in the Evans Room. Babysitting is available.
Lois: Sharon Dziubala (297-6200) - Meets second Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. in the Evans Room.
Lydia: Judy Reinsma (296-6869) - Meets first Monday of the month at 10:00 a.m. in the Evans Room.
Mary Martha: Nancy Spigelman (254-0319) & Sam Spigelman (312-7111) Meets second Monday of the month at 7:00PM at various homes.
Rachel: Tiffany Aune (478-2056) - Meets second Tuesday of the month at 6:15 p.m. in various homes and shares a salad dinner.



Christmas Eve Services

Sunday December 24th are at 10am, 5pm (Children's service), 7pm & 9pm (candlelight services)



Did You Know Our Church has a great website: www.presby-newhall.org Sponsored by

You can find a wealth of information about our church including: upcoming events, our online church calendar, past audio sermons, links to contact our Deacons and Stephen's Ministries support, a great theological blog, a description of all the committees and how to get involved; information on all the Presby Women programs, newsletter archives; links to Little Shepherds and links to the Presbyterian disaster relief fund. Our Online Church Calendar is available under the menu choice “Something for Everyone”.



Home Our Community Celebrating God Together Something for Everyone When You're Hurting Discover Your Mission
 The Next Generation Photo Galleries Engagement

a welcoming loving family of faith

“Come as you are, journey and grow together in a relaxed environment”



Living Waters for Lao

First Pres Newhall's Third Mission Trip to Laos, Oct. 30 to Nov. 11, 2017 The 2017 Living Waters Project: Lao Partners' Team will work with the Lao Evangelical Church (LEC) to visit two of the "Clean Water" Filter Systems at the village.

Something For Everyone Every Day

Upcoming Events service schedule - 9:30am for traditional and 11:15am for contemporary the November Newsletter is available here

Church "Christ is Coming" Work Day - December 2: 9am to noon come help Building & Grounds setup the outdoor creche and beautify the sanctuary. Then also 1pm to 3pm help is needed to decorate the sanctuary!

Our Vision

At First Presbyterian Church we invite people to follow Jesus Christ in a community where we EXALT God in worship, EMBRACE one another in love, ENCOURAGE spiritual growth, and EQUIP every person for ministry in the Church and world.

An Atmosphere of Acceptance - Come as you are, make friends and journey together in a relaxed no pressure loving environment.
 Practical Meaningful Messages - Our pastor expresses the truth found in Scriptures in a fresh

Our Community

Helping build the Kingdom of God - the First Presbyterian Church is located in the heart of old town Newhall California at: 24317 N. Newhall Avenue Newhall, CA 91321-2721 phone: (661) 259-0555

Member of Presbytery USA



The church as occupied the same ground since 1891, but this church is more than the buildings. It is a community of people who

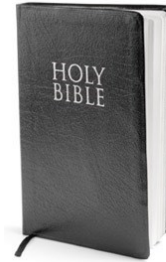
← Previous Month **November 2017** Next Month →
 List Calendar Month Week

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 Meet the Reformers Upcoming Time Change Reminder! 9:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Traditional Service 11:15 AM Contemporary Service 11:30 AM Ring Tones Rehearsal 1:30 PM Young Nk Presbyterian Worship 6:00 PM Youth Group	30 5:30 PM Bible Boyz 7:00 PM NA* - F.H.	31 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	1 10:00 AM Pastor Bill's Bible Study 7:00 PM Adult Education 7:00 PM Church Life 7:00 PM Olgong*	2 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study @HQP 6:30 PM Band Practice 7:30 PM NA* - F.H. 7:30 PM Choir Practice	3 11:00 AM Midday Bible Study	4
5 Daylight Savings Time Ends! 9:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Traditional Service 11:15 AM Contemporary Service 11:30 AM Ring Tones Rehearsal 1:30 PM Young Nk Presbyterian Worship 4:00 PM Adult Ed - Supper in Upper Room 6:00 PM Youth Group	6 10:00 AM Lydia Circle 5:30 PM Bible Boyz 7:00 PM Mary Martha Cr 7:00 PM Children's 7:00 PM Deacons 7:00 PM NA* - F.H.	7 11:30 AM Elizabeth Circle 7:00 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 AM Stewardship 7:00 PM Worship & Music 7:00 PM Olgong*	8 10:00 AM Pastor Bill's Bible Study 10:00 AM Outreach 7:00 PM Olgong* 7:00 PM Standing Together	9 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study @HQP 10:00 AM Love Circle 4:00 PM Book Buddies 6:30 PM Band Practice 7:00 PM NA* - F.H. 7:30 PM Choir Practice	10 8:00 AM Personnel 11:00 AM Midday Bible Study	11
12 9:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Traditional Service 11:15 AM Contemporary Service 11:15 AM Mysteries of the Bible - Adult Ed 11:30 AM Ring Tones Rehearsal 1:30 PM New Members Class 1:30 PM Young Nk Presbyterian Worship 4:00 PM Adult Ed - Supper in Upper Room 6:00 PM Youth Group	13 5:30 PM Bible Boyz 7:00 PM NA* - F.H.	14 10:00 AM Handshakers 10:00 AM Stewardship 6:15 PM Rachel Circle 7:00 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM Fusion	15 10:00 AM Pastor Bill's Bible Study 7:00 PM Olgong*	16 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study @HQP 6:30 PM Band Practice 7:00 PM NA* - F.H. 7:00 PM Troop 609 Mt St 7:30 PM Choir Practice	17 11:00 AM Midday Bible Study	18
19 Newsletter Deadline 9:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Traditional Service 11:15 AM Contemporary Service 11:30 AM Ring Tones Rehearsal 12:30 PM New Members Class 1:30 PM Young Nk Presbyterian Worship 4:00 PM Adult Ed - Stress-Free Holidays	20 5:30 PM Bible Boyz 7:00 PM NA* - F.H.	21 11:30 AM Elizabeth Circle 7:00 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM Session	22 5:30 PM S.M. Leadership 6:30 PM Stephen Min. CE 7:00 PM Olgong*	23 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study @HQP 6:30 PM Band Practice 7:00 PM NA* - F.H. 7:30 PM Choir Practice	24 11:00 AM Midday Bible Study	25
26 9:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Traditional Service 11:15 AM Contemporary Service 11:30 AM Ring Tones Rehearsal 1:30 PM Young Nk Presbyterian Worship	27 5:30 PM Bible Boyz 7:00 PM NA* - F.H.	28 10:00 AM Handshakers 8:00 PM Troop 609 #5 6:30 PM Ladies' Night Out 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	29 7:00 PM Olgong*	30 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study @HQP 6:30 PM Band Practice 7:00 PM NA* - F.H. 7:30 PM Choir Practice	1 11:00 AM Midday Bible Study	2 Ring Tones @ Presbyterian Women's Annual Brunch 5:00 PM Fine Tuning, Advent Dinner

The Adult Education Committee at First Presbyterian Church of Newhall encourages the congregation to mature in their Bible knowledge and practice of their Christian faith as disciples of Jesus Christ both personally and in community with other believers.

The First Advent and the Second Advent of Jesus Explained in the Hourglass of Salvation History - By Jack Irwin

This hourglass tells the story of the history of salvation as recorded in the Bible. God's plan to save humanity focused on all peoples, and then it narrowed to the People of the Jews, and finally narrowed to one Jew, Jesus. It starts in the Old Testament Book of Genesis when God promised to Eve that her "seed" would be the future Savior, who will strike the head of the Serpent, which represents Satan, Evil, Sin and consequential Death. God's plan works through the Covenants with Noah, Abraham and Moses to develop a people through whom God will send the Savior of the world. The people of the Jews is created, holy and dedicated to God, but the Nation of Israel rebels. The Old Testament books end

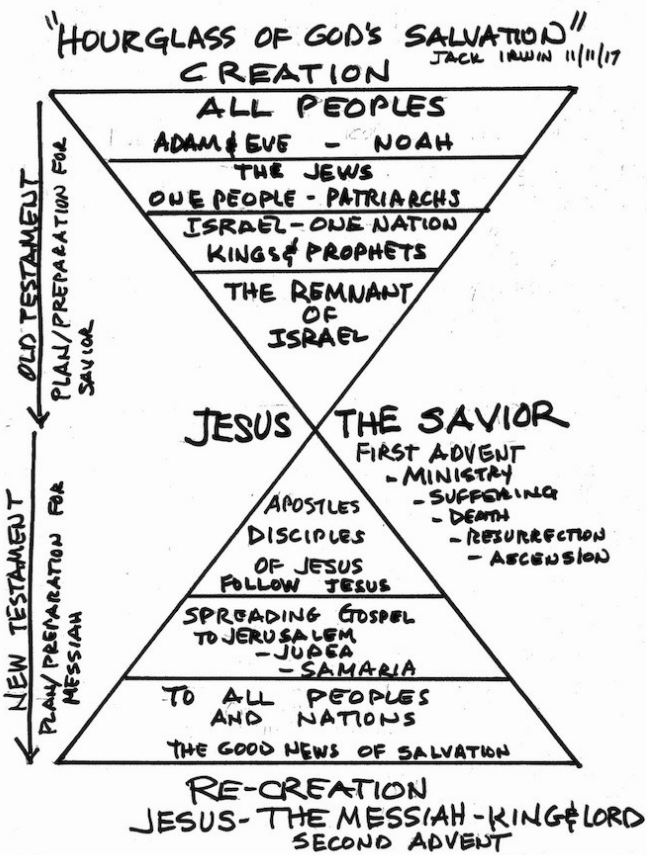


Let the Word of God Transform You.

with a faithful Remnant of the Nation and People and the Prophets looking for the coming Savior and Messiah.

From the faithful Remnant of the Jews comes finally the Savior, the promised "seed" of Eve, who is Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary. We celebrate Jesus' entry into the world at Christmas, which season we call "Advent." However, the Advent of Jesus includes not just his miraculous birth, but his eventual ministry, his suffering, his death on the cross, his resurrection and his ascension, and through these events the Savior has defeated Satan, Evil and Death. This is salvation. This is the Gospel of Jesus. The word "Gospel" means "Good News."

From the one Savior, the spreading of the Gospel spreads like an hourglass, first to the apostles and disciples who knew Jesus, then to the Jewish peoples in Jerusalem and the surrounding Judea and then to the Samaritans (recall Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan). Next, it spreads through the apostles and disciples, especially under the leadership of Paul, to those called the "Gentiles" in the Bible who are all the non-Jewish peoples and nations of the earth. We are still in the age of the expansion of the Gospel to all people's around the world. There are tribes and ethnic groups who have not heard the Good News of Salvation, who are being reached by disciples of Jesus in our own times.



Supper in the Upper - At an evening presented by Adult Ed, Becky Cranert discussed her myriad of meaningful Christmas Religious Family Traditions demonstration. There were also some hands-on fun activities. Those attending were Sharie and Richard Telles, Cathy Johnson, Jung and John Favalessa, Art Moore, Lynn Parkinson and the Cranert Family. The evening was followed by a full holiday dinner and cookies straight from the oven! In the picture, Becky is demonstrating how to make Christmas shortbread! It was wonderfully delicious and tasted like "Heath Toffee Bars"! - the editor



Little Shepherd's Nursery School

at First Presbyterian Church of Newhall



This year seems to be going by really fast! We just celebrated our Thanksgiving Feast and now it's already December and that means a very busy and joyful time at preschool!

We began practicing songs for our Christmas Program before Thanksgiving, not easy for me since I like to enjoy Thanksgiving to its fullest first! We are making our traditional ornaments to sell to our families for a small but priceless amount. We are making many crafts this season with the parent gift being at the top of that list. We will have music with Miss Kathy, she is helping us learn our songs for the program and by the time you read this we have already had chapel with Miss Sam, she will bring a nativity scene and tell us about that first Christmas!

We would like to invite our church family to join us for our Christmas Program! It is a very short but very sweet program that we think you will enjoy, please join us Thursday December 14 at 6pm in the sanctuary, for the program and stay for hot chocolate and cookies in the Evans Room afterwards!!

May you all have a wonderful and blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year too! Miss Sharie and the staff and board of Little Shepherds Nursery School



The Outreach Committee is called by our Heavenly Father to extend the hospitality that we find in our fellowship to the community, to visitors, and to new members, in order to draw them into the family of Christian faith at First Presbyterian Church of Newhall.

The Patio Fellowship Table by Lorraine King

Have you visited the Patio Fellowship Table lately? Yes, you can complete your nametag. But there are other items of interest at the Fellowship Table:

Flower arrangements for the sanctuary on Sunday mornings: Sign up for a particular Sunday to honor a birthday or anniversary or in honor/memory of a loved one(s). The list is reviewed by the church office (Bob Balkcom) every Sunday. He will contact you regarding the flowers. You can bring your own flowers or designate a dollar amount, and Bob will order the flowers for you. (Please reimburse the church for the dollar amount within the week and take the flowers with you after second service.)

Adult Education Lending Library: Books are displayed every Sunday with a sign-out sheet. There is no charge, and no deadline in returning the book you've selected. Peruse the book selection as it changes every few weeks.

Sign-up Lists for New Member Classes and Senior Lunches: There are notifications in the newsletter and the bulletin for these events. Stop by and sign up at the Fellowship table.

Names Tags: Folks often say that "everyone knows me," and they don't need to complete a name tag. In reality, not everyone knows you (including those manning the table). Name tags are for other folks to call you by name, put a name with a face, and the opportunity to chat and get to know you. Red tags are for first-time attendees so those of us who attend church on a regular basis can greet the newcomers. First-time visitors also receive a "welcome bag" with information about the church and the past year's Lenten Devotional.

We look forward to seeing you Sunday mornings!

Editors note - this is a reprint of a past article, but I am one who often forgets a name tag and I need to be reminded of its importance on most Sundays!



ADVENT(S): HOLDING TOGETHER THE CRADLE AND THE CROSS - By Roland Wrinkle



As I stare slack-jawed into the face of my weeks-old granddaughter, Clover, I can see the universal newborn features of the Christ child. She has the image of God written all over her as at Creation. This will be her first of many Christmases. My boy/girl twins are unknowingly adventing towards their second Christmas yet, while bursting into creation as just-born humans, they too took on the countenance of our infant savior. Just to the right of my big screen HD television as I watch the King's game is a back-lit ceramic art piece of the manger scene, confirming the commonality that exists among all newborns, both human and divine. (I trigger the back lighting by speaking "Alexa, turn on Jesus" to my Amazon Echo). I too want to linger long over the beauty of the crèche and the image of the Creator God becoming human as an infant who is indistinguishable (in appearance and sinlessness) from these latest additions to my lineage. I have no desire to celebrate the King's beating the Ducks in overtime beneath a crucifix. Ricky Bobby (Will Ferrell in *Talladega Nights*) much preferred saying grace to "Baby Jesus" rather than to the Christ of the Cross for very good reasons. The innocent aura of a baby is infinitely more comforting than the nightmarish awfulness of an execution by torture.



But, uncomfortably chained by and yoked to the grand narrative of scripture as I am, the vast differences between the visages of baby Jesus and babies Wrinkle (actually Mehegan and Tsang) are irreconcilable and ignored only by misunderstanding the First Advent and missing the Second. Jesus was born in a manger; a manger we idealize and thereby distort. My twins' mom is a cow biologist who makes her living in animal dung-infested, urine-soaked barns. Her own babies were born in Tarzana Encino Medical Center. The thought of her giving birth to her own children in the theater where she works would be unthinkable - and repulsive. Baby Clover was born with the promise of unlimited potentials, including serving the world as an emergency room doctor, university vice-chancellor, wife, mother, architect, postal worker, teacher and anything and everything else. Same for her twin cousins. But not so for baby Jesus. He was born to die an excruciating death at a young age. My grandkids rested their baby heads on clean sheets in a hospital. Baby Jesus laid "His sweet head" on a crown of thorns.

During this First Advent, we send and receive Christmas cards trumpeting the coming of the *Prince of Peace*, yet the New Testament never refers to Jesus of Nazareth that way. Yes, Isaiah prophesized that a messiah would come and he would be called, "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." And yes, it sells greetings cards. So do lions with lambs. But we have allowed the traditions of men to let us keep the Prince of Peace and lose the Messiah. "This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines. You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition." (Mark 7). Several Christmases ago, Jack and I tried to explain that "Christ" is not the last name of Jesus. It is His title and vocation. It means *messiah*, that is the *anointed one, king and savior*. So, we encouraged all to greet each other with "Happy Messiah-mas!" What exactly are we celebrating then? We are proclaiming the glorious reality that, at a time when history had unmistakably taught that Israel (elected by God in Gen 12:3 and hundreds of passages elsewhere) to bring about the blessings of New Creation to the whole world, had irretrievably lost its way. The promise of salvation then came unexpectedly by God becoming human right there in the middle of history and in the middle of the Middle East, to serve as both the representative of chosen Israel and as the perfect Israelite. God always keeps His promises, even in the darkest hours. While we commonly refer to this decisive Christmas event as *incarnation*, I prefer the more easily understood English word, *embodiment*, to a strange and distant Latin term.

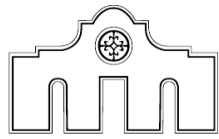
The expected and very reasonable response to these (harsh?) observations being advanced at this, the "happiest time of the year", will surely include: "Thanks Scrooge!" and "I can already see the lump of coal in my stocking." I'm okay with that. I'm simply trying to approach from a different angle what we always say to ourselves at Christmas time: "It's not about presents, parties, excess and anxiety; it's about the birth of God coming into the world." For me at least, that approach hasn't worked all that well. I lose focus about the time I turn left on Lyons after leaving church on Sunday.

Let's just try this once and see what happens: Advent signifies the once-a-year run-up to God having become embodied as a lowly member of His own creation, inevitably to rescue a fallen humanity. Great. That certainly is to be roundly celebrated. Now, each and every day, let's *also* celebrate the **Second Advent**. That is, waiting in the sublime and confident anticipation of God's promise to return to us in order to finish what He started on the cross, i.e. to bring about New Creation where everything will be renewed and restored to the "very good" that it was proclaimed to be on the first page of the Bible, a world free of pain, tears and death. A world set to rights, where the first will be last and the last will be first. And this will all be accomplished (if we believe our own scriptures) by and through the embodied, crucified, resurrected, ascended and reigning King of the Universe who, yes, was born in a manger, but who has promised to return and bring about a final reunification of God's space and human space, here on an earth that will finally be what it was meant to be. It is then that Jesus will become the Prince of Peace and the lion will lay down with the lamb-on a trajectory that goes straight from the promises to Abraham in Genesis 12 through the prophesies of Isaiah 9 and 11 to the realities of Revelation 21.

We are celebrating the First Advent this month. Let's celebrate the Second Advent each day. Oh, and **Happy Messiah-mas!**



The Adult Education Committee at First Presbyterian Church of Newhall encourages the congregation to mature in their Bible knowledge and practice of their Christian faith as disciples of Jesus Christ both personally and in community with other believers.



SANTA BARBARA MISSION CONFERENCE

ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

is the theme of the annual Santa Barbara Mission Conference to be held February 2 and 3, 2018 at the First Presbyterian Church (SB). For us Newhallers, this will be the fifth year in a row that we have attended this inspirational and worthwhile conference. There will be workshops along with displays of what other are doing to bring the Kingdom of Heaven to earth. At the conference in 2014 Jack Irwin and I learned about Living Waters for the world. Now we have a water purification ministry in conjunction with the University Presbyterian Church in Fresno.

There is a list of impressive speakers who will be presenting workshops on such vital subjects as immigration, city ministries, human trafficking, and working for the Kingdom in Gaza and Jordan. One of the keynote speakers is someone of special interest to us. He is Dr. Craig Barnes, President of Princeton Theological Seminary. He is not familiarly related to our own pastor Dr. William Barnes but is a close colleague in ministry. Bill speaks very highly of him, and we can look forward to some inspiring messages. The cost of the registration is \$60 (\$20 of which can be reimbursed by the Adult Education Committee).

Check out “www.sbmissionconference.org/2018-conference/#2018-details” for more information or contact me.

Let us pray that our participation will empower us to realize the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven to earth. - Art Moore

A Big Thank You from your Adult Education Committee

2017 has been a year of incredible activity opportunities for our congregation. We started the year with phenomenal Lenten Study Group support and had over 70 participants. What a joy to prepare for the Resurrection of our Lord.

Reformation Sunday in October was an informative and remarkable day with Jack Irwin at the pulpit, Roland’s Timetable, Pastor Bill’s impressive in depth education on Reformation and then finishing with a Scottish Meal in our Fellowship Hall prepared by Becky Cranert. It was a day to remember and rejoice.

We offered a Sunday afternoon Movie in the Sanctuary entitled “Luther” where we followed the life of Martin Luther. Joseph Finnes played Luther and was superb.

In September, Jack Irwin offered a “Mysteries of the Bible” walk through the Bible in a Year with him. It is an individual opportunity to read the Bible with the assistance and encouragement from Jack

Every SECOND and FOURTH Sunday in September, October and November, we offered an early afternoon Bible Study fellowship and “Supper in the Upper Room”. We will continue this Bible Study and Supper next April, May and June after Easter.

And of course there is the ongoing “Faith Talk” every Sunday morning at 9am on the benches led by Roland our resident theologian. Bring your questions of faith!

In 2018, your Adult Ed Committee has some continued Education opportunities that we feel each of you will find appealing and challenging as we educate ourselves as Christians.

Lynn Parkinson, Adult Ed Elder





The purpose of **The Mission Committee**, in order to further share the gospel of Jesus Christ, is to responsibly use the resources of First Presbyterian Church of Newhall, wherever we find a neighbor in need. We are committed to meeting mission needs in our local community, across the nation, and globally, by sending money, food, clothing, volunteers, or whatever else is needed.



Scott is home safely from his successful Laos Mission Trip!

Scott Bullock of our church returned recently from a two-week mission trip to Laos. He went with a team of 5 from University Pres Church in Fresno. The purpose of the trip was to visit two of the water systems, one at Ban Yodh Keau that was installed in 2015, and one at Ban Vanh that had been installed several years before that. These systems filter out bacteria and viruses from the water so that the villages can have clean water for cooking, drinking, cleaning the babies, and brushing the teeth. The Team installed a backwash system to clean the sand filters in the system at Ban Vanh, and inspected and trained the operators at Ban Yodh Keau. They also conducted hygiene classes at Ban Yodh Keau teaching the concept of germs (new to them) and how to practice cleanliness and the uses of the clean water. If you see Scott on the patio, ask him about this second trip of his to Laos.



Scott's trip was sponsored by the Missions Committee of our church. Jack Irwin, Art Moore, Jack Irwin, Johan Vandersande and Dale Boss are all on the Clean Water Systems group at Newhall Pres. If you want to join this group, please contact us. We are also exploring the opportunity to install clean water systems for the Presbyterian churches in Colombia, South America.

- Jack Irwin, PE

Our next church mission trip will be our spring homebuilding trip with AMOR Ministries in Tijuana April 13 through 15, 2018. All are welcome, but since we will not be taking the trailer we need vehicles and drivers. Please see Art Moore or John Favalessa for details or if you have any questions. Email us at amor@presby-newhall.org

From all of us AMOR devotees, we want to thank this congregation for your support for this ministry through the past years...this church has completed at least 37 homebuilding trips! Think of it this way, there are 37 families with much better housing than they had before. Things we take for granted like a roof that doesn't leak, a concrete floor instead of dirt, strong stucco walls instead of cardboard or walls made of our old garage doors.





JOIN A COMMITTEE

Adult Education Committee - encourages the congregation to mature in their knowledge and practice of their Christian faith as disciples of Jesus Christ both personally and in community with other believers. *meets first Wednesday of the month.* Elder Lynn Parkinson

Building and Grounds Committee - is responsible to diligently maintain and thoughtfully develop the buildings and grounds of the Church facility that the Lord has provided, so that we may carry out His Ministry. *meets first Monday of the month.* Elder Don Trammell & Jim Combs

Christian Education - Children Committee - invites children to embrace the word of God through worship, games, song and other activities; to encourage their spiritual growth to become closer to our Lord Jesus Christ and equip them to go out into the world and share God's love. *meets first Monday of the month.* Elder Eric Clardy

Church Life Committee - promotes fellowship and fun activities for the church family by providing a variety of community, cultural and special events. *meets first Wednesday of the month.* Elders Patrick Stokes, and Nicole McCreery

Futures Committee - plan for and embrace the future. *meets second Tuesday of the month.* Elder Barbara Irwin

Mission Committee - our purpose in order to further share the gospel of Jesus Christ, is to responsibly use the resources of the Church wherever we find a neighbor in need. We are committed to meeting mission needs in our local community, across the nation and globally, by sending money, food, clothing, volunteers or whatever else is needed. *meets first Tuesday of the month.* Elders Geoff Harms and Benny Goldstein

Outreach Committee - is called by our Heavenly Father to extend the hospitality that we find in our fellowship to the community, to visitors, and to new members, in order to draw them into the family of Christian faith at First Presbyterian Church. *meets usually on the second Wednesday of the month.* Elder John Favalessa

Stewardship Committee - strives to build stewardship disciples of our church family by: *transforming the hearts of believers to reflect the image of Christ*, to become generous "as Christ is generous in being rich toward God" in the stewardship of all our gifts; to empower God's Kingdom work to be fully staffed, funded and shared throughout our community, country and world; and, as a committee, to monitor the fiscal responsibilities of our church ministry. *meets second Tuesday of the month.* Elder Jan Fraser and Sue Stanger

Worship Committee - will strive with God's guidance and grace, to create Christ centered worship experiences, inspiring God's people as they respond to the word proclaimed in prayer, song, scripture, sacrament and message. *meets first Tuesday of the month.* Elders Kathy Bressler and Sonja Tweedie

Youth Committee - nurtures the junior and senior high aged youth of the church and the community by providing a Christ centered program of worship, education, fellowship and service in order to equip them with a framework in which they can realize their spiritual gifts and live a Christian life. *meets second Wednesday of the month.* Elder Barbara Irwin

YOU CAN ALSO GET INVOLVED BY:

Praying - see Sunday Bulletins Prayer requests.

Join the prayer chain. Contact Connie Luechtefeld at: prayerchain@presby-newhall.org

Volunteer to provide a meal. Contact your Deacon

Come build a home for a poor family in Mexico. Contact John Favalessa at amor@presby-newhall.org

Join Living Waters for the World with our Lao Partners. Contact Jack Irwin or Art Moore.

Become an usher

Sing in the choir

Ring in the bell choir

Help with Sunday School

Come to an Adult Ed class

Join a Bible Study or Circle

The Bean Counter's Corner - By Dorothy Ng

Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live. – Jim Rohm

Your body is a temple; respect it, and it will bless you. – Shiamak Davar

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. – I Corinthians 6:19-20

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself. – Luke 10:27

According to *The Telegraph's* article in a December 2012 article, this is the first time in history that there are as many people suffering from the result of too much food as malnutrition. Millions of people suffer from not having enough food to eat, and millions of people are struggling with the effects of being overweight. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention announced in May 2008 that 7 in 10 Americans are overweight. And an article written in May 2008 on CNNHealth.com stated that diabetes, heart disease, and other "lifestyle-based diseases" now kill more people than infectious diseases worldwide.

Why am I telling you all this? Because of one simple question: how can we give our time, talent, and treasure to God and fulfill His plan for each one of us, if we are sick and tired? I know I have been there and I'm still there sometimes. After Katie was born, I weighed 40 pounds more than I did when I was married 11 years earlier. That's an average of about 3 ½ pounds a year. With each child, I gained 10 pounds that wouldn't come off plus 10 more because of my eating habits. Then a couple of years later, I began my menopause life. My dad had heart disease and died when I was 24 from Parkinson's Disease. A few months later, mom was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. And diabetes runs on both sides of my family.

I was 42 when Katie was born and my mom was 41 when I was born. The one thing I remember most from my childhood is the numerous people who thought I lived with my grandparents. After Katie was born, I was determined to not ever let that happen to my kids. I wanted to be around to watch my kids find their places in this world.

So it was good-bye Hamburger Helper, Rice-A-Roni, potato chips, and soda; hello fresh fruit and vegetables and make dinner from scratch. I exercised watching videos at home when the kids were in school or napping, used two-pound and five-pound weights at home, and joined the YMCA for those few, precious times I could get away from home. It took about a year or so, and I lost 35 of those pounds, had more energy, and things were great. But then in the fall of 2014 began Jerry's ordeal that still continues, for the most part, today. The stress got to me and exercise went out the window and chips, French fries, and junk went into my mouth. I have gained 15 pounds and wondering where I went wrong.

So now I am trying something new. A few months ago, I read [The Daniel Plan](#). One of the authors is Rick Warren, the pastor at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, CA. The whole idea behind The Daniel Plan is to change your lifestyle but not just by Food and Fitness. There are three other components also – Focus, Faith, and Friends.

Food and Fitness we all get; eat the right stuff and move your body. But how about the other three? Let's start with Focus. If you want to change your life you have to change your thoughts. Focus on God's love which becomes the motivation. With love, you can experience God's unconditional love, learn to really love Him back, learn to love whom God has made you to be, and learn to love and receive love from others. Faith is a verb – an action word. It is something you do. Decision-making is a faith-building activity. Dedicate your body to God. Trust in God's power to help you change because you cannot rely on merely your own willpower. It didn't work for me. Friends are the best support system you can have. God made us to be relational. He stated it is not good for us to be alone. So why do we go on "diets" or lifestyle changes by ourselves. Pastor Warren says that these last two (Faith and Friends) are the "secret sauce of the Plan because "when you have God and a group helping you, you have far more than just your own willpower helping you make positive changes and are far more likely to stay consistent."

So who wants to join me on this journey? I have started on the Plan but I have already messed up. That Halloween candy kept calling my name. And now the holidays are here which means lots of food and sweets. Help me!

So let's do it. Let's all start a new lifestyle dedicating our bodies to God. Losing weight is a bonus. The real objective is to be healthy so that we can do what God has called us to do. We can do it together. Just email me, treasurer@presby-newhall.org, or call me at the church, 259-0555 x3. There's no telling what God might want to do through us as we gain more energy, think more clearly, feel more confident, and grow physically stronger and more flexible. I'm excited! How about you?

Romans 12: 1-2 "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will."





The Youth Committee nurtures the Junior High and Senior High-aged youth of First Presbyterian Church of Newhall, and the community; by providing a Christ-centered program of worship, education, fellowship, and service in order to equip them with a framework in which they can realize their spiritual gifts and live a Christian life.

As the month of November wraps up, and we close out another year, there's so much in our lives and church family to be thankful for. Here are some that we've recently experienced...

Thankful for the small, yet committed individuals that continue to be a permanent fixture in our youth group on a weekly basis. *And thank you to those parents that enable them to be there! You're the reason for our success. Keep setting that example...

Thankful for a nice turnout for our Youth Halloween Party that was held on October 29th. See photos for some wacky outfits.



Kenzie Jordan



Bryce Morrow

Thankful to celebrate our youth's birthdays! Emily Abbate (Youth Sponsor) celebrated her 21st birthday on November 1st! Emily is a Biology major with an emphasis in Pre-Med at Grand Canyon University in Phoenix. Parents, especially those with young adult girls, this is the young woman you want to lead your children. Such a heart for serving others and following Jesus.



Emily Abbate



Our sweet and talented, Hannah Buhle, a sophomore at Hart High School and a leader on and off the field (she is a first-year captain for Hart's Color Guard), celebrated her sweet sixteenth birthday on November 18th. A young lady who strives for perfection, she embodies the nurturing gene that allows her to spread her love openly to others.

Hannah Buhle



Thankful for opportunities to see our youth in their element. For Van Johnson, that element is on the soccer field. This kid can play! A fierce defender who isn't afraid to mix it up and yet Van has an awareness of the field and game situations that can rarely be taught. Extremely proud of him!

(l-r) Van Johnson, Youth Director - Bryce Morrow, Kyle Johnson, and Amy Johnson

Thankful for another year of Turkey Bowl! 🦃🏈 While Central Park's multipurpose fields are being reseeded, we've decided to move the event to Old Orchard Park on Lyons Ave.

And lastly, on behalf of Sam and me - thank you to Pastor Bill, Pastor Phil, our Youth Committee, our congregation, our youth, their parents, and our family and friends for praying and supporting our trip to the National Youth Workers Convention in Memphis, TN. We felt God's presence in each and every seminar we attended. We are excited to continue leading our youth to Christ, so that they may experience the type of grace we experience from our Heavenly Father daily. Thank you all for being in our corner.



Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, His love endures forever. -Psalm 107:1



The Youth Christmas Party will be on Friday, December 20th from 6-9pm. Location tbd.

-Bryce Morrow, Youth Director

The Newhall Press

First Presbyterian Church of Newhall
24317 N. Newhall Ave.
Newhall, California; 91321-2721

Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage PAID
Santa Clarita, CA
Permit No. 49

Change Service Requested

DECEMBER 2017

Advent
*A Season of Hope
& Expectation*

Sunday Worship Services

9:30 & 11:15 AM

Christmas Eve Services

10am, 5pm, 7pm & 9pm

New Years Eve Service Sunday 10am



**Deadline
for the
January Newsletter:
December 20, 2017**

**Send articles and photos to our
email address:**

newsletter@presby-newhall.org

The Newhall Press

First Presbyterian Church of Newhall

24317 N. Newhall Avenue

Newhall, CA 91321-2721

(661) 259-0555

E-mail: churchoffice@presby-newhall.org

Web Site: <http://www.presby-newhall.org>

Pastor: Bill Barnes (ext. 1)

Pastoral Support: Phil Aijian (ext. 2)

Youth Director: Bryce Morrow

Assoc. Youth Dir: Sam Spigelman

Assoc. Children's Dir: Lelia Meadows

Office Administrator: Bob Balkcom (ext. 0)

Music Conductor: Connie Woodson

2nd Service Worship Leader: Sam Besse

Treasurer: Dorothy Ng (ext. 3)

Custodian: Nelson Orellana

Groundskeeper: Steve Fuller

Nursery Care Provider: Linda Weingarten

Little Shepherd's Nursery School:

Director: Sharie Telles (661) 254-2312

Thanks to Bob Balkcom, office administrator, for oversight and printing; Ellie and Steve Fuller, for faithfully preparing newsletter for mailing; and Lorraine King for proof reading. —john favalessa, temporary editor