

<u>LOOKING AHEAD</u>		
December	30	Food Bank Closed No Choir Practice
	31	12:00 Church Office Closes New Year's Eve at Camp Mack
January	1	Church Office Closed

Christmas Eve Cookies Needed

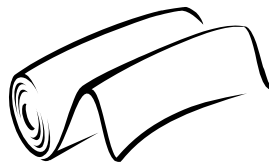
You're invited to bake, or purchase cookies for the reception after the Christmas Eve worship service. A dozen or two would be most appreciated. They can be left labeled in the kitchen or brought Christmas Eve. Nancy and Steve Eikenberry will host.

Please make suggestions of book titles and other media that would make good additions to the church library to Mary Bosserman or Mary Whitehead, church librarians.



Brown Towels vs. White Towels in the Bathroom A New Look for Beacon Heights

Many brands of paper towels are bleached (like the multi-fold towels in Beacon Heights restrooms). Dioxin is a byproduct of the bleaching process. It can cause birth defects and cancer. As an option to bleached paper towels, some brands are made from recycled materials. They cut down on the waste and take less energy to produce. We are trying something new—brown multifold towels— in the restrooms. It's another small step toward being environmentally friendly. Better for us, better for the earth.



If you have questions regarding Beacon information, please contact the church office between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE Adult and Children's Sunday School at 10:00 a.m.

Next Week—December 27, 2009

9:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. Worship

"Lost!"

This multi-faceted story provides us with an early glimpse into a Jesus who is both all too human and all too divine. Who among us cannot relate to the feeling of losing someone in a crowd? Who among us cannot remember the panic of getting separated from a loved one and not initially realizing it? And who among us doesn't think that Jesus is at least a little insufferable when he calmly addresses his parents after they have been frantically trying to find him?

But Jesus' response reminds of us some important parts of life: Sometimes, we are actually lost when we are "found." Sometimes, being lost is preferable to being found. And sometimes, being lost is more comforting than being found. Being found can be a terrifying, liberating, frustrating, freeing, lonely, and faith-provoking experience. The people who walked in darkness don't always want to see a great light. But the light is there. The light of Christ shines upon us, imperfections and all, and challenges us to explore what it means to be lost and found.

Pastor Brian

**THIS WEEK AT
BEACON HEIGHTS**

Wednesday

6:00 p.m. Bell Choir
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir

Thursday

7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship

Friday

Merry Christmas!

Food Bank

Closed Dec. 23 and 30, reopens Jan 6.

Beacon Heights Church believes everyone is a child of God. We welcome all people, of any age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family status, socio-economic status, physical ability, mental ability, or place along their faith journey.

THE BEACON

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STATISTICS

Sunday December 13, 2009

9:00 Worship	85
10:00 Building the Bridge	119
11:15 Worship	123
Adult Offerings	\$6, 823.00
Children's Offering	\$.00
Weekly Budget	\$7,277.00



Christmas Eve Offering Announcement

Our 2009 Advent theme is “Return to us the hope, joy, peace, love and light of Bethlehem.” Luke’s Gospel tells us that Joseph returned to his hometown – his place of origin. Most of us, as we think of where we grew up, experience fond memories and a deep sense of thankfulness.

This year, as we anticipate Christmas, we return to places we hold dear in our faith journey. In particular we remember two places that have been foundational for our community of faith. The first is Palestine, the birthplace of Christianity through Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem. The second is Virginia, the home of John Kline (an early spiritual leader of our denomination), who died for his faithful witness to the way of Jesus.

Our 2009 Christmas Eve offering will be shared with 1) Christian Peacemaker Teams as they work for peace and justice in the land of Jesus’ birth (and elsewhere) and 2) with the John Kline Homestead Preservation Trust as they invite visitors to remember the faith of prior generations as inspiration for today.

**Safe Church Training
Sunday, January 3, 2010
Following the 11:15 service until 2:00 p.m.
Lunch will be provided.**

ALL who work with children and youth in the congregation and have not previously attended a training are encouraged* to attend. This training will include conversation about how to report any incidents of harm as well as appropriate relationships and boundaries.

Please RSVP by December 29 to the church office.

Contact Pastor Melissa, if you have any questions.

*According to our Safe Church Policy (adopted in 2007), this is REQUIRED for everyone who works with children and youth.

Winter 2010 Building the Bridge Classes Begin January 3

***Neglected Voices: Peace in the Old Testament* by David Leiter**

Facilitated by Mark Beck and Dave Kiracofe

As members of a peace church we have often lauded Jesus' teachings of nonviolence in the New Testament. However, we have struggle with the violence we find in the Old Testament. In his book, *Neglected Voices*, the author has studied examples of peacemaking and nonviolence found in the Old Testament. In this class we will be studying Leiter's examples and consider their implications for peacemaking in today's world.

The Message in the Movies

Facilitated by Anne Ott and Craig Smith

Every culture for millennia has used storytelling to pass on its history and values. Jesus told stories as a means of requiring his audience (including us) to think about the meaning of life and faith. Movies are one of our society's most prevalent, far-reaching modes of storytelling with powerful visual and auditory images. Join us as we watch a movie each week in its entirety (possibly on Saturday) and then discuss it on Sunday morning.

***When Faith Meets Reason*, edited by Charles Hedrick**

Facilitated by Todd Steele

How do we respond when our faith and religious beliefs seem to conflict with reason, science and scholarship? How have you reconciled ideas or reconstructed understanding? Join us for a series of candid conversations that explore our own experiences and challenges, and reflect on the personal testimonies of leading contemporary Christian scholars and theologians as they reveal their personal negotiations of intellect and faith.

Caring for Creation: February 14, 2010 (One Sunday only)

Facilitated by Tom Benevento

This class will highlight "...most effective personal and public actions to care for our planet." The session will include slides, group discussion, and perhaps a short DVD. Tom Benevento of New Community Project will spend the weekend at Beacon Height as part of the Undoing Global Warming weekend. This class is part of our Flourishing Congregations theme of care for creation.

An Advent Message from the Pastoral Team

This year as Advent returns, we join with you in seeking the return of the hope, joy, peace, love, and light of Bethlehem. We recognize that in our own world, just as at Jesus' birth, these wonderful aspects of life exist side by side with pain, struggle, discouragement, conflict, and sorrow. Here we are, many of us struggling perhaps a bit more this year than others – emotionally, economically, even spiritually; struggling and longing for a sense of God's care.

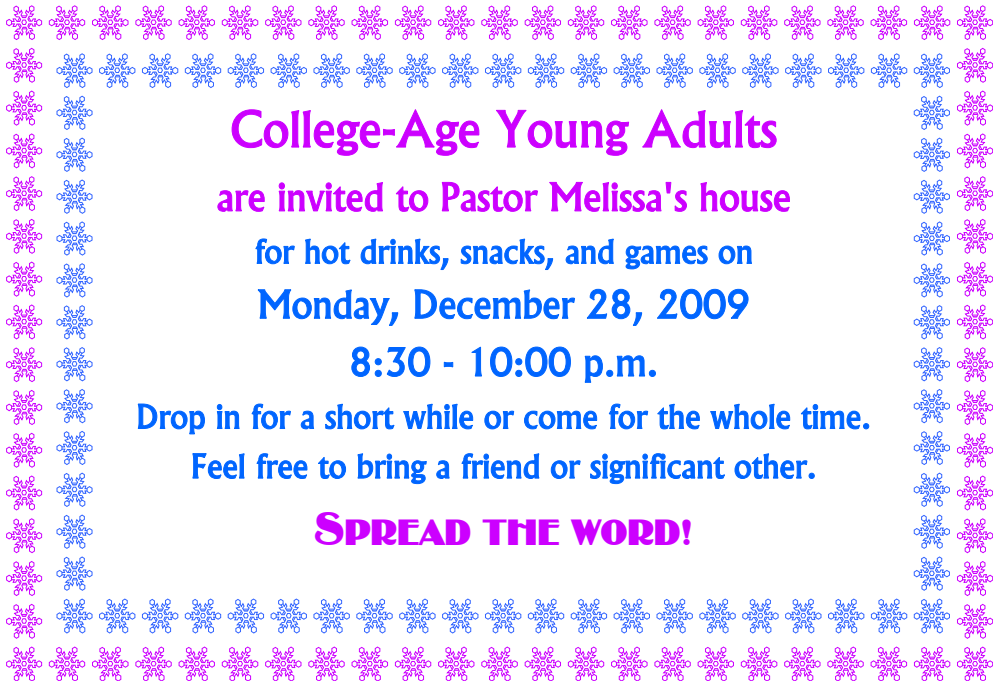
In returning to the age-old stories of Jesus' birth, we discover new awareness of God's love and presence in our living. We find the grace of this season filling us with a joy and hope that is not connected to the circumstances of our lives, but comes alive in the mystery of God-with-us.

In the midst of life, we return to the stories of Jesus' own Advent -- the stories which call us to reflect on what is truly important in life, to be attentive to the freshness of God's coming among us, to bring our gifts of praise and devotion to the Holy One. Here – and now - these stories guide us as a community of faith to return to the foundations of who we are to be – a beacon of God's love in this world.

As your pastoral team, we continue to celebrate the Spirit who lives within this congregation - a Holy Spirit of generosity and compassion, of commitment to justice-seeking and healing-service to those around us. We are humbled, yet thankful for the opportunity to share this journey with you, and we welcome God's stirring within this body, leading us into a shared vision of God's Shalom amid the challenges of this time.

Giving God thanks for the community that receives and shares the Love born anew among us,

Pastor Jan *Pastor Melissa* *Pastor John*
Pastor Brian



College-Age Young Adults

are invited to Pastor Melissa's house

for hot drinks, snacks, and games on

Monday, December 28, 2009

8:30 - 10:00 p.m.

Drop in for a short while or come for the whole time.

Feel free to bring a friend or significant other.

SPREAD THE WORD!

Middle East Delegation

January 5-18, 2010

Are you ready for the trip of a lifetime? This is not a typical guided tour of the Holy Land. It is a journey in faith and forgiveness. Meet the ordinary Israelis and Palestinians who are seeking to come together for peace.

On Earth Peace is still taking applications for the 2010 Middle East Delegation. For more about the delegation, go to www.onearthpeace.org, click on 'special programs' and Middle East Peace or contact delegation leader Bob Gross at bgross@onearthpeace.org.

Participants should be prepared to spend 12 days in Israel/Palestine, prepare for the trip by becoming familiar with the current conditions there, and communicate their experiences to local congregations, groups and the media upon return.



Notes of Gratitude from Witness Commission

Donating Your Used Eyeglasses

In recent months our congregation has donated 35 pairs of eyeglasses. They have been delivered to an optometrist's office for distribution to those who need eyeglasses and can't afford them. Thanks to Sue Warren for initiating and handling this ongoing project!

The Partner Church Visit

The recent visit of 3 representatives (Sylvia, Nicolas, and Margarito) from our Partner Church (2nd Congregation of Mision Cristiana) seemed to go well and the bonds between our congregations appear to be stronger because of the visit.

Thanks to all who helped make it a successful project, with a special thanks to Raquel Aragon and Josh Kline for housing our guests, to Raquel Aragon and Carol Baker for translating, and to Paul Fry-Miller and the Partner Church Committee for planning the whole visit.

Supporting the Future Development of Camp Mack

On November 1st our congregation had a special emphasis on Camp Mack and we were offered an opportunity to donate to the Camp Mack Capital Campaign, which will help fund some special projects related to the improvement of buildings and the grounds at Camp Mack. Some of us placed contributions in the offering plate that day and others used the special Camp Mack envelopes to mail our contributions directly to Camp Mack. The total amount (that we know about) donated from our congregation for this Capital Campaign was \$900. Thanks for supporting Camp Mack - a special resource for the Brethren of our region!



Disaster Relief Trip for 2010 Nearly Full

Beacon Heights has scheduled another disaster service trip to Chalmette, LA, in the winter of 2010. Chalmette was one of the hardest hit suburbs of New Orleans where devastation was massive. Beacon Heights is organizing a group of volunteers to travel there and work February 21-27, 2010. Several levels of skills and a variety of talents are needed, including those willing to cook for the group or help in the kitchen. If you have any interest in going along or in being placed on an alternate list, please talk to Pastor John.

Advent Building the Bridge Classes

December 20-27: *Simply Wait*
Location: South Classroom
Facilitated by Nancy Eikenberry
Anticipation, Hope, Patience, Obedience. This advent class will guide you in finding time for holy anticipation during the advent season. The book, *Simply Wait*, provides opportunities for daily meditation, prayer and space for journaling.

December 20: Caring Crafts for Advent
Location: Parlor
Facilitated by Phyllis Hall
Supplied and instruction to create a special folded paper card.

It's not too late...

...to give bees, or rabbits, or geese, etc., (heifer.org) or mosquito netting or a year's schooling, etc., (newcommunityproject.org). These are just two of many venues for life-changing gifts that make a difference in the world.



YOUTH

High School

DECEMBER 27

DURING SUNDAY SCHOOL



Planning for
Winter Retreat
and
Winter/Spring
Sunday school focus

Bring your great ideas (I know you have them!)

January 16
Ice Skating

January 29-31
Retreat at Camp Mack

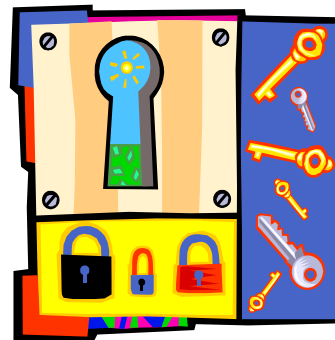


NEWS

Middle School

Mark your calendars:

January 22, 2010



Lock-in at the
church

7:00 p.m. Friday
to
8:00 a.m. Saturday

Watch the Beacon for details!