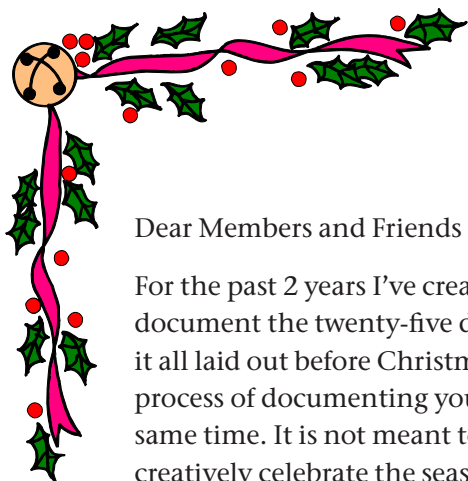


Commonplace Press

Winter
2011



Minister's Message

Dear Members and Friends of Faith Des Peres,

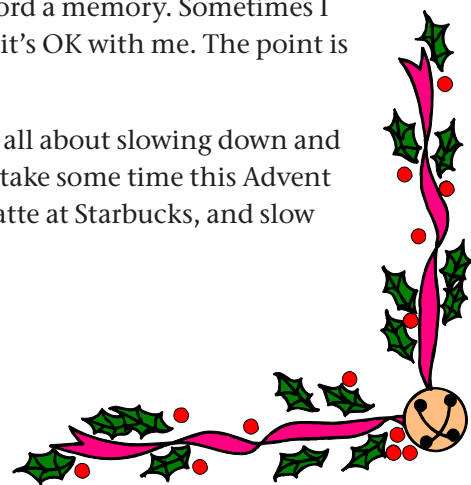
For the past 2 years I've created a December Daily album. The idea behind the album is to document the twenty-five days that lead up to Christmas. The key to the album's success is to get it all laid out before Christmas so that during the season you can enjoy the season & enjoy the process of documenting your days without having to be putting the entire thing together at the same time. It is not meant to be stressful. It is, in the words of the creator, meant to be a way to creatively celebrate the season and document your special holiday memories in one album.

In preparation for this year's album, I pulled out my albums from 2009 and 2010. There were lots of little memories I recorded that I'd forgotten, like the big snowfall we had last Christmas Eve or the 10 degree days we had in early December! (I guess I'd rather forget those memories!) But there were other memories, bigger ones, about people and traditions, that I did record and I'm really glad I did. I'm glad I took a few minutes out of my day to write a thought or record a memory. Sometimes I had a photo to go with the story and sometimes I didn't. Either way, it's OK with me. The point is I took some time to slow down and enjoy the season.

I know Christmas can be hectic. I know it can be crazy. But Advent is all about slowing down and waiting and preparing for the arrival of Emmanuel, God with Us. So take some time this Advent season, whether it's to document your story or to get a peppermint latte at Starbucks, and slow down. I think when you look back, you'll be glad you did.

Many Blessings,

Annie



IN THIS ISSUE

- *Sunday School News*
- *Advent & Christmas Worship*

- *Worship & Evangelism*
- *Mission Program*

- *Mission & Ministries*
- *Endowment & Finance*

Sunday School News

Sunday School kicked off with lots of kids and fun on Rally Day. The elementary class has been learning about Moses, the Exodus, and the Sacrament of Communion. Some of the kids participated in the CROP Walk and volunteered at Food Outreach. Some of them also participated in Frontenac's scarecrow making party!

The youth have been learning the who, what, where, when and why of the Bible. They've also been learning about other religions, how they compare to Christianity, and what makes us unique as Christians.

Both classes are taking an offering that will support Food Outreach, a St. Louis agency that provides meals for people living with HIV/AIDS and cancer. All ages will participate in making gingerbread houses.

We are always in need of Sunday School teachers or helpers. You will have fun and learn something new by teaching and/or helping. Guaranteed!



Advent and Christmas Worship

Experience the joy of the season through worship opportunities at Faith Des Peres. "Advent is a time to open ourselves to the love of God in Christ in a new way, as we ponder the traditional themes of the season: expectation, hope, preparation and longing."—from *Presbyterians Today 2009 Advent Calendar*.

Sunday, November 27, 10:30 am: Our Advent Journey begins. Rev. Pat Cleeland is preaching this Sunday.

Sunday, December 4, 10:30 am: The theme for the 2nd Sunday of Advent is "Prepare". What does it mean to be prepared for Jesus Christ? What does this look like?

Sunday, December 11, 10:30 am: On the 3rd Sunday of Advent, the Angel Gabriel visits Mary to tell her she will bear the Christ child. This is the quintessential Christmas story. It's beginning to feel a lot like Christmas!

Sunday, December 18, 10:30 am: The children will present "A Christmas Carol in Bethlehem."

Christmas Eve, 5:30 pm: Traditional Candlelight Service with trumpeter.

Sunday, December 25, 10:30 am: For many people Christmas Eve is a time of great celebration. The choir pulls out all the stops, the bells ring out the joy of the season and people gather with family and friends to celebrate the birth of Jesus. In contrast to all that, this service is a simple Sabbath. A chance to gather in the quiet of the morning, to remember, to rejoice and to respond to grace flowing freely in the humble birth of the God-made-flesh. The service revolves around carols that are familiar to sing and hearing the Christmas story.

It is the hope and prayer of the staff at Faith Des Peres that you will join us in renewal, refreshment, and reconnection this Advent/Christmas Season. Blessings!

News from Worship & Evangelism

The season of Advent is upon us! We hope you will join us for some very special services in which we celebrate the birth of Jesus the Christ in his First Advent and anticipate the return of Christ the King in his Second Advent.

From the beautiful anthem *E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come* to our choir's rendition of Isaiah's prophecy in *Every Valley Shall Be Exalted*, the music of Advent will fill you with hope.

On December 18, our children will provide leadership in worship with the presentation of a Christmas pageant called *A Christmas Carol in Bethlehem* (Dickens meets the Christmas story!).

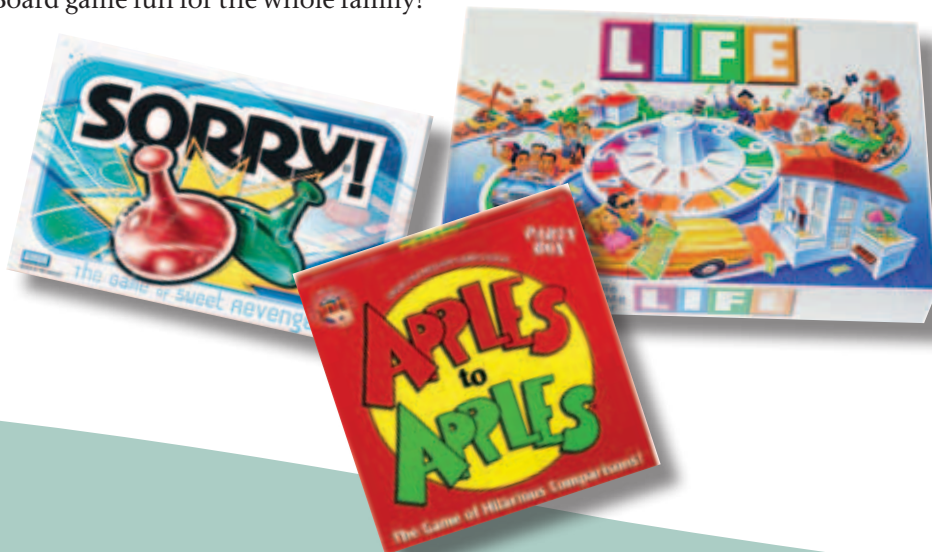
We look forward to a beautiful candlelight communion service on Christmas Eve with very special music including many favorite songs and carols of Christmas. You will not want to miss *Walk in the Light*, a gospel anthem proclaiming Jesus as Light of the World.

During the season of Epiphany, our choir will explore anthems in which we see Jesus revealed to the world. Some of these anthems include new settings of the texts of *Amazing Grace* and *It Is Well with My Soul*. Some guest musicians will join us during this season, providing voluntaries and adding extra musical flavor to our anthems and hymns.

Lent is a time of preparation to celebrate God's redemption at Easter, and the resurrected life that we live and hope for, as Christians. Join us as we begin the season of Lent with a special service on Ash Wednesday, February 22.

How about some fun church family and friends time?

Evangelism will present Game Night on Saturday, January 14, 2012. Don't be **SOLITAIRE** and **SORRY** that night. The **PRICE IS RIGHT**, take a **RISK**, enjoy **LIFE** and plan to attend Game Night in the Gathering Space. Bring a drink and a snack to share (**APPLES TO APPLES** is always a good choice). We will give you a **CLUE** and try not to **BOGGLE** your mind with **TRIVIAL PURSUIT** or **BRIDGE**. Board game fun for the whole family!



TNT

The TNT Group at Faith Des Peres is all about food, fun, and fellowship. Anyone who considers themselves a "young-ish adult"—that's to say in their twenties, thirties, or just over the hill, is welcome to join in our good times. Past get-togethers have included a BBQ in the Benben's backyard and brunches at Brio, the Highland Brewing Company, and foot-long chili cheese hotdogs (with an optional fried egg on top!) at Lester's. There is always lively conversation and enjoyment to be had by all.

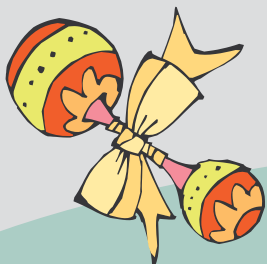
Future TNT events will be posted in the bulletin and on the Commonplace blog—so keep your eyes peeled! Contact Scott McClure with questions or future social suggestions, and make sure he has your email address to keep you in the loop. Hope to see you at the next TNT event! Friends and visitors are always welcome to join us—the more, the merrier!

*Printing of this newsletter
courtesy of Morgan Press in
Bedford, New Hampshire.*

Grandbabies Galore!

Congratulations to Jim & Joanna Gerst! Jim and Joanna have welcomed three grandbabies so far this fall, and a fourth is due around the time this newsletter will be mailed. Alice Elizabeth Klein was born September 10 to Kate (Joanna's daughter) and Matt Klein in Phoenix. Alice is named after her great-grandmother and longtime Faith Des Peres member, Alice Solliday. Joanna's son, Alex Solliday, and his wife Kerry welcomed their new little son Owen Alexander Solliday on October 7. They live in California. Jim's daughter and frequent Faith Des Peres visitor, Emma Dolley, and her husband Kevin are the proud parents of Hayden Max Dolley, who arrived on October 25. James and Morgan are the big brother and sister. And last but not least, Jim's son, Ben Gerst, and his wife Karen are expecting a daughter on December 2. Watch your Sunday bulletin for an update on this one!

Congratulations to Rufus and Judy Sisson on the birth of their granddaughter, Madison Jane Donnelly, on October 6. Their first! Proud parents are Joe and Katie Donnelly. Joe and Katie were married in our sanctuary in 2008.



Mission Program

Work toward a hands-on mission project to be funded with monies allocated from the first Capital Campaign receipts continues following a series of three informal focus group discussions conducted this fall to gather thoughts and ideas from FDP members. At its October meeting, Session approved a recommendation from the Mission & Ministry Committee to establish a "weekend meals for kids backpack program."

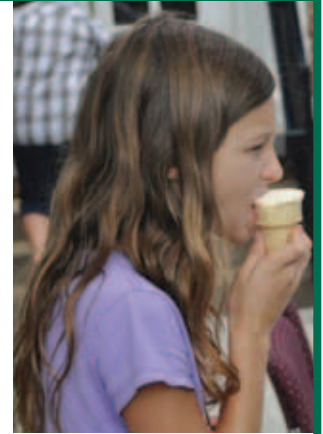
Next steps involve completing research to identify a school or other community organization through which backpacks will be distributed on Friday afternoons to a designated number of children who would otherwise not have nutritious meals over the weekend. Churches in other parts of the country are participating in similar initiatives and providing a source of ideas from which FDP will model its program. The goal is to have FDP's backpack program up and running by January 2012. As more specific details are put in place, Mission & Ministry will begin recruiting volunteer teams to help with the tasks of acquiring food, assembling backpacks and delivering them to the selected site each week. Anyone with ideas or questions about the backpack program should contact Joanna Gerst, Jan Morris, Erica Abbett or Barb Abbett.

When the first Capital Campaign to support the Gathering Space was conducted in 2008, Session voted to set aside \$20,000 of pledge receipts for mission work. Earlier this year, Mission & Ministry allocated \$7,500 of the total to establish a new hands-on mission program at FDP. Other recipients of these special mission funds were Food Outreach and Reading is Fundamental (RIF).

Trunk or Treat

On Saturday, October 29, Faith Des Peres Church hosted their first annual Trunk or Treat. It was a huge success and frankly, set the bar high for any rivaling trunk or treats. All who participated did FDP proud! Cars, trucks, vans, portable tents, and even a dog were completely decked out in spooky fashion. Numerous people from our church and the surrounding community joined us for Halloween fun, apple cider, and s'mores around the fire. There was certainly no lack of candy for the kids who had a ball checking out each other's costumes and running around the church yard. You have to check out the pictures!

Rally Day 2011 and Trunk or Treat



Elders

Clerk of Session

Joe Morris

Commissioner to Presbytery

Dorcas Case

Treasurer

Kathy Sherrick

Class of 2012

Terry Baker

Jim Gerst

Sarah Ludlow

Class of 2013

Barbara Abbett

Scott McClure

Joe Morris

Class of 2014

Leslie Barnes

Sean O'Rourke

Rufus Sisson

Mission and Ministries

The Garden has been a successful project this year, not only our beds from which donations were made to Circle of Concern, but also the expansion of the idea into a Community Garden. We held a fall cleanup day on November 5th as well as a meeting with the gardeners where we shared a snack and ideas for next year. Everyone had the opportunity to reserve their plots for 2012. We look forward to another growing season and some new ways to be more of a community as we garden together.

A number of folks from the congregation participated in a food packing on October 22nd at Food Outreach, the organization that provides prepared meals and food to people living with AIDS and cancer. Mark your calendars for our next volunteer day at Food Outreach—January 21st. Remember to donate canned food anytime for Food Outreach. Look for the bins in the Gathering Space.

On October 23rd we heard a very powerful message from the executive director of Circle of Concern, Glenn Koenen, who helped us understand the increasing need in the area for food assistance.

The CROP walk was October 30th at Tower Grove Park. CROP Hunger Walks are community-wide events sponsored by Church World Service and organized by local congregations, raising funds and awareness to combat hunger at home and around the world. Thanks to our congregation's walkers and "Spirit Walkers"—those committed to raising funds but unable to walk—the FDP Walkers raised \$625.

In conjunction with the CROP walk, we held a Food Stamp Challenge, asking the congregation to see if their families could survive on a food stamp budget for a week. The money that was not spent on food that week would be donated to the CROP walk or other hunger-advocate organization.

Our annual Christmas Giving Tree event was launched with a full Thanksgiving dinner on November 13th in the Gathering Space. This year, we plan to provide Christmas joy to five families provided by SSDN and five families from Lydia's House. Each family will also be given a Target and Schnucks gift card. Many thanks to all who took "ornaments" and gave so generously from the heart. You are making Christmas so much brighter for the sponsored families.

A new activity this year is helping sell handmade Lucinda pins for Lydia's House during their Gingerbread House Event at Plaza Frontenac. The event will be held from November 20th through December 3rd. We will be acting as ambassadors for Lydia's House by interacting with folks while making sales, promoting the mission of Lydia's House, which is to provide housing and support for women and their children as they transition from a domestic violence situation to independent living.

From Endowment & Finance Committees. . .

Since 1992 Faith Des Peres has been blessed with the benefit of an Endowment Fund that has provided support to the annual operating budget in varying degrees. With a growing awareness that this resource will not last indefinitely and the reality of greater fluctuations in the fund's market value, an objective of the Endowment and Finance committees and Session is to reduce the church's reliance on the Endowment as a source of revenue for operations.

On the latter front there is good news: No draws from the Endowment were needed in October or November. At the same time, fluctuations in the market continue to take a toll on the fund. As each of us is keenly aware, we have no control over the state of the market. What we can manage is our own expenses, and to a lesser degree our revenues.

Since the beginning of this fiscal year (July 1) FDP's cost control measures have resulted in monthly savings of over \$500. Annual pledge payments through the first quarter (Sept. 30) were on track at just over 25% of the annual projection, with other contributions and revenue sources at or above the prior year. In addition, FDP continues to benefit from members' use of their Schnuck's E-Script cards at a quarterly average of about \$175.

The Finance & Endowment committees continue to look for and plan for ways to improve the church's financial state, and appreciate support from members in several ways:

- Continue to stay current with pledge payments.
- Use your E-Script card each time you are shopping at Schnuck's, or sign up for a card if you don't have it. (Talk to a member of Finance for more information.)
- Consider gifts to the Endowment Fund in honor of special occasions (births, graduations, other achievements) or memorial gifts.

As we move into the second half of this fiscal year, the Endowment and Finance committees will be looking at other ways to enhance the church's financial status, including programs for planned giving and estate planning designed to support the ongoing needs of Faith Des Peres and its members. Please talk with a member of the Finance or Endowment committees if you have questions or ideas for consideration.

Happy Anniversary!

Jim & Joanna Gerst (Dec. 5)
Bob & Sharon Wyman (Dec. 5)
Joe & Jan Morris (Dec. 8)
Brad & Mary Sinclair (Jan. 28)
Jim & Terry Baker (Jan. 30)

Happy Birthday!

Grace Klein (Dec. 1)
Helen Onken (Dec. 5)
Sako O'Rourke (Dec. 6)
Bill Downs (Dec. 7)
Dom Fenoglio (Dec. 11)
Jim Gerst (Dec. 15)
John Onken (Dec. 17)
Sean O'Rourke (Dec. 18)
Annie Epling (Dec. 22)
Susan Neunreiter (Dec. 22)
Barb Abbett (Dec. 24)
Lennon Benben (Dec. 27)
Sarah Cleeland (Dec. 27)
Will Ridley (Dec. 28)
Dianne Modrell (Dec. 28)
Becky McClure (Jan. 4)
Cynthia Williams (Jan. 8)
Dave Newcomb (Jan. 12)
Simonne Klein (Jan. 15)
Lisa Becker (Jan. 18)
Jean Neunreiter (Jan. 20)
Aleta Klein (Jan. 21)
Eric Ludlow (Jan. 23)
Whitney Payne (Jan. 24)
Scott McClure (Jan. 25)
Erica Abbett (Jan. 30)
Joe Morris (Jan. 31)
Jeannie Downs (Feb. 1)
Julia Epling (Feb. 10)
Dorcas Case (Feb. 22)
Ron Scott (Feb. 27)



**Faith Des Peres
Presbyterian Church (USA)**

11155 Clayton Road
Frontenac, MO 63131-2548
314.432.8029

*Visit us on the Web at:
www.faithdesperes.org*

**Mission & Ministry
Events**

Upcoming events in early
2012—mark your calendars!

January 21st

Food Packing at Food Outreach

February 5th

“Souper” Bowl of Caring

February 10th

Blanket night

FDP Hosts Regional PWs

On November 18, the St. Louis Midwest/Metro PW group held its regional meeting at Faith Des Peres. Presbyterian women came from all four corners of the region—Chesterfield, Mehlville and, of course, Kirkwood and Webster Groves.

The purpose of the gathering was to invigorate the organization and spawn new ideas. After a brief worship service, the women got down to business. Working in small brainstorming groups, they were asked to describe their most successful programs over the past two years. In addition, group leaders were looking for ideas to increase our membership.

To keep things simple, attendees brought a brown bag lunch. FDP provided a continental breakfast, desserts and coffee. The women were also asked to bring a “slightly used” handbag filled with toiletry items for Lydia’s House, which provides transitional housing for women and children in need.

While the results have yet to be tallied, many new friendships were made and fresh ideas created.