

**College Place  
Presbyterian  
Church**

**Special points  
of interest:**

- Christmas Eve Services are at 5pm and 7 pm. Invite your Friends and neighbors as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.
- Check out upcoming Adult Christian Education Classes that will begin in Jan. (pg. 5)
- The Scholarship Fundraiser and Annual Meeting is Jan. 30th. (pg. 5)
- Women's Retreat - Feb. 25-27 (pg. 5)

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## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO ALL MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF CPPC!

It is Sunday evening, December 12<sup>th</sup>, as I try to get this newsletter article written before we leave for Seattle tomorrow. I have had so much encouragement and support from all of you that I don't adequately know how to express our appreciation. We feel your love and prayers on a daily basis. I read the article in the Union Bulletin about Jim Andrews that appeared in the December 12<sup>th</sup> front page. He will be in Seattle about the same time that we will be there and is scheduled for a transplant on January 4<sup>th</sup>, a day before mine. It sounds like he won't have anyone to be with him for the procedures, so I am going to try and get in touch with him and his wife and see if we can help provide some support for him. I have a feeling that God may use us in some way to help provide the support he will need in the coming days. As I compare my situation with his, I am even more thankful for God's care and strength that comes from all of you. Your deep devotion and concern for all our family makes this great burden seem light.

Jesus spoke of that reality when he invited us to "Draw near, all you who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you everything you need for life and salvation. Allow yourselves to be yoked together with me and systematically learn from me, for I am your nearest friend and my heart yearns for your well-being. For my yoke will fit you perfectly and you will find rest and peace for your soul; working side by side, the great burdens of life will seem light and bearable." We are embarking on the greatest challenge and adventure of our lives. Being a great student of World War II, I feel like one of the troops in the landing crafts on D-Day or one of the islands of the South Pacific. Everyone on board knew that they would not all survive or return to home and family. I know the statistics of survivability and healing. I know that there are great risks, yet the potential of great results leads us forward. Having played some very amateur hockey, I am shooting for a Hat Trick. That is when you score three goals in the same game and everyone in the arena throws their hat on the ice and the goal scorer gets to keep all of them, or give them away. The three goals I am praying for are: 1). The healing of my myloe-displastic syndrome, which would probably turn into leukemia within a couple of years; 2). A new immune system from our daughter Hanna, via the stem-cell transplant, that would; 3) Be strong enough to send out "T" cells that would seek out and destroy any cancer cells floating around in my body and make me cancer-free.

I know it's a lot to ask for, but Jesus challenged his followers to be bold and persistent in prayer. I would ask you to specifically pray for the same things as we undergo this stem-cell transplant. I never scored a Hat Trick in my few years of playing recreational hockey. In fact, most of the goals I ever scored were deflections of the shots of other players that I would redirect into the goal past the goalie. I visualize Jesus shooting the puck and all I need to do is put my self in front of the goal and redirect the puck into the net. I remember scoring the winning goal in the league championship match one year and I pray that we'll have a medical Hat Trick to celebrate when I return in the coming months.

Speaking of celebration, I want to thank all of you who have made the first two Sundays of this month a cause of rejoicing as we strive to eliminate our General Fund deficit for 2010. We have already received over \$32,000 in General Fund income so far this month. We rejoice in God's provision through your faithfulness and thank you in advance for your help in finishing the year on a strong financial note. Please continue to remember this need as you finalize your year end giving commitments. As usual, we will dedicate all of our Christmas Eve Offering to supporting families in need. Thank you for all your love and partnership in making God's work possible in this congregation.

~Robin

## A Note from Skip

"... and he will be called Immanuel" (Matt. 1:23; Isa 7:14; 8:8, 10). Immanuel, God with us! It is the very heart of the Christmas story. It's not only that God becomes one of us it's in the way it is done. He comes to us through a humble virgin by lowly means, allows Him self to be completely vulnerable in the form of an infant, and turns the established order upside down revealing the nature of His love and how His Kingdom here on earth is ordered.

It is called incarnation, this reality that God becomes one of us. It's a concept that has guided my understanding of ministry for the past 30 plus years. It's considered earning the right to be heard. There is a Native American saying that says something to the effect, "Don't criticize me until you have walked a mile in my moccasins." Just as Christ did such with and for us He encourages us to do the same in sharing the Good News of His Kingdom with others.

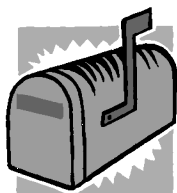
In reflecting upon this the past few weeks I have been mindful of how this is being lived out by recipients of the Ed Freepons Scholarship. The list has grown so long there isn't space here to mention all of them. Among the list are those who have chosen to "earn the right to be heard" while serving cross-culturally. Included among these are two who recently walked away from secular positions to serve in ministry to the poor. Connor Lucas-Roberts, formerly a Marine Corps officer now serves the people of Haiti. Chris Erickson, recently of Tourism Walla Walla, is now working with the people of Guatemala. The following excerpt from Chris's most recent letter embodies what incarnational ministry is all about:

*"Thank you for all your prayers and well wishes while I am here in Guatemala. The last month has been interesting to say the least; somewhat uneventful, although very educational, and I have been thankful to be very patient and understanding about the things that I cannot control. I like to have control. I talk often with the missionary here about the fact that we want to have control and do things our way, and have a tough time putting things in God's hands. At least the worse I get at being in control the better I get at being open to seeing the lessons around me and finding the good in situations I don't find to be the most appealing.*

*Being able to not just see but search out the good in these situations is not my usual instinct. I'm glad of this change in me, and am thankful that I'm able to be less of a pessimist (at least in certain situations) and have a decent attitude about it. I joked to the missionary that when all is said and done that if the most of my problems is that I was made to feel uncomfortable by the inconvenience of not feeling completely secure, or at a lack of knowledge, or power, or to have things my way, that I'm doing pretty well. Especially when I'm always taken care of sooner or later and I also seem to pick up a sense of understanding along the way."*

Merry Christmas to you all! And, May God provide special blessing for Chris, Connor, and all from among our family who are away from home serving the Kingdom ushered in by the cry of a tiny baby who is called... Immanuel.

~Warmly, Skip

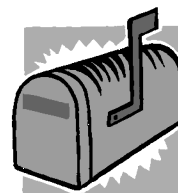


### Mailing address for Robin & Kriss Peterson

10120 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NW Seattle, WA 98177

Robin's blog: [www.pastorpeterson.blogspot.com](http://www.pastorpeterson.blogspot.com)

There are copies of the blog in the foyer if you do not have access to a computer.



### A Note from a Family who we were able to help because of the Christmas Eve offering

It is with a humble and grateful heart that my family and I thank you for the generous gift. The last couple of years have been difficult. Most recently my children's Father lost his job and with it the medical insurance for our children. Adding them to my insurance meant more money being taken out of my paycheck, which already doesn't seem like enough.

As I wrestled with God over this latest issue, I was lead to my Bible and into the book of Psalm 23:1 The Lord is my shepherd. I have everything I need. Once I allowed God to be my shepherd a great peace came over me. It was only a few days after when Robin called and said the church would like to help. I will never be able to put into words what this has done for us. Not only God cares for us, but, also CPPC. So it is with heartfelt thanks, that I thank the CPPC congregation and Staff for their gift, and pray that someday I may be able to pay it forward.

Sincerely, ~A Very Grateful Family



# Youth Ministry Report

## Parenting Jesus?!?!

I love the stories of Jesus' early years. Maybe its because I am a youth minister, or maybe its because I am perpetually a kid at heart, but for some reason, I am drawn to the few glimpses of Jesus when he was younger. This year, my heart and mind have been focused on what it must have been like to be Jesus' parents. What was it like to hold the Christ Child who was also your child? The Bible is clear that God had let both Mary and Joseph in on the story of what He was doing, but would that just make it all the more difficult to be Jesus' earthly parents.

Carson is in this stage where his curiosity is driving me nuts. I know that he is just trying to learn and discover, and be a part of what his mom and dad are doing, but... But its impossible to keep up with him, and I am afraid his curiosity is going to get him hurt. For example, we just got a new stove (our old one kept loosing more and more "working" features"), and Carson in his curiosity wants to figure out everything he can about this new "thing" in his house. He wants to know what it feels like. He wants to know what it sounds like when he hits it with his toys. He wants to know what it taste like when he licks it. What is scarier is that once he saw me open it to check on some biscuits, I could see in his eyes that he wanted to put the inside of the oven through all of these "tests" as well.

His curiosity is both awe inspiring and completely terrifying. He wants to know, understand, test, and play with everything. I can already tell that he is a hands on learner, and that he is going to be one of those boys who takes everything apart in order to put it back together. It is awesome to sit back and watch as he learns, and to see that overwhelming joy that lights up his face when he figures out something new. But at the same time, His curiosity terrifies me, because there are just some things that a one year old should not be playing with or even touching (like the inside of the new oven).

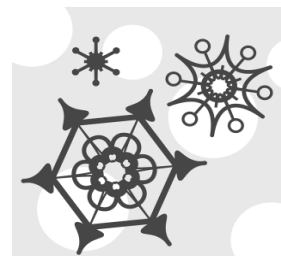
As a parent, I find myself struggling to know what to do. I want my son to be safe, and to stay away from things that could seriously hurt him, but at the same time I don't want to do anything to stifle his curiosity.

What is absolutely amazing to me about Jesus is that His parents had to deal with all the same things. Mary and Joseph had to figure out how to teach the one whose love is an all consuming fire not to play with or get to close to the fire. They had to teach the giver of life, how to live in this life. What a beautifully ridiculous reality we celebrate at this time of year. Thank God it's TRUE!!!

Merry Christmas

~Doug

P.S. I will be preaching on Jesus' Early life Dec. 24, 26, Jan. 2, & 9



## Important Youth Ministry Dates

Sr. High Bi-

ble Study 8-9pm:

- Jan. 3, 17, & 31st

No Sr. High Youth Group

- Dec. 26th

No Sr. High or Mid High Sunday School

- Dec. 26th
- Jan. 2nd

# Kids Club!

## A Note From Cheryl

*"Christmas would still be Christmas without gifts, but it can't be Christmas without Jesus!"* -Alexander (CPPC 3<sup>rd</sup> Grader)

A couple Sundays ago, we read the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. Before we read the story we talked about how Christmas is just right around the corner, and of COURSE everyone is just so excited to get their gifts on Christmas morning. I am kind of like a kid that way too! I mean, who doesn't like getting gifts? For me, the best part of receiving a gift is it shows that someone is thinking of me.

So going from there, how awesome is this?! In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:7 says that God gave each of us a gift (or a talent). We were that special, that God created each of us uniquely, giving us each a special gift. We are wonderfully made. I'm always in awe that God loves me that much. Of course, we must not forget the greatest gift of all he gave to all of us, his only begotten Son, **Jesus**.

Then put both of those passages together. God gave us each a special gift (always reminds me of the body of Christ, we all have a different job), so what are we going to do with our gift? Are we going to be like the two faithful servants and use our gift wisely? Or go and dig "a hole in the ground", hiding our gift, ignoring the talent God gave us so that we could bring him glory.

So what gift has God given to you? My hope is that this season I will remember and be thankful for the many gifts God has given me.

Love to you all, and I hope you have a wonderful Christmas!

Love in Him,

Cheryl

[Cheryl\\_thonney@hotmail.com](mailto:Cheryl_thonney@hotmail.com) (509)520-9601

This coming week we will be getting together to decorate gingerbread houses. My dear mom and Aunt Barb came over and helped make up 23 gingerbread houses. I am so excited to decorate them with the children!



## Parents Please Note!!!

**There is NO Kid's Club  
for these two Sundays:  
December 26<sup>th</sup>  
January 2<sup>nd</sup>**



With lots of help and support from many of the parents, we had a wonderful Christmas Program this last weekend. It was the best way to welcome the season.

\* Please have your children join you in the main worship services for these two weeks. Doug will be including a message for the kids in the sermons.

## In Robin's Absence

I believe that the greatest Ministry that Robin has in the Walla Walla Valley is a ministry of Presence. For the nine years I have been working at CPPC, and the 15 years that Robin has been my Pastor, the one thing that stands out above the rest is that every time you turn your head, Robin is there. I rarely meet someone that doesn't already know Robin, and on a daily basis someone who doesn't even go to our church asks me how Robin is doing. Robin's ministry of Presence is profoundly powerful in our community, and over the next four months is going to be greatly missed as he and Kriss migrate to Seattle for his stem-cell transplant.

I believe that Robin's ministry of presence over the past 32 years is the example that Christ has given our community in order to empower us to continue to strive on in the Name of Christ in Robin's absence. I know and hear that many in our community are feeling a sense of uncertainty and unease in not knowing exactly what lies ahead. My encouragement for all of us would be to imitate Robin as he has so faithfully imitated Christ. I can not tell you exactly what is going to happen in these next few months. I don't know any better than anyone else how well Robin's transplant is going to go. But I do know that one of the reasons we love Robin so much is that in the uncertain times of life, we always know that Robin would be right there, ready to help in any way he could. If we as a congregation and a community all make a commitment to be there for one another in Robin's absence, we will discover a new strength and a deeper relationship with Christ and with each other.

On a more practical side, please also know that the church staff and the elders have all made that commitment to each you. If you have any needs, prayer requests, or questions, please do not hesitate to contact any of us directly or the church office. Skip is committed to taking on many of the pastoral counseling and visitation roles that Robin typically handles, and I will be helping with the generally "running" of the church. On Sunday mornings, Skip and I will be leading the worship services, and along with some members of the congregation will be presenting the sermons. In the immediate future, I will be doing a four sermon series on the early life of Jesus, which will begin on Christmas Eve and will continue through Jan. 9th.

~In Christ, Doug

Doug - 301-1646

Skip - 386-2745

Church - 529-3210

## January Adult Christian Education Classes

**Beginning Tuesday, January 4, 2011** - Paul for Everyone - 2 Corinthians an 11 week study 7PM

- *"Paul's 2nd letter to Corinth is very different from the first one. Something terrible had happened, and we feel his pain from the very opening lines. In this letter he goes down deeper into sorrow and hurt, and what to do about it, than he does anywhere else, and he emerges with a deeper, clearer vision of what it meant that Jesus himself suffered for and with us and rose again in triumph. The letter itself comes through the tragedy and out into the sunlight, and has a lot to teach us as we make that journey from time to time ourselves."* Tom Wright

**Beginning Sunday, January 9, 2011** A Christian Life in Balance a 6 week course 11:00 to noon

- *Jesus asks us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and then to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:30-31 paraphrased). This six week course explores the unique balance between the physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and relational aspects of the Christian life. The interactive format will provide you an opportunity to examine how wholeness can lead to holiness.*

**Continuing Tuesday, January 4, 2011** – Timothy Study with James Veatch

## Mark Your Calendars



**Annual Scholarship  
Baked Potato Dinner,  
Auction & CPPC Annual  
Meeting**

**January 30, 2011**

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS



**ANNUAL  
WOMEN'S  
RETREAT  
FEB. 25-27<sup>TH</sup>**

# College Place 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church

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Children & Family Ministry: Cheryl Thonney Music Ministry: Dr Evelyn Mariani & Jeffrey Townsend

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To notify us of an address change, or for more information about our church, please call our office at 509-529-3210

## CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

5:00 & 7:00 PM

Come and join us on Christmas Eve as we  
celebrate the birth of our Savior together.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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*December*