

THE WAVE



VOLUME 10, ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2012

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The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem

Our December Sunday morning message themes move in concert with the wonderful little book *The Journey* written by **Adam Hamilton**. Using historical information, archaeological data, and a personal look at some of the stories surrounding the birth, the most amazing moment in history will become more real and heart-felt as you walk along this road. Copies of the book are available for purchase Sunday mornings.

Christmas Musical to be Offered December 16

The story of faith is often reflected as a journey from darkness to light. The Bible speaks of Israel living in bondage and darkness, awaiting the light of the promised Messiah. His coming is punctuated by light: a bright angelic host proclaiming the news to shepherds; a shining star inviting Magi from afar to the young Christ-child. Our Traditional Choir brings us **Behold the Star!**, a blend of original and familiar carols on **Sunday, December 16 at 9:30 and 11:00.**

The children of C.I.A. will offer *Joy to the World* on the bells that same morning.

Church Wide Serve Day, December 16

In conjunction with the weekend's Mission Blitz, **December 16th Serve Day work teams** will be sent to **The Jacksonville Zoo, St Francis House, First Coast Homeless Pets, Hartfelt Ministries** home projects and also put to work building Care packages. Serve Day commences at **2:00pm** on the 16th. Sign up Sunday morning December 2 or 9!

Christmas Eve



We'll worship at **4:00, 5:30 and 7:00pm** on Christmas Eve with candlelight at each hour. The nursery will be available.

Upcoming Messages

Begin The Journey message series

December 2 **On Saying Yes... Mary's Story** (Luke 1:26-38)

December 9 **Joseph or Herod... Who Will You Choose to Be?** (Matthew 1:18-24)

December 16 **Behold The Star - A Christmas Journey to the Light of Christ** (A Christmas musical)

December 23 **Oddly Blessed** (Luke 1:42-45)

December 24 **An Unwanted Journey** (Luke 2:1-7)

December 30 **Birthing Grace** (Colossians 3:12-17)

OUR MISSION:

Making fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.



PONTE VEDRA
United Methodist Church

Missions Corner

Operation Christmas Child



Many thanks to you who prepared shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child. **65 boxes** have gone out from our church to children all over the world. Thanks too to **Rita and Andy Andreu** for receiving and transporting the boxes.

The Giving Tree

Last year's **Giving Tree** was popular with both our generous church family and with those served by B.E.A.M. (Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry). To participate, take a Publix gift card from The Giving Tree in the sanctuary and have Publix "charge it up" in an amount of \$15, \$20 or \$25. Place it in the offering plate the following Sunday and we will get the cards to BEAM where staffers will distribute them to those in need of diapers, formula and food items not available in the BEAM pantry.

If you forget to get a card from the tree and you'd like to participate, any Publix or other grocery store will sell you a card that you can give to BEAM through the church.

(Please don't put more than \$25 on a single card; a gift of multiple cards is preferred.)

Change for Cuba

Over \$100 worth of vitamins were successfully delivered to La Sierra in November.

George and Loree Reed will travel back to Cuba in February with VBS supplies, clothes, medicine and cell phones. If you have an old GSM compatible phone (like an iPhone) or a laptop computer to donate please let them know.



“Teaching Moment”

by Pastor Jimmy Jones, Teaching Pastor



Pastor Jimmy (jimmy.jones@pv-umc.org) answers your questions in this column so feel free to call the office, ask in person, or email him with your Bible questions.

Question: Why do we celebrate the birth of Jesus on December 25th?

Answer: Believe it or not, for the first three centuries of Christianity, the birth of Jesus wasn't even celebrated. If recognized at all, Christ's birth was lumped together with the celebration of Epiphany on January 6th. The first official Christmas in the church did not occur until December 25, 336 AD when Roman Emperor Constantine declared the celebration to recognize the birth of Christ. Still, why was December 25th chosen? Of course, the scriptures are silent about the exact date of Jesus' birth. December 25th was chosen for a couple reasons. First, the date already hosted two other popular festivals. One Roman festival was called the “birth of the unconquered sun”. Another festival recognized the birth of Mithras, the Iranian “Sun of Righteousness” whose worship was popular among Roman soldiers. Second, the winter solstice, another celebration of the sun, was (of course) held on December 21st. Since many pagans (non-Christians) were already celebrating various “Sun” related deities (gods) on December 21 and 25th, these early Christians believed that December 25th was an opportune time to celebrate the Son of God, who created the sun, the earth and the heavens.



Our Hearts Go Out To ...

...George Garcia at the loss of his wife Sissy on November 21. You and your family are in our prayers, George.

A Word from John Wesley, founder of Methodism

It's good to be working to do God's will. The founder of Methodism, John Wesley wrote, To continual watchfulness and prayer ought to be added continual employment. For grace fills a vacuum as well as nature, and the devil fills whatever God does not fill.

– Jackson, XI, 439.

Financial Status

General Fund Recap October 2012

Tithes & Offerings	\$ 60,662
Less Expenses	\$ 53,991
October Income/(Deficit)	\$ 6,671
YTD Income/(Deficit)	\$ (23,406)

November 2012 Giving & Attendance

Date	9:30 Attendance	11:00 Attendance	6:30 Attendance	General Fund Giving	Missions Giving	Designated Giving
11/4	138	129	45	\$12,984	\$356	\$0
11/11	103	129	37	\$10,878	\$558	\$0
11/18	125	188	37	\$21,171	\$485	\$100
11/25	145	132	95	\$9,057	\$134	\$0

Designated Totals

Mission Funds	\$6,708
Enhancement Fund	\$1,672
Memorials	\$4,460
Building Fund	\$247,941
General Fund Needed Weekly 2012	\$ 12,824

Owed on Church Facility: \$2,212,253

Owed on Parsonage: \$121,843

Money Matters

British novelist, academic, and lay theologian C.S. Lewis wrote,

The only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. If our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc. is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditure excludes them.

– C. S. Lewis [Mere Christianity, p. 82]

Up to Date on Your Giving?

As of this writing our year to date deficit is **\$23,406**. How's your giving been in 2012? Your year-end gift is most welcome; it will help us meet our present obligations.

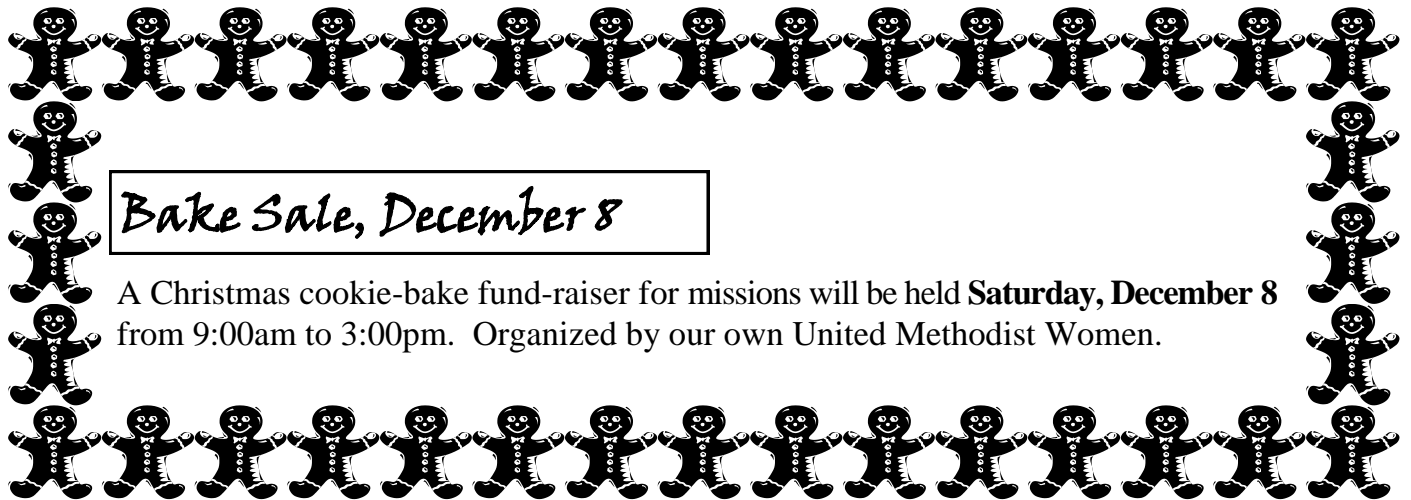
Estimate of Giving for 2013

Our thanks to those of you who have already completed your *Estimate of Giving* card for 2013. It is so helpful for planning purposes to know what people think they'll give. There are **blank cards** on the welcome table in the foyer if you wish to complete one. Or simply email our accountant **Jim Larsen** (jim.larsen@pv-umc.org) with the amount you intend to give in the new year.

Volunteer Opportunities

Mark your calendar! The next PVUMC **blood drive** is **Sunday, January 13** from 9:00am - 12:30pm. You can beat the rush and get the best time for you now by going to thebloodalliance.com. Keep in mind you must be at least 17 and not have been to some countries in the past year. Sign up on-line and get the best time that fits your schedule. Just go to www.igiveblood.com. Click on *Give Blood* then choose *Make an Appointment*. Choose *Make an Appointment* and enter 7931 in the zip or fund code box and select our church name. **Eleanor Snite**, eleanor.snite@pvumc.org, can give you more information.

There are plenty of opportunities to provide **Sunday morning snacks** in the month of December. Sign up in the foyer on the wall next to the nursery. Small groups or families or by yourself you can make food to serve or purchase it from grocery store. Thank you to all who have participated.



Bake Sale, December 8

A Christmas cookie-bake fund-raiser for missions will be held **Saturday, December 8** from 9:00am to 3:00pm. Organized by our own United Methodist Women.

Almighty God,

I dream of a church...

where people come to faith every Sunday;
where testimony to God's miraculous activity is a common occurrence.

I dream of a church...

where worship attracts heaven's attention and prayers draw heaven down to earth;
where teaching empowers, instructs and revives.

I dream of a church...

where faith is contagious, love is infectious and power transferable;
where God is at home with us and we are at home with God;

where thousands come to receive, and hundreds are sent out to serve, and millions are blessed.

I dream of a church...that redefines church.

I dream of a church...the way God intended it to be.

I dream we are that church. Amen

United Methodist Women

In addition to our families and friends, we are very thankful for our church, Ponte Vedra UMC. We are grateful for the staff who excel at helping us reach our goals and we are blessed with the leadership of Pastor Jeff and Pastor Jimmy. We, United Methodist Women, offer a heartfelt thank you to all of you!

Our final project for 2012 is our **3rd Annual Christmas Bake Sale** on **Saturday, December 8**, from 9:00am to 3:00pm. We appreciate your donation of any type baked goods which you can bring to the church on Friday, December 7 from 10:00am to 3:00pm or Saturday, the morning of the sale. This sale is an opportunity to invite friends and neighbors to visit our church.

Staff Gift

Our pastor, staff and musicians have served us well this year. If you'd like to bless them with a monetary gift at Christmastime designate your gift "**Staff gift**" and turn it in by Tuesday, December 18 to the office or through the weekly offering.

Welcome PVUMC New Members

On October 14 we received new members **Scott & Mary Sekeres** (baptizing their son **Luke** the same morning), **Bill & Jan Sekeres** and **Jenny Dorsey**. We also welcomed into our fellowship **The Reverend Steven Dorsey**, retired member of the West Virginia annual conference. On October 21 we received into membership **Gene & Irene Cook**, **Wayne & Barbara Ellis**, **Mark & Ping Kuca**, **Avery & Sonja Reed** and **Bob & Eve Geis**. We are delighted to be serving Christ together with you!

Financial Peace University

The new nine week **Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University** classes will begin **Sunday, January 20** and run through Sunday, March 17, 2013. Classes will be from 2:00pm until 3:30pm. Please contact **Susan Bowler** (susan.bowler@pv-umc.org) in the church office, 280-5141 to register for this nine week class that could change your financial life.



Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.
Luke 2:14

Advent Altar Frontals

Our communion table will have a beautiful, new altar frontal for each of the Sundays of Advent beginning December 2 and one for Christmas Eve. The frontals have been designed by **Mary Neely Clendeninn** and lovingly created by the **Ponte Vedra UMC Quilters**. The quilters, led by **Marilyn Elston**, also create our baptismal quilts, quilts for the Children's Home, and prayer shawls. Each of these altar frontals focuses on a specific theme for each Sunday; Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Please come early each Sunday so you can see the detail in these works of art. All are welcome to join this quilt ministry. Call Marilyn at 223-9477.

The Way of Forgiveness

This is an experience to learn to give and receive forgiveness. This is not an informational class but a transformational event. This training in spiritual formation explores Christ's call to live a forgiven and forgiving life. The *Way of Forgiveness* focuses on releasing shame, guilt and moving toward forgiveness and reconciliation. There are nine weekly sessions. Each session is two hours in length. The Way of Forgiveness is to begin mid January. The day and time of gatherings is to be determined by those interested in participating. Intrigued? Call **Donna Bowen**, 232-8596.



Ponte Vedra UMC Mission Trip to The Florida United Methodist Children's Home

PVUMC will be visiting the **Florida Methodist Children's Home** March 8-10. We will be preparing the campus for their annual open house event. We have room for five women and six men to attend. The cost is \$50 which includes all meals and housing. The best part is the home is two hours from Ponte Vedra Beach and you do not need a passport. Please email **George Garcia**, george.garcia@pv-umc.org.

Receive Our Weekly Email



Interested in getting the latest on PVUMC happenings? Sign up at pv-umc.org or via the Welcome Card for **the weekly email**. (You may easily unsubscribe anytime.)



Children's Corner

On A Musical Note

Praise Choir

Tuesdays 6:30-7:30pm

C.I.A. Children In Action

Wednesdays 6:00-7:30pm

Traditional Choir

Thursdays 7:00-8:30pm

C.I.A. (Children In Action) Briefs

Great job C.I.A. for singing so beautifully at the Hanging of the Greens! You did an amazing job welcoming in the Christmas season. And a big thanks to all of the wonderful adult and youth volunteers who helped make our Advent Festival a great event for all!

C.I.A. did a tremendous job donating books to help build the classroom libraries for S. Paul School of Excellence in Lincolnville. We had over 50 books to help this first year charter school.

C.I.A. will be playing the bells Sunday, December 16 at both services! A big thanks to **Jill Bennett** for teaching the children the song on the hand bells.

Wednesday, December 12 will be our last C.I.A. this year. We will be ending with a special night of caroling, hayride style! C.I.A. will resume on January 9.

Mark Your Calendars

Saturday, December 15 is the **Holly Jolly Kids Christmas Extravaganza** from 8:30am - 12:30pm. A kids only event! Children will begin the morning with a waffle breakfast and a visit from Santa, followed by crafts, games and a popcorn Christmas show finale. This event is provided by the PVUMC youth group.

On a Personal Note...

At the start of every Christmas season, I vow that I am going to curtail the stress and spend more time with my family truly enjoying the meaning of Christmas. Goals are good, even if at the end of the season I realize the stress was still present and I didn't meet my own personal expectations. This year, let me share a few ideas for Christmas Family Devotionals I have found that will help us stay connected to what Christmas is all about. Merry Christmas everyone!

Family Devotional Advent Bags: Each bag contains a scripture and short thought along with a tiny gift/candy for the children. Open one bag a day throughout the month. You could also make twelve days of Christmas devotional bags.

Make a Nativity Scene: Be creative and make one out of playdoh or toilet paper rolls. For good ideas visit, <http://biblekidsfunzone.com/themes/adnativity1.html>.

Good Will Family Project: Find someone or a local charity with a genuine need. Involve your whole family and see how happy you can make someone this Christmas.

Give a Surprise Gift of Service to Each Member of Your Family: Jesus taught us that it is "more blessed to give than to receive" Acts 20:35. The idea of giving an unexpected gift of service to members of your family is to demonstrate Christ-like love and service. You might consider giving a back rub to your spouse, making your siblings bed, or cleaning out a closet for your mother. Make it personal and meaningful and watch the blessings multiply.

Attend a Live Nativity in your community.

Read the Christmas Story: Luke 1:5-56 through 2:1-20.



Round Of Applause



- 👍 For Ben Hancock and Tiffany Beavers, who lead our youth Sunday school last month
- 👍 For all our students who helped out with the Children's Advent Crafting event
- 👍 Emily Fratterelle, Emma Bennett, Hallie Murta, and Cayleigh Smith on winning our 2nd Annual bake-in!

Upcoming Events

Looking for a way to worship with your teens, or a worship time that is interactive and different? Come check our *Connections!* Every Sunday night @ 6:30pm. We explore worship in a conversational, connectional way. December 2 we will experience Advent in prayer stations, December 9 we will deal with handling our baggage, and on December 16 we will meet for the last time in 2012 for a study on incarnation. We'd love to see you there!

Mission Blitz 2012 Friday, December 14-Sunday, December 16. We will be making a difference, here in our own community! This is an event for all ages, and we hope everyone participates. For the youth, there is an added overnight element! Friday evening will be a community wide children's party, where parents can drop off their children and go shopping for Christmas treasures. Saturday will be spent working on schools and homes in St Augustine, and Sunday will be spread out across Jacksonville with a church wide serve day! We will share a meal together every evening, and worship too! Keep your eye out for more information!

OUR SUMMER 2013 MISSION TRIPS HAVE BEEN CHOSEN!

The Senior High group will travel to Queens in New York City June 22-29 and our Middle School group will go to Topsail Beach in North Carolina July 21-27. A non-refundable deposit of \$60 is required to save a spot on the trip, and space is limited. Deposits are due by January 13.

WII Wish You a Merry Christmas (Party) Saturday December 8. Come to the church at 12:30pm to participate in our annual youth group Christmas celebration! We will set up our wiis, play games, and have a white elephant exchange. If you want to participate in the exchange, bring a gift that costs **NO MORE THAN \$5**, wrapped and let the fun begin! The more creative, the better. In fact, some of our favorite gifts have been things that we had lying around the house!

SIGN UP TO PROVIDE DINNERS We need families and church members who are able to help out our youth ministry by providing our weekly dinners. Right now we have many dates in January open! More details are available from Kelly. Thanks in advance for your help!

A Note From Pastor Jeff.

At November's men's breakfast we were offered a chance to respond to a few questions as a way of getting to know each other. One of the questions was, "Tell us something we don't know about you." I shared that I was the number one seller of oranges & grapefruit in my high school band, two years running. And how at the time I didn't even *like* oranges or grapefruit! Perhaps I could have had a future in sales. (Then again, since self-deception seems symptomatic of the human condition, maybe not.)

Some might argue that, as a pastor, I'm already in sales. Doubtless some have tried to sell Jesus but I've not ever been able to bring myself to do that. I read the Bible and I never see Jesus trying to sell anyone on himself or on God the Father. Instead it seems to be about receiving the gift of a relationship with Someone who loves you. Jesus never badgered or twisted arms to get people to follow him; he invited them. And he was transparent about the cost of discipleship as well as the benefits. No hype; just honesty.

Christmas is touted as a season of gift giving, though the culture seems most interested in selling us stuff. Those you know who don't have a church home, why not offer them the gift of Jesus through the flesh-and-blood body of Christ that is the church? Invite them to a worship service this Advent season. Invite them to join you for one of our Christmas Eve services. And in your coming and going, don't forget to receive The Gift yourself!

Anticipating the gift of Emmanuel, God-with-us, once again,
Pastor Jeff



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Children's Minister	Jenn Smith
Nursery Coordinator	Kim Knopp
Admin. Assistant	Susan Bowler
Accountant	Jim Larsen
Music Contemporary	Scott Tinsley
Music Traditional	Elisabeth Crumrine
Custodian	Sheila Epperson

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