

FREEDOM PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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THE HERALD

Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church
Founded 1827



December, 2007



“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth”. (John 1:14)

Dear Friends,

I suspect that by the time you are reading this there will be turkey leftovers and your thoughts will have started to turn towards Christmas. When you are reading this, I will be with ten Presbyterian ministers and Frank Pepe in Nicaragua, also with my thoughts turned towards Christmas. The organization facilitating the trip is called Bridges to Community, and we will be building one or two homes for a needy family(s) in the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. We will also be doing an advent study on incarnational theology, the word made flesh.

The powerful claim of Christmas really is that God entered human form and life to be with us, sharing our joys and struggles. That God’s love is not far removed or abstract, but real and present in our lives. Incarnational theology challenges Christians to think about the word becoming flesh in our lives and world. It is not enough to love God, but we must love and be present with our neighbors.

In truth, I’m not sure how I will react and what I will learn from this experience. I do expect it to be powerful and important. Will I become the word made flesh to a family in need? Will they become the word to me, or perhaps, as I suspect, will it be a combination of both?

I look forward to sharing the experience with you upon my return. In the meantime, maybe we can all enter this Advent season in wonder, not knowing what to expect and yet ready and anxious to be the word made flesh, and to have the word made flesh to us. Expect this Christmas season to be powerful and important in your life, and I bet it will not disappoint.

Vaya con Dios,

Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church

Staff:

Rev. Paul Lent, Pastor
Rev. Heather Finck, Parish Associate
Denise Bassen, Music Director
Cheryl Haight, Administrative Assistant
Christine Lent, Church School Director
Bonnie Biskup, Parish Nurse
Kevin Coyne, Sexton
Donna Logan & Em Jorgenson, Bell Choir Directors
Rich Roeser, Ruth Sheets, Website Directors
Jennifer Barry, Clerk of Session
Office Hours: 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Office Telephone: (845) 452-0684
Office Fax # (845) 452-7816
E-Mail Address: office@fppchurch.org
Website: fppchurch.org

FPPC ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOLIDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE – Sunday, December 23rd - 9:00AM and 11:00AM, Christmas Eve Family Service - 5:00PM, Candlelight Lessons and Carols – 7:00PM and 11:00PM, December 30th one service only 10:00AM

MITTEN TREE – WANTED: MITTENS, HATS, GLOVES, and SCARVES! We are collecting these items for Rural and Migrant Ministries and will deliver them the week of 12/9. The Mitten Tree will be in Fellowship Hall. Please help keep children warm by providing some of these items.

FREEDOM PLAINS CHURCH AT WORK AND WORSHIP - Visit our website at www.fppchurch.org. Click on “recent photos” to view the photo gallery to see recent pictures from the Thanksgiving Dinner and Service, the Rummage Sale, as well as pictures from past events.

HOMELESS SHELTER SIGN-UP – We are in need of volunteers for both cooks and hosts for the homeless shelter. Please sign up on the bulletin board. If you have any questions, please contact Laney Newton at 473-2209.

JANUARY HERALD – Please submit articles for the January Herald in writing or by email to the church office by Monday, December 17th. The email address is office@fppchurch.org. Thank you in advance.

FREEDOM PLAINS CHURCH ONLINE CALENDAR! – Please visit our website: www.fppchurch.org and click on “calendar” to view our current events. If you would like an event posted to the calendar, forms are located at the church office, or submit the event in writing by email with any pertinent details regarding the event to office@fppchurch.org.

CHURCH EMAIL LIST – We are in the process of updating our church email list. You can help us out by taking a moment of your time to send us an email listing each member of your family’s name and email address to office@fppchurch.org. Please include in your email if you are a member of a specific group, such as an Elder, Deacon, JHYF, SHYF, Bible study group, church school teacher, etc.



DCIC will be holding its next **Interfaith Story Circle on Thursday, December 6th at 7:00 PM** at Vassar Temple. The theme will be “*Green Stories: Reverence for the Earth*”. Vassar Temple is located in Poughkeepsie on the corner of Hooker Avenue and South Cherry Street. Park on the adjacent streets.

Save the date for the DCIC benefit Peace Story Concert on Sunday, January 13th at 2:00 PM. It will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Poughkeepsie, 67 South Randolph Avenue, Poughkeepsie.



AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE, DECEMBER 28TH
From 1:30 – 6:30 in Fellowship Hall

Please contact Jill Underwood at (845) 471-7098
To schedule a donation time slot.

*“Give the Gift of Life during the New Years Eve Holiday Weekend
and feel terrific”*

HEALTH MINISTRY

Dear Church Family,

Robert Frost wrote in “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” ... the woods are lovely, dark, and deep, but I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep.” The holiday season feels that way. It brings additional stress to already busy lives. Here are some ideas for getting through the holiday season with less stress:

- Keep your expectations reasonable. For example, instead of baking multiple cookie recipes, bake just one favorite. Bake the others at a less busy time.
- Do not overbook yourself into a state of exhaustion. Recruit other family members to help with tree trimming, card writing, cooking, etc.
- Remember no matter what our plans, the holiday does not automatically take away feelings of aloneness, sadness, frustration, anger, or fear.
- Be careful about resentments related to holidays past. Declare an amnesty with whichever family member or friend you are feeling past resentments.
- Don’t expect the holidays to be just as they were when you were a child. They NEVER are. YOU are not the same as when you were a child, and no one else in the family is either.
- Plan unstructured, low-cost fun holiday activities: Window shop to look at store decorations, look at peoples outdoor holiday decorations.
- If you drink, don’t overindulge. It could exacerbate depression and anxiety.
- Things don’t have to be perfect, enjoy the process.
- Keep meals simple, even Christmas dinner. Enjoy the company around the table.
- Eat smaller portions. Include fruits, vegetables, and lots of water.
- Give yourself a break; create time for yourself to do the things YOU love to do. Go for a walk in the cool air. It will invigorate you.

(Source: Robert A. Kutner, Psy D, Radford Health Online)

We Lift up in Prayer for Comfort and Healing – Bob Burrows’ Mom and Dad, Mary Moody’s sister Sarah, Jan Malone and family, Betty Budd, Hannah Fandl, Mitzi Loatman’s niece Lauren, Beverly & Morgan Stark, Richard Harney, Carolyn Peterson, Cleve & Doris Hill, Tom Hasenpflug, Sally Kemink’s sister Jeanie and sister-in-law, Michael Palooso, Elice Tobin, Edward Van Etten, Betty Wade, Bob Young, and Becky.

Christmas Blessings,
Bonnie Biskup
(Office hours – Sun. 10-11, 12-12:30)
By appointment 724-5631 or 452-0684



LIBRARY NOTES

Book Review

In his recently published book “Faith and Politics”, former senator John Danforth, an ordained Episcopal priest, focuses on the “difference between being a Christian in politics and having a Christian agenda for politics”. He believes that since we can never be sure that our way is God’s way, faith makes the reconciling work of politics possible. Taking issue with the Christian Right, he states with clarity how they have breached the separation of church and state and through divisive wedge issues have thrown the Republican Party off center. He also stresses that great need for more bipartisan problem solving in the Senate and gives examples of what happens when this succeeds. In his book, Danforth offers specific suggestions for those who want to improve American politics and concludes with thoughts on chapter 12 of Paul’s letter to the Romans – a suggested guide as we “search for common ground on which Americans might unite to address common challenges”. This book can be found in the “New Books” section of the library.

The following books are recent additions to our library:

- “The Language of God – A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief” by Francis Collins
- “There and Back – Robben Island 1964 – 1979” by Eddie Daniels
- “A Broken Heart Still Beats After Your Child Dies” by Anne McCracken
- “Skipping Christmas” by John Grisham
- “Traveling Mercies” by Anne Lamott
- “The Qur’an” (translation by A. Haleen)
- “Three Cups of Tea” by Greg Mortenson and David Relin
- “The Christopher Churchmouse Treasury” by Barbara Davoll
- “We Drink From Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People” by Gustavo Gutierrez
- “Palestine – Peace, Not Apartheid” by Jimmy Carter

In addition to the above, with the arrival of Advent, the library invites you to check out appropriate books for this beautiful season. You can find them in the “Advent” section on the counter in the library.

**Library Committee,
Liz Miglis, Pam Woodward, Kathy Newton, and Laney Newton**



SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL UPDATES:

- 12/9: 5th grade parent “open house”
- 12/16: Children’s Fellowship
- 12/23: Children’s participation in “Around The World” at 9:00 am Service
- 12/30: No Church School – New Year’s holiday weekend

Operation Christmas Child: Thank you to all of the children, families and classes that helped provide shoeboxes full of toys, school supplies and/or toiletries. 62 shoeboxes were collected and have been shipped to children around the world in poor neighborhoods, children’s hospitals, orphanages and refugee camps. Many of these children do not know who God or what Christmas is, or have never received a gift. Your thoughtfulness in sharing and caring will brighten a child’s world this Christmas season.

Christine Lent, Sunday School Director



CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD - FAMILY CELEBRATION

Come join us for a Christmas Around the World Family Celebration, which will start on December the 16th at 4PM. The Freedom Ringers and Quartet will play, there will be a live nativity scene, reading of the Christmas Story, carols from around the world, an international potluck supper, and crafts for children.

You are invited to wear costumes from another country where Christmas is celebrated. Perhaps you have made a recent trip or have attire from your family or another tradition.

At the close of the Christmas Story, families will be able to come forward to the crèche to present a flag from another country to the Christ child, symbolizing our oneness in Christ and our prayers for peace around the world. Flags will be provided or you can bring one of your own. Flags will remain in the sanctuary until the following Sunday, December 23rd, when the church school will continue the Around the World Celebration.

We will also be celebrating an old tradition at Freedom Plains of saying Merry Christmas in many different foreign languages. Practice up now!! Let’s see how many different languages we can represent with the words Merry Christmas.

Following the service, we will gather in Fellowship Hall for an international potluck supper. Bring your favorite dish to share. This could be a traditional dish that celebrates your family heritage or perhaps you have a favorite recipe with a foreign flare.

There will be a special time in between dinner and desert where families will be able to take part in various international craft activities. If you have a particular craft which is part of your family tradition or heritage that you would be willing to share, please let us know about it.

Help is needed in the following areas, crèche set up, costume helpers to assist those participating in the Christmas story, bell choir assistance - help to disassemble the tables quickly during the service, dinner table set up, kitchen help to organize the food and serve, craft assistants, and clean up.

If you are able to help, please contact Renie Milliken (227-6374) or Sally Woods. (223-3800) sallyawoods@gmail.com



VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH LOU BISKUP

There are many people around Freedom Plains who do things in the background and we risk taking them for granted. Yet, if they were not doing what needs to be done, we would know it very quickly. Lou Biskup is certainly such a person. Lou has been the administrator on our database at church for many years now. He also organizes the counting schedule, and works with our computers and phone system. A few summers ago, Lou even renovated the upstairs girls bathroom. Right now, Lou is preparing to step out a bit from the background. Lou has agreed to become the Church's Treasurer. After three years of outstanding service, Gerry DeFiglio is stepping down. At first this created great unease, because Gerry did such a fantastic job. But when Lou stepped up to the challenge, he put many at ease. Lou's experience and knowledge of the church's systems has certainly prepared him well to take over this essential job in the life of the Church. So thank you Lou, for what you have done, and for agreeing to continue to service Freedom Plains as its Treasurer. Please feel free to park in the Volunteer of the Month Parking space, there is no doubt you have earned it.

FREEDOM RINGERS

The Freedom Ringers, our adult hand bell group, has resumed rehearsals for the 2007/2008 season. We are looking for a few additional members to be part of our "rotating pool." Having extra members allows flexibility for everyone. The commitment is for approximately 6 weeks of rehearsals at a time. The next session will begin in January. Anyone interested in trying bells is welcome to join us in the months to come to see if they enjoy bell playing. This is a great opportunity to try it without a long-term commitment.

This group is open to all adults, ages 18 and over, who can read music. Freedom Ringers is a fun and purpose-filled way to get to know your fellow church members in a supportive, friendly, musical environment.

Please call or email Donna Logan at 635-1431 or dmlogan@hvc.rr.com to learn more.



- ❖ **A Morning for Mom! – Meets Wednesday's at 10:00 AM in the Church Common Room. Fellowship Group for mothers of young children. Childcare provided. Contact: Rev. Heather Finck or call the church office at 452-0684.**
- ❖ **Women's Evening Study Group – Meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM in the Common Room. Contact: Mary Moody – 223-3370.**
- ❖ **Dorcas Bible Study – Will resume October 3rd at 1:00 PM – 2:45 PM in the Common Room. Contact: Bonnie Biskup - 724-5631.**
- ❖ **Men's Breakfast Bible Study – Meets every Thursday at 7:30 AM in the Church Common Room, breakfast following. Contacts: Ben Sung – 635-1463 and Rev. Paul Lent – 452-0684.**
- ❖

LOCAL MISSION PROJECT – BROOKHAVEN APARTMENTS 2007

Grace Smith House in Poughkeepsie provides safe short-term housing for victims of domestic violence. Since 1988, the Brookhaven Apartments have provided transitional long-term housing for 15 families. The residents receive job training and counseling in an effort to give them the skills needed to become independent members of their community. Freedom Plains Church as had the opportunity to provide much needed items to make their holiday season less difficult. Once again, we request your help.

This is the "wish list" of the 29 residents living in the Brookhaven Apartments. Most of the families are new residents this year and are in need of various household items as well as personal items. Please stop in Fellowship Hall to select a gift card (or two) of the items requested by each resident. The cards are color coded to help with selection: pink/girl, blue/boy, green/adult woman, yellow/household item. The sex, age, and sizes have been provided to help in selecting a gift. Simply attach the gift card to the item being donated with the apartment number visible. These **new, unwrapped** gifts may be brought to Fellowship Hall **ONLY on Sunday, December 16, 2007**. Financial contributions are greatly appreciated to purchase needed items that are not donated.

Household Items: Dish towels, bath towels (3), deep fryer, bake ware, nonstick pot set (4), iron (2), dishes (3), drinking glasses, silverware, cooking utensils, knife set, toaster oven, queen bed-in-a-bag (5), full size bed-in-a-bag (2), queen sheets, full sheets (2), coffeemaker (3), slow cooker (2), blender, toaster (3), humidifier, cordless phone, canisters, pressure cooker, microwave, power screwdriver.

Women: (11 total – age 24-50) scarf, hat, gloves, bath items, lotion, makeup, socks, jeans size 0, 7, 11, 12, 18/20) tops/sweaters (XS, M, L, XL) winter coats (XL-2), bathrobe S, slippers, bath items, picture frames, nursing scrub pants (M), nursing shoes (8 ½), winter boots (8 ½, 9, 9 ½, 10) hair dryer (5), curling iron, flat iron, female sanitary pads, digital camera (2), book – The Secret (2).

Boys: (8 total)

2yr - hat, gloves, socks, pj's, clothing 5T, puzzles, blocks, cars, trucks, learning activities
 3yr. (2 boys) hats, gloves, socks, clothing size 4T, 5T coat 4T, underwear, books, action figures, cars, trains, learning games
 9yr. hat, gloves, socks, pants size 10, tops L, pj's, shoes 3 ½, educational toys and games
 10yr. hat, gloves, socks, pants size 12, tops L, pj's, shoes 4 ½, games, educational toys
 12yr. hat, gloves, socks, pants 14, tops L, pj's, winter coat, underwear, notebook, board games
 14yr. hat, gloves, socks, clothes men's size 32 waist, tops L, pj's, coat, underwear, toiletries
 17yr. hat, gloves, socks, clothes men's size 32 waist, tops L, pj's, coat M, underwear 30-32, toiletries

Girls: (10 total)

1yr. hats, mittens, socks, slippers, pj's, clothing 18mos, underwear, winter coat, toys
 2yr. (2 girls) hats, mittens, socks, pj's, clothing 24mos, 2T, coat, African American Bratz doll, Baby Alive, Dora, puppies, books, Dora doll, car
 3yr. hat, gloves, socks, clothing 4T, pj's, Dora toys, gift certificate to age appropriate store
 5yr. hat gloves, socks, slippers, clothes size 6/7, Polly Pockets, age appropriate toys
 6yr. (2 girls) hats, gloves, socks, slippers, pj's, clothing size 6 and 7/8, coat, Leapfrog, Baby Alive, Bratz babies, books, board games.
 9yr. hat, gloves, clothing size 10/12, pants, shirts, pj's, coat, socks, slippers, Baby Alive, gift certificate to age appropriate store
 13yr. hat, gloves, socks, slippers, clothing misses 12, pants, tops pj's, coat, board games – Life, Scrabble, Jeopardy, teenage drama and mystery books.
 15yr. hat, gloves, pj's, socks, slippers, underwear 5/6 clothing jr. size jeans 5/6, tops M, Coat M, makeup, nail polish

Please contact me if you are able to help divide the gifts after church on Dec. 16th or transport the gifts to the Brookhaven Apartments on 12/18. For more specific information regarding donations, please contact Debbie Armstrong at 226-4856. Thank you for your support of this local mission project.