



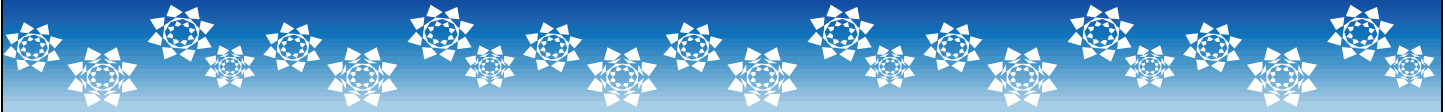
# The Back Pew

The Newsletter of Leesburg Presbyterian Church,  
Leesburg, Virginia.

*Serving God and Neighbor in the Heart of Leesburg since 1804*

[www.leesburgpresbyterian.org](http://www.leesburgpresbyterian.org)

January 2010



## Parsons' Point of View

I've never been very successful at keeping New Year's resolutions, and so for the past several years I've refrained from the pretense of even making them. But today, the day of Epiphany, when we celebrate the manifestation of God's light to the whole world, I received an epiphany from a stranger who came to the church office. Not completely a stranger. She has come before needing the church's help with rent. She's about my age, she is intellectually very bright and mentally very confused. She is renting a room from a woman desperate to save her house from foreclosure. I see her walking the streets of Leesburg in every type of weather; I think she has been let go from a low-paying job at the outlet mall. She is one of millions of Americans who are living on the edge between barely making do with very little and collapsing into a shelter-less and money-less darkness.

But, in spite of all this, she shared with me some phrases from Philippians 4: 4-11, a passage that came to her on the same day that her beloved dog and Mr. Rogers died and that has stayed with her ever since. When you look it up you will see words about rejoicing, about being content with what one has in times of abundance and in times of scarcity, about "doing all things through him who strengthens me." She came to a pastor to receive help, and she left giving this pastor a New Year's blessing and a resolution! "Be it resolved that in 2010 I will live the coming year in a spirit of gratitude for the day at hand, with contentment, with circumstances that are not perfect, and with confidence that God's strength will be sufficient for me to meet the challenges that come my way."

By God's grace, may it be so!

Grace and peace,

*Debbie*

P.S. A quotation worth referring to in the coming year: Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow. Melody Beattie



### Circle I

Come join **Circle I** for a time of fun and fellowship...and a time of study on Thursday, January 14th, at 10:00 a.m.

### Emma Clemens and Ruth Circles

**Emma Clemens and Ruth Circles** met on Wednesday, January 6th, at 7:30 pm in the church library. Shirley Pearson led the fourth lesson on the Book of Joshua.

All women are welcome to attend the monthly meetings. We meet on the first Wednesday of the month. Contact Helen Taylor (703-777-6338) if you have any questions.

### **PLEDGE ENVELOPES**

For those who pledged and wanted pledge envelopes, the boxes are located in the narthex. They are in alphabetical order. If someone

wants pledge envelopes and did not get them, please add your name to the list. I will assign a number and let them know when they are available for pick-up.

### **CONTRIBUTION NUMBER**

When contributing, it would be helpful to write your **contribution number** on the Memo Line of your check. You will find this number located in the top left corner of your newsletter address label.

If you have any questions, please contact Julie Gross.

### **News from the Session**

Among actions taken by the Session in December:

Gave permission to First Night Leesburg for the use of the church building on New Year's Eve.

Approved a request a request to transfer the membership of Scott and Glenna Smith to First Presbyterian Church in Pensacola, FL.

Received a report from the Endowment Committee on the church's trust funds, which had a positive return of 17.28% through September 2009. \$5,000 in scholarships were paid out from the trust funds in 2009.

Authorized the expenditure of up to \$35,000 to repair the roof, with the Stewardship and Finance Committee to work with the Endowment Committee to identify sources of funding.

Approved a child protection policy for the church.

The Session offered a commendation for Evelyn Rolison for her constancy and devotion in caring for another member of the church.

### **CARE PACKAGES**

It's **CARE PACKAGE** time again. If you have a college student or someone serving in the military in your family, please email Donita Petersen

(donita510@yahoo.com) with their addresses before January 25.

If you would like to **donate goodies** to put in the boxes, please leave them in a bag marked "Care Packages" in the church kitchen.

### ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL



A new year brings even more new opportunities to explore your faith. Here's a look ahead at LPC's 2009-2010 Adult Church School winter offerings.

**Jesus and His Contemporaries.** Join Elder John Sawyer as he takes a new look at Jesus of Nazareth and his opponents – the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essences, and the Scribes – by looking back. Explore together recent historical research to help bring new light and understanding to our reading of scripture today. A four-week course beginning January 10, 2010.

**Nooma.** February brings another chance to explore NOOMA, "a new format for getting Christian perspectives." NOOMA is a thought provoking collection of short videos on a wide variety of faith life issues. Join in the discussion. Led by Betty Lowenbach, classes will meet January 17th—February 14th.

**It's not just your kid's Sunday School anymore!**

### CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

**HAPPY NEW YEAR** from the Christian education committee. With renewed energy and excitement we invite you to join us in our Education Ministry in the new year.

The Children's Choir Christmas program was wonderful, and helped us begin our Christmas celebration with joy and expectation. A special thank you to Wendy Bourloulkas and Kim Vigil for their creative and unique gifts in assisting the children in their sharing the good news of Jesus' birth.

With a well deserved break, our 9:45 am Church School program will resume on Sunday, January 10th. We return to the color, green, and begin Ordinary Time, to represent our spiritual growth.

The curriculum will trace the birth narrative of Jesus. The children will study how Jesus' baptism sets the stage for our celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism and how the Lord's Prayer offers us a model for our prayers.

**SHARE-THE-CARE** Ministry resumes on Sunday, January 10th, following the Time With Children during the 11 am worship service for children age 4 through grade one. The theme is **God Has a Plan for the World and for ME!**. If you can share in this ministry, please contact Karen Werner to choose your date and lesson.

### ADVENT WREATHS



**Reminder:** Please return your Advent wreath form (no candles) to the Christian education office for use next year. We hope you enjoyed this annual celebration as you prepared for the coming of Jesus.

### LPCP Enrollment Begins



Enrollment for Leesburg Presbyterian Church Preschool starts on Monday, January 11th, for congregational members and returning families. We are offering morning classes for 2 and 2 1/2 year olds, and morning and afternoon classes for 3 year olds and 4 year olds.

Contact Meg Thaler at 703-771-1461 or come by the preschool for more information, to schedule a tour or to pick up an application.

### Alternative Christmas Faire and LPC Congregation Partner to Help Those in Need

The Mission & Witness Committee extends heartfelt thanks to the LPC congregation for their support of the annual Alternative Christmas Faire that was held in December. Because of your generosity we will:

- Send \$410 to the remote Malawi mountain village of Luvwere for purchase of medical clinic supplies, school blackboards and church benches.
- Purchase (2) shares of a Heifer, (1) share of a Water Buffalo, (1) goat and (7) shares of a Goat, (1) Trio of Rabbits and (4) shares of Rabbits, (4) Honeybees and (10) flocks of chicks to total a donation of \$735 to Heifer International.
- Support the Loudoun County Salvation Army's mission by donating (39) hot meals and (19) vouchers for clothing, children's gifts and grocery store cards for a sum of \$665.
- Continue our most needed and appreciated support of Embangweni Hospital in Malawi where the funds sent will help purchase drugs for children

#### From Malawi with Love...

A letter from Mrs. Jere, teacher at CDSS and mother of Gondiwe who is a Livingstonia University student and is supported by LPC through tuition payments from very generous donations from members of our congregation to the Malawi fund.

November 29, 2009

Mrs. Mestina Moyo (Mrs. Godwin Jere)  
Embangweni Community Day Secondary School  
Mzimba, Malawi  
Central Africa

Dear LPC Congregation,

I hope you are fine. My children are also doing well. The sad news is Godwin's father passed away on November 1, 2009 and was buried on November 3, 2009. All this time I had been taking care of him but God has taken him .

Zondiwe is closing school on December 18th and will be back to school by January because the school calendar has changed in our country. I wanted you to know this. He promises to work hard and I encourage him to do so.

We are now in the rainy season and have started planting seeds.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy prosperous New Year. We are drawing to the end of the year.

Love from,  
Mrs. Godwin

### Holiday Greetings from Mr. Zgambo of Luvwere, Malawi

The congregation of LPC supports this remote and very needy village with quarterly donations. Mr. Szigambo was born there and worked at Embangweni Hospital when our mission team worked in Embangweni.

November 30, 2009

W.S.S. Zgambo  
Kazaka Village  
P.Bag Luvwere  
P.O. Kafukule  
Mzimba, Malawi  
Central Africa

Dear LPC,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Please kindly extend my fond close-to-new-year greetings to all brothers and sisters in Christ at Leesburg Presbyterian Church.

As we humbly take time considering the coming of our Lord and his mission on earth we also take time to look back on how we have travelled in the year and the hardships we faced. May His abundant mercies be upon us all and lead us in our humble activities in the years to come.

I do not know how long it will take to reach you, so this could also be my Christmas Greetings although this seems to be very early. Special greetings to Kathy (Brown), Bill and Beth Rule, Tom Chase, Shirley (Pearson) and Laurie (Stevens). Wishing you all the best and our Lord's protection and guidance during the wonderful time.

I am at home (Luvwere) now trying to work gardens.

### Mission Team Participant

**Have you been thinking of joining a mission team in 2010 – perhaps for the first time?** Come to the Mission & Witness Committee's annual Alternative Christmas Faire to learn more about this year's Katrina RECOVERY Team Mission Trip to New Orleans on March 8-14, 2010.

We will have a photo display table, sign-up sheets and experienced volunteers ready to talk with you about their experiences and how mission work can be life changing. You can sign up for email updates and get the travel details and work plans from our team leaders at Catocin Presbyterian Church in Waterford. You may also call Kathy Brown at LPC or Liz Horton at CPC @ (301) 349-2721 for more information.



## BOOK CLUB February 12th Author Visit

Please join us for a discussion with Meredith McMath, a Loudoun County playwright and historian and author of our book club's February reading selection, *Pella's Angel*.

*Pella's Angel* is a mystery set in Loudoun County during the Civil War: "Spanning the Civil War from 1863 to reconstruction, *Pella's Angel* tells the true story of life in the war-torn border county of Loudoun, Virginia from the point of view of Annabelle MacBain, a fictional character whose attitudes and actions are based on war-time diaries of the young women who lived in Loudoun and surrounding counties" (from the author's webpage). There are a limited number of copies available in the blue library bag in the church office closet; feel free to sign out a copy. A few other copies are available through the library system, including the Balch Library. We will meet in the lounge at 9:30. Childcare is provided in the nursery. Please contact Jennifer Marsh with questions (703-779-0042, [jmclean-marsh@hotmail.com](mailto:jmclean-marsh@hotmail.com)).

*"The LPC Book Club is a joyful group of readers who come together in a Christian environment to explore a wide range of literature in a safe and nurturing atmosphere. We welcome and value new, diverse points of view. Our aim is to grow individually and together"*



## WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Worship Committee thanks all who served as Ushers and Communion Servers during 2009 and would like to invite more members of the congregation to step up and join our pool of Communion Servers and Ushers for 2010.

Communion Servers must be either Elders or Deacons; (do not have to be active on Session or Board of Deacons to serve). Any LPC member, or regular participant, may serve as an Usher. Communion is held at all services the first Sunday of each month, and we need four Servers for the 8:30 service and six for the 11:00 service. So there is plenty of room for volunteers!

Please email Frank Gasperini ([gasperfa@yahoo.com](mailto:gasperfa@yahoo.com)) or call the church office to get your name and email/phone information on the lists.

## Messages and Moments about Mission and Witness

The year 2009 has brought many opportunities and challenges to Leesburg Presbyterian Church. The response to these opportunities by individuals, and indeed our entire congregation, has helped to meet the need for actions and financial support.

Many people have contributed time and talents, and we would like to recognize a few now. Pam Poisson and Laura Herring provided leadership for the Crop Walk. Laura who also helped to organize the Hosanna Mission trip was invaluable. Thanks, too, to parents who drove and cooked and youth who worked hard as volunteers to rehabilitate the homes. Thanks to Pastor Debbie for spiritual leadership and guidance. Thanks to those who walked in the Crop Walk despite the wind. Thanks for Sheila Finney's diligence every Friday in taking the food to Interfaith Relief and then working there to stock shelves. Thanks to people who have taken on individual students in Malawi, and others who anonymously give support.

Big thanks to all who supported the Alternative Christmas Faire. The different local, national and international organizations received financial support and SERRV was supported by the purchase of their art. Thanks to Shirley Pearson for her part in organizing, driving and bringing the artwork to LPC. The participation in the Angel Tree program made such a difference in children's lives, I think we tried to meet every request as if the child was one of ours. Indeed, is that not the truth? Captain Criss spoke of a child who wanted a violin, and remarked this was a first and the child was overcome with happiness when she received it. All that occurs through Mission and Witness is the result of support of this wonderful congregation.

There will be new challenges in 2010. One already on the screen is the emergency food program of the Salvation Army. Several folks have indicated interest in helping coordinate our church's response. There is plenty to do in this and other programs. If we each do what we can, with God's design, great things will be possible. It is already happening.!

Deadline for February newsletter: January 31, 2010


# YOUTH CORNER

## Youth on Retreat

Twelve youth and two adults are going on a mid-winter retreat to Deer Valley YMCA Camp in Pennsylvania January 15-17.

There they will join youth from Catoclin Presbyterian Church in Waterford and St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Purcellville for a packed week-end of outdoor winter recreation, indoor "spirit sessions," evening vespers and lot and lots of fun!

Those attending are: Kate and Emma Renner, Cullen Poisson, Nate Ritsema, Cole Peterson, Rachel Gettier, Jessica and Carly Potter, Liza Caprio and friend, May Paige Rodgers, Rachel Conway, Kristen Petersen Evans and Debbie Dodson Parsons.

**Mom's Alive! (MA!)** meets every Friday from 9:00 to 11:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Childcare is provided in the nursery. Moms are invited to join us for a time of fellowship, devotionals, and a variety of outreach and other planned activities throughout the year. For more information call Sarah Jones (703-777-1071).

*Thank You!*

To My Church Family: The past 6 weeks have been an emotional roller coaster for me and my family. The anxious weeks leading up to my son's surgery were so difficult. The anticipation of the unknown is the worst. Finally the day came and everything went exactly as it was supposed to. The surgery actually took less time than we had been told and Dale came through it just fine. Three days later he was at home and he has had his follow-up visit the surgeon and has been released. He has a couple of months of mending and rehab to go through, but all signs are great. I couldn't have gotten through this without my LPC family. Your thoughts, prayers, notes, cards and emails have meant so much. There aren't words sufficient to express how much it has meant. God bless each of you, especially during this season of miracles. My family has certainly been blessed.

*Thank You,  
Jane Wallace*



Please don't forget to pick up your directory. It will be on the front pew in the sanctuary. Church pledge envelopes will be there too.

**Dates to Remember:**

New Officer Training — January 24, 2010

Ordination & Installation of Deacons & Elders  
January 31, 2010



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#### Worship Schedule

Sunday Worship	8:30 and 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday Choir	7:30 p.m.

**OUR CHURCH ELDERS:** Jim Barnes—Clerk, Kathy Brown, Ben Franklin, Frank Gasperini, Jason Hovda, Pat Kropp, William Marsh, Donita Petersen, Chuck Rodgers, John Sawyer, Beth Shockley, Bill Wingardner, and Chris York.

**DEACONS:** Nancy Blaine, Wendy Bourloulukas, Rebecca Caprio, Mike Christensen, Sheila Finney, Tom Gurney, Matt Howard, Julie Koochagian, Peggy Moats, Jennifer Morris, Shirley Pearson, Betty Robbins, and Wynne Rodgers

Sign up for our weekly electronic newsletter at [www.lpcva.org](http://www.lpcva.org)!

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Leesburg, VA 20176

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



The Sacrament of The Lord's Supper is celebrated the first Sunday of each month.