



FIRST and ForMOST

December 2006

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

“In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah and Christ, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom He favors!’” (Luke 2: 8-14)

I don't know about you, but I never get tired of reading and hearing those blessed words from Luke 2 announcing the birth of the Lord, Jesus Christ. As a matter of fact, I look forward to the coming of our Lord's birthday each year!

This year's Advent Season at First Presbyterian Church will be full of joy, special music, and celebration. As you look through this issue of the First and Foremost, you will see that we have special worship services like the *“Lessons and Carols Service”* on Sunday, December 17, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. and a very special *“Christmas Eve and Candlelight Service”* on December 24, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. At our Christmas Eve worship service this year, we'll be asking members (children, youth, and adults) to share their God-given *“gifts”* of musical talent (i.e. singing, playing bells, playing instruments, drama, etc.) to Jesus as birthday presents, following the tradition of *The Little Drummer Boy*.

On Sunday, December 31, 2006, we'll be having a *“Come As You Are”* Worship Service at the church from 10:00 to 10:45 a.m. This New Year's Eve Day worship service will be an opportunity to for all of us to share our favorite Christmas present with our FPCA Christian family. All children and adults are asked to bring their favorite Christmas present to church with them, whether it be a toy, a sweater, or a warm and loving story about how wonderful it was to be with family over the holidays! Whatever your favorite Christmas present may be, we would like to ask you to share it with the rest of your FPCA family for 45 minutes or so! Then, you can take it back home with you and play with it to your heart's content! In addition to showing off and sharing our favorite Christmas presents with one another, this special service will also include the singing of hymns and a special message about the GREATEST GIFT OF ALL, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

This coming Advent Season is going to be filled with fun and love. And, as this is the Looker family's first Christmas season as members of the FPCA Christian family and congregation, Genny, Ben, Sam, and I look forward to sharing with all of you the joy, wonderment, happiness, and hope that only Jesus Christ's birth can bring into our lives.

So, from all of the Lookers to all of you, we join in with the angels in heaven by singing, *“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom He favors!”*

Merry Christmas!

Chris, Genny, Ben, and Sam Looker

EDITOR'S NOTE

Anne Warrel is no longer the editor of *FIRST and ForMOST*. She has done a fine job during the past year, and we can only say a heartfelt THANK YOU for all her planning and hard work. Starting with this issue, I am the new editor, and will do my best to keep our newsletter running on a monthly basis, supplying you with information about our church, our congregation, our plans for the future. I could not do it without your contributions! I trust you will send announcements, news about the congregation, or interesting articles you have come across which are worth sharing with all of us.

Let us hope this issue is not only the continuation of a newsletter that has been with us since 1967, but also a new beginning, a look forward to our future.

Any notes and messages you want me to put into the newsletter, whether they are short thank you notes or an article you want to share, please e-mail it to me: LUXI7777@aol.com, or put it in the "FIRST and ForMOST" drawer in the church office. I am looking forward to working with you!

Marta Strada

Deadline for contributing reports and announcements for the January issue: **Dec. 15.**

PAST AND FUTURE EVENTS

Mission Trip Presentation Sunday, Oct. 28

Quite a few from our congregation gathered with the Koreans to enjoy a delicious potluck supper and watch the presentation of the mission trip of the young people of FPCA and FKPCV to Cumberland, Maryland last August, to repair the home of a low income family. The youngsters worked hard and had fun relaxing. Dr. Looker introduced John Fennig, Nadine Ingess and David Koo, who worked as leaders.

Lois Little Honored

On Friday, Nov.3 the Church Women United honored Lois Little as a "Valiant Woman". This was in recognition of her 20 years of faithful service in the local unit of the organization. The occasion was the World Community Day celebration at Bush Hill Presbyterian Church, and several of our women attended..

Parents' Day Out, December 2

Parents, do you need time to go shopping without your children? On Saturday, December 2 we will have a child care officer and helper at the church from 8:30 am to 12 pm to watch your children to give you a chance to do some Christmas shopping. If you are interested, please call the church office 703-941-3300. The service, sponsored by the Congregational Life/New Member Commission, is limited to 10 children on a first come, first served basis.

Betty Beal

The Salvation Army Christmas stockings have arrived! Please make eyes sparkle on Christmas morning by signing up for one or more stockings. I will be in the library November 26 and December 3 – Santa hat and all. Deadline to have stockings back to church is December 10.

Thanks, Jane Rottier

Bethany House

To help with this year's Christmas season, Bethany House of Northern Virginia, which helps battered spouses and their children, will be most happy to receive tax deductible monetary gifts sent to Bethany House of Northern Virginia 6121 Lincoln Rd., Suite 303, Alexandria, VA 22312.

Lois Little

Anyone who wishes to donate items for this women's and children's shelter may put those in the container marked Bethany House. That container is in the storage room off of the kitchen. Norma Muller will check this regularly and deliver any donated items.

Miriam Houseworth

Help the Handicapped!

A protection and advocacy agency, University Legal Services, assists persons with disabilities in moving out of nursing homes to live independently in the DC area. On December 1, three ULS clients with few resources are moving into a new home with no furniture, cooking utensils, dishes, linens, or small appliances. If you are able to donate small household items that can help meet this need, please contact Amy Metzel at (202) 547-0198 x102. Unused items will go to Goodwill.

John Metzel

Secretary Leaving

Good bye Sandy, welcome Nancy! Sandy Cummings has been our secretary since 1999 and has done a wonderful job. Unfortunately she is leaving FPCA by the end of December; as she and her husband are planning to move away from Virginia. She will be greatly missed. We are happy to learn that Nancy Manning, who has already been doing secretarial work in the church office, will be replacing Sandy. While we are shedding tears for losing Sandy, we are looking forward to seeing Nancy working for us all week

There will be a Special Reception held immediately after the 10:00 am worship service Dec. 17, to honor Sandy for her 7 ½ years of dedicated and faithful service.

THANK YOU FROM SANDY MORI

Dear Church Friends,

Thank you so much for the cards, phone calls, food, rides to appointments, going to lunch, and especially your prayers during my recuperation from a broken leg.

Until I was able to drive, I was really stranded and you came to my rescue. I could not have stayed in my home without your help. I felt blessed to be part of our close church family.

Love, Sandy Mori

PRISCILLA and MARY MARTHA CIRCLES

Attention, women of our church! All women are welcome to attend our Circle meetings! This year the Priscilla Circle and Mary Martha Circle are studying the Pentateuch in the study book "In the Beginning", and started out with Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel. While the Priscilla Circle had a combined Nov./Dec. meeting on Nov. 29, the Mary Martha Circle has been invited by Anne Manning to her beautifully decorated home. As every year, Bible study is being followed by a delicious lunch.

COMMISSIONS' ACTIVITIES

Christian Education

While the combined church school with the Korean children works fine, our older youth could show more interest! To involve children in church activities, we want them to rake leaves at the homes of some of our members, participate in the music on Christmas Eve, also in the retreat between Christmas and New years, bring their favorite presents to worship service on Dec. 31. (Plans for 2007 mentioned under Session Highlights)

New Member and Congregational Life

This fall the commission sponsored the 50th Anniversary Celebration in September; a covered dish dinner featuring the slides from the young people's mission trip to Cumberland, MD; a new church pictorial directory; the Pastor's Class in November (being a membership class for new members and those interested in learning more about FPCA and what Presbyterians believe); and will sponsor a parents day out in December to give them a chance to do their Christmas shopping.

Worship

The commission proposed to session giving the congregation the opportunity to buy and dedicate new hymnals; confirmed Advent plans with the pastor; facilitated getting an article in the Capitol Pulpit section of the Washington Times – highlighting the pastor's background, the Church's history and excerpts from a recent sermon. We talked about having the musical group Mystic Harmony perform sometime in 2007.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

At the Session meeting November 15, 2006, the following items were discussed:

1. The Session received the letter of resignation from Sandy Cummings, our Church Secretary, effective December 29, 2006.
2. The Session learned that, as of November 15, 2006, the official Active Membership of FPCA is 140.
3. The FPCA Session Minutes (9/21/05 – 9/20/06) were ***“Approved Without Exception”*** by the National Capital Presbytery. Lynette Kwaku is a fantastic Clerk of Session!!!
4. A contract was signed to install a new Air-Conditioning System in the Activities Building. The old system no longer works and needs to be replaced. The Session wished to thank the members and Session of FKPCV for contributing \$4000.00 toward the total cost of installation, which will be \$9,970.00. Thank you, FKPCV!!!
5. The Session voted to set the date and time of the Annual Congregational Meeting (required by the Book of Order). It will be held on Sunday, January 28, 2007.
6. The Mission Commission proposed that the Session and Members of the FPCA congregation prayerfully consider supporting two Mission Trips in the Summer of 2007: An Adult / Senior High Mission Trip to either New Mexico or the Gulf Coast **and** a Middle School Mission Trip to Cumberland, Maryland.
7. The Christian Education Commission proposed supporting the sending of youth from FPCA and FKPCV to the Youth Triennium event at Purdue University in Indiana and the Montreat Youth Conference in Montreat, North Carolina in 2007 (if funds are available and the parents of our youth and the youth are supportive of this proposal).

The Rev. Dr. Chris Looker, Moderator of the Session

THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Your deacons hope that members of the congregation will help them keep aware of needs of our church families. There have been some changes in the deacon groups listed in the last church directory, so if you know of a situation where a deacon needs to be contacted, you may call the church office, the board's moderator or any other of its members to learn which deacon to notify.

The 2006 Board of Deacons: Marianne Artherholt, Betty Beal, Joan Johnson, Anne Manning, Randy Meli, Jane Rottier.
Randy Meli, Moderator

YOUTH NEWS

The Church School season is off and running. On October 29th, we enjoyed a night of viewing the slides and video from the summer's Mission Trip. If anyone missed this great event, see the Lookers for a chance to see all the activities and fun had by the combined FPCA-FKPCV Mission Trip to Cumberland, MD.

For Advent, the youth will be participating in the Christmas Eve Service. Those interested in playing in the Youth Bell Choir should contact Genny Looker, or show up at 9:15 a.m. on December 10, 17 and 24 to practice. Like the Little Drummer Boy, anyone else who wishes to share their talent should contact Stephanie Berg, Genny Looker or Larry Young.

Finally, we will have a Youth Christmas Gift Swap with the FKPCV youth, at a time to-be-announced. Gifts should be no more than \$10. All ages welcome! Genny Looker

FIRST and ForMOST is an official publication of the First Presbyterian Church of Annandale, 7610 Newcastle Drive, Annandale, VA 22003. Dr. Chris Looker, Pastor; Larry Young, Choir Director; Sandra Cummings and Nancy Manning, Secretaries; Marta Strada, Editor.