

# Good News from Good Hope!



Day after day... they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ. ❖ Acts 5:42  
Good Hope Reformed Presbyterian Church ❖ The Presbyterian Church in America ❖ December 2004

## Don't Miss This Breaking News!

News casters sometimes announce that they have a "breaking news report." This means that the news is new or just happening. Generally, the news that is anticipated in the report is not good. Christmas is not new news. It is old news, but it is good news. The angel of the Lord who appeared to the shepherds on the night of Jesus's birth said to them, "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." (Luke 2:10)

How many "breaking news reports" on TV have you heard and still remember? You may remember a few, but probably not that many. The phrase "breaking news report" is meant to grab your attention. As you wait to hear the report, the story is not often of high importance, much less eternal significance. When the angel told the shepherds that he had good news to tell them that would bring everyone great joy, it was contemporary news to them. Yet, every generation on earth needs to hear this news. What is this "good news" that brings great joy? Let me quote the angel: "Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord." This story was "breaking news," and it deserves to be the continual lead story and run every news cycle. While it might not make the press every day in today's world, it is written on the heart diary of every Christian, and it brings great joy to know and read to yourself, "I have a Savior." ❖



## Great Expectations—More or Less?

Don't miss a treat on December 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm, when the Good Hope children present this year's Christmas play at Briggs Chaney Middle School titled, "Great Expectations—More or Less?" The thirty+ children and young teens involved will explore the idea that perhaps the first Christmas was not what the characters involved expected. In like manner, our expectations for Christmas can be more or less than we had hoped, but God's true gift of His Son is far greater than anyone could have imagined!

The children are working hard and are quickly mastering their lines and the song lyrics. Many thanks go to **Tracy Young**, who initiated the "O.T.P. Award," and also for her assistance with costumes and props. Thanks also to the other Sunday School teachers who have helped during play practice: **Amy Higgins, Joanna Lyon, Kathy Haber, and Kate Haber.**

How can you help? Support our play by coming on December 19<sup>th</sup>, and bring a plate of Christmas cookies to share afterwards! Pray for the children and adults involved. Pray that the Gospel message will be clear to our visitors. Have your child practice his lines and songs, and be present for each important practice remaining. Plan to quickly vacate the auditorium during the Sunday School hour on December 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> so that the children can practice on stage without the distraction of adults talking and drinking coffee in the back! And let **Chris Waller** know if you can loan a robe for the Biblical characters.

Our annual Christmas play is an important part of Good Hope's Christian education program, and it promises to be a delight for all members, visitors, and other friends who attend on December 19<sup>th</sup>! ❖

### *Make A Joyful Noise!*

The musical ensemble will meet together on **Sundays, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup>** from 8:45-9:20am. We will practice two Advent pieces to sing each week.

## Focus on Our Missionaries: *The Showalter Family, Burkina Faso, West Africa*

This Thanksgiving season, we give thanks to the LORD for His many blessings. With civil war flaring up in the Ivory Coast to the south of us and friends being evacuated from their language programs, we are grateful for the relative peace and freedom we continue to enjoy here in Burkina Faso. We are able to talk openly about the Lord, to translate the Bible, to teach reading and distribute books. This may not always be the case. Both Christianity and Islam are growing here in Burkina, and it is hard to know which is growing faster. Pray that we will make the best use of the opportunities that exist now in this country to spread God's Word.

The Kaansa Bible translation work is moving ahead. Our co-translators, Yao and Nadoome, are here in Ouaga now, and the team is checking the second half of Acts with a consultant, Idda. During checking sessions there is supposed to be a "naive speaker" present, that is, someone who hasn't been to church and hasn't learned the "inside" language of the Scriptures. It's interesting to work with Kobina, the young man who is filling this role this time. The book of Acts is full of people and places with unusual names, people moving around from place to place, unexpected and often miraculous events, intense arguments... Kobina seems a bit overwhelmed by some of it. But at least Paul's sermon at the Aeropagus in Acts 17 should have struck a familiar chord with him. The Kaan people know what it's like to have many spirits to worry about and to work hard to keep them all happy. We pray that the Lord will use His Word to touch Kobina's heart during these two weeks of intense interaction with Scripture. In January, we're setting aside a week to read aloud the entire book of Acts, then we'll prepare the fourth and final revision for publication.



Nathanael used most of his summer earnings from his job in Maryland with **Tim Rowan's** landscaping company to buy himself a motorbike, which gives him new freedom. The joy this brings is somewhat tempered by the fact that he is going through the long and arduous college application process, not to mention AP classes and SAT II exams coming up on December 4<sup>th</sup>. We will all breathe a sigh of relief when the college question is settled. Meanwhile, he has something fun to look forward to—a trip to Ghana in January with the rest of the senior class. Esther is enjoying her first year of high school and is playing soccer and volleyball this semester. She also tutors a middle school student for whom English is a second language. There's a new piano teacher in town, so piano lessons will soon be added to the activities list for both Esther and Jesse. Jesse is in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and taking it in stride. He thrives on computer time and wants to learn programming. Since it's not offered at his school, he's starting a self-study program. He also plays soccer two afternoons a week.

We are grateful to you at Good Hope and the rest of our home team that has supported the Kaansa Bible translation work in prayer and financially over these many years. A number of people have increased their giving since April, which has covered about 65% of our deficit. This has made a big difference in our ability to meet the challenges here and continue the work, and it has also encouraged us a great deal!

Thank you for your continued prayers for our family and our work in Burkina Faso!

*Stuart and Cathie*

Good Hope Reformed Presbyterian Church  
 Post Office Box 164  
 Burtonsville, MD 20866  
 (301) 236-4151  
 Current Meeting Location:  
 Briggs Chaney Middle School  
 1901 Rainbow Drive  
 Silver Spring, MD 20905  
 Join us for Worship at 9:30am and Sunday School at 11:00am each Sunday  
 www.goodhopepca.com

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# December 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>28</b> Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am Craig Higgins GG - 6:00pm	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Men's Basketball at Briggs Chaney Middle School 8-10pm	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Building Committee at Route 216 7:30am
<b>5</b> Musical Ensemble - 8:45am Worship Service - 9:30am <b>Congregational Meeting 11:00am</b> Craig Higgins GG - 6:00pm Youth Group GG - 6:00pm	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Session Meeting at Waller's House 7:30pm	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Christmas Party at Macdonalds' House 5:00pm
<b>12</b> Musical Ensemble - 8:45am Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am <b>Youth Group Trip to DC</b> Craig Higgins GG - 6:00pm	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Men's Basketball at Briggs Chaney Middle School 8-10pm	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Building Committee at Route 216 7:30am
<b>19</b> Musical Ensemble - 8:45am Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am <b>Children's Christmas Play at Briggs Chaney 7:00pm</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Christmas Eve Service at Macdonalds' House 5:00pm	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am	<b>27</b> Info for January newsletter due to Kate Haber today!	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>

## *Get Involved With Our Building's Next Steps*

*by Steve Gerwin, Building Committee*

It has taken many years of preparation, hard work, and the Lord's grace, but we now find that it is time to turn some dirt and lay some bricks, time to build this house of God! Preparation always starts with planning and design. Ideas take form, are improved, and finally approved. There has been so much work going on, unseen by most, some real heavy lifting, but the results will be to His glory. We will soon have approved plans, permits, and all of our contractors lined up. This is the result of many years of hard work—it is all about preparation.

Now we build. As you know, we have been in the destruction business lately, and we've reduced the building to a shell so that the contractors can begin work. The new roof will be built using the old one as a scaffold. Site work, parking, and access roads will be a major effort. Much dirt must be moved, a sedimentation pond to catch eroded runoff will be built, and finally parking, access roads, and improvements on the state road will be handled by our site contractor. You may have noticed that we needed to relocate the telephone poles to expand the state road—these telephone lines are being buried, and the poles removed. The view of this beautiful building will be unobstructed from the front—no poles! You will soon notice sedimentation fencing being put up on the site to control erosion, the first step in site work. Soon heavy equipment will show up to build the pond and level out the paved surfaces and finally pave.

We still have many projects associated with the old house that need attention from church members, including removal of some trees, removal of the fireplace in the building and out back, poles to be removed, trenching for parking lot lighting, and some ramp construction, just to mention a few. This is a very rare, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to actually be involved in building a church building—something you will remember for the rest of your life. Church members performing this work will save us money, and those who participate will be bonded forever to this house of God, a house of God that you help build. ❖

### *Prayer Chain*

Carol Taylor will soon be revising the church prayer chain. Please contact Carol or **Barbara Petro** if you would like to be added to or taken off of this phone list.

### *December Youth Group Events*

The middle and high schoolers will meet on **Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>** at 6:00pm at the home of **Bob & Ruthie Lockhart** (403 Firestone Drive, Silver Spring, MD).

On **Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>**, the youth group will head into DC for ice skating and sightseeing. Stay tuned for more details...

### *Church Christmas Party*

Don't miss the annual church Christmas party on **Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup>** at 5:00pm at Mac and Bobbie Macdonald's beautifully decorated home! Please bring an appetizer or hors d'oeuvres to share.