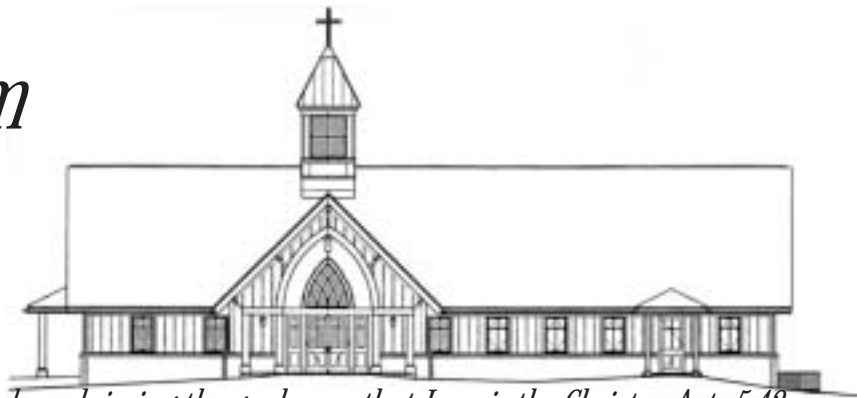


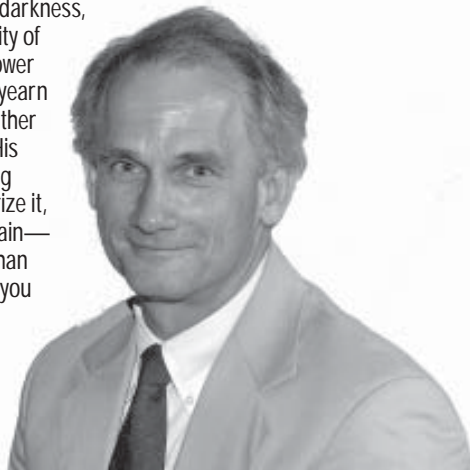
Good News from Good Hope!



Day after day... they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ. ❖ Acts 5:42
Good Hope Presbyterian Church ❖ The Presbyterian Church in America ❖ December 2007

An Indescribable Christmas Gift

Gifts. What's on your gift list this year? Are you still thinking about it? Maybe you haven't even thought about it yet. Before God created anything, He had a gift list. The gift at the top of the list was so spectacular that it exhausts any vocabulary which tries to adequately speak about it. In his second letter to the Christians at Corinth, Paul wrote, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift." (2 Corinthians 9:15) The gift that Paul writes about is the gift of God's Son. That God would give Him to the world to be our Savior is unfathomable. That we would fully comprehend His value is unthinkable. Each year Christians sing and sing and sing about the birth of Christ. Each carol may touch upon a facet of the gift, yet no song completely tells nor fully grasps the wonder of the story. Each year Christians retell the story of God's gift through plays and sermons, yet each effort tells only a portion of the astounding majesty of the gift. When we contemplate the reality of God giving His Son, it brings enjoyment to the heart, mind, and soul. The story of God's gift has the power to awake a sleeping heart. The story of God's gift has the power to reach a distant heart that has grown cold in the shadows of darkness, warming it once again with the love of God. The reality of Christ coming to live for us and die for us has the power to soften a grudgingly insensitive heart and make it yearn to be lavishly generous. Think about what God the Father gave. Why did He do it? Think of the magnitude of His gift, the impact of His gift, the eternal and everlasting benefits of His gift. Whether you delineate it, categorize it, systematize it, or alphabetize it, one thing is for certain—you can never right-size it. It is more, always more than you can ever describe. As Christmas approaches, if you think you've heard it all, think again. Muse again. If you've grown tired of the story, it's not the story that is tired, but you. Let its glory enflame your heart once again. Come near and see God's indescribable gift, and you too will cry out, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift." ❖



Church Christmas Party

Mark your calendar for the church Christmas party on **Sunday, December 9th** at 4:00pm at Mac and Bobbie Macdonald's beautifully decorated home (14505 Gilpin Road, Silver Spring). Since this event will take place during the dinner hour, please bring non-messy appetizers or heavy hors d'oeuvres to share. Please feel free to drop in at any time during the evening, if you're not able to arrive at 4:00pm, as this is an open house. Evening worship, choir rehearsal, and youth group activities will not be held on December 9th, so that everyone may enjoy fellowship at the Christmas party.

Christmas Eve Service

A candlelight Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols will be held at the church at 5:00pm on **Monday, December 24th**.

Focus on Our Missionaries: *Eddie and Gail Brown in Cary, North Carolina*

Greetings! We hope you had a great Thanksgiving Day, whether you celebrated at home or abroad. A few words about our family, church, and prayer requests.

Family: Our son Alan returned home on November 3rd (Eddie's birthday) after six months in Africa studying with the Kenya Wildlife Service. Alan's hope is to be a safari guide, and he plans to return to Africa ASAP. Our daughter Katie will graduate, Lord willing, from East Carolina University on December 14th and is counting down the days. Gail is teaching in a special needs class with the Wake County Public School System. There are four teachers and eight kids. Gail and the teachers often feel outnumbered! So that's a prayer request. Eddie had an MRI in mid-November and was told that his tumor had shrunk! His doctor said he would be surprised if the tumor ever bothers Eddie again. We thank God for this great news. But life is full of surprises, isn't it? We thank God for His gracious care for all of us in this surprise-filled life.

Church: We continue to see God add to Christ Our Redeemer (COR). Pray that we will be able to love God and our neighbors well. Our Christmas Eve Service will be "Christmas Eve Serving." We are going to work with the United Service Organizations (USO) out at the Raleigh airport by providing a Christmas dinner for the troops passing through. The USO provides a place for servicemen and women in transit to come and just chill or even spend the night if they need to. We will feed them, sing some carols, and simply be there to thank them. The USO asked us to prepare to feed 100. With Fort Bragg and Camp Lejeune nearby, the place is rather busy. Pray that the Lord will bless our time with these men and women.

We recently signed a lease that keeps us on in our current church location until at least the end of May. This is a real answer to prayer, as we thought we were going to have to move, and space is a challenge to find at any price. So thanks for praying! Earlier we were subleasing, so now we have the opportunity to do a little painting and spruce up the place.

Last Sunday we had a time of thanks and sharing. One husband and father, relatively new to COR, thanked God for the church and how they had "invited God into their lives." Please pray that God will give us many more such testimonies.

Personal: Recently we had a family leave the church. We've had three families move away, but these particular folks walked away. It happens in every church, but you hope to do better. It was hard for me! But God used it to remind me of how I so often live as a spiritual orphan. I think I can make it happen on my own. I can't. So will you please pray for me, that I will learn to trust in God and not in myself.

We are thankful to you for the relationships shared over the past years and your love shown through many means of support. Thanks!

Eddie for the Browns



There's no shortage of little ones at Christ Our Redeemer in Cary!

Join us for Sunday School at 9:45am and Worship at 11:00am each Sunday.
Evening Worship is held each Sunday at 6:30pm.

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December 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am Middle School at church - 5pm Evening Worship - 6:30pm High School Youth Group at the Higgins' - 8:00-9:30pm	3	4 Jim Haber Growth Group - 5:30pm Deacons Meeting at the church - 6:30pm	5	6 Session Meeting at the church - 7:30pm	7 <u>December Deacons:</u> Bill Davis Mark Hegerle	8
9 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am Christmas Party at the Macdonalds' - 4:00pm	10	11 Jim Haber Growth Group - 5:30pm	12	13	14	15 Christmas Play Dress Rehearsal at the church 9:00-11:30am
16 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am Christmas Play at the church - 7:00pm	17	18	19	20	21	22 Choir Rehearsal at the church 5:00pm
23 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am	24 Candlelight Christmas Eve Service at the church - 5:00pm	25	26	27 Info for January newsletter due to Kate Haber today!	28	29
30 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am	31	1	2	3	4	5

"A Promise Kept" on December 16th

Don't miss the annual children's Christmas play, coming up on **Sunday, December 16th**. In this year's play, entitled "A Promise Kept," our talented and enthusiastic middle school students will characterize promises that couldn't possibly be kept and a situation where someone feels forgotten. The younger children will enact the true story of Christmas, where God kept His promise to send His Son. We will all be encouraged not to forget the true meaning of the season. Join us at 7:00pm on December 16th for "A Promise Kept," and please bring a plate of **Christmas cookies** to share afterwards!

All children should plan to be at the final Sunday morning rehearsals on December 9th and 16th during the Sunday School hour. In addition, there will be a **dress rehearsal** on Saturday, December 15th. The middle school students will begin practice promptly at 9:00am. Younger children should join us at 10:30am, and the rehearsal should conclude at 11:30am. If you have a scheduling conflict, please let **Chris Waller** know immediately!

Finally, a **set-up crew** is needed to prepare the stage for the play. Speak to Chris Waller if you are able to help in this way. Many strong arms are requested! Our annual Christmas play promises to be a delight for all members, visitors, and other friends who attend on December 16th. Please be in prayer for the participants and our audience, and contact Chris Waller if you are able to help with remaining details! ❖



Thank you from Keith Hoekman and the people of Ghazni, Afghanistan for the coats, hats, gloves, and shoes donated for children there. As Keith wrote, "Though we are not allowed to overtly witness about Christ unless in response to questioning, our actions speak very loud with gestures such as these. We are expected to be Christians because we are from America, and our action do not go unnoticed. God has been working in Ghazni, and people are curious why so many people in the US would even care, let alone donate coats to the people of Afghanistan. And I can tell them about a God of mercy Who said, 'Whatever you did to the least of these, my brothers, you did to me.'"