

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 2008

Are You Mindful of Your Lowly Condition?

Mary was a humble recipient of the Lord's will for her life. She measured her life by what God brought into her life. In what is known as "Mary's Song," she said, "From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me." (Luke 1:48-49) When the Lord revealed Himself to her through the message of Gabriel, Mary acknowledged that the Lord was "mindful of the humble state" of her condition. (Luke 1:48)

It is one mindset to be living in a humble state without recognizing it. It is another to understand that you have deficiencies, and yet another to know that the Lord Himself knows your condition. A further mindset is to realize that the Lord has taken steps to remedy your humble state. This recognition that the Lord is mindful of our needy condition "extends to those who fear Him." (Luke 1:50) Mary knew that the Lord's extension of mercy was not limited to her own condition but was intended for others as well. She was aware that the Lord chose her to birth the Savior and that through Him those who were aware of their need would find redemption and hope just as she had.

During this season each year, Christians need to remind themselves that the Lord has been mindful of our lowly and lost condition, and He has brought us salvation through His Son. This joyful celebration should also be echoed to those who may not see their needy condition yet but who may see it one day. Let us join with Mary and sing her song of salvation, making ourselves freely available to others who might listen in. ❖



Church Christmas Party

Don't miss the church Christmas party this **Sunday, December 7th** beginning 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. 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. The Friends & Family luncheon, evening worship, and youth group activities will not be held on December 7th, so that everyone may enjoy fellowship at the Christmas party. Choir rehearsal will be held immediately following the morning worship service instead of in the evening.

Christmas Eve Service

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

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

We are grateful for the opportunity to update our friends at Good Hope on Christ Our Redeemer Church and the Brown family. And we are grateful for the prayers, support, and other means of encouragement that we have received from you over the past years as we ministered in Africa and now back in the US.

First a few words about our family. Gail recently lost her dad. We returned just this week from New Jersey, where the memorial service for "Pop" was held. Though it is a sad time, we thank God for the long life he lived (88 years) and his peaceful death. One of the great things at the memorial service was hearing another older man share how Gail's dad visited him and prayed with him several times even while he was sick in the hospital himself. What a great thing to hear! Pop had been a Presbyterian elder, and he continued his good work to the end.

Our "kids," Katie (23) and Alan (21) are both working. Katie graduated from East Carolina University last December. Alan is enrolled at the local community college, but still hopes to return to Africa as a safari guide one day. He spent 6 months last year with the Kenya Wildlife Service Institute, and Alan and Eddie also spent the month of April in Africa. Eddie's health is good. All of his follow-up MRIs after the tumor have been clear, and he is told this should not bother him again.



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

We remain encouraged about our church plant, but (as you know) it is hard work. In the past year we have had two families leave and three move away. So while our attendance remains around 70 each week, it feels as if we are treading water. We need to do more than tread water! It can also be discouraging when people leave. You are told that it will happen, but we want to do better.

The best news to me is how people are now taking ownership of things. Our commitment level seems to have risen. For the past two months, we've had a team of folks meeting to do some planning. This has been an encouraging time. We've had husbands and wives over for a meal at our place, spend a season in prayer, and then go through a planning tool we are using for each area of church life. Please pray for wisdom for us as we complete this process and then the ability to follow up on what we believe God is leading us to do.

The crucial need right now is for a space in which to meet. Please pray for this! The place we were meeting was sold out from under us. Right now we are meeting in a community center, which is a nice, clean space, but limited. There is a possibility of sharing a church building with a Messianic congregation that meets on Saturdays. Since they have purchased the building very recently themselves, they want to see more clearly what their needs are before they consider sharing the facility. We have other options, but they are a real stretch financially. And we have this economy to consider. Thank you for your prayers!

Thanks again for the partnership we share in the Gospel,
Eddie, Gail, Katie and Alan Brown

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

Good Hope Presbyterian Church
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December 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am Choir Rehearsal - 5:30pm	1	2 <u>December Deacons:</u> Matt Malanoski Jim Rowan	3	4	5 Ladies' Night Out at Cheryl Dudek's 7:00pm	6 Christmas Decorating Day at the church 10am-12noon
7 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am Choir Rehearsal - 12:30pm Christmas Party at the Maccdonalds' - 4:00pm	8 Session Meeting at the church - 7:30pm	9	10	11 Set-Up for the Christmas Play at the church	12	13 Christmas Play Dress Rehearsal at the church 9:00-11:30am
14 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am Choir Rehearsal - 12:30pm Christmas Play at the church - 7:00pm	15 Registration deadline for January 3 rd ladies' class on "How to Study Your Bible"	16	17	18	19	20
21 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am Distribution of Angel Tree Gifts Choir Rehearsal - 5:30pm	22	23	24 Candlelight Christmas Eve Service at the church - 5:00pm	25	26	27
28 Sunday School - 9:45am Worship Service - 11:00am	29	30 Info for January newsletter due to Kate Haber today!	31	1	2	3 "How to Study Your Bible" Precepts class at the church 9:00am - 3:00pm

"Back to the Past" on December 14th

Don't miss the annual children's Christmas play, coming up on **Sunday, December 14th**. In this year's play, entitled "Back to the Past," our talented and enthusiastic middle school students will portray time travelers who are searching for the true meaning of Christmas, while the elementary-aged children enact scenes from 2008, 1950, and colonial times, then finally the true story of the first Christmas in Bethlehem is enacted by children of all ages. We will all be encouraged not to forget the real reason for the season. Join us at 7:00pm on December 14th for "Back to the Past," and please bring a plate of **Christmas cookies** to share afterwards!

All children should plan to attend the final Sunday morning rehearsals on December 7th and 14th during the Sunday School hour. In addition, there will be a **dress rehearsal** on Saturday, December 13th. The middle school and older elementary students will begin practice promptly at 9:00am. Younger children need to join us at 10:00am, and the rehearsal should conclude by 11:30am.

Finally, a **set-up crew** is needed to prepare the stage for the play on Thursday, December 11th, and more strong arms are needed to tear down the stage on Monday, December 15th. Speak to Chris Waller if you are able to help in this way. Special thanks to those who have helped prepare already, with particular thanks to **Michelle Bosman** for collecting props and to **Mary Jane Bradford, Sally Johnson, and Tracy Young** for their sewing work. Our annual Christmas play promises to be a delight for all members, visitors, and other friends who attend on December 14th. Please be in prayer for the participants and our audience, and contact Chris Waller if you can help with remaining details! ❖

Daily Schedule of Bible Readings in December

December 1 - Judges 4-5	December 16 - I Samuel 3
December 2 - Judges 6	December 17 - I Samuel 4-5
December 3 - Judges 7	December 18 - I Samuel 6-7
December 4 - Judges 8	December 19 - I Samuel 8-9
December 5 - Judges 9-10	December 20 - I Samuel 10-11
December 6 - Judges 11-12	December 21 - I Samuel 12-13
December 7 - Judges 13-14	December 22 - I Samuel 14
December 8 - Judges 15-16	December 23 - I Samuel 15-16
December 9 - Judges 17-18	December 24 - I Samuel 17
December 10 - Judges 19-20	December 25 - I Samuel 18
December 11 - Judges 21	December 26 - I Samuel 19-20
December 12 - Ruth 1-2	December 27 - I Samuel 21-22
December 13 - Ruth 3-4	December 28 - I Samuel 23-24
December 14 - I Samuel 1	December 29 - I Samuel 25
December 15 - I Samuel 2	December 30 - I Samuel 26-27
	December 31 - I Samuel 28-29

Deliver a Gift to an Angel!

Delivery of gifts for Angel Tree will take place on Sunday, December 21st immediately after the morning worship service. Contact **Ed French** or **Faye Gerwin** if you'd like to be involved in this life-changing outreach.

Ladies, Make A New Year's Resolution Now—Study The Bible in 2009!

The Women's Ministry is pleased to announce the start of a Wednesday evening ladies' Bible study using Kay Arthur's Precept Upon Precept™ methodology and course materials. These courses use the *inductive study method* (observation, interpretation, application), which results in life-changing knowledge of God's holy Word and in-depth appreciation of God's character and His expectation of believers. These studies are open to all females, teenage and up, including those who do not worship at Good Hope. Precept studies have been called "the Rolls Royce" of Bible studies, because they open one's heart and mind to the ways of the Lord like no other approach. As a current Precept student at another church said: "The Precept studies are absolutely the best I've ever done. Once you've tasted the meat of the Word, it's hard to go back. I have only been doing these studies for a year, but I have learned so much. I'm just sorry I didn't start sooner."

A one-day course will be offered at the church on **Saturday, January 3rd** for ladies who have never taken a Precepts course. While this one-day class is not required before taking one of the courses, it is highly recommended, as it will cover all the techniques to maximize one's comprehension of God's Word. The \$18 course fee for this "how to" course will include a copy of Kay Arthur's book, *How to Study Your Bible*, a copy of the book of Ruth course, entitled *Kinsman Redeemer*, as well as other class materials. Students taking this one-day "how to" course do not have to take the *Kinsman Redeemer* course, but will be fully prepared to start the course that begins the following Wednesday evening. All classes will be held at Good Hope in the Fellowship Hall. The Wednesday evening classes will be held from 6:00–8:15pm. The first hour consists of facilitated discussion, classroom style, led by Precepts-trained leader, Sue McConnell; the second hour is a viewing of the DVD of Kay Arthur teaching on that week's study. More information is available at the special Precepts display in the narthex.

Course schedule for 2009:

1/3	How to Study Your Bible, Precept Upon Precept
1/7-1/21	Ruth aka "Kinsman Redeemer"
1/28	Review of "Kings & Prophets" material (from courses held elsewhere) for all students taking the Isaiah course that follows
2/4-5/20	Isaiah, Part 1 (includes one night off for Spring Break on 4/15)
5/27-9/9	Summer break (no classes)
9/16-11/18	Isaiah, Part 2 (includes one night of review on 9/16)

Prayerfully consider taking part in this new opportunity. For more information, contact **Sue McConnell** at (410) 489-9687 or sobriquet3921@hotmail.com. ❖

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