

Shepherd's Staff

December 2014

We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.

"You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth!"

Parkersburg Christian Reformed Church

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. ~ Church School 10:45 a.m. ~ Life Plus Wed., 6:30 p.m.

Snowed Under

It seems the snow came a little earlier than normal this year. I know I was not ready for the blanket of white to hide the work I did not get to. The early cold came at a time when a few repairs came into play making time a precious commodity. This left some things undone such as treating our lawn for those quaint little yellow flowers that arrive in the spring. Yet it is apparent that I am not the only one caught with work left undone as there is still standing corn in the field around our home.

Maybe you are one who grumbles at the sight of the snow. It is easy to complain if you are the one who must clear the snow from the driveway and walk ways. Sore backs and other strained muscles add to the misery. It also seems the temperature takes a dip and the wind whips up just in time to make the task of scooping snow even more "enjoyable".

Still the ground covered in the fresh white of the snow makes all things look clean. Still the ground is still littered with the leaves and corn stalks that did not get cleaned up. Maybe that is the difference between the snow and the white as snow condition we will have when we gather in eternity. We have scripture informing us that we will be dressed in snow white garments that will not hide any sins but reflect our newness brought to completion in Christ.

Seeing the new snow should cause us to consider our situation though. Are we living as the redeemed already now as Christ tells us we should? Having clean garments in glory will reflect the fact that we will sin no more. So what is keeping us from living with the glory we long for? Of course it must be more than a temporary cover-up. We are called to clothe ourselves even now with the purity of Christ in all that we do to bring the glory and honor of our actions to God. This is to be our living sacrifice.

Living as the redeemed should be observable through our actions that show our change already taking place. Loving God first and foremost and those around us as well as we love ourselves show the color of our current garment. Let's all work at portraying the results of the grace God has showered upon us so that we may begin wearing the whiter than snow look now.

Pastor Rus



Symbols of Christmas:

- **The Star:** A heavenly sign of prophecy fulfilled long, long ago- The shining hope of mankind.
- **The Color Red:** The first color of Christmas, symbolizing that Savior's sacrifice for all.
- **The Fir Tree:** Evergreen- the second color of Christmas shows everlasting light and life. The needles point up to heaven.
- **The Bell:** Rings out to guide lost sheep back to the fold, signifying that all are precious in His eyes.
- **The Candle:** A mirror of starlight, reflecting our thanks for the star of Bethlehem.
- **The Gift Bow:** Tied as we should all be tied together in bonds of goodwill forever.
- **The Candy Cane:** Represents the shape of the shepherd's crook, used to bring lost lambs back to the fold.
- **The Wreath:** A symbol of the never ending eternal value of love... having no end.



Long, Long Ago

~ Anonymous

Winds thru the olive trees
Softly did blow,
Round little Bethlehem
Long, long ago.

Sheep on the hillside lay
Whiter than snow
Shepherds were watching them,
Long, long ago.

Then from the happy sky,
Angels bent low
Singing their songs of joy.
Long, long ago.

For in a manger bed,
Cradled we know,
Christ came to Bethlehem,
Long, long ago.

Christmas gift giving can be stressful (and expensive). How about one of these simple and easy gifts instead?

1. Charity—Make a donation to a charity in that person's name.
2. Practical—Handmade soaps, grocery gift cards, favorite restaurant gift cards.
3. Personal—Give something the recipient loves that has shared sentimental value like a toy, a recipe, a picture.
4. Family gift—Rather than buy a gift for each person in another family, give one gift for the whole family. For example, magazine subscriptions, zoo passes, or fun family games.
5. Ebooks and audio—These can be delivered via email, but be sure the recipient is tech-savvy.
6. Food—Give all the ingredients (plus the recipe). Or bake some goodies like brownies or bread.
7. Time together later—Plan a lunch date, an afternoon tea, or other outing together. This could cost very little or even be free. Just sharing your time can be the greatest gift for some people.





December Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

- 12/6 Darlene Bruns
- 12/7 Mildred Rewerts
- 12/7 Delbert Cordes
- 12/7 Joel Reints
- 12/12 Angie Meester
- 12/14 Helen Druvenga
- 12/14 Clayton Groeneveld
- 12/20 Duane Anderson
- 12/20 Betty Mulder
- 12/27 Austin Shepard
- 12/31 John Oltman

Happy Anniversary

- 12/10 Ken & Jan Johnson
- 12/10 John & Karen Oltman
- 12/17 Mark & Lanae Kramer
- 12/26 Paul & Ruth Haan
- 12/27 Irv & Amy Haan

Reminder: If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Mulder by the 20th of the month. The goal is to have the newsletter in your mailboxes on the last Sunday of the month.



CRC Service Schedule

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Coffee*</i>
12/7	Dennis & Sharon (N) Marlyn & Marcia (S)	Ken Meester	Larry & Mary
12/14	Ken & Janet (N) Pat & Deb (S)	Ken Johnson	Don & Annie
12/21	Henry & Kathy (N) Don & Annie (S)	Ken Kramer	Pat & Deb
12/28	Delbert & Sharon (N) Mark & Lanae (S)	Ken Mehmenn	Paul Haan Family

*If you are unable to serve coffee on your Sunday as listed, please find your replacement. Thank you.

Christmas is Holy

F T T L F R A N K I N C E N S E B C M L T G Q
 V E L L L X W C A D Z L Z K J N C F K G L Y T
 P L E B A B R I M M T P E G P P K T H L W N G
 R C K G G E U J N T J E R U S A L E M K C A G
 I A G W C L G O J Y J C M M N I G A M Q X H L
 N R R H E A R S C E L E E K C A D E L G J P O
 C I E L L N F E F Z S O L R P L M Y A V K I R
 E M L C F N M P N V F U H B E G G M Y N M P I
 O A L H M O Y H B L N X S K A M H I E B T E A
 F N N R A U N R O H T A A S G T O K F L A M K
 P L O I N N C R F V C L T N R F S N R T R B R
 E P I S A C D Q J R W R Y I G V Y V I H S A T
 A R T T G E X C E W O S B R H E Z N R E T Q X
 C O A C E M P D X L K D T P A J L R J S S N K
 E C N H R E R K O C M R T R T M Y S B J W D V
 H L R I T N C G O N E E Q O N M R R O I V A S
 F A A L W T E L N V H H R P E L L I W D O O G
 T M C D R R F I L T E P B H V N A T I V I T Y
 R A N V S F G R R M L E R E D T V M V K T Z G
 V T I L K T L G H T H H K C A H B H G X T G M
 T I B Y E K N O D X T S N Y K N L F Y G O G C
 N O W I S E M E N J E V R C A M E L Q L N W K
 T N A N G E L I C P B T T V H G K F D D B Y Z

Advent	camel	Gloria	Magi	shepherd
alleluia	ceremonies	gold	manager	Savior
angelic	Christ Child	goodwill	Mary	shepherds
angels	creche	holy	miracle	stable
announcement	donkey	incarnation	myrrh	star
astrologers	Immanuel	inn	nativity	wise men
babe	Epiphany	Jerusalem	pageant	
baby	flocks	Jesus	Prince of Peace	
Bethlehem	frankincense	Joseph	proclamation	
birth	gifts	Lord	prophecy	