



SonLight

FIRST-MERIDIAN HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • 4701 N. CENTRAL AVE. • INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46205 • 283-1305

December 2011/January 2012

OUR MISSION IS TO ACCEPT, CELEBRATE, AND COMMUNICATE THE LOVE OF GOD IN JESUS CHRIST.

Youth Christmas Pageant

Mark your calendars ... On Sunday, December 18, we will have only one service of worship at 10:00 a.m. The Christmas Pageant presented by our youth will follow the sermon and wrap up our worship. This is always such a joyous celebration in the life of our church – and we invite you to join us for this special service.



All youth, toddler through middle school age, are invited to participate in our Pageant. If you are interested in a speaking part, please contact Betsy Grocki by Sunday, December 4. With many speaking parts available, both short and lengthy, we're sure to have room for every young person who would like to speak! We also invite all men to participate by singing with the Men's Glee Club.

Practice for the Pageant will be held:

- o **Sunday, November 27th** during Sunday School in the Chapel (youth only)
- o **Saturday, December 17th at 10:00 a.m.** in the Sanctuary (youth and Men's Glee Club)
- o **Sunday, December 18th at 8:45 a.m.** (youth and Men's Glee Club - prior to the service)

More information will be forthcoming in the next few weeks. Feel free to contact Betsy Grocki, bgrocki@indy.rr.com, 441-6941 with any questions. We look forward to seeing you then!!!

Pastor Search Update

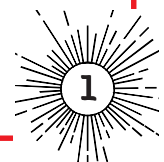
The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) was elected mid-October and has met weekly since their election. The chair is Elizabeth McDonald-Zwoyer, a recent college graduate and member of the church since her confirmation. If you have a recommendation of a candidate for the committee's consideration, please contact Elizabeth at elizabethmczwoyer@gmail.com. Please see page 8 for further information about this exciting phase of our transition process!

Advent Wednesday Evening Fellowship

We will meet on **December 7 and 14**, to prepare and celebrate the season of Advent and Christmas. We will gather from 5:45 to 6:30 p.m. for dinner; our activity/discussion time runs from 6:30-7:30 p.m., and childcare is available. **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7th** is our annual GINGERBREAD decorating evening.



Wednesday, December 14th, we will be making crafts to be given as gifts; more details about the actual project will be forthcoming. Hope you can join us!



God's Gift of Love

Several years ago, the New York Daily News carried an article written by Karen Zautyk entitled, "It Is Love That Makes Us Rich". She tells about a place in Edinburgh, Scotland called "The Museum of Childhood" filled with childhood treasures—teddy bears, rocking horses, model trains, books, dollhouses and cases of dolls of privileged children.



However, off in a corner is another case. Behind its glass pane is a solitary old raggedy doll. But then, it began its life raggedy. The doll's body is made of tattered brown socks stuffed with rags. Its arms are two thin sticks of wood, covered with wool. Its hair is a sock. It wears a plain gingham dress and a rough linen apron. For all its simplicity, it was made with painstaking effort. The head is the heel of man's shoe—a worn down, battered heel with nail heads visible around the edges. For a face, the doll has small bits of paper pasted on—paper eyes, nose and a mouth that does not smile.

Some might call it ugly but they would be wrong. It was a gift created by a parent poor in possessions but rich in love. And there is no doubt that this doll was loved. The sign on the case reads, "Doll belonging to London slum child, circa 1905". Karen writes, *"In all the Western World there were no slums bleaker. But somewhere in those slums, a sad and sorrowful doll was born—a doll that can bring tears to your eyes because it is so pitiful and because it is so very, very beautiful."*

To appreciate that story is to catch the significance of the Advent/Christmas season. The doll loved into life is you and me. Why should God love us so when we are far from being perfect creatures? There is not always a lot to recommend us—NOTHING BUT

LOVE, the height and depth of which is revealed in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ.

Think about it. ONLY GOD CAN GIVE CHRISTMAS! No one can make it happen. Not all the greenery, tiny white lights, Christmas carols or presents can make it happen. CHRISTMAS IS GOD'S GIFT OF LOVE TO YOU AND ME!

Take time in this season to reflect on the best Christmases you've known. Surely they've had a gift quality. Share your memories with your family or others, and then give thanks to God for the greatest gift of all—**THE GIFT OF JESUS CHRIST!**

*May
the true
spirit of the
Christmas Season
its joy, beauty and hope
and above all its abiding faith
live among you bringing you all the
blessings
of Christ
our Lord
the King of kings.*

— Bob Agnew

Christmas Morning is Pajama Sunday!

We hope you might make time on your Christmas morning to join us for worship at 10:00 a.m.! We invite you to come as you are ~ in your pajamas!



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

7:00 p.m.

Christmas has not always been a high, holy day. Early Christians felt the observance of birthdays was pagan. Their emphasis was on Jesus' death and resurrection and spreading Christ's teachings. The date of December 25 was most likely established by Pope Julius I around 325 CE in Rome.

The word "Christmas" is a combination of two words "Christ" and "Mass." Mass comes from the root word "mission." God sent Jesus into the world so that the world might be saved through him. This was his mission. It was Christ's Mass and thus Christmas.

In the tradition of the 4th century, our Christmas Eve service will be a celebration of Jesus' birth. It will focus on the Hope, Peace Joy and Love which came into the world through the birth of our Lord, *Emmanuel* (God with us).



Christmas Eve

Carols, scriptures and meditations will center on our Advent Wreath—the lighting candles for each Sunday in Advent and then on Christmas Eve the "Christ Candle."

The service ends with the singing of carols as we light our candles and proclaim, "**Jesus is the Light of World. The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.**"

Glory to God in the highest for this time of anticipation, renewal and joyous celebration.

In the words of the carol, "Angels, from the Realms of Glory":

*Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ the newborn King!*

Can You Spare a Drop?

by Kathy Zoppi

Do you have a desire to help others? Are you willing to give of your time, treasure and Blood? No, REALLY, BLOOD!

Blood DRIVE

Your donation of a pint of blood can save many lives. And, if you give blood regularly, it improves your health too!!

On December 11, the Indiana Blood Center has asked us to host a bloodmobile at the church. The bloodmobile is open to donations from anyone in the community, including church members, neighbors and friends. You probably know that the Christmas and New Year's season is especially critical for blood donations in Indianapolis. People need blood when they are having surgery, have accidents, or have some operations. Some blood and blood products are used to support patients who are very critically ill or having treatment for chronic illnesses.

If you are over 17 years of age, have a driver's license or photo ID, and are in good health, you can donate. It's pretty painless and you get cookies at the end. You will be screened for cholesterol and a number of diseases as a bonus.

If you want to make an appointment for a time to donate, call Rachel at the church office. If you are not sure if you are eligible to donate, check the website www.indianablood.org. If you want to come to the bloodmobile on 12/11, just show up with your ID. Eat a good breakfast (not just a donut hole) prior to donating, and join us in helping save lives.



Happy Birthday Jesus Party

On Sunday, January 8, we invite all the kids of the church to join us for a special party to celebrate the birth of Jesus! We will meet in the Gallery for traditional games and crafts, lunch and cake! We ask that the children bring 1-2 gently used toys of their very own that they will give to the baby Jesus (which we will deliver to the Julian Center and the Children's Bureau). This can be a wonderful opportunity to talk with your children about giving and being generous to other people because that's what Jesus encourages us to do. The party will run from 11:15 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.: please plan to pick up your children at 1:00. Parents are, of course, welcome to join us! Questions? Please talk to Trish or Catherine Fravel.



Mix It Up Sunday!!

On Sunday, January 8, we will have a combined service of worship at 10:00 a.m. This service will be led by folks from the congregation; Ibrahim Garba is in charge of the message. We will also celebrate communion during this service of worship. Please join us for this change-of-pace worship service!

Making a Joyful Noise!



We hope you have enjoyed the beautiful music in our worship services lately. In the AliveTime service, our SpiritHeart band continues to make a joyful noise unto the Lord! Mother and daughter **Michelle Brady** and **Alaina Dehnke** recently shared a heart-stopping ballad with lovely harmonies. **Tim Brickley**, a local recording artist, provided wonderful music on November 6. **Jennie DeVoe**, a congregational favorite, will be visiting us and leading music on December 4.

In the Classic Service each week, **Melissa McMahan** blesses us with her leadership and lovely singing while **Pat Finnegan** provides beautiful music on the organ. Kudos also go to our own **Elizabeth McDonald-Zwoyer**, who has enriched our Sunday morning worship experience.

As we look forward to the Advent season and the singing of favorite Christmas Carols, we give thanks for the gifts of time and talent by these fine musicians. We look forward to the children of the church leading music during their Christmas Pageant on December 18.

Join us for worship on Sunday mornings – you'll leave with a song in your heart!

DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012

Christmas Poinsettias

It's time to decorate the Chancel with the beauty of poinsettias. We will use the plants on December 18th and 24th. You can take the plant home with you after the Christmas Eve service or on Christmas Sunday, the 25th. The plants are \$10.00 each. Checks can be made out to FMHPC; please write "poinsettias" in the memo line of your check. You can leave this form in the collection plate or bring it to the office. The deadline for ordering poinsettias is **Wednesday, December 14th**. If you have any questions, please call Rachel at 283-1305. Thanks!



Name: _____

Number of Poinsettias: _____ x \$10.00 = Total enclosed: _____

I will take my plant _____ Please take my plant to a shut in _____



Dedication for the Bulletin:

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

To the Glory of God: _____

Giving Tree Gifts are Due!

The frost is barely on the pumpkin, but First-Meridian Height's Giving Tree is in full swing. Plan to take an ornament off the Giving Tree in the Gallery.



Each ornament represents a child from Kaleidoscope Youth Center, the JOY (Just Older Youth) program, and Northwood Christian Church Food Pantry families and contains information about the child and his/her gift wishes.

Plan to spend no more than \$30 per child. Gifts are to be returned wrapped (except for Northwood gifts) **NO LATER THAN Sunday, December 4.**

Cash donations are also appreciated to help Deacons fill in for those ornaments (children) that may not be selected. Also, canned food donations are encouraged to help fill Northwood's food pantry shelves during the holidays.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

FMH's day to ring bells for the Salvation Army is fast approaching! We will ring bells at the Broad Ripple Marsh (62nd and Keystone) on **Saturday, December 3** from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.. Each shift will be one hour with a minimum of two ringers per shift. Sign up with Lee Crist at church or email Leslie Crist at Leslie_Crist@yahoo.com.



Confirmation Begins in January

Organizing Meeting will be Sunday, December 11

Our confirmation class will begin in January. The confirmation class is designed for Middle School Youth — particularly 6th graders — with the intention of thinking through our faith and our church to consider becoming a member of the congregation.

Confirmation Class



We recognize that many youth are baptized as infants and their parents say on their behalf that they believe that Jesus Christ is their Lord and Savior. Confirmation is each youth's opportunity to make that claim for him/herself. All youth 6th grade and older are invited to participate; you don't have to have been baptized as a child to go through confirmation.

Each youth will be given a mentor to go through the confirmation process with him or her. I encourage the youth to participate in the class even if you choose not to join the church~ it's a wonderful experience! Confirmation classes will meet from 10:45 a.m.-noon on Sundays. Our first meeting of youth and mentors together will be January 22.

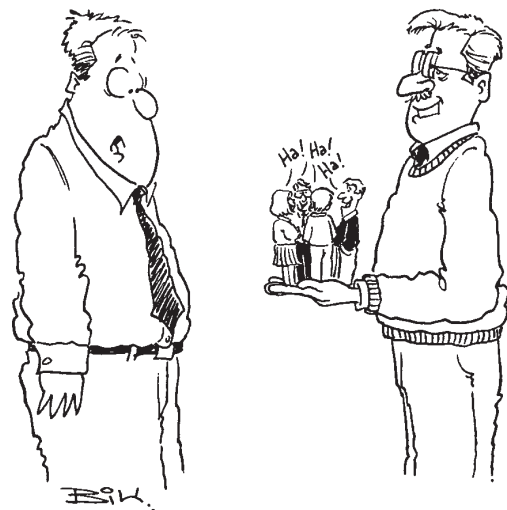
PARENTS and YOUTH — please plan to meet with Trish on Sunday December 11 to plan the calendar and ask any questions you may have. We will meet in the Wicker Room from 10:45-11:15 a.m. Any questions? Please talk to Trish (340-3354 cell or trishlisa@sbcglobal.net).

Small Groups Update

Thanks to everyone who recently responded to our survey regarding interest in small groups at FMHPC. We had a very positive response and are now in the planning process for small group creation. It looks like we will be offering a discussion group, service oriented group, and a Men's group. We have some awesome folks who have expressed an interest in co-facilitating the groups. Our goal is to have these groups 'ready to go' by mid January. Please look for more information in the near future via Sonlight, announcements, and email.



Church Chuckle



"So that's your small group."

DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012

P.W.O. Fellowship and Mission News

by Margo R. Gaines



Hi, ladies and gentlemen! Snow in October was enough white flakes for me, and I hope by the time you receive this newsletter that it would be the only snow thus far. But who am I kidding? This has been a busy year for most of First-Meridian Heights; we had our Mission Study Team do a terrific job with the focus groups, mission statement, visions and the whole process of preparing for the next stage of transition. Now we have our Pastor Nominating Committee working on our CIF (Congregation Information Form) and researching candidates for Head of Staff for FMHPC. And the women of this organization have worked to collect monies to share with Wheeler Center for women and children, baby goods for Wishard, sending our pledges to PCPWO world missions, and purchasing a new convection oven for our kitchen. So, December is here and we wish to see you for the following . . .

December Party

Come on Thursday, December 8, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. for our Christmas party. What do you need to bring? We are asking everyone to bring several items for the Northwood Food Pantry and a gift-wrapped white elephant item for our gift exchange. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m.

No Meetings in January

New Oven!

Many thanks to the PWO for funding the purchase of a new convection oven for the kitchen. It required some changes to the kitchen to install which also required spending by the PWO. It is a wonderful asset for cooking (it even has “french doors” that open vertically!) and will help our cook Karen Licht in preparing lovely meals for years to come.

February 2012

CT Board meeting is on February 2, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. in the church parlor. Circle 6 meeting is on February 9, 2011 at 10:30 a.m. in the church gallery. Be prepared to stuff puppy pillows and write valentine messages for our homebound friends. Lunch will be served at 12:00 p.m. (noon) at the cost of \$4.00. Please bring a friend.



Thanks

Due to the generous people who supported our fundraiser (Spaghetti Dinner) we raised \$600 for the Wheeler Mission Center for Women and Children and donated clothes and ‘what not’ items to this organization. The women of the PWO say “thank you” to our church friends. It takes a church village to make a difference in people’s lives, and the love of God to share the joy of giving.



The First Noel

Does this story ever get too old to hear? Or does this carol get too old to sing? My reply is no! We have heard how the angels awoken the shepherds to the birth of our Savior, and the joy they shared for this event. Every year we as Christians celebrate the birth of Christ and we welcome the meaning of his birth in our lives. Without His birth will there be any salvation? Without His birth will there be the Holy Spirit? Without His birth will there be the “Good News”? God came to us in the flesh and that story never gets too old to tell, nor sing. Praise be to God!



Pastor Search Update

First-Meridian Heights has entered the final phase in our transition process. The Pastor Nominating Committee has been formed and has begun its search for our next Head Pastor. Here are the steps to be taken in this phase:

Phase IV: Discerning a Call

Listening for God's mutual call to the church and to First Meridian Height's new pastor through the work of the Pastor Nominating Committee:

- Pastor Nominating Committee writes Church Information Form, based on the Mission Study
- Session approves CIF
- Committee on Ministry approves CIF
- CIF is submitted to PC(USA) Church Leadership Connection data base
- PNC receives pastors' Personal Information Forms from CLC and from other interested candidates
- PNC studies PIFs, contacts references, and prayerfully discerns the best possibilities for First Meridian Heights PC
- PNC enters into conversations with selected candidates and seeks the guidance of the Holy Spirit in discerning the call God intends for the church
- The mutual call for the church and the candidate is discerned
- COM interviews the candidate and authorizes a Congregational Meeting
- The Congregational Meeting is held to call the church's new pastor
- The church community welcomes the new pastor to First Meridian Heights

It's Pledge Time!

Have you made your pledge yet? As you prayerfully consider what God is calling you to give to First-Meridian Heights in 2012, you may find this review of the recent history of pledging and giving at FMH:



2010:	61 pledges \$181,510 pledged \$173,421 pledges received \$10,173 non-pledged received
2011:	67 pledges \$179,019 pledged \$139,791 pledges received as of 11/17 \$10,173 non-pledged received as of 11/17 (yes, the same amount as in all of 2010!)
2012:	67 pledges so far \$192,500 pledged so far \$216,000 pledge goal

As you can see, we are still short of our pledge goal for the year. Pledging is important so that our church leadership can plan programming for the coming year.

For 2012, several members have been able to answer the call from Session to increase their giving by \$5.00 a week, some have increased by more! Others have stayed the same - but their pledges are still vital to the life of the church. Reminder letters have been sent to those who have yet to pledge. Every pledge makes a difference! Thank you for supporting FMHPC!



DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012

December and January Birthdays

December 1	P.J. Grocki Louise Stebbing Sydney Stephenson	December 16	Imogene Moore
December 3	Lee Crist Meryl Madrick Kathleen Zoppi	December 20	Joe Stilwell
December 7	Bonnie Uhrig Kendyl Monke	December 21	Shannon Facey
December 13	Barbara Brake	December 23	Eric Sheets
December 15	John Newton Lexi Knoll Lucy Emhardt	December 24	Skip Kappes
		December 27	Daniel Tran
		December 29	Ellis Marie Smith
		December 30	William Hosford
		December 31	Eric Jones



To our FMH family and friends,

Thank you once again to those of you who sent cards and condolences after my mom's passing in July. Your support during the last two years during my mother's battle with cancer was so heartfelt and genuine, and a comfort during our times of stress and unknown. We know there are many others who have traveled this road before and are here to help guide us in our days of sadness still to come.

Your caring words and warm hugs give us strength to remember the wonderful memories created during her short time with us.

The Hoberty Family
Chris, Mara, Alex & Carson

Carole and Jay Kirkpatrick would like to thank the ministers and all of our church family for their cards and prayers after the passing of Carole's brother, Marty. It is a very difficult time, and we couldn't have gotten through it without your support. Many thanks.



January 9	Virginia Hatfield Barbara Storer
January 10	Susanne Harlow Zachary Harlow
January 11	Josie Nowak
January 12	Susie Stilwell
January 14	Virginia Blum
January 15	Paul Grocki
January 16	Cleva Duncan
January 19	Josi Miller
January 21	Ann Phend
January 22	Paula Newton
January 25	Jill Billups Diana Smith
January 27	Dottie Craig
January 29	Charles Mathews Marilyn Emerson



DECEMBER 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>Church Office: 283-1305</p> <p>Email: fmhpc@live.com</p> <p>www.fmhpc.org</p>				1	2	3 9:00-5:00 - Salvation Army Bell Ringing
4 9:30 - AliveTime 10:45 - Classic Service Giving Tree gifts due!	5	6	7 10:00 - Bible Study 5:45 - Dinner 6:30 - Advent Fellowship - Gingerbread	8 11:00 - PWO Christmas Party	9	10
11 9:30 - AliveTime 10:45 - Classic Service 10:45 - Confir- mation Class meeting Blood Drive	12	13	14 Poinsettia orders due! 10:00 - Bible Study 5:45 - Dinner 6:30 - Advent Fellowship	15	16	17 10:00 - Christmas Pageant Rehearsal - children and Men's Glee Club
18 8:45 - Pageant rehearsal 10:00 - Worship and Christmas Pageant	19 7:00 - Session and Deacons Meetings	20	21 10:00 - Bible Study	22	23 12:30 - Mariners Bridge	24 7:00 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship
25 <i>Merry Christmas!</i> 10:00 - Worship - Pajama Sunday	26	27	28 10:00 - Bible Study	29	30	31

Sunday Schedule

9:30 - 10:30

AliveTime
Sunday School/child care
Adult Education classes

10:45 - 11:45

Classic Service
Child care
Adult Classes

10:30 - 10:45

Coffee Time

5:00 - 7:30

Senior Highs



JANUARY 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p><i>Happy New Year!</i></p> <p>10:00 - Worship</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>10:00 - Bible Study</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <p>10:00 - Worship - Mix It Up! 11:15 - Happy Birthday Jesus Party</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">9</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">10</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">11</p> <p>10:00 - Bible Study</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">12</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">13</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">14</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">15</p> <p>9:30 - AliveTime 10:45 - Classic Service</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">16</p> <p>7:00 - Session and Deacons Meetings</p> <p><i>SonLight</i> Deadline</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">17</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">18</p> <p>10:00 - Bible Study</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">19</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">20</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">21</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">22</p> <p>9:30 - AliveTime 10:45 - Classic Service</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">23</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">24</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">25</p> <p>10:00 - Bible Study</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">26</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">27</p> <p>12:30 - Mariners Bridge Women's Retreat</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">28</p> <p>Women's Retreat</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">29</p> <p>9:30 - AliveTime 10:45 - Classic Service</p> <p>Women's Retreat</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">31</p>	<p>Church Office: 283-1305</p> <p>Email: fmhpc@live.com</p> <p>www.fmhpc.org</p>			



Please help us recycle by placing
your bulletins in the marked
boxes as you leave the sanctuary!
Thank you!



SonLight

Women's Retreat to Geneva Center January 27-29, 2012

The weekend of January 27-29th is our annual time away for renewal, spiritual growth and of course, fellowship with other amazing women! We head north to Geneva Center, a Presbyterian Retreat center located about 2 hours north of Indianapolis.

The theme for the retreat is ENNEGRAMS. This is an ancient way of recognizing that people approach the world from different perspectives, and examining the enneagram helps us to both know ourselves more fully and be more open and understanding of others.

We will have a brief gathering on Friday evening around 8:30 or 9:00 p.m. (whenever most of our group arrives) then start again on Saturday morning, when we'll have 2 sessions. Saturday afternoon is completely free for

you to take care of yourself...we'll have massage therapists available, some crafty things to do (or bring your own), time for naps or reading, games and puzzles and lots of people to sit around and chat with. We'll gather again Saturday evening for a session. Sunday morning we'll have one more session then will close with worship. Our weekend concludes with lunch on Sunday before heading home.

Accommodations are 2 people per room with a shared bathroom between 2 rooms. Meals, linens and towels are provided for us. The cost for the weekend is \$130 to share a room (it is possible to pay extra for a single room); scholarships are available- just talk to Trish! Further questions can be addressed to Trish Lisa (340-3354). Hope you can join us for a wonderful weekend!



SonLight

**FIRST-MERIDIAN HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
4701 N. CENTRAL AVE.
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46205**

RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED

