



PINNACLE VISTAS

The Newsletter for Pinnacle Presbyterian Church, Scottsdale, Ariz. • December 2008

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH US!



To celebrate the birth of Christ, please join us for one of our Christmas Eve Worship Services on Dec. 24:

3 p.m. Sacrament of Holy Communion

5 p.m. Family Service (childcare provided)

8 p.m. Candlelight Worship with Choir

10 p.m. Candlelight Worship with Choir

All services are in the Sanctuary.

“THE LOCATION OF GOD”

In a sermon recently I floated a question about where we “place” God in our mind’s eye. I wondered aloud (and even suggested) that for many of us we put God “out there”: We look up to the heavens when we think of God, we look out into space, we think of the cosmos or we simply think God is far away. For many of us this idea is almost subconscious.

It’s like all the little cartoons of an old bearded man way up on a cloud in the sky have penetrated and implanted themselves in our minds.

I believe the heart of Christianity should wipe away this imprinted image.

The person of Jesus shatters the image of God being far away.

During Advent, as we await the celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas, we are pregnant with the reminder that God is with us. (After all, this is the meaning of the name Emmanuel.)

The stories of Jesus are a living reminder of God’s proximity to humanity: God is in our midst, not out there, far away.

If we believe that God is life, then in every breath and movement God is here. If we believe that God is love, then in every loving thought, word and action God is here. If we believe that God is generous, then in every act of emptying ourselves for the benefit of others God is here.

As stock prices fluctuate, as politicians change, as calendars fill up, as children run from one activity to another, as life goes on, I challenge you to remember that Jesus’ birth is a reminder to us all that God is in the midst of us, right here. God is present, God is loving, and God is moving, and God is the essence of living.

Celebrate Emmanuel... God with us!

With Love,
— Mac



Rev. Mac Schafer,
interim pastor

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING ANDRE HOUSE DONATION DRIVE

Thank you for all the generous donations PPC members have made to help meet the winter needs of the extremely poor people served by Andre House.

The blankets, sleeping bags, warm clothing, toiletries and more will be of great help to people living on the streets.

We are no longer accepting donations, so please hold on to any items you wish to donate for the next Andre House drive.

PPC December volunteer dates for meal preparation at Andre House are Tuesday, Dec. 9, Thursday, Dec. 11 and Sunday, Dec. 28.

VOLUNTEER

First Monday
Mission Committee meets in Chapel Conference Room at 7 p.m.

First Tuesday
Andre House

First Thursday
Andre House

Fourth Sunday
Andre House
Vista del Camino Food Bank Drive

PPC'S CONNECTION TO LEBANON MISSION

Pinnacle has a connection with a missionary couple working with the Presbyterian Church in Lebanon. Deanna and Mike Womack are friends of Rev. Kristin and Brandon Willett and attended Princeton University with them.

Mike and Deanna have visited Pinnacle and the PPC Mission Committee would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to them.

In August, they moved to Zahle where they are mission volunteers at a Presbyterian school (SES) serving 800 students from pre-school to 12th grade. Mike teaches high school English and Deanna is responsible for morning chapel services, Christian counseling, and the school’s other spiritual activities. As missionaries, they feel honored to represent the Presbyterian Church and to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ in a nation that has seen much turmoil.



Mike and Deanna
Womack

Please see **MISSION** on page 11

CHRISTIANITY 101 LOOKS AT FUNDAMENTALS OF OUR FAITH

During this Season of Advent, spend time reflecting on your faith as we discuss the topics central to our Christian beliefs and life during Christianity 101: Fundamentals of Our Faith.

Bring your questions as we explore these foundational building blocks.

Attend one session or all as each will be an independent class. Classes will be at 11:15 a.m. Sundays in Room 1 of Fellowship Hall.

Class Dates	Topic	Leader
Nov. 30	God	Rev. Mac Schafer
Dec. 7	Jesus	Rev. Kristin Willett
Dec. 14	Holy Spirit	Rev. Mac Schafer
Dec. 21	The Bible	Rev. Fran Park

PARABOLA DISCUSSION GROUP ON DEC. 7

Parabola is a quarterly journal, one of the pioneering publications on the subject of myth and tradition. Every issue explores one of the facets of human existence from the point of view of a variety of the world's religious and spiritual traditions, through the prism of story and symbol, myth, ritual and sacred teachings.



The journal holds that the questions are as fascinating and thought-provoking as the answers, and we seek to open and sustain discussion of the oldest questions of all.

Join Dave Ropp at 11:15 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 7, in the Chapel Conference Room for discussions on *Parabola's* various articles and themes.

Parabola is sold at better bookstores, such as Barnes & Noble, Borders and Bookmans or by subscription at parabola.org.

For more information or to sign up for the discussions, contact Dave at 480.585.0224 or e-mail him at droppoff@att.net.

MARK YOUR CALENDER FOR CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS: DEC. 7



Certainly one of the most beloved concerts of the season, Pinnacle's Celebration of Christmas continues to thrill and inspire all who attend.

This annual holiday concert features Pinnacle's Chancel Choir and Pinnacle Pealers along with special guests, Southwest Brass, as they usher in the holiday season with carols both old and new. Culled from

the rich heritage of Advent and Christmas music, there is sure to be something for everyone.

The two concerts will be held in the sanctuary at 4 and 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7. Admission to this celebration is free, however a special offering will be received to support Casa de la Misericordia in Nogales, Mexico, and to further the fine arts program of Pinnacle Presbyterian Church.

SALT RIVER BRASS PERFORMS DEC. 20

The bright bold sounds of Salt River Brass have been entertaining Valley audiences since 1988. The ensemble will perform at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 20, in the Sanctuary.

This holiday feast for all ages blends classics such as Bizet's "Farandale" with jazzy favorites like "Here Comes Santa Claus" that capture the child-like wonder of the season.

Please see **MUSIC** on page 8

PARENTS: ENJOY A DAY OUT ON DEC. 6

Pinnacle's youth are offering free babysitting for parents as they kick off the holiday season. Drop off your kids to play with our youth from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6. Kids should bring a sack lunch.

To participate you need to RSVP by Dec. 1 by e-mailing Pastor Kristin at kwillett@pinnaclepres.org.

Any donations will go towards the High School summer mission trip. We look forward to spending the day with your kids!

MUG N' MUFFIN REUNION TO DECORATE CHRISTMAS TREE

Calling all past, present and future Mug N' Muffiners: It's time to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. Come join in for a great morning of service to our church as we help decorate the sanctuary with all the festive ornaments for this Advent season.

We will meet in the sanctuary at 9 a.m. Monday, Dec. 1, to start unpacking garlands and setting up trees.

Please remember to bring gardening gloves for fluffing the garlands. Childcare will be provided in the nursery.

Please let Katy Schafer, 480.513.0942, know if you can come. We need you! Many hands make light work.

REGULAR MEETING DATES: Come have a cup of coffee and a devotional lesson with other moms of young children. The group usually meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month.

Our next meetings are Wednesday, Dec. 3 and 17, in Room 2 of Fellowship Hall. Childcare is provided in the Sanctuary nursery. Mug N' Muffin starts at 9:30 a.m. and finishes around 11:15 a.m.



SAVE JAN. 17 FOR AMIGOS' BEER AND BRATS

Mark your calendar now to join the Amigos for a Beer and Brats party on Jan. 7.

Watch the bulletin for more details as the date nears.

HERE'S THE EARLY SCOOP ON DECEMBER CHURCH SCHOOL

There is no Church School on Sunday, Dec. 14, so families may enjoy Christmas J-O-Y!, and on Sunday, Dec. 28, for winter break.

Join us the other Sundays in December for these classes:

- 3s and 4s will learn of Jesus' birth – how Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago, and born in a stable.

- Kindergartners will also learn of Jesus' birth – that Jesus is the Savior God promised, and was born in Bethlehem.

- Our 1st–4th graders will be learning about Christmas Around the World – through a Mexican procession, Las Posadas, Christmas Carols, Christmas decorations, and more!

- Our 5th and 6th graders are continuing in their survey of the New Testament, and will have a special Christmas Session in December.

CLUB 46 PLANS CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR DEC. 19

Club 46 will hold a Christmas Party and Goofy Gift Exchange on Friday, Dec. 19.



Join us for an afternoon Christmas cheer, goofy gifts, games and more! Details to follow!

We've had some great times with bowling (strikes, spares, or gutter balls, anyone?), Halloween fun at the Balvin's house, the Corn Maze and our churchwide scavenger hunt.

Come join us in December, and bring a friend. Club 46 is open to all 4th, 5th, and 6th graders.

CLUB WED PREPARES FOR CHRISTMAS J-O-Y!

Due to the rehearsal schedule for Christmas J-O-Y!, some of our classes are on hiatus until January.

Our Questers will continue to explore their Faith Connection with the beloved Veggie Tales, and our Lamb Brigade kids continue their learn

Please see **CHILDREN** on next page

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

BIRTH

The congregation celebrates the birth of:

Caroline Margaret Jones, daughter of **Laurie and Brad Jones**, born Nov. 1.

SYMPATHY

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to:

The family of member **Lee Combs Smith**

Margaret Ebert on the death of her sister, **Janet**

Paula Thoms and **Susan Kruidenier** on the death of their mother and grandmother, **Frances Thoms**

Carole Vandersteeg on the death of her mother

Mimi Moyer on the death of her sister, **Elma Irene Asel**

Stephanie Webster on the death of her mother, **Louise Beard**

Jeff Schapira on the death of his mother, **Edith Schapira**

CHILDREN

From previous page

ing through Veggie Tales videos.

Lion Pride will begin meeting again in January.

Everyone is invited to join us for caroling at Classic Residence at 5:45 Wednesday, Dec. 17.

Please note Club Wed classes will be on break Dec. 24 and 31, and will resume Jan. 7

SHARE AN HOUR WITH OUR CHILDREN

Can you share one hour with our children? If so, please contact Debbie Lisk to be added to the Sunday School substitute list.

We are looking for people to be available to help out just once or twice throughout the course of the year. Please contact Debbie at 480.585.9448 ext. 203, or dlisk@pinnaclepres.org.

MUSIC

From page 5

The American folk tune “Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head” brings home the heart and soul of Christmas. Add a delightful soprano soloist leading an audience sing along and you are guaranteed an exceptional holiday experience.

Tickets are available through ticketforce.com or Sunday mornings.

PINNACLE PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL

PRESCHOOL STAFF PRESENTS AT NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Preschool Director Sabrina Ball, along with studio teacher Cheryl Lundberg and classroom teacher Juliet Mendon, presented the long-



term project “How a Castle Came to Life in the Desert: Stories of Collaboration at One Reggio-Inspired Preschool” at the National Association of Education of Young Children’s (NAEYC) national conference in Dallas on Nov. 8.

The NAEYC Annual Conference is attended by over 15,000 early childhood educators from around the world.

“We are incredibly honored to have been chosen to present our project at the NAEYC Conference this year since only 10 percent of proposals are actually chosen to be presented,” Director Sabrina Ball said.

After spending four days of attending seminars and presenting our project, the seven staff members attending the conference headed out to the Dallas Museum of Art to attend the King Tut traveling exhibit.

PUMPKIN PATCH PROCEEDS BENEFIT HAITI MISSION

This past January, a group from PPC spent six days with the “Mother Theresa” of Haiti, Pastor Luc Deratus. Pastor Luc leads a 20-year-old mission, Harmony Ministries, that serves the poorest of the poor in three areas of Haiti.

There are a multitude of opportunities for Pinnacle to be “in mission” with Pastor Luc and Harmony Ministries. To help, Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool will be donating \$500 from the pumpkin patch proceeds towards this very worthwhile cause that will assist with the funding of their schools.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Dec. 1

Thomas Jimerson
Monette Lasater
Flannery Miller

Dec. 2

Ava Bianco
Michael Biondo
Betty Garrod

Dec. 3

Tracee Balvin
Ellis Bergey
Bryce Fitzgerald
Taylor Norman
Stephanie Webster

Derek Wilson

Dec. 4

Karen Moore
Mary Westoby

Dec. 5

Alexandra DeWeese
Ryan Gropel
Catherine Kalina
Sarah Klemmer
Michael Pascucci
Owen Rhodes
Curtis Sorenson
Caitlyn Walker

Dec. 6

Matthew Behrenbrin
Paul Premo

Dec. 7

Alyssa Coughenour
Barb Dios
Dianne Drake
Lindsay Lesnick
Ryan Sanchez
Harlan Stratton

Dec. 8

Richard Ebert
Leyla Hobbi

Andy Yaconis

Dec. 9

Rev Mac Schafer
Christopher Hylton

Dec. 10

Dean Coughenour
Vicki Dillon

Dec. 11

Regan Danis
Jeanee Dean
Rosalea McLemore
Margaret Swanson

Dec. 12

Alexander Bright
Arlene Johnson

Dec. 13

Kelsey Casas
Tony Walker
Rev. Kristin Willett
Catherine Yelanich

Dec. 14

Marcia Sobek

Dec. 15

Jeffrey Miller
Grayson Morris
Parris Richie

Dec. 16

Doug Brown
Taylor Clarkin

Dec. 17

Jamee Balvin
Jaryn Leming
Kamryn Smith

Dec. 18

William Kessler
Blair Myers
Hans Peyer
Lauren Pille
Elyce Walthall

Dec. 19

Janet Halliday
Nancy Noyes
Greer Pattison
Henry Rasmussen

Dec. 21

Justin Augustine
Clare Cline
Jarett Upchurch

Dec. 22

Carolyn Baer
Jack Mason

Dec. 24

Sara Zeumer

Dec. 25

Virginia Belt

Dec. 26

Rodger Wilson

Dec. 27

Ralph Pucci

Dec. 28

Sydney Clark
Linda Coder
Alice Roe

Dec. 29

Davis Hartman

Dec. 30

John Brenalvirez
Tom Clark
Jaren Habel
Brent Whittington

Dec. 31

Wallace Davis
Cameron Foutch
Becky Le Shana
Hunter Schafer
Mary Vedder

CAPITAL PROGRAM UPDATE

The last bills are coming in and we are actively looking for the final \$400,000 pledged, but not yet received, to the Capital Campaign.



As the construction nears completion, everyone is excited to have the new facilities in use by yearend. Thanks to all who have helped the project become a reality.

IRA OPPORTUNITY

The new TARP legislation extended the benefit to 2008-09 for persons over 70-1/2 to be able to gift IRA funds directly to charitable organizations. If you are planning to make a final contribution to Pinnacle in December, let the federal government pay some by making a direct withdrawal from your IRA to the church. Contact the business office for details.

MISSION From page 3

If you would like to follow their work, please visit their Web site at: <http://web.mac.com/mikewomack/Mission>.

Also, if you would like to support their work with a financial donation of any size, please make your check payable to Pinnacle Presbyterian Church with a notation that it is to go to Lebanon Mission Support.

Any questions, contact Pastor Kristin or Sally Williams.

PET OF THE PARISH



MEET RILEY He's an 8-year-old, Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier that sits and shakes hands, barks for "please" and rolls over after lying down. He gets very upset by coyotes, javelinas and rabbits running in the yard. Riley is Mrs. Nell Myers' pet and Pinnacle's Pet of the Parish for December. Nominate a Pet of the Parish: Send its name, age, breed, any unique skills and the owner's name to the church office.