



FLPC News

HEAD, HEART AND HANDS IN THE SERVICE OF CHRIST



Issue No. 25

December 8, 2021

Dear Friends,

December 21st is the winter solstice, the shortest day, and the longest night of the year. And this year, I want to encourage you to think of those around you who are experiencing darkness and figure out a small way to bring light into their lives.

John 1:5 says, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light." (Common English Bible Translation) John is talking about the advent of Jesus Christ into the world. And we believe that God's presence is both light and life for us and for the whole world. So, I encourage you to think of December 21st as **John 1:5 Day!** Do something to dispel someone's darkness on that day, or during that week. You might send a card to someone that you know has had a hard year. You could leave a single flower for someone who is grieving with the scripture attached. Your family could take sidewalk chalk and write words of encouragement outside of an emergency room, a police or fire station, or other service providers. Gather a few friends and hold a "prayer flash mob", praying for a specific person and surrounding them with love. Our Stephen Ministers are creating a Prayer Wall on which the congregation will be invited to write their prayer requests. Be creative and take the challenge to bring light into the darkness of the world.

In our worship on Sunday, December 19th, we will be focusing on Love and Light. You are invited to worship at either 10am and/or the 5pm on December 19th. Remember that the 5pm Advent Worship Service will be outside in the Rockbridge Parking Lot and will combine fire pits, s'mores, and hot chocolate with worship! There will be a special John 1:5 craft opportunity for children during Sunday morning Faith Formation classes and before the 5pm Worship Service. And the names of the members of our faith community who have died in this last year will be printed in the worship bulletin on December 19th. It might be that you will choose to do something for those families who are grieving the death of a loved one.

In all that we do, those who follow Jesus are to be good news to the world. The Angels told the shepherds that they appeared in the sky over Bethlehem to bring wonderful, joyous news for all people! They told the shepherds that the savior had just been born, and then there was an angel party in the sky, and everyone praised God!

There is much darkness, grief, hate, anger, and frustration in our world. So, on (or around) December 21st, do what you can to bring light, comfort, love, reconciliation, and patience to the world that God has made, loves, and will redeem! We want to be part of God's solution.

Please help us celebrate December 21st as **John 1:5 Day!** And if it spills over into the other days of the year well that is just plain GREAT NEWS!

Holy Advent to you all!

Ellen

Ellen Fowler Skidmore

Baking Gratitude
Advent Service Project

THANK YOU to all who baked and delivered items for our Baking Gratitude service project. We delivered cookies, cakes, snack mixes and more along with a thank you letter from Ellen to four Columbia Fire Departments, two hospital emergency rooms, and the Forest Acres Police Department. What a lovely way to say thank you to those who serve our community!

Senior Lunch Christmas Program
Thursday, December 16, Noon

Senior Lunch is back with a special in-person Christmas musical program featuring Sylvia Trimmier and Charles Huff. Boxed lunches will be provided from Crossings Deli for \$7 per person. Bring a friend and come enjoy some Christmas music and your FLPC friends!
Register by Monday, December 13, by calling the church office. (803-787-5672)

2021 Christmas Memorial/Honorarium Order Form

To make a contribution to Christmas Joy Offering in memory or in honor of a loved one, please complete the form below. You may place it in the offering plate, mail it to the church, email it to the church, or bring it to the church office along with a minimum donation of \$10.00.

Please make your check payable to FLPC. The deadline is **December 15**. Memorials and Honoraria will be listed in the December 19 and December 24 bulletins.

Please print clearly so that your information will be listed correctly. Thank you!

GIVEN by _____

In HONOR of _____

In MEMORY of _____

This gift is a tax-deductible contribution.

PASTORAL CARE CONTACTS

- ◆ Ellen Skidmore - 803-463-7586/ellenskidmore@flpc.org
- ◆ Eric Skidmore - 803-543-9859/zacchaeus@sc.rr.com
- ◆ Ed Black - 803-240-0192/edblack@flpc.org

Stephen Ministry Contacts

- ◆ Wayne Harris - 803-608-1187/wcharris1973@gmail.com
- ◆ Margaret Harris - 803-608-1477/mmck1950@gmail.com
- ◆ Bettianne Davenport - 803-530-6018/bettianned@sc.rr.com

Holiday Warning!

The holidays are a “high season” for scammers and identity theft. SLED suggests the following guidelines:

- If you are asked to share personal information in the course of purchasing items online, please think twice about that purchase.
- Keep a close eye on your financial accounts
- Be cautious in handling any email with a holiday related subject line, attachments, or hyperlinks, or when an email speaks of gifts, coupons, gift cards, or anything that must be done urgently, within the hour, or by the end of day.
- Beware of social media please, online marketplaces, texts or door-to-door solicitations.
- Online:
 - ◇ Keep your anti-virus software up to date and run updates regularly
 - ◇ Scammers can make phone calls look like they come from anywhere (the IRS, a business you know, etc.) Don’t give out personal information unless you placed the call.
 - ◇ When making online transactions, ensure that they are encrypted. Look to be sure that the lock symbol in the website’s URL is “locked”.
 - ◇ Do not click on any email links unless you are certain you know who it comes from. Check to be sure that the name matches the email address.
 - ◇ Instead of replying online to emails from financial institutions, pick up the phone and verify by calling your institution directly.



Capital Campaign Construction Updates:

- Things are moving along with the Capital Campaign. Next week the construction for adding to the wall on the playground will start. This will make the playground level and inclusive for everyone. The playground will remain off limits. Please speak to your children about staying away from this construction zone.
- The landscape plan is well underway. They have begun to build the rain gardens below the playground. This will help us be good stewards of the environment and to our neighbors by capturing water instead of it going into Gill’s Creek. They have also dug out the courtyard and are starting to plant trees and shrubs. The new well has been installed along with the irrigation system. The landscape plans are in the business manager’s office if you would like to see them.
- Behind the scenes, contracts have been signed for the following: security cameras, telephone system upgrade, sealing of the stained glass windows, and a Pelican Thermostat system. The kitchen, community room and Family Promise shower plans are almost finalized. Once finalized, they will be sent out for General Contractor bids.
- A big thank you to those that are serving on the committee: Steve Hyman, chair; Joe Davenport, Sissy Ervin, William Hunter, Cathy Hyman and Travis Taylor. There are several others that are also helping with the kitchen design and we are grateful for them and their talents: Kim Binnicker, Steve Etheredge, Ray Nix, Laura Wannamaker, and Cindy Welborn.



Advent and Christmas Schedule



December 12 – Third Sunday of Advent—The Candle of Peace

10:00 am Worship Service

5:00 pm Children's Christmas Program - Sanctuary

Come to the sanctuary or watch via live stream at 5 PM to see more than 30 children participate in this year's program! Thanks to all of our children who are either singing, reading Scripture, or both!

December 19 – Fourth Sunday of Advent - The Candle of Love

10:00 am Worship Service

5:00 pm Evening Service - Rockbridge Rd Parking Lot

Join your church family in the Rockbridge parking lot at 5 PM to worship God and hear messages from FLPC members reflecting on John 1:5. Hot chocolate will be provided throughout the service, and we'll make s'mores afterwards.

December 21 - John 1:5 Day

On the day when the dark of night lasts the longest, we invite you to witness to the light of Christ by acknowledging and addressing the grief of someone else with an act of kindness or thoughtful remembrance. On this day, make a plan to name, acknowledge and to address the grief that surrounds us in ways that bring light, hope and love to those who are grieving.

December 24 – Christmas Eve Services—The Christ Candle

5:00 pm Family Service and communion - Sanctuary

This 45-minute service is for the young and young at heart. A simple retelling of the Christmas story is combined with familiar Advent and Christmas carols. Communion is served, and the story is brought to life by larger-than-life figures that give the service a sense of majesty and mystery. Dress is casual. Nursery provided for children ages 3 and under.

8:00 pm Candlelight Service and Communion – Sanctuary and Livestream

This traditional Christmas Eve service combines the beauty of candlelight Communion with the beauty of well-loved Advent and Christmas carols. Come and wait with us as we celebrate the coming of Christ into the world! No nursery provided for this service.

December 26 - 1st Sunday of the Christmas Season

10:00 am Worship Service - *Dress casually and come for a brief, informal worship service in the sanctuary. No Sunday Faith Formation.*

January 2, 2022 – Epiphany Sunday

10:00 am - All Saints Celebration with Communion

