

# OCEAN *Views*

OCEAN VIEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DECEMBER 2016



## From the Pastor Gerald Egger

### Shalom

The season of hope, peace, joy, and love is here. I pray that some of those sensations may return to my heart. November was a difficult month for some of us. I enter Advent this year with a vague sense of hopelessness, upheaval, despair, and mistrust.

The Hebrew word shalom captures much of what I'm missing in Advent. The conventional synonym for shalom is "peace." But what is peace? For some people all they know of peace is merely the absence of war or conflict, which at best is neutral. For other people, the stress of peace is actually negative, so accustomed have they become to conflict. Noted preacher John MacArthur has written that the biblical concept of peace does not focus on the absence of trouble. "Biblical peace is unrelated to circumstances; it is a goodness of life that is not touched by what happens on the outside. You may be in the midst of great trials and still have biblical peace."

I find it instructive to explore the broader range of meanings of shalom. For starters, I think of our Lord Jesus on the night before he died. He knew the horrors he was facing, yet Jesus took time to comfort his disciples with this assurance: Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful. (John 14:27).

In Jesus' benediction peace means total health; the well-being of the whole person; and open friendliness, not merely the absence of hostility. The giving of Christ's shalom (eirēnē, in Greek) to the disciples is less like the world's political *détentes* and more like the steadfastness of God. The deepest meaning of peace is the divine grace and salvation that the Messiah brings.

Bible commentator Francis Moloney writes, "The peace of Christ is the gift of eternal life and the gift of joy that transcends the vicissitudes and losses of this life, because it offers the deep joy of salvation, which God gives and the world cannot snatch away." But Moloney cautions, the peace of Christ does not insulate us from the reality of warfare, or from pain, or from bruised feelings. The peace of Christ will not make every day shiny and happy.

I think my current malaise can be addressed by working for shalom at the very local level, which for me includes the church I serve. As individual members of the body of Christ, we can make choices about what we do and say based on whether or not these actions will bring peace or create unnecessary conflict.

The Oct-Nov 2016 issue of Presbyterians Today discusses peace within the church in the context of God's call to reconciliation. The article by Shannon Beck takes a broad, shalom-like view of reconciliation, which "is more than just simply getting along. It's a way of living that allows us—and others—to thrive. It's an invitation to wholeness in our relationships with God, ourselves, each other, and our earth. Reconciliation . . . is a restorative process that creates fair and just relationships." There can be no peace without justice.

Beck writes, "This cry for justice winds throughout Scripture. From Moses to Jesus, from the heart language of the Psalms to the wisdom literature, justice is tied to real people trying to make their way through a difficult and unjust world."

Thinking of peace as a process rather than an outcome encourages us to provide a space where personal safety is emphasized and respect for others is learned. Can we as a church (let alone as a nation) create space for reconciliation across political divisions? Divisions related to gender or sexuality? Racial divisions? One tool I think we can use in worship is the newly adopted Confession of Belhar, which calls us to reject any sinful separation of people and

affirms that "we need one another and upbuild one another, admonishing and comforting one another; that we suffer with one another for the sake of righteousness; pray together; together serve God in this world; and together fight against all which may threaten or hinder this unity." Shalom is identifiable as the presence of God's justice. More than an absence of war and bigger than personal contentment and well-being, shalom is the re-creation of our world into one where everyone can thrive. May the peace of Christ be with you.

### THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

Colossians 3:14-15

## Ocean View Presbyterian Church

67 Central Avenue  
Ocean View, DE  
19970

**Service**  
Sunday, 9:30 A.M.

**Interim**  
Gerald Egger

**Church Office**  
302-539-3455

**Website**  
ovpc.org

**Session**  
Don Bailey  
Bob Wolf  
Jennifer Read  
Mike Quinn  
Bruce Hobler  
Elsie Young  
Karen Colwill  
(Clerk of Session)

**Deacons**  
Earlene DeFazio  
Betsy Henifin  
Bill Colwill  
Cindy Benjamin  
Ollie Robling  
Sue Baer

**Newsletter Editors**  
Lorie and Jim Hartsig

# Nativity Festival



Saturday December 10

10am-2pm

Ocean View Presbyterian Church

67 Central Avenue

Ocean View, DE

302-539-3455

(for more information)

**Punch and Cookies**

**125 Creches and their stories**

**Christmas carol sing**

**Prepare for a Blessed**

**Christmas Season**

OVPC Nativity Festival will be open to the public Saturday, Dec. 10th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. A team will be setting up on Thursday-Friday Dec. 8th and 9th, from 9 to 11a.m. If you loan a crèche for display, please write a story about it (100 words or less); submit the story to Harriette Tuttle (htuttle72@verizon.net). Plan to attend to enjoy all the nativity scenes, have punch and cookies, and join the choir in singing Christmas carols. For more information call Harriette at 302-604-4743.

## *Session Report*

### *Karen Colwill Clerk of Session*

The Session of OVPC met on Monday, November 14, 2016, at the home of Elsie Young.

The Rev. Jerry Egger opened with prayer and devotions at 7:00 P.M.

Session performed the annual Pastor's Review. Results were reviewed and discussed with Rev. Jerry Egger.

Approved MOTION to accept the minutes of the October 10, 2016 Session Meeting.

Approved MOTION to accept the minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting to Elect Officers on November 6, 2016.

Approved MOTION to accept the Treasurer's Report for October 2016.

The Clerk reports the New Castle Presbytery, Committee on Ministry, completed the 2015 Session Minutes Review without findings.

OVPC has declined to host a 2017 New Castle Presbytery Meeting.

The Amendments to the Book of Order from the 222nd General Assembly will be voted on at the December New Castle Presbytery Meeting. Details will be forwarded to congregations after the meeting.

OVPC received a donation of an antique pew from our sanctuary along with a water color of the church.

The 2017 Officer Training Event has been changed to February 3 and 4, 2017.

Approved MOTION to support the Mission Co-Workers of the PCUSA through prayer and financial support. Session commits OVPC financial support in the amount of at least \$1,000.00 annually for 3 years. Monies not received from Deacons or the Sewing Circle will be available from the general fund.

Approved MOTION to identify Rev. Dr. Karla Ann Koll serving in San Jose, Costa Rica at the Latin American Biblical University as the OVPC supported Mission Co-Worker. Clerk will notify New Castle Presbytery.

Approved Finance Committee MOTION to increase the amount of Self Allocated Missions from \$6,500.00 to \$7,000.00.

Approved Facilities MOTION to approve the Facilities Coordinator's Job Description.

Approved Facilities MOTION to approve an increase in rental rates effective January 2017.

Approved Sewing Circle MOTION to take donations for Water4 items during the 3 Sundays in December. Donations will go to Water4.

Approved Sewing Circle MOTION to recognize the end of our 3-year commitment to Water4 by hosting a musical celebration on Friday, January 27, 2017.

Approved Worship Committee MOTION to accept the Communion Schedule for 2017.

Approved Worship Committee MOTION to change the Order of Worship. After studying the New Directory of Worship, the 'We Remember Baptism' will be placed before the 'Call to Confession'.

The Rev. Jerry Egger adjourned the meeting with prayer at 10:05 P.M.

# water4



## Welcome to AmazonSmile!

Thank you for supporting **Water4**.

**Remember, always start at**

**[smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)**

and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases.

<http://smile.amazon.com>

## Saying “Goodbye” to Water4 through Giving, Fellowship, and Song.

OVPC has had an exciting and dynamic relationship with Water4 for the last almost 3 years. We have raised enough money for 18 wells in our almost three years in partnership. Before we close out this amazing experience the Women’s Circle offers you two more opportunities to donate and enjoy the relationship.

**”Christmas Giving from Your Heart”**—during the 3 December Sundays before Christmas the Mission Team will offer the opportunity to honor a friend or family member by donating to Water 4. In addition to a card thanking you for your gift, we will have key chains (\$10 donation), water bottles (\$15), and tee shirts with the Water4 logo(\$20) for you to give depending on the amount of your gift. We will be in Fellowship Centre before and after Sunday School Classes on December 4, 11, and 18, or you can call Bev Bailey . If you would be willing to help on any of these Sundays, please let Bev know.

**A Light-Hearted Evening of Song**—presented by the Sanctuary Choir and Friends on Friday Night, January 27, 2017 at 7 pm. Mark your calendars now for a totally different way of listening to the sweet sounds of OVPC singers. There will also be a representative from Water4 so that we can say our official goodbyes and hear more about what they are doing. A Free-Will Offering for Water4 will be received. (More information in the January Newsletter).



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Bob Wolf	Dec. 7th
Karen Hamilton	Dec. 15th
Patrick Read	Dec. 18th
Eric Neumann	Dec. 20th
Kathy Sheetz	Dec. 20th
Pam Price	Dec. 29th

# Happy Anniversary

Peggy and Bill Wievel	Dec. 4th
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**“May you have the gladness of Christmas which is hope;  
The spirit of Christmas which is peace;  
The heart of Christmas which is love.”**

**Ada V. Hendricks**

## *Christmas Poinsettias* *Kathy Sheetz*

We will be ordering our Christmas plants that are in 6 1/2” pots at a price of \$5.50 each.

A variety of colors will be available: red, white, or pink.

Orders must be paid and turned in by Sunday December 11th.

Please place your order with the money in the collection plate or give it to Kathy Sheetz or Karen (in the office).

Make checks payable to OVPC.



## *A Different Christmas Story*

### *Presbyterian Today*

*October 20, 2016*

#### *Bible Explorations:*

#### **What the Bible Gets 'Wrong' About Our Holiday**

By Aric Clark

*Aric Clark is a writer, speaker, and Presbyterian minister living near Portland, Oregon. He is also the creator of [LectioARIC](#), a YouTube channel devoted to reading the text of religion and culture with "geeky irreverence."*

Americans love to celebrate Christmas. Christmas is wrapped in numerous beloved traditions and well-known folk tales. Even non-Christians are familiar with key aspects of the story behind the holiday, which is why many people find it shocking that a lot of the story details aren't, strictly speaking, you know, in the Bible. For the Advent season I thought it might be fun, with my tongue firmly planted in my cheek, to go over some things the Bible gets "wrong" about Christmas.

Let's start with the date. Both Matthew and Luke tell us that Jesus was born during the reign of Herod (Matt. 2:1, Luke 1:5). Herod died in 4 B.C., so right away we have a conflict with the established date of Jesus' birth. But it gets messier, because Luke also tells us that it happened when Quirinius was governor of Syria and conducted a census of Palestine (Luke 2:1-7), and that didn't happen until 6 A.D. In other words, there was never a date when Herod was reigning and Quirinius was governor of Syria at the same time. So what year was Jesus born? We don't know. Maybe this will be the 2,016th celebration of his birthday, but probably not.

Speaking of the date, the Bible doesn't give us a clear indication what time of year Jesus was born. Many have theorized that the December 25 date for Christmas came about as a way for Christians to co-opt pagan celebrations around Saturnalia and the winter solstice. Perhaps there's some truth to that, but another possibility is that there was a strong folkloric tradition in the ancient Near East of saints and prophets dying on the same day they were conceived. Since it was believed that Jesus died on March 25, it must mean he was also conceived on that day. Add nine months to March 25 and you get December 25! Happy birthday, Jesus!

The little town of Bethlehem is another element of our story the Bible contradicts. According to Matthew, Joseph and Mary just lived in Bethlehem. There's no mention of a census, no journey to Bethlehem, no inn, none of that stuff. All of those elements are drawn from Luke's version of the story. But before you just get comfortable assuming Luke got it correct, you should know there are a lot of problems with Luke's narrative, too.

For example, the census would not have required people to journey to a different city to be registered. The purpose of a census is to figure out where people actually live and work so you can tax them. It would have been highly impractical and counterproductive to require everyone to return to some arbitrary ancestral home to register.

But even if we roll with Luke's unusual depiction of a census, we're still left with another big problem for our favorite traditional Christmas stories: there was no inn as we know it. The word that some translators have rendered in English as "inn" is the Greek word *kataluma*, which means "guest room." It is the same word used elsewhere in the New Testament to refer

*(A Different Christmas Story cont.)*

to that “upper room” where Jesus and his disciples had their last supper.

Since Luke has made it clear that in his version of the story Joseph is returning to Bethlehem because it is his family’s hometown, he wouldn’t be looking for a Motel 6 when he got there. He’d be expecting his relatives to put him up. Luke is telling us is that, due to all of the family coming home for the census-inspired reunion, the guest room at his family’s place was crowded. That doesn’t mean Joseph and Mary got kicked out on the street. It just means they were staying in a crowded house with all of their relatives, and when Mary went into labor, rather than give birth in a room full of second cousins and nosy aunts, they decided to seek some privacy in the stable.

Luke isn’t the only Gospel to get these important holiday traditions “wrong.” Matthew never mentions that the wise men were kings, and he doesn’t even say that there were three of them. He just says “magi,” plural. It could be two. It could be hundreds. Many early paintings of the visitation of the magi depicted them as being 12 in number, like the tribes of Israel and the disciples.

When it comes to comparing the Biblical versions of these stories with our holiday traditions the list of discrepancies is long. Those angels in the sky weren’t friendly choirs; they were an invading army. That donkey Mary rode into Bethlehem? Never mentioned. Even that stable I mentioned above isn’t in the text. A manger is mentioned, but many people in that region actually kept their animals in caves. Reading the Bible at Christmastime can be a dangerous activity if all we want to do preserve the traditional images we associate with the season.

## Christmas Carol

**“In the bleak mid-winter Frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, Water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, Snow on snow,  
In the bleak mid-winter, Long ago.”**



## **YARN...You Are Ready to Needle...**

.Knit or crochet or just watch and learn.

Join us in Fellowship Center

the first Monday of the month from 10 am-2 pm...

bring your lunch.

**See you on December 5th**



## *Christian Education*

*Bev Bailey*

### **“Called, Challenged, Changing”**

Advent Study on Sunday Mornings: December keeps us busy preparing for Christmas. Take an hour each week to learn with Walter Brueggemann as he explores Names for the Messiah from Isaiah 9:2-7. Classes are facilitated by: Dec. 4, Gary Baer, Dec. 11, Jerry Egger, Dec. 18, Bob Wolf and will meet in Fellowship Centre.

Winter Mid-Week Book Study. The book is: *Pilgrimage into the Last Third of Life: Seven Gateways in Spiritual Growth*, by Jane Marie Thibault and Richard L. Morgan. There will be two opportunities to study this book about the last third of life—ages 60 and above. The Wednesday morning class will be offered at 10 am in Fellowship Centre, facilitated by Jen Read and will begin on January 11. The Monday evening class will be facilitated by Bev Bailey and will be held in her home, beginning on January 16 at 7 pm. The book, published by Upper Room Books is “to be slowly savored as it leads the reader to contemplate the mysteries of aging, dying and death, secure in the assurance of the abundance of God’s abiding love for us, regardless of circumstances. The poems, prayers, and personal stories reveal a new countercultural vision of life in old age—a life filled with love, hope, and continuing spiritual growth”. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the back of the church as to which class you will attend. Books are available at Amazon.com or can be purchased from Bev for \$12.50. Don’t miss this special opportunity to study together during the winter season...

## *Deacons Report*

*Betsy Henifin*

The Board of Deacons will miss Bill Colwill who served as an active and most helpful member for the past three years. Thank you, Bill! The good news is that we will welcome Eric Neumann who will begin his service in January. Ollie Robling will serve as our moderator in 2017. The Deacons look forward to another busy term. Blessed holidays to all!

The Deacons want to thank you for OVPC’s continuing contributions to the Pyle Center Food Closet. This year, OVPC has donated food with a value over \$1200! All of this has been thankfully accepted at the Pyle Center. The need continues to be strong.

If you wish to contribute, please bring your food, cleaning supplies, health aids, toiletries, diapers, etc to the church and put them in the basket in the Narthex. Deacons will take them to the Pyle Center. Coupons are also very well received.



*Photogenic  
Jim Hartsig*



Building  
another ramp



Trimming the trees in front of the church office.

## *Buildings and Grounds*

### *Buzz Henifin*

The new year will start off with new leadership in the Buildings (Ray Keeney) and Grounds (Phil Hamilton) Committee. Welcome. I thank the new guys for volunteering and hope they get all the help and support that the Church membership and friends have given to me.

A great big THANK YOU to the 31 volunteers who worked to clean the church's facilities and made the grounds and Cemetery look so nice. On top of the labor, the lunch donations practically paid for the whole event. A further thank you goes to the Sewing Circle ladies for coffee, doughnuts, the subs, potato chips, cookies, and brownies.

Early in the month Ray and Mike put on their paint clothes and gave the outside crèche and all our risers a good coat of paint. The appearance of the crèche and risers are much improved.

New gutters and down spout were installed around the north face of the office complex and the walkway between the office and Memorial Hall. Hopefully this will reduce the amount of ice that piled up there last winter.

Some new decorations have been added to the office garden area. Following the raking and trimming of the area the Ladies asked if it would be possible to put some lights on the trees and to provide a light outside of the office door. Not a problem to Bob as we now have a motion detector fixture by the door that lights up the area. A power line was also run from the office to a post in the garden which can supply power for several strings of lights now strung around the trees and shrubs in the office area garden.

Please be aware that there are some light switches in the office and the Fellowship Center that control some outside lights. It would be appreciated if these switches were left alone and/or contact B&G for additional info.

B&G is in the process of marking the parking lot. The yellow marked area is no parking, allowing our neighbor across Church Street easy access to their driveway. The remainder of our parking lot will be laid out in 10.5 X 20 feet parking spots. Yes, from time to time the lines should be redone because painting the rocks will deteriorate over time. The stripes that we added last year are still visible. I believe that drivers are trying to stay within the striped parking areas.



## Advent Times of Prayer

Please join us each Wednesday during Advent (Nov 30, Dec 7, 14, 21) from 5:55 to 6:15 pm as we use scripture to guide our silent personal prayers, and offer prayers of intercession for requests submitted by our congregation. We meet in the sanctuary to praise God and refresh our souls.



## *Friday Night At The Movies*



Because of the busy Christmas season full of Church and family activities we will not hold a movie night in December. We will gather together again on January 6th to watch a 2010 Hallmark retelling of 'Gift of the Magi'; a retelling of the classic short story by O. Henry. We may also show the short 1952 version introduced by John Steinbeck as a special treat!

If you are interested in hosting movie night, or have a special movie request, please contact Bob Wolf. Remember that you can be a host without having the movie at your home ---

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
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Ocean View, DE 19970

