



MINISTER'S MESSAGE

"I met a man who lives in Tennessee and he was heading for Pennsylvania and some homemade pumpkin pie." So sang our men's quartet at the *Welcome Christmas* Concert on Dec. 13th. I thought they might have added that number to the program on purpose. For by that date I had more than a passing acquaintance with pumpkin pie. In an effort to stimulate giving I offered on Consecration Sunday in November to make a pumpkin pie for anyone who raised his or her 2010 pledge by a minimum of \$250. I had no idea how great was the demand in Glen Ridge Congregational Church for pumpkin pie! By the time you read this, Katie Bodell (a baking angel, if ever there was one) and I will have baked and delivered 34 pies. Ten more families qualified but declined the pie. That's a lot of pies, but it is also at least \$11,000 in additional income for our mission next year.

I can make a pumpkin pie in my sleep now, having committed the recipe to memory. I heard there was a shortage of pumpkin this year but I don't think I am to blame! In any case the church has helped the Libby Company considerably with their cash flow at the end of 2009. The Bodells have become fond of my recipe, too.

There were many satisfied customers. "The best pumpkin pie, *ever*," one said. I love it when people respond like that. So often in the ministry you are in a delayed gratification mode. It is wonderful to hear about a success immediately.

I often wonder how the Lord feels about his gift to us. It has been a long time since Jesus' birth, and it must look to God as if we haven't exactly put the gift into full service. When people try Jesus, the satisfaction is both immediate and long term. But so often we hedge and make excuses, sort of putting Christ in our lives, sort of keeping a few of his rivals with us, too. I hope this Christmas and in the New Year you will put Jesus first in your life. You will always be satisfied.

Join us this week for one of our Christmas services on the 24th to thank God, and then for breakfast on Sunday the 27th. I don't yet know the menu for breakfast. Probably no pumpkin pie, however....

~J.D. Stinson

December 27, 2009
1st Sunday After Christmas

9:00am Breakfast in Robinson Hall
10:15am Worship in Robinson Hall

The Rev. Dr. Joseph David Stinson, Preaching
Luke 2:41-52 "Three Carols"



Child Care for the very young provided.

Greeting you this week will be the Gsell Family and Linda Kerr. The ushers will be Craig Wood, Connie Booth, Nancy Bigelow and the Carey Family. The Videographer will be Jim O'Brien. Counters in the Treasurer's Office, Tom Agnew and Linda Seyffarth.

The attendance last week was 207. There were 7 in the 8:15am service, 179 in the 10:15am service and 21 in the 5:00pm service. All students and staff were in church for Bell Sunday!

✦ IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS ✦

- ◇ *At home:* Tom Agnew, Bob Kansky, James Hollander, Lauren Smith, Lorraine Rieder, Susan Booth, Karen Augis, Phyllis Domenic, Madeline Edgar, Scott Spoerl, Sandra Lefkovits, Mary Keller, Bob Runge, Jim O'Brien, Jack Cusick and Barbara Underwood.
- ◇ *In extended care facilities:* Tom Horton (Valley Hospital), Bill Luddecke (Van Dyk), Ed Warren (Stuart FL), Art and Marilea Schlobohm (Green Hill), Betty Bishop (Juniper Village, Chatham), Don Olson (Job Haines), Robert Martin Schaeberle (Ridge at River Woods, Exeter, NH), Peg Carr Waters (North Carolina), Lucy Force (Sunrise, Woodcliff Lake).

Friends & family of our church: Bill Nelson, Bern Sleem, Ruth Mustachio, Ryan Munson, Eloy & Ofelia Hernandez, Andrei Padlowski, JC Egbert, Alison Krien, Stephen Strickland, Len Calvin, Andrea Row, Neil Connaghan, Bob Sherman, Helen Brabham, George Boltnew, Georgianna Booth, Agnes Joy Busk, Anna Withington, Jill Reintjes, Dan Glitzer, Sue Potter, Merrill Roberts, Joan and Frank Lytle, Barbara Acosta, Claire Meeker Xenikakis, Thomas Bright, Jim O'Brien, Sr., Amanda Oliver, Jean and Barry Frere, Jim Marturano, Elizabeth Knox, Gilda Oliver, Pat and Betty Vigliotti, Paula Newman, Frank Pescatore, Mary Embree, Jeff Glock, Bill Phillips, and UCC Missionaries Jon and Dawn Barnes in South Africa and Back Bay Mission in Biloxi. The men and women of the Armed Forces serving overseas in harm's way.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

- ★Star of Wonder, Dec. 23rd at 1:00pm
- ★Christmas Eve, 3 services: 4:30; 8:00 and 11:00pm.
- ★Sunday, Dec. 27th, 9am breakfast & 10:15 carol service.

OUR THREE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

★We offer many choices for Christmas Eve. The largest is the 4:30pm service with children's choirs and no sermon. It lasts about 45-50 minutes and is family/child-friendly. The format is to sing a few carols, tell the Christmas story and have a live nativity. *Children are invited to bring a new, unwrapped gift for a small baby to the 4:30p.m. Service. The gifts will be given to MEND(Meeting Emergency Needs with Dignity). Suggested items are: diapers, formula, wipes, ointments for diaper rashes, baby food, juices, stretch suits, blankets- any items that a small baby needs. And you're welcome to include along with your practical gifts, a small stuffed animal, rattle or baby toy.*

★The 8pm service highlights the talents of our choir. The Christmas sermon is preached at this service and there is also Holy Communion. It follows the format of lessons and carols. It lasts a little more than one hour.

★The 11pm service is led by the high school Young Peoples Society. There is no sermon, however, the Christmas story is read from Luke and Matthew. There are many carols and the format changes from year to year. It is also popular with college students, affording them the opportunity to reconnect with one another at Christmas. We hope you will attend one or more of our services this Christmas Eve!

THERE WILL BE NO NEWSLETTER THE WEEK AFTER CHRISTMAS. NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE THE WEEK OF JANUARY 4.

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERINGS

The offerings at our Christmas Eve services will be divided between The UCC Fund for Retired & Disabled Ministers and to Jon and Dawn Barnes work in South Africa. Special envelopes will be available in your bulletins this Sunday as well as Christmas Eve.

BREAKFAST ON SUNDAY, DEC. 27th

We plan a breakfast on the First Sunday of Christmas at 9am in Robinson Hall. Can you help with preparations? A 10:15am service will follow in the hall, a service of carols, with a sermon by Mr. Stinson.

ANNUAL REPORTS

A reminder to Chairpersons of all Ministries. Annual reports are due **January 4th**.

IHN FAMILIES ARRIVE JANUARY 10

Please sign up to help make our guests feel welcome and cared for. Signup sheets will be in Robinson Hall.

CHAPEL SERVICES

There will be no chapel services on December 27th and January 3rd. Both days we will worship together at 10:15.

STEWARDSHIP: Where we stand....

As of Monday, Dec. 21st, we have received 135 pledges for \$426,755. We need to receive another \$172,000 to underwrite fully the costs of our church. We have put David Dik's and Jill Simmons' excellent testimony from Consecration Sunday on our website under sermons from Nov. 15 and on the Action Table. Any questions, please contact the chair, Gordon Hunziker.



2009 PLEDGE REMINDER

With the end of the year fast approaching, please be sure that you have fully paid your 2009 pledge by noon on December 31st. In addition, we hope that many will be able to follow the example of some who have already paid more than they originally pledged. We need everyone's help to meet the challenges of our current financial crunch!! Thank you!

Glen Ridge Congregational Church

195 Ridgewood Avenue

Glen Ridge, New Jersey 07028

Dated Material - Please Deliver by December 24, 2009

(Return Service Requested)

PHOTO DIRECTORY

Plans are underway to produce a new photo directory (our last one was issued in 2001!) Photographers from Universal Church Directories will be here at the church January 12th through the 16th. We have already started to schedule appointments.

Online scheduling is available Monday through Friday— and easy! Simply go to the Universal website, www.ucdir.com, click on the yellow sunburst icon, enter NJ106 in the Church Code field and enter glen in the Church Password field. Follow the prompts to schedule your appointment time.

If you prefer, you can schedule through Barbara Duym in the church office (973)743-5596 ext. 21.

Each family photographed will receive a complimentary 8X10 portrait and a directory and will have the opportunity to purchase additional portraits.

We hope that everyone will participate in this program.

BIBLE STUDIES: Luke and Isaiah

Both the Sunday and Wednesday Bible Classes will take a Christmas break after Dec 23rd for a week. Classes resume Jan 3rd and 6th.

CONFIRMAND'S INTERPRETATION

Sarah Singh read from Micah 5:2-5a. Her interpretation for the passage was "I think that this passage is expressing the Lord God's great power and majesty. It tells that he will give a leader of Israel for his people, and this leader will hold the power of God, showing his greatness and love for mankind."

THE NEXT WEEK AT GRCC

SUNDAY 12/27

9:00am Breakfast in Robinson Hall

10:15am Worship in Robinson Hall

MONDAY 12/28

PILGRIM CLOSED

OFFICE CLOSED

7:00pm Yoga

TUESDAY 12/29

8:00pm AA

WEDNESDAY 12/30

PILGRIM CLOSED

10:00am Bible Study

THURSDAY 12/31

PILGRIM CLOSED

FRIDAY 1/01

HAPPY NEW YEAR

SATURDAY 1/02

2:00pm Hostnik Memorial Service

SUNDAY, 1/03

10:15am Worship/Fellowship
