



CENTRAL STEELE CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CENTRAL CALLING

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December 2016

Special points of interest:

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- Akilah's YAV Blog (p 4)
- Advent Schedule (p 5)

We're on the web...
www.cscpc.org
or Facebook.com/
Central Steele Creek Presbyterian

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From the Pastor's Pen

Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt. (Matthew 2:14)

You have no earthly idea how strange a sentence that is for a 1st Century Jewish family in Palestine. They went *where*? They went to *Egypt*? To escape danger? The primary story of the Old Testament, the Exodus, is about the people of Israel *fleeing* Egypt, and now here they are going back? And not only that, this is the long awaited Christ child, the one about whom the prophets spoke and in whom the people hoped for centuries. And he's going back to Egypt?

The Christmas story is full of such strange, shocking, and ironic ideas. Not only does Matthew drop the Egypt bomb on us, he also tells us that the people who worshipped Jesus first were foreign astrologers, or kings, or magi, or whatever we call them these days. Whatever they were, they certainly weren't anything like us. Luke goes even further. The angels announced the birth of the world's savior to shepherds? Really? Shepherds were the least educated, least sophisticated people in the world. It's hard to imagine them doing anything remotely meaningful. Mary and Joseph were peasants, not even married, on a humiliating and treacherous trip to "register" for their Roman occupiers. In all four Gospels, these "others" were the only ones who "got" Jesus. This is true from his birth to his resurrection. The very ones who should have "gotten it" were the very ones who missed the whole thing. In fact, they were the very ones who nailed their savior to a tree.

The dividing lines in this world are growing larger. We live in an unusually contentious time. Maybe that's nothing new, but it seems more threatening these days. Facebook, the social media icon that has of-

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fered to bring us all together, has been a warzone lately. And, lest we forget, Charlotte literally was a warzone just a few months ago. The "other" for us has become our enemy, so much so that it feels like we're coming unraveled.

We are all tempted in such a time to hunker down and seek comfort among people who think, look, and act like we do. The Church is the worst at this. Black/white, conservative/liberal, contemporary/traditional, rural/urban, big/small... Each Church has its own niche, each filled with likeminded people. A casual observer might conclude that salvation comes more from human like-mindedness instead of God's otherness.

So I believe that this Christmas season, now more than ever, we should turn to the other. Maybe that means meeting some of September's protesters to see just how being black in America is. Or maybe it means meeting with that person who cast their vote for Donald Trump. Evidently, there were enough of "them" to get him elected. Maybe we should hear them out. Maybe for us at Central Steele Creek it means getting to know the names of the 700-some-odd people who walk this campus every week but are not members here.

Whatever it means, it's the polar opposite of retreating into our camps of like-minded people who make us feel good about ourselves. That has a place, goodness knows, but it's not Christmas and it's not at church. Jesus, after all according to Matthew, spent Christmas in Egypt of all places. So, it seems, should we.

—Luke



Central Steele Creek Presbyterian Church

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Luke H. Maybry	Pastor
British Hyrams	Director of Christian Ministries
Sheila Fetner	Director of Music
Tom Schmutzler	Associate Director of Music
David Hines	Director of Handbells
Lisa Caudle	Director of Preschool
John Granger	Custodian
Allyson Haenlein	Administrative Assistant
Rob Vojvoda	Treasurer
Jeanne Sikes	Financial Secretary
Charlotte Burgess	Clerk of Session
Pat Hart	Moderator of Deacons

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Sunday School	9:15am
Worship	10:30am

DEADLINES

January 2017 issue deadline is December 27

Articles received late will be included the next month.

Sunday Bulletin: Thursdays, 10:00am

Articles received late will be included the next week.



THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

Canned Soups, Vegetables & Meats

Please place items in the donation box located in the Church Narthex.

CSCPC WOMEN'S GROUPS

Circle #1

10:00am, Room 300, Tuesday, December 6

Deborah Circle

5:30pm, Room 300, Tuesday, December 13

Practice for **Christmas Play**: If you would like your child to participate in the Christmas play on December 11th (and we want them to!), please have them in the Sunday school on December 4th by 9:45 for practice.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CONVERSATION



"When I was in college, I frequently walked past an old church on the edge of campus. One of the paths led from the university to the main street along campus—the street that had everything from the five-dollar burrito place to the frat houses, to the movie theater, to all the major watering holes. This path went right past the church. As you can imagine, it was a road well travelled. In the middle of the path, the church had placed a sign; it was mostly an invitation to come inside, but it ended this way: "Know that God still cares for this broken world and for all its creatures, and that the cross, even when all else fails, yet makes its appeal."

I read that sign a lot during my four years—after September 11, before we went to war with Iraq, on the day my friend's father died suddenly. The tragedies of this week (mass shooting at Pulse nightclub in Orlando) brought it to mind, so I emailed the church office to ask if they could tell me exactly what was written on the sign.

It turns out the church removed it a while back during construction. When the work was finished, they didn't put the sign back up. In the words of the church administrator, "Some people felt it was awfully gloomy to attract students to come in." It might be too gloomy indeed to attract college students, especially the ones who've been told college should be the best four years of their lives or the ones who are busy trying to study or party the gloom away.

But if we avoid the gloom or if we suggest that church is a place to escape it, it's false advertising. The Bible doesn't run from the gloom, and neither should we. In fact, if Elijah is any indication, God sends us straight to the heart of it. Most of what God said to Elijah was simply "Why are you here? Come out. Go back." Back to the trouble, the conflict, the risk.

It was too much for Elijah. It's too much for you and me. But it's not too much for God. It wasn't too much on Good Friday, and it isn't too much now. God's power sustains us in the midst of a journey we cannot handle, and admitting that we can't handle it is in fact the best place to begin."

taken from "Too Much" by Rebecca Gurney, Journal for Preachers, Volume XL, Number 1; Advent 2016. pgs. 42-43

Pastor's Reading Corner

Recommended Book List



The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can

Reach the West...Again; George G. Hunter, III. Abingdon Press, Nashville; 2010

Glory to God Hymnals

There are still 'Glory to God' hymnals available to have dedicated in 'honor of' or in 'memory of' a loved one. Please stop by or call the church office if you are interested.



STAFF HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Welcome back John!** After a brief medical leave, John returned to Central on Monday, November 14th. It's great to have him back!! AND, we celebrate with him on December 7th his first anniversary with Central.
- **Happy Birthday** to Jeanne Sikes on December 19.
- British has completed her last two ordination exams and will be ready to seek an ordained call in the PCUSA in February, 2017. We are really proud of her accomplishments!



Dear Congregation,

Thank you for all the prayers, meals, kind words and support during Midge's illness. Especially thank you for the many, many cards that you sent her. Each and every card was read more than once and lifted her up! The entire Caudle Family felt the love of this congregation through a very difficult time.

We would also like to thank those that helped us with her service and those that provided the meal afterward. We truly felt like she was honored that day. To say thank you doesn't feel like enough.

Love, The Caudle Family

CSCPC Dinner & a Movie Night

Approximately 50 church members, family and friends had an evening of food and fellowship at movie night on November 5th. The pasta dinner was delicious and the desserts were delightful! Afterwards, we settled in to watch "Akeelah and the Bee". It was inspirational and humbling: thank goodness we turned on the closed captioning to help with all those hard spelling bee words!

Hopefully the church can do this again a couple of times in 2017. Please give us your ideas about 1) improvements to the event, 2) increasing attendance from church members, and 3) how to incorporate the community. British, Russell, Becky, and Martha would love to hear from you.

It's probably accurate to call movie night #2 a success. Thank you to everyone who helped make it happen!



PRESCHOOL NEWS

Central Steele Creek Preschool loves the month of December and all that it means. We have the joy of celebrating the birth of Jesus, and that is what we will focus on most. The children will learn about Jesus' parents and their journey to Bethlehem. They will learn that Jesus was born in a stable because there were no rooms available. The classes will also explore the sights, sounds, tastes and smells of the holidays. Miss Maggie and all the teachers will be working very hard on our Christmas Play. We would love to have you join us on Thursday, December 15th for their performance. It will begin promptly at 9:30 in the Family Life Center.

We want to wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! We hope you have a wonderful time celebrating our Savior with your family and friends.

Love, Miss Lisa



This will be the 10th year that our church is participating in the Room In The Inn program! Thank You for all your work over the years!

Starting on Monday December 4, 2016 we will be providing beds and meals for some of the homeless men from the Charlotte area.

The men are selected and screened by Urban Ministries and assigned to various churches throughout Charlotte.

Our church hosts the men on Monday nights from December until the end of March. Our members provide the volunteers in December. Pleasant Hill, McClintock, and Mt. Olive church members perform most of the duties the other months using our facilities.

Volunteers are needed to prepare meals (supper and breakfast), set up tables, set up the sleeping area, do laundry, act as overnight security, and transport our guests to and from Urban Ministries.

If you helped last year I will be contacting you within the next month to see if you are willing to volunteer again. Other church members who are interested in joining us, please contact Mike Brown (704-588-4805) or Della Medlin for further information.



AKILAH'S YAV ADVENTURE

It's been a while! part 2

October 30, 2016

So, the third and fourth week in the Philippines had to be the hardest for me. Not only were they difficult for me as a general traveler, but they were hard from a social justice point of view and health wise.

The third week, my fellow YAVs and I went to an island about two hours away (by boat), called Bohol. There, we stayed in a very rural area with a local pastor and her family. That was a rough week for me because I realized a) that I'm privileged and b) I'm not so great at physically adapting to my environment. The entire week, we lived in this farming area, where everything was far, where we got to see our food before we ate it, and where the only foreigners were on the television.

We had some amazing opportunities in Bohol, like plowing a field with a Philippines water buffalo, planting corn, working in rice fields, etc. However, those opportunities have led me (along with my fellow YAVs) to the conclusion that nature is not my friend. I don't think I've ever fallen into so much mud in my entire life. Also, I realize, fire ants hate me. I'm allergic to something in the rice fields and possibly one of the local fruits. There are a lot more reasons, but those are just the major ones. Regardless of nature's dislike of women named Akilah Hyrams, I still enjoyed my time in Bohol.

My fourth week was a different story. We went to a mountainous region on an island in the northern part of the Philippines called the Cordillera. There, we visited a lot of indigenous communities who were facing a lot of injustices. Many of the communities were farming communities that heavily relied on their produce. It was really heart breaking because, as I learned, farming is a very unpredictable business and the farmers don't get to control the price for their own produce. They have to go through a middleman to sell them in the market. When I was there, farmers were given 2 Pesos for one kilo of carrots by the middleman. It costs 7 Pesos to grow one kilo of carrots. So the farmer just lost 5 Pesos per kilo. Oh, and since most communities don't have trucks to transport their produce, it's costs 2 Pesos per kilo to send them to the market on a truck. Well, there went the 2 Pesos they actually "earned" from the carrots they sold. Being in those communities, watching and participating in some of the work they did just to make a living was so hard to do, knowing they were getting next to nothing for it. Later that week, we saw some more indigenous communities fighting to keep their land as international mining companies came to exploit the land. And the companies that

were already there were destroying the quality of land and the lives of the local communities; from contaminated water to crumbling houses due to underground tunnels.

So, not only did I see the effects of injustice and a corrupt system, there was also the factor of nature hating me, so naturally, I was sick pretty much the entire week. But, I really do appreciate the opportunities afforded to me over the month of traveling. There are some things you really can't fathom until they are right in your face. And even then, I was always aware of the fact that I was leaving the area, bringing myself back to a relatively comfortable place while those communities continue to fight for their rights and their land and will continue to do so long after I leave the country next year.

Akilah

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

In Memory of Geraldine Norman; New Life Baptist Church

In Memory of Charlie Joy; Brown Grier & Emma B. Young classes

In Memory of Frel & Peggy Youngblood; Roy Youngblood

In Memory of Gloria Tripp, mother of Teresa Canipe; Burns & Jean Taylor

In Memory of Margaret "Midge" Caudle; Burns & Jean Taylor, Linda & Bob Blackwelder, Rozanna Lawing, Paul & Martha Sigmon, Emma B. Young class, Pat & Sandy Hart, Ken & Diane Price, Dean Bassett class, Ruby Potts, Beth McKee, Harry & Portia Weatherly, Toni & Greta Lambert, Mary & Jack Phillips, Betty & Query Byrum, Charles G. Potts, Bill & Doris Gore & family, Bud & Pauline Shaney, Rhonda & Lester Weaver, Doug Youngblood, Susan Osmar, Mable Osborne, Wilma Price, Jim & Marilyn Gallagher, Bill Gordon, Jr., Mike & Judy Brown, George & Marilyn Hege, Kay & Jim Patterson, Banks & Lucy Choate, Manley & Annette Caudle, Circle of Friends

In Honor of Evelyn Ervin; Roy Youngblood

In Honor of our teachers, Linda Blackwelder, Barbara Choate, & Rozanna Lawing; the Emma B. Young class

Giving Tree for Teachers at Steele Creek Elementary





The Mission Team is sponsoring a Giving Tree for the teachers at Steele Creek Elementary. The tree is in the Narthex. Please pick an angel from the tree that has a teacher's wish for their classroom. Gifts should be wrapped and returned to the tree during the month of December. The gifts will be delivered to the school the first week of January, 2017.



***Come Celebrate
the
2016 Advent Season***

Saturday, December 3	1:00pm	VIP Social	FLC
Sunday, December 4	Worship	Second Sunday of Advent Combined Bell Choirs Advent/Christmas Music	Sanctuary
Sunday, December 11	9:15am	Christmas Breakfast No Sunday School	FLC
	Worship	Third Sunday of Advent	Sanctuary
Thursday, December 15	9:30am	Preschool Christmas Program	FLC
Sunday, December 18	Worship	Fourth Sunday of Advent Christmas Cantata	Sanctuary
Saturday, December 24	6:00pm	Christmas Eve Service	Sanctuary
Sunday, December 25	10:30am	Combined Church Service @ Pleasant Hill Presbyterian	
Sunday, January 1	10:30am	Combined Church Service @ Central Steele Creek Presbyterian	

December 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Preschool, 9:00am Bridgewater BB, 6:00pm Food Addicts in Recovery, 7:00pm	2 AA, 12:00pm	3 VIP Social 1-3:00pm 
4 Sunday School, 9:15am Worship, 10:30am Guest Outreach Team, 11:45am Cub Scouts, 1:00pm	5 Preschool, 9:00am AA, 12:00pm RITI, 3:00pm Publicity Team, 5:30pm Boy Scout Troop Leaders, 6:00pm Central Ringers, 6:15pm	6 Preschool, 9:00am Circle #1, 10:00am B&G Team, 6:00pm Men's Basketball Ministry, 6:00pm	7 Preschool, 9:00am AA, 12:00pm Christian Ed, 4:30pm Cub Scouts, 5:30pm Choir, 6:45pm Boy Scouts, 7:00pm Boy Scouts, 7:00pm	8 Preschool, 9:00am Bridgewater BB, 6:00pm Food Addicts in Recovery, 7:00pm Emmaus Board, 7:00pm	9 AA, 12:00pm Charity Christmas Party, 6:00pm 	10
11  CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST, 9:15am Worship, 10:30am Cub Scouts, 1:00pm Chrysalis Group, 2:30pm	12 Preschool, 9:00am AA, 12:00pm RITI, 3:00pm Staff Support Team, 5:15pm Worship Team, 6:00pm Central Ringers, 6:15pm	13 Preschool, 9:00am Deborah Circle, 5:30pm Men's Basketball Ministry, 6:00pm	14 Preschool, 9:00am AA, 12:00pm Cub Scouts, 5:30pm Choir, 6:45pm Boy Scouts, 7:00pm Cub Scouts, 7:00pm	15 Preschool Christmas Program, 9:30am Bridgewater BB, 6:00pm Session, 6:00pm Food Addicts in Recovery, 7:00pm	16 AA, 12:00pm Bridgewater BB, 6:00pm	17
18  Sunday School, 9:15am Christmas Cantata/ Worship, 10:30am Deacons, 11:45am Cub Scouts, 1:00pm	19 Preschool, 9:00am AA, 12:00pm RITI, 3:00pm Cub Scout Leaders, 5:30pm Central Ringers, 6:15pm	20 Preschool, 9:00am Men's Basketball Ministry, 6:00pm	21 Preschool, 9:00am AA, 12:00pm Choir, 6:45pm	22 Bridgewater BB, 6:00pm Food Addicts in Recovery, 7:00pm	23 AA, 12:00pm Bridgewater BB, 6:00pm	24 Christmas Eve Worship Service 6:00pm 
25  Worship, 10:30am @ Pleasant Hill PC	26 Church Office Closed AA, 12:00pm RITI, 3:00pm	27 Church Office Closed Men's Basketball Ministry, 6:00pm	28 AA, 12:00pm	29 Bridgewater BB, 6:00pm Food Addicts in Recovery, 7:00pm	30 AA, 12:00pm Bridgewater BB, 6:00pm	31 New Year's Eve!

Birthdays-December

2	Kerri Murray	17	Geneva Godfrey
4	Timmy Hood		Richard Moss
6	Mark Clapham	18	Max Tolley
	Nora Carter	19	Lynn McNeill
9	Caleb Dorr		Jeanne Sikes
	Amanda Romance	21	Kathy Bricker
10	Deborah Russell	28	George Bostick
11	Diane Faust	29	Randi Clapham
12	Wilma Price		
	Eric Smith		
	Will Moss		
13	Miles Shepard		
	Andrew Burns		
14	Kevin Hyrams		
	Stephanie Vojvoda		
16	Matthew Clapham		
	Pete Wortman		



Worship Child Care — December 2016

	Volunteers		Volunteers	
December 4	Sandy Hart	Mary Deal	Open	Open
December 11	Open	Open	Open	Open
December 18	Open	Open	Open	Open
December 25	Service @ Pleasant Hill PC	Service @ Pleasant Hill	Service @ Pleasant Hill	Service @ Pleasant Hill

Worship Child Care Sign Up Genius link

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/10C0548AFAD2BAFF2-2017