



DECEMBER

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TUALATIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

9230 SW Siletz Drive, Tualatin, OR 97062

Rev. Ken Evers-Hood

Phone: 503-692-4160 **Web Address:** www.tpcspirit.org
Worship Service – Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Elders: Craig Bowen, Norm Dannemiller, Paula Miller, Scott Mitchell, Joan Nardi, Adele Pelletier, Meg Price, Chris Robertson and Marsha Steffen

Deacons: Rob Ayers, Edda Brown, Pam Cameron, Carolyn Hale, Jack Lemmon, Sherry Nelson, Judy Nix, Bill Smiley, Kathy Sweetland, Julie Van Buren, Linda Watkins

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e-mail: music.director@tpcspirit.org

Bell Choir Director: Martha Wilson
e-mail: bells@tpcspirit.org

Music Accompanist: Ron Fabbro
Art Director: Ellen VanSchoiack
Bereavement Committee: Pam Cameron
Wedding Coordinator: Stacy Mauer

Church Office Hours

Monday – Thursday: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 pm, Friday – 9:00 a.m. to noon

Dear friends,

Last month I introduced a new “It’s Greek to me” theme for my articles in the newsletter, focusing on issues relating to language. Given that the holidays are upon us, it’s hard to avoid the most well known linguistic conundrum of Christmas. Nope, I’m not talking about whether to wish people Merry Christmas or Happy Holidays. I’ll leave that up to my good friends in talk radio. I’m talking about that great shibboleth of orthodox belief: the virgin birth of Christ.

My mom remembers that her home church in Western Pennsylvania had a member for whom the virgin birth of Christ was THE most important belief one could have. Being a fairly small church they often had a string of pastors coming in from the seminary. And the only question this woman would ask of them during the congregation’s examination was: “Do you believe in the virgin birth?” And the guy (they were all guys in those days) could have three heads and a forked tail, but if he said ‘Yes’ he was in with her. If a pastor expressed any kind of reservation or nuanced view at all, nothing else mattered to her- he was toast.

Well, if it’s hard for me to resonate with her unyielding attitude, I can certainly understand how she came to her belief. While the Gospels of Mark and John make no mention of the birth of Jesus, Matthew and Luke agree on Mary’s...um...pristine condition when it came to motherhood. The most influential text regarding the virgin birth came from Matthew 1:21-23: “She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.”

The prophet referred to in this text is the prophet Isaiah. And while the meaning of the text seems clear and self-evident, it’s anything but. The sticky wicket: language, of course. When we translate the New Testament, we’re only rendering ancient Greek into modern English. However, when we translate the New Testament quoting the Old Testament, we also have to cope with Ancient Hebrew which was then translated into Ancient Greek. So if two languages isn’t complicated enough, Matthew gives us three.

And, sex being as tricky to talk about in the ancient world as it is in ours, it shouldn’t be a surprise to us that confusion and misunderstanding plague this text. The Greek word that we render as ‘virgin’ is the term ‘*he parthenos*’. The Parthenon, the temple to the virgin goddess Athena, is derived from this term, and there’s no argument that both ‘*he parthenos*’ and ‘virgin’ refer a young woman with no sexual experience. The problem isn’t the Greek to English- the problem is what happens when Isaiah’s Hebrew was shoehorned into Matthew’s Greek.

While the prim Greeks could not imagine that young, unmarried women could possibly be familiar with the birds

and the bees, the more realistic Israelites weren’t so linguistically naïve. Instead of just one word for young women, *he parthenos*, Ancient Hebrew has two words: *almah* and *betulah*. *Almah* refers to young women in general with no reference to sexual experience. *Betulah*, on the other hand, refers to young women unaware that educated fleas and even goldfish, in the privacy of bowls, do it.

Now, I’ll give you three guesses as to what word Isaiah used and the first two don’t count. That’s right. Isaiah uses the Hebrew word *almah*, the general word for young women. Indeed, in context Isaiah wasn’t actually talking about a virgin birth at all, but he was referring to the young mother of King Hezekiah, the coming king that Isaiah was accurately foretelling would save Judah from Assyrian destruction. But unfortunately, when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek, the good people translating it were stuck with the limited vocabulary of Greek. And a text that meant one thing in its own context suddenly sounded very different in another.

So, what am I saying? Am I saying that we should can Silent Night with that whole ‘round yon Virgin bit that I was always embarrassed to sing as a teenager? I honestly wouldn’t go that far. I would caution us from turning something like the virgin birth into a theological litmus test, whereby the folks who agree with our view are great and the folks who don’t are lunkheads. The textual support is just too complicated for this kind of thinking. But I would stop short from saying this story has no meaning for us today.

The ancient church fathers and mothers agreed the importance of the virgin birth has less to do with science and more to do with a story about God coming into our world and doing a new thing. To them this birth was a way of signifying God’s presence in a world more interested in the Pax Romana, the peace that comes through the power of the sword, than in the Peace of Christ, the peace that comes through the power of surrender and love. They believed that back then only a miracle could tear people away from believing in the ways of aggression and force.

Are we any different?

So I guess I could say to that woman in my mom’s home church that I do believe in the virgin birth. But I believe not because “twas Isaiah that foretold it” (because he didn’t, he was mistranslated). I believe because this story is about an unlikely God doing an impossible thing with an overlooked girl in an unimportant place to show us all that change really is possible. And this Christmas, at this time of seemingly endless bad economic and global news, this isn’t just a story I believe- it’s a story I need.



Laura, Blain, Carson and Elliott Grover

Greetings TPC! We have been members for a little less than a year now and are still feeling elated about finding the right church for our family! Thank you all for making us feel so welcome and at home. We knew it was a great fit from the first time we walked in the door and heard "Hi Carson!" Turns out that cool kid from our son's preschool was none other than William Evers-Hood. We attended worship and knew we were in the right place. Here is a little bit about us:

Blain and Laura have been married for 11 years but dated for 6 years before that, having met in high school in Salem. We have a tremendous amount in common in that we both love to travel, have the same sense of humor, love hiking and backpacking, being outdoors, working in the yard, and most of all our two boys. Where we can't seem to agree is which is better, OSU or U of O. Blain graduated from OSU and Laura from U of O. Blain studied construction engineering management and is a construction project manager. Laura studied interior architecture at U of O and works in an architecture firm doing commercial projects, mostly in higher education. Carson decided long ago that he will be a Beaver, so naturally it was decided for Elliott that he will be a Duck!

You may have noticed, or heard, Carson and Elliott. Carson is five and Elliott is two. Carson is in kindergarten this year at Bridgeport Elementary.

He participated in Tualatin Soccer Club this year, and his team, the "Dragons", was undefeated. They narrowly got by their last game of the year against the "Polka Dots". Elliott is "in school" as we say at Growing With Pride. Both boys have been swimming since they were just over a year old and we hope they continue to enjoy it.

Some of the things we look forward to in coming years are, hopefully, more opportunities to travel with the boys, and more involvement in the community.



PERSPECTIVES FROM AN EARTHQUAKE, learned from the earthquake villagers...

Bundles of corn stalks make great walls—even though they leak, at least they are private.

A jump rope still provides hours of fun.

The Uno card game knows no language barrier.

When your house collapses, you can build another one.

When your school is destroyed, you will find a way somehow to continue your child's schooling.

If you have to be resourceful, you can be.

The ground will never feel solid again.

A tent feels safer than a house, especially during an aftershock.

You can take pride in your hard work, even if it looks like a shabby shack to outsiders.

Just because you've lost everything you own doesn't mean you've lost everything.

Laughter is an important ingredient of life.

No matter how little food you have, you always have enough to share with a visitor.

No matter how busy you are, you always have time to spend with a visitor.

TUALATIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CALENDAR DECEMBER, 2008

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 7:00 PM Spiritual Formation, off site 7:00 PM Bell practice	2	3 7:00-9:00 PM Choir practice	4	5	6 5:30 PM Progressive Dinner
7 2nd Sunday Adv. 9:15 AM Adult Ed 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship After worship Christian Education lunch&gingerbread house making	8 7:00 Deacon Event for Seniors 7:00 PM Bell practice	9 7:00 PM Christian Education Mtg	10 7:00-9:00 PM Choir practice	11	12 Cookie Sale Set-up	13 Cookie Sale 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM
14 3rd Sunday Adv. 9:15 AM Adult Ed 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 5:00 pm Youth Group Christmas	15 7:00 PM Bell practice	16 7:00-8:30 PM Tuesdays Treasures 7:00 PM Fellowship Meeting	17 7:00-9:00 PM Choir practice	18 7:00 PM Session/Deacon gathering	19	20 Men's Breakfast 7:30-9:00 AM at a restaurant
21 4th Sunday Adv. 9:15 AM Adult Ed 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Evers-Hood Open House 5:00-9:00 PM	22 7:00 pm Bell practice	23	24 Christmas Eve Services 5:00 PM and 10:00 PM	25 Christmas	26	27
28 9:15 AM Adult Ed No Sunday School 10:30 Worship	29 No bell rehearsal	30	31 HAPPY NEW YEAR			

TPC office hours are Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 3 pm and Friday, 9 am to noon.

Have you moved or changed your email address? Please let us know. Call (503) 692-4160 or email Rhoda@tpcspirit.org

Church website: www.tpcspirit.org



Donated Eyeglasses

“EYE” thank you...for donating 57 pair of used eyeglasses to the Amigos Project at Pacific University. For the past 30 years, this dedicated group has provided glasses to people in developing nations such as Guatemala, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Palestine, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Moldova and Jamaica. Over the last 15 years alone, 97,000 patients have been helped.

Students mix service with education as they learn to clean, calculate the prescription, and catalog the eyewear. During the week of Spring Break, the students and doctors work on location, putting in 18 hour days and servicing 1,000 to 2,000 clients. Doctors perform the ocular exams, after which the data base is searched to find the closest match among the donated glasses. Your discards then become the blessing of good vision!

Cackie Kyle

MANY, MANY THANKS

Tom and I would like to thank the congregation for everything that has been done for us during our trip through breast cancer. Whether it was a huge hug, card, email, phone call, flowers, chocolate chip cookies, dinners, visits or prayers...it has been felt. Without the support...life would not have been as easy.

Tom and I also thank each of you for your kind words regarding Tony. He is now in a much better place without pain. He will be missed.

Clare Hahn

LOVING STITCHES has placed a basket in the narthex to collect 7-inch by 9-inch and 7-inch by 7-inch knitted, crocheted or quilted pieces that will be assembled into blankets and donated to women in need. If you're short on time and creating an entire blanket seems like too much, you can create squares and working together, a blanket will emerge. If you have questions, please talk to Mary Feiler (503) 319-5229 or Shirley Schultz (503) 625-9810.

Uncollected 2008 Per Capita Expense is \$1309

The per capita fee for 2008 is \$21.41. If you have not already done so, please write a check payable to TPC, write per capita on the comment line and place it in the offering plate or take it to the office. Thank you.

POP CAN RECYCLING CONTINUES

Proceeds go the women's retreat account to help offset the cost of the speaker. The next retreat will be Friday through Sunday, January 30 through February 1, 2009 at Alton Collins Retreat Center.



BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

December Birthdays

01	Debby Owen	15	Blair Ewing
01	Rachel Norse	16	Stacy Bartlett
04	Emma Steffen	17	Clare Hahn
06	Greg Owen	17	Greg Imus
07	Rick Crall	19	Todd Sweetland
07	Nancy Catanese	19	Dorothy Butts
09	Leah Olson	20	Dorothy Farrell
10	Tanuja Senthirajah	21	Jaci Smith
10	Philip Martin	22	Rick Norse
11	Marlene Hines	23	McKinley Ewing
13	Barbara Kozak	25	Allison Blair
13	William Evers-Hood	27	Myrna Friese
14	Barbara Thomason	28	Anna Schmitt
15	Jackie Danne-miller	29	Norman Danne-miller

WHAT'S HAPPENING



GINGERBREAD HOUSE AND COOKIE DECORATING for KIDS OF ALL AGES

The Christian Education committee is sponsoring a fun time for all after service on **Sunday December 7**. Bring your gingerbread house for decorating (and some candy to decorate with) (entire kits can be purchased at a variety of places including Michaels, Fred Meyer and Costco) and join us for fun, fellowship and food. We will gather on **Sunday, December 7 after worship** for a pizza lunch and then move to decorating cookies and gingerbread houses. Please sign up on the tower in the narthex so we know you're coming and can order enough pizza for everyone. Please call Barb Crall at 692-1677 or Marsha Steffen at 692-0120 if you have any questions. Hope to see you there!

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND MUSIC

Seniors, would you like to take a tour of local Christmas lights? Meet at the church at 6:00 PM and we will go see Christmas lights and then come back to the church for Christmas music, cookies and beverages. If you would like a ride to church, please call Sherry Nelson at 503-692-3156 or call your deacon. Hope you can come to this event.

TPC COOKIE SALE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 9 AM TO 1 PM

The adult education committee is sponsoring a cookie sale. If you are willing to volunteer to bake several dozen of your favorite cookie, Christmas or otherwise, to donate to this cookie sale, please sign the sheet on the tower in the narthex.

Bakers, when you bring your cookies to the church, please also bring a 3X5 card that lists the ingredients in your cookies.

Cookie eaters, mark your calendar for Sat., Dec 13.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

SAT. DECEMBER 20TH, 7:30 AM

Please join us for a great breakfast, good conversation and a chance to get to know other men in our church family.

If you have questions, talk to Chip Kyle after worship or by phone at 503-387-3940.



Holiday OPEN HOUSE

EVERS-HOOD OPEN HOUSE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 5:00-9:00 PM

Everyone is invited to the 2nd Annual Evers-Hood Open House 21865 SW Columbia Circle, Tualatin Please RSVP to evershood@yahoo.com Please feel free to bring an appetizer, dessert or beverage to share!



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE AT TPC

will be **Wednesday, January 28, 2009** from 2:00 to 7:00 PM. This is a reminder that blood donations can only be given every 8 weeks, so be sure to give before December 3rd so that you can give again on January 28th. Watch the tower for sign up sheets to donate blood and/or cookies.

2009 WOMEN'S RETREAT
Friday, Jan. 30 through Sunday, Feb. 1
 at Alton L. Collins Retreat Center.

**Being and doing –
 the Mary and Martha in all of us.**

This retreat will be an opportunity to integrate these two aspects of our lives as in the story of Martha and Mary in Luke 10: 38 – 42. We will explore ways to balance our time and energy to support “being” as well as “doing” in our practical every day busy lives. There will be time to share, time to sing, time to be creative, time for solitude, and time to be together as women, using Abraham Heschel’s quote as our inspiration: “Just to be is a blessing, just to live is holy.”



Biography of Presenter:

Sister Mary Jo Chaves is a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia. She has her Masters of Arts in Teaching from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, OR. Previous to her work in spirituality, she taught

secondary school for 26 years. She completed her Masters in Applied Theology at the Graduate Theological University in Berkeley, CA in 1999. Since 1996 she has been ministering as a spiritual director and co-coordinator of spirituality programs in the Portland Metro area. She is presently employed at the Franciscan Spiritual Center in Milwaukie, OR.

Collins Retreat Center charges \$180 for a single room for two nights, \$150 per person for a double room for two nights. This includes 6 meals (Friday dinner through Sunday lunch). Linens and towels are provided.

Saturday, full day with lunch, is \$37.00 (no overnight stay). Breakfast is \$9.00, dinner is \$15.00.

There may be charges in addition to the Alton Collins fees. How much will depend on fund raising. There is a sign up sheet on the narthex tower.

LOOKING BACK

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS
Sunday, October 26



About 15 dogs attended with their owners. The small pugs were in the majority. Ken's dog, Rigby, was the gentleman of the group.

It was agreed that this service should be repeated, but in the spring or summer when it's warmer and there is more sunlight.



BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PLAY AND DINNER
Play it Again Spam!

Twenty people from TPC attended the play and dinner at Bethel Lutheran Church on **Friday, November 7**. Carolyn and Brian Locke were first time attendees and Brian came away with a story to tell. Ask him about Brunhilde. Erik Spurrell played the part of Sammy the bellhop.

SWING INTO THE HOLIDAYS DANCE
Saturday, November 15th, 7-10 pm

The festivities started at 6:00 PM with a beginning dance lesson taught by Michael Parent. Promptly at 7:00 PM, the band started. They played a variety of music throughout the evening. And the people danced...and danced.

The comments heard were positive, often followed by an inquiry as to whether TPC would sponsor a dance again in the future.

At 10 PM when the music stopped, a hearty crew of about 16 people dismantled the dance floor and transformed the sanctuary back into its Sunday morning worship configuration.



TREASURE TIDBITS

At the November 'Treasure Night' outreach program for developmentally disabled adults, the Treasures shared what they are thankful for: family, friends, teachers, birthdays, every new day, Mom's cookies...and Treasure volunteers!



Promised Pucker
Publicly Performed

The Mission Committee, in cooperation with other committees of the church, set a goal of raising \$5,000 to fund a complete ark for Heifer International. To encourage the congregation, Pastor Ken agreed to kiss a pig if the goal was reached.

Well, thanks to the fantastic support of the congregation, the goal was not only reached but exceeded. To date, \$8,413.14 has been raised – exceeding the goal by 68%!!

Sunday, November 16th was the big date. In front of a packed church, Pastor Ken fulfilled his promise and kissed that little piglet like no pig had been kissed before! Friends, this was not some little, chaste peck on the snout. Nope, it was a full-on, full-bore, smackeroo! Just take a look at the picture to get a hint of the intensity of that kiss. The piglet squealed with delight (perhaps wanting a second?) and the congregation roared its approval.



Thanks to the entire congregation, and especially Pastor Ken, for reaching this goal. It's a job well done! Because of your time, talents and treasures, you have enabled us to send hope around the world and make it just a little bit better place in which we live.

Chip Kyle
 Mission Committee Member