

THE NEW PORT REPORT

December, 2011 and January, 2012

One Christmas an aging grandfather realized that as his family was growing larger and larger, he was becoming less and less able to go out and get meaningful gifts for everyone. He loved his family dearly, and because God had blessed him greatly he enjoyed being generous to them throughout the year, but especially at Christmas. He decided to give each of them a substantial gift certificate so they could go out and get something they would really enjoy.

He went out and got the gift certificates and special Christmas cards. He enjoyed writing personal messages to each of them. He finished each card with the same message: *Merry Christmas. Love, Grandpa. P.S. Go Out And Get Your Own Gift!* It gave him great satisfaction to drop each of the cards into the mailbox, thinking of those he cherished so much.

He waited to hear from his family, but days came and went and no one called. Oh well, he thought, perhaps they're just waiting to say thanks when we get together for our Christmas meal. It was their tradition for the whole family to gather at Grandfather's home a few days after Christmas, a kind of family reunion where everyone brought something wonderful for a huge meal.

But when the day arrived and all the family was gathered, he noticed that his children and grandchildren seemed a little more distant than in past years. No one said, "Thank you." And the meal seemed to end much earlier than it had in past years.

Bewildered and a little hurt, the grandfather was unable to sleep that night. So he did what he often did when insomnia struck: he got up and started cleaning. His desk was a little messy, so to clear his head he started straightening it up. As he opened the main drawer he couldn't believe his eyes: there were all the gift certificates he had bought for his family! He had forgotten to include them with the cards he sent. No wonder they were so cool to him; he had told them to go get their own gifts without giving them the resources to get them.

Can you imagine how that grandfather felt? Can you imagine the bewilderment of his family when all they received was the command to go out and get something for themselves? Maybe they thought grandfather's resources weren't what they used to be. Maybe they thought his affection for them wasn't what it used to be. Maybe they just thought grandfather wasn't as kind as they had believed.

Don't we wonder the same thing about God during times when he seems distant from us, or when it seems we don't have the things we need from him to face whatever circumstances confront us?

The good news of Christmas is that God has not forgotten us, nor has his affection for us grown cold, even though we have acted coolly toward him time and time again. He could have let us go our own way or abandoned us in our sin, but he sent his son in the world, not only to redeem us, but to show how dear to him we are. The gift he gave for us is priceless and dearer to him than anything: his own dear son.

We remember this at Christmas, but we sometimes forget it in our daily lives. But Jesus' coming to us at Christmas ensures that God is always with us as Immanuel. *God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.* (Romans 5:8, 10)

So remember as you celebrate the wonder and joy of Christmas, as much as God did for us at Christmas, and at the cross, and at the empty tomb – he promises more to those he loves. All these things are only a down-payment of the blessings he promises. The Israelites waited many, many years for the promises of the Messiah to be fulfilled. Maybe they thought God had forgotten them. Maybe they thought his love for them had changed. And then, suddenly, the angels declared that God had come to fulfill all his promises: *I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people!* (Luke 2:10)

Perhaps it seems like God is distant or that his love for you has changed. Remember the promises of Christmas. Remember that they are only a down-payment of the glory that awaits. Remember that even when time seems to linger without answers. Trust the Savior who came, who is still with you, and who will return to bring you to glory: *Now to him who is able to do far more*

abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)
Merry Christmas!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 1 Bill Allen
- 3 Dennis Kassebaum
- 11 Mimi Amburgy
- 18 Chaney Duckworth
- 19 Cole Brinker
- 20 Karen Allen
- 27 Heidi Brinker
- 27 Jim Klott
- 28 Kevin Brinker
- 31 Dennis Reed

- 1 Jana Todd
- 12 Rich Schmidt
- 20 Barb Barrett
- 20 Mary Ann Barrett
- 21 Betsy Allyn
- 21 Abi Schmidt
- 22 Evan Duckworth
- 22 Charlie Scheer
- 25 Stacey Barrett
- 25 Bob Galbraith
- 25 Jean Koirtyohann
- 29 Dave Brockmann

December

January

December

4	First Sunday of Advent	10:30 a.m.
6	Good News Club at Campbellton	2:40 p.m.
6	Diaconate Meeting	7:00 p.m.
11	Worship at New Haven Care Center	2:30 p.m.
13	Good News Club at Campbellton (Last of the Year)	2:40 p.m.
13	Women's Christmas Gathering at El Ranchito	6:00 p.m.
15	Trustees/Session Meeting	7:00 p.m.
18	Christmas Program during Sunday School Hour	9:00 a.m.
18	Celebration of the Lord's Supper	10:30 a.m.
25	Christmas Morning Worship (No Sunday School)	10:30 a.m.



January

1	New Year's Day (Normal Sunday School and Worship Schedule)	
7	Men's Prayer Breakfast	8:00 a.m.
15	Celebration of the Lord's Supper	10:30 a.m.
18	Women's Monthly Study	7:00 p.m.
19	Session Meeting	7:00 p.m.
29	Annual Congregational Meeting	11:30 a.m.

February

4	Men's Prayer Breakfast	8:00 a.m.
7	Good News Club at Campbellton (First of Year)	2:40 p.m.

Merry *Christmas*

Women's Christmas Gathering

Tuesday, Dec 13th, 6:00 p.m.

El Ranchito, New Haven

Christmas Program

Sunday, Dec 18th, 9:00 a.m.

(No Sunday School)

Christmas Worship

Sunday, Dec 25th, 10:30 a.m.

(No Sunday School; No Christmas Eve Service)

New Year's Day

Sunday, Jan 1st

Normal Schedule

(Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.; Worship: 10:30 a.m.)

**Ladies'
Bible Study**



The next New Port Ladies Bible Study meeting will be on Wednesday, January 18th, at 7:00 p.m. here at the church. We will be discussing study # 3, *Another Painful Decision*.

You do not need to have a book to participate—just read John 11:17-44

In this passage Jesus faced a difficult decision. Mary Ann Barrett will be our hostess for the evening. Please join us for good discussion and prayer.

See you on the 18th!

Ladies of New Port

Ladies,

Please join us for a Christmas Dinner on Tuesday, December 13th. We will meet at El Ranchito in New Haven at 6:00 p.m. Before dinner, we will car pool from the restaurant over to New Haven Care Center for about 20 minutes and sing Christmas Carols. We will then return to El Ranchito for dinner. (Please contact Linda Galbraith if you would like to car pool from the church to New Haven.)

Please note: El Ranchito has a variety of food including an American foods menu.

Please take time to fellowship with your church friends.

Christmas Family

We are providing Christmas gifts for a family through the Pregnancy Assistance Center again this year. The large gift box in the narthex has gift tags that show the items needed for our family. Take a tag, purchase the item listed, and bring the wrapped package back to church with the tag attached by Sunday, December 11th. If anyone is interested in delivering the gifts to the Center during the week of Dec. 11th, please contact Joan Schmidt.

A Little Humor

Though twins Timmy and Tommy looked exactly alike, their personalities couldn't be more opposite. Timmy was the eternal optimist, while Tommy was more of a glass-is-half-empty kind of kid. One Christmas, their father decided to try an experiment and mess with his boys just a little. He filled Tommy's bedroom with dozens of toys and all kinds of things boys hope to get. And though in a wiser moment he might have done differently, he filled Timmy's room with – horse manure.



On Christmas morning he passed by Tommy's room and noticed he was crying. He stepped in and asked what was wrong. "Oh, Daddy," Tommy sobbed. "Look at all these toys! My friends are going to be jealous, I'll have to read all these instructions before I can do anything with any of this stuff, I'll constantly need new batteries, and my toys will eventually get broken!"

Shaking his head a little, the father walked into the hallway and gazed into Timmy's room. He was shocked to see Timmy full of glee and practically dancing with joy in the midst of the manure. His father asked, "What are you so happy about?" Timmy exuberantly replied, "Look at all this, Dad! With all this mess, there's got to be a pony in here somewhere!"

Worship Notes

*Behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.
For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.
Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!*



As believers we are quick to remember that “Jesus is the reason for the season”! And in order to remember the “reason” he entered our humanity we often point to the cross and the death he suffered to free us from death, and to the resurrection he accomplished to bring us eternal life, and to his ascension to God’s right hand where he reigns forever as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

But the Bible also gives us glimpses of his glory even as a child in the in-between time between the nativity and the resurrection. Though he was a child that had to grow in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52)

like the rest of us, he was *the* child who took the government upon his shoulders and, even from his youth, showed that he was the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

In our Advent series, we’ll take a look at the child whom kings worshipped, prophets affirmed, angels adored, and shepherds marveled. We’ll start with the twelve year old boy astounding religious leaders in the temple, worship the toddler along with the wise men from the east, rest in the promises fulfilled by the 10 day old baby held by Simeon, and be in awe with the shepherds and the angels over the newborn in the manger.

We’ll return to our series through 1 Corinthians after the first of the year and consider how newborn children of God are called to grow in Christ-likeness.

Remember, as an aid in preparing for worship, each week’s bulletin is posted on the church’s website (www.newportpca.org) by Thursday or Friday.

Audio files of past sermons and the current monthly newsletter are also available there.

Scripture

Luke 2:41-51
Matthew 2:1-12
Luke 2:22-35
Luke 2:8-20
2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Sermon Series: *Advent*

A Child to Lead (Isa 11:1-10)
A Child to Seek (Isa 60:1-3)
A Child to Hold (Isa 52:7-10; Lord’s Supper)
A Child to Behold (Heb 1:1-6)
A New Creation

Date

Dec 4
Dec 11
Dec 18
Dec 25
Jan 1

Sermon Series: *1 Corinthians*

1 Corinthians 6:9-20
1 Corinthians 7:1-9
1 Corinthians 7:10-17
1 Corinthians 7:17-24
1 Corinthians 7:25-40

Glorify God in Your Body
Is Marriage Good? (Lord’s Supper)
Is Divorce Bad?
Do We Just Accept Our Lot in Life?
Are Singles Happier?

Jan 8
Jan 15
Jan 22
Jan 29
Feb 5