



Greening the Church
Lend a hand at this festive PCJH tradition!



ALL CHURCH POTLUCK on Sunday December 13th in the Fellowship Hall following the Choir Christmas Cantata and supported by your Deacons. Don't miss this opportunity to continue the celebration at PCJH during this blessed time of year.

POTLUCK GUIDELINES: If you plan on attending, each individual or family is to bring a side dish, salad or dessert for 8. Since our Cantata is attended by many visitors, we want to be prepared with enough food for our guests. Think generous!

Please label any serving dishes so they can be claimed after the lunch.

If your dish needs to be warmed, please drop it off in our kitchen by 10am. Volunteers in the kitchen are welcomed and appreciated!

Enjoy each other in this Advent Fellowship.

A WORD FROM PASTOR BEN PASCAL

Every Member a Minister

Dear PCJH Family,

I love the season of Advent as we prepare for Christmas! I love the quiet moments when I can center my heart and mind on Christ Jesus the Lord. I love decorating our home and putting up lights around the house and placing ice lanterns on the path leading to our front door. I love the scene from the film *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* when Chevy Chase puts up all the Christmas lights on his house. The reason I love Christmas lights is because I see them as a witness to the message from the prophet Isaiah about the coming of Christ...

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.
-Isaiah 9:2

The Light of the world... Jesus Christ! As you look at Christmas lights this year, may they remind you of God's presence and light in the midst of our dark and broken world.

The beginning of Advent is Sunday, November 29th and continues until Christmas day. Advent is a time of waiting and preparation for the coming of Christ. We remember Christ's coming into our world as a baby in a manger. We also await Christ's coming again in all his power and glory to usher in His kingdom... a kingdom where all things are made new. A kingdom that the book of Revelation describes as a place where there will be no more tears or suffering... a place where there is peace, love and joy!

I know that many of you are experiencing trials and challenges while others are experiencing immense blessing and joy in life. It is a reminder to me that we live in an era that theologians have coined, "the already but not yet". God's kingdom is "already" here but "not yet" fully here. We live with a mix of joys and sorrows. As we celebrate Christ coming into our world and as we await Christ's coming again, may we never lose hope in the promises of God that are in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I pray that you will find time to reflect on life during this Christmas season. Reflect on God's promises and the assurance we have, that in Christ, *God is with us*. May you sense God's presence within you and all around you this holiday season.

◆ **Christmas Festivities:** This year is no different than prior years in the line-up of wonderful Christmas celebrations within the life of PCJH. Here are the major celebrations to put on your calendar to help prepare our hearts for Christmas...

- **Christmas Cantata** with full orchestra and choir on Sunday, December 13th at 10:15am. Afterwards please attend the ALL CHURCH POTLUCK in the Fellowship Hall.
- **Christmas Pageant** with cast and crew of all ages on Sunday, December 20th at 10:15am
- **Christmas Eve Services**
 - 5:00pm Intergenerational Service with Communion at PCJH
 - 5:00pm Intergenerational Service with Communion at Hotel Terra in Teton Village
 - 10:00pm Candlelight Communion Service at PCJH

I would like to encourage each of you to bring a friend to one or more of these services. This is a wonderful opportunity to introduce them to the love of God and to PCJH. I anticipate people's lives being changed because of the ministry of PCJH during this Christmas season!

Associate Pastor Search Committee: At our congregational meeting on November 8th, the members of PCJH elected the following people to serve on our Associate Pastor Search Committee...

- Warren Myers (co-chair)
- Sue Unruh (co-chair)
- Tom Jordan
- Irene Lund
- Melissa Snider
- Aaron Nydam
- Karen Brennan
- Ben Pascal (ex officio)

This is a wonderful team of very committed and faithful members of our congregation. I am excited to see how God works in them and through them as they discern who God is calling to serve as our next Associate Pastor. Please keep them in prayer as they begin this process. We have already had two meetings and you will hear more from them in the coming months as they update you on the process.

May you experience the hope, peace, love, and joy of the Lord this Christmas!!

God is with us, ~Pastor Ben



**PCJH Mission Team
to Las Cuarentas, Nicaragua
November, 2015
by Becky Kimmel**

Our journey together with a village began in 2011; as a church, we committed to partnering with Agros to purchase and develop land in Nicaragua to help the rural poor climb out of poverty through land ownership. As part of the original Vision Team in April 2012, I joined the team as we journeyed to Managua, Nicaragua, then by bus to Matagalpa and again by bus to Tuma and the final leg of the ride/walk to Tierra Nueva. Tierra Nueva, or the “New Land”, consisted of 1,500 acres in need of a road, water, housing and lots of help.

Our church has continued to invest in helping the villagers of Las Cuarentas, “the Forty”, to grow themselves out of poverty by hard work and God's provision. We are God's hands and feet in helping to make this happen. And our

twice yearly mission teams continue to report the improvements in the health of the villagers of Las Cuarentas.

Three and one half years later, returning by the same route and seeing the infrastructure improvements, I thoroughly enjoyed seeing the growth from ten inch coffee plants now bearing fruit. We all agreed that we have a renewed appreciation for the work of these farmers. They have successfully developed their village, with 60 homes completed, and a road that enables us as a Mission team to reach them in under two hours daily each way. They now have a school with three classrooms, improved toilets and water for hand washing. We enjoyed our time together in worship and in the newly constructed community shelter, which offers protection from the rain and sunshine. We felt privileged to share our lunches with a different family each day in the shelter of their homes, each a modest concrete block building with a tin roof.

The priority of the villagers initially was the planting of crops. It was our privilege, to help them during our November 2015 trip, to harvest the ripe coffee berries by hand. The two gallon baskets we each filled took us an hour to pick and probably would have taken the villagers a mere 15 minutes. The ten of us were accompanied by 50 villagers, picking the ripe fruit from four foot coffee plants on steep and shaded hillsides. Each plant must be picked two or three times to harvest berries as they ripen. Then the manual work continues with processing by a rented metal hand grinder to separate the pulp from both halves of the coffee bean. The pulp is returned to the fields to enrich the earth and the beans (technically berry seeds resembling cherries) are washed and then dried. Many days the beans are exposed to sun and air on black plastic sheets. The workers must alternately protect the coffee beans from regular rainstorms and exposure to the sun for drying. Then the beans are roasted and transported for consumption by North Americans and other world markets.

Our activities included times of sharing in worship, projects for the students, athletics, supporting the Agros staff with a hand washing class by rewarding the children and their families with a slice of birthday cake for the village matriarch. Men met separately on administrative matters while women joined together for a bible study. We colored on prepared papers and decorated crowns for the children and braided hair with new hair brushes donated for this purpose. We sang, shared photos and enjoyed several skits by the youth. We presented the youth soccer team with a new soccer ball and gave needed medical supplies to the Agros staff for distribution as needed. We cried as we said our goodbyes, “Le te bendiga”, God bless you!

For information about future Mission trips, contact the church office.

Newly Elected Deacons and Ruling Elders

At our congregational meeting on November 8th, the members of PCJH elected the following people to serve as new Ruling Elders and Deacons.

Ruling Elders

- Debbie Schlinger 2016
Congregational Life
- Warren VanGenderen 2018
Adult Ministries
- Barb Andrews 2018
Children, Youth, and Family
- Peter Keenan 2018
Nominating Team
- Pat Wright 2018
Stewardship

Deacons

- Kenlyn Long 2016
- Michael Adams* 2017
- Joanie Shipman* 2017
- Barb Huhn* 2018
- Yvonne Henze* 2018
- Tena Webb* 2018
- Jen Baki 2018
- Dylan Wade 2018
- Paula Jorgensen 2018
- Erin Rosenberg 2018
- Deb Keenan 2018

Those with an asterisk (*) next to their name are serving a second term. The year listed next to each name is the year that their term will end on December 31st of that year. Please be sure to thank all of these individuals for their service to the Lord and to PCJH.

2016 Pinnacle Database Mailing Cleanup

In order to steward our resources to the best of our ability, would you be interested in viewing the Pinnacle online or pick up a copy the beginning of each month in our lobby to save postage costs?

Whatever you decide, our communication with YOU and your involvement with PCJH is our priority. Also please notify office@pcjh.org if you have any address changes. Thank you all for your help.

Music Lessons

As part of our music ministry, PCJH is offering private music lessons to the congregation and the community at a subsidized rate of \$40/hour and \$20/half hour. Lessons are available on various instruments at a time that works for you. Contact Kenny Hadden at music@pcjh.org to enroll for the spring semester!



Welcome our Newest Members!



Please welcome our newest members, Joy and Stan Steiner. They officially became members at our Council meeting on November 17th. Joy is the school librarian at Colter Elementary School and Stan is a professor at the University of Idaho in Boise. They are both wonderful people! Please be sure to welcome them to the family. You can usually find them singing in the choir on Sunday mornings.



THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING will be received again this year on Christmas Eve, and on the Sundays surrounding Christmas. One of the four Special Offerings of PC(USA). It has been a part of the Christmas tradition in the Presbyterian Church since 1933. Half of this offering is distributed through the **Board of Pensions' Financial Assistance Programs**, recognizing the faithfulness of current and retired church workers by providing funds to help them through difficult times. The other half supports **Presbyterian racial ethnic schools and colleges**:

- *Barber-Scotia College, NC
- *Knoxville College, TN
- *Stillman College, AL
- *Menaul School, NM
- *Cook College and Theological School, AZ
- *Cook Native American Ministries, AZ
- *Presbyterian Pan American School, TX

Please glance at the poster and bulletin insert about the JOY OFFERING to understand its implications for our Mission work throughout the nation, and use the envelope provided to participate in this extremely worth while work of the Church.

**We are grateful for our always generous congregation!
Thank you!**

The Mission Committee



Save the Date ENGAGE!

January 29-30, 2016

PCJH is excited to host an upcoming conference provided by Presbyterian Church (USA) which presents a new evangelism approach to help churches become relevant again. As congregations using Engage they learn how to share their story and faith journey, they attract people to join them in following Jesus— in God's mission of transformation in neighborhoods and communities.

The conference will cover topics to equip us to give our testimony of God's work in our lives and organically discuss our transformation through God's love. Save the date and join us as we pursue our vision at PCJH to Gather, Grow and Go! Details and registration information will be released in December.

November was spent learning about and visiting many places in Our Community. We also took time to reflect on the many things we are thankful for. We had our annual Thanksgiving Feast with our families. The kids performed "Albuquerque Turkey" and a poem.

The month of December is always busy. This year, we look forward to celebrating Jesus' birthday and performing for the Morning Star residents. The kids learned a song this month called "He's Here." It talks about the expectancy and joy that came with Jesus' arrival. May your family remember and experience these feelings during the holidays!

"God has given a son to us." Isaiah 9:6



Save the Date
Little Lambs Christmas
Concert
Thursday, December 17th @
5:30 p.m. in the
Sanctuary



PARTNERING IN FAITH

Multi Faith Educational Gathering on Domestic Violence
with Rev. Dr. Marie Fortune

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Workshop | Buffet Lunch | Keynote Address

Presented by
COMMUNITY
SAFETY
NETWORK.org
307.733.SAFE



9am – 11:30am

WHERE FAITH & VIOLENCE MEET:

How Religious Communities Can Help

Topics include enhancing response to victims and abusers, best practices for safety, identifying signs of abuse, and understanding tactics for control. For faith professionals, lay spiritual leaders and advocates.

11:30am – 1pm

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION by Rev. Dr. Fortune

FREE BUFFET LUNCH

Genesis Room of the Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole
Open to all community members.

“People in crisis often look to their faith leaders for guidance and assistance,” explains Rev. Dr. Fortune. “There is great need to strengthen collaboration between faith communities and secular organizations in order to improve community-wide approaches to ending violence against women.”

For more information or to **RSVP**, please contact Education and Outreach Director Shannon Nichols at shannon@csnjh.org or **307.733.3711**

An Opportunity for Community Involvement - Systems of Education Group

Over the last 5 years, PCJH has been an active participant in the Systems of Education (SOE) group, organized by the Teton County Library. The majority of organizations that offer educational opportunities to the children in our community are represented here, including the Teton County School District. SOE started with the goal of maximizing learning opportunities for children and youth in our community outside of the K-12 classroom. The group continues to share the vision of advancing and enriching our community's out of school time. The subgroups of SOE are Early Childhood Education, Summer and After-school programs. As the PCJH representative for the Summer Programming subgroup, I wanted to share one of the great successes of our partnership with SOE.

The "Summer Sampler Program" was launched in 2013 with these objectives:

- To provide a unique and thoughtful enrichment program created by community leaders to introduce youth and their families to several existing quality summer programs at an affordable rate so that families could enroll in programs that appeal most to their children for the remainder of the summer and into the future;
- To reach students who have little to no summer camp exposure due to various barriers, often times providing "at risk" children with a safe environment during these 3 weeks in June and hopefully beyond;
- To address the school district's concerns over "summer learning loss," because research shows that youth participation in summer programs of all kinds can lessen summer learning loss and even lead to achievement gains; and
- To engage school-age youth in a variety of enriching, experiential activities – science and nature, literacy, sports, history, art - right in our backyard. During their time at PCJH, they were able to explore their faith and learn about God's unconditional love for them!

J.O.Y. Summer Camp, the JH Children's Museum, and Teton Science Schools were the hosting organizations, and an average of 10 enrichment partners also participated by providing activities/programs at little to no cost over the course of 3 weeks in June (2013-2015).

An average of 60 total children participated each summer, and the parents reported that their expectations were exceeded each year. This program was seen as a privilege for these students and their families.

Unique to J.O.Y. Camp, we served approximately 54 students each year and experienced greater return rates each summer, culminating in 2015 with 10 Summer Sampler children joining in for 210 additional student days. Unique to the J.O.Y. Summer Sampler experience was that students were integrated into our existing classrooms. This expanded the children's opportunities to make new friends and be part of a group of peers their own age. In addition, PCJH was able to contribute to tuition assistance to the participating families to the tune of \$13,480 over the 3 years. This wonderful, collaborative program achieved its goals during this 3 year run, ending in 2015. Moving forward, the TCSD is spearheading how the community will continue to collaboratively serve all families with a different approach for the summer of 2016 and beyond.

In conclusion, statistics are important in assessing the "value" of endeavors such as the Summer Sampler, but to the J.O.Y. staff, the "God Sightings" were what made this venture an undisputable success! Here are just a few – Enjoy!

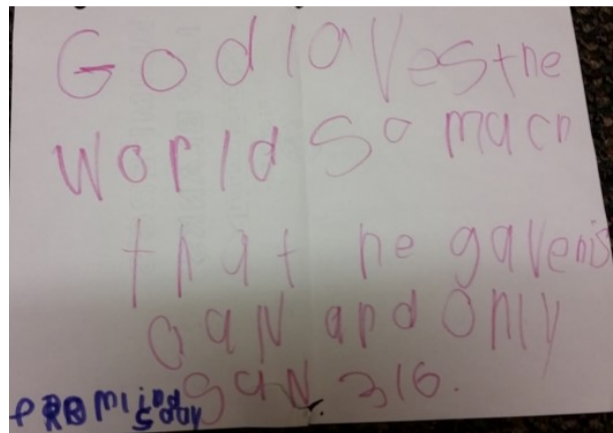
Blessings, Diane McGee J.O.Y. Director

One student, who was 10yrs old, learned to ride a bike this summer, with his peers cheering him on!

A grateful mother came to me with her 9 yr old daughter. She had tears in her eyes as they relayed the story that her daughter came home one afternoon and said, "Mom, I have Jesus in my heart and because of that, I will treat you with more respect and kindness."

Continued on the next page →

A mother shared: "My daughter came last year for the Summer Sampler, and we are so glad to be back. She feels very safe here, and we know that she will try new things and that the staff will look after her."



Sisters shared: "We came here last year with the Summer Sampler, and this is was our favorite camp! We are so glad to be back!"



Intern Testimonials



Grant Wright:

I've been an occasional attender of PCJH on school breaks for a decade, but this last year of living in Jackson and working at the church has been a wonderful new experience. My fellow interns, church staff coworkers, and the many volunteers and participants in our programs with whom I've worked have given me a real sense of why this church always seemed like a place of light and energy. God has given this body of believers enormous blessings and is clearly working in the life of this church. I've seen this in Ascent and JOY, my primary areas of responsibility, as well as in the many other programs run by our gifted staff and volunteers. Thank you so much to the church and community for your kindness and enthusiasm throughout this adventure!



Aubrey Hoffman:

It has been three months since I moved to Jackson, and I can't believe all that has happened during that time. I have already learned so many things. A lot of my time so far has been spent with the elementary school kids at PCJH. It is really the most exposure that I have had to this age group and they are inspiring me. They constantly amaze me at their willingness to forgive, try new things, and include others. I've spent some time comparing how these children interact with each other and how I interact with adults around me. There is a joy and innocence in how they approach life that I am trying to integrate into my own culture. How different would our relationships be if we welcomed new faces with open arms, or noticed someone was upset and offered a hug and a smile? I hope to build community during the remainder of my time here, and I believe that that is possible by following the example of the children that I'm privileged to work with.



Jordan Shive:

Hello Church Family! Where do I start? It has been a transformative time since I have been here working at PCJH. I have been able to lead in various programs and activities here in Children, Youth & Family Ministries. It has been great having a mentor, and friend like Ricky Emlyn, Director of CYF, to live, work and do ministry together. It has been an exciting time this fall with the two new interns, Aubrey Hoffman, and Grant Wright. The team is great and works really well together. I have had a lot of fun leading "Wednesday After-School" for the past two years. It has been awesome seeing kids I met at JOY and Upward flow into the ministry program. During my time, I feel that I have grown exponentially in my understanding of leadership and how to lead others, and have grown in my own spiritual life, all of which is priceless learning, but I still have a ways to go. All in all, I have adored and cherished my time here. You all make working here fun!

CHILDREN,
YOUTH &
FAMILY
MINISTRIES





The 2015 Upward Committee: Linda Hanlon - Director
Ricky Emlyn, Robyn Lunsford, Amy Hindman, Jim Radda, Rita Lucas, and Kelley Tucker.

Special thanks - PCJH Staff – Coaches – Referees – Volunteers!
What we studied in addition to basketball and cheerleading:
RESPECT - GRATITUDE - TRUST – LOVE.

6th Grade Boys

Ben Blount
Uriel Vazquez
Ethan Holmes
Tyler Wilkinson
Ryan Lane

6th Grade Girls

Bailey Chamberland	Bonnie McLennan
Lilly Eggett	Diana Moser
Kate Frederick	Sarah Robinson
Rachel Klemmer	Zaidee Smith
Brayden Levanduski	Chloe Wengerd
Morgan May	Kaity Yarrow



2014 White Star Trophy Recipients



The recipients are selected by their coaches and a trophy is given to one 6th grade boy and one 6th grade girl who model the Upward white star virtue that stands for Christlikeness.

Lilly Eggett and Ben Blount
Congratulations from all of us

Congratulations to our Spalding Portable
Basketball Hoop Raffle Winner!
Isaac Moser

Thank you, Linda Hanlon

Stewardship Update

In scripture, we are asked to meet, to worship, to pray, to witness, and to give....

Because through meeting, we gain strength.

Through worship we gain understanding.

Through prayer we gain faith.

Through witness we share our strength, our understanding, and our faith.

And through giving, we acknowledge what has been given to us.

As a congregation, we have \$388,624 remaining to be raised this year to meet our commitments to each other and to Christ.

We would ask that you give prayerful consideration to what you wish to return to the Lord this holiday season as we celebrate His birth.

Thank you to everyone for their generosity.

Yours in Christ, Stewardship Team PCJH



Finance Update

PCJH has a budget of \$1,006,500, with expenses expected to be greater than revenues by \$27,175. As of the end of October, PCJH is ten months into the 2015 Budget. Expenses continue to be below expected levels for this time of year by \$65,181.

The Pinnacle
 The Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole
 Box 7530
 1251 South Park Loop Road
 Jackson, WY 83002
 Published Monthly
 Issue #12-2015

December Anniversaries 2015



© Can Stock Photo

Fred & Linda Walker
 December 18 28 years

Larry & Barbara VanGenderen
 December 28 54 years

White, Steve & Katie
 December 29 17 years



Email Address Privacy

PCJH is committed to protecting everyone's email address privacy. Please do not use PCJH as a way to acquire email addresses for soliciting purposes. If you should receive emails about church business where email addresses have been inadvertently listed rather than BCC'd, we kindly request that you do not use those addresses for purposes other than church business communications.

Should you receive an unwanted solicitation email from a PCJH member or affiliate, please notify the church office at office@pcjh.org.

Meet the PCJH Staff & Ruling Elders

Pastoral Staff

Rev. Ben Pascal – Senior Pastor
 Rev. Steve Weber – Temporary Associate Pastor

Worship Staff

Kenny Hadden – Worship Coordinator
 Keith Phillips – Pianist

Administrative Staff

Cindy Dahlin – Operations Manager
 Lindsey Parr – Communications Coordinator
 Pam Flores – Congregational Life Coordinator
 Barb Huhn – Pinnacle Newsletter Publisher
 Kim Bogen – Bookkeeper
 Sanchez Family – Custodial Crew
 Bill Fox – Maintenance Specialist

Kitchen Staff

Steve Murphy – Wednesday Fellowship Dinner Chef

Children, Youth and Family Ministry

Ricky Emlyn – Director of Children, Youth and Family
 Jordan Shive – Intern
 Aubrey Hoffman – Intern
 Grant Wright – Intern
 Darla Jackson – Nursery
 Renee Knutson – Wednesday After School Teacher

Little Lambs Preschool

Effie Edwards – Director & Teacher
 Amy Dahmen – Teacher
 Martha Davila – Teacher
 Mrs. Cho – Teacher
 Barb Huhn – Teacher
 Pat Wright – Teacher

J.O.Y. Summer Camp

Upward Basketball

Linda Hanlon – Upward Basketball Director

PCJH Church Council (Ruling Elders)

Ken Blount – Adult Ministries
 Kathy Robertson - Adult Ministries
 Alli Lane - Small Groups
 Nancy Dunlap - Worship
 Karen Fox - Children, Youth & Family
 Larry Huhn - Buildings & Grounds
 Larry Jorgenson - Clerk
 Alan Lund - Finance
 Patty McDonald - Personnel
 George Scarlett - Nominating
 Katie-Chloe Stock - Mission

DECEMBER, 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 6:45am Men's Breakfast at the Virginian 12 Noon Women's Bible Study 1:15pm Staff Mtg	2 10am-4pm Church Greening After School Program 5:15pm Praise Band 6:00pm Fellowship Dinner 6:45-7:45 Programs for all ages 6:45 Adult Choir	3 12 Noon Men's Group @ Jackson Whole Grocer Community Room 7:00pm Young Adult Fellowship	4 Office Closes at 1pm	5 8:00am Men's Discussion Group PCJH Youth Lounge 8:30am-3pm ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIZARRE
6 The Story Chapter 12 8am Worship Service 9:00am Adult Classes 10:15 Intergenerational Worship Service NO CYF CYF Ice Lantern Sale 11:45-12:30 Children's Choir Practice 11:30 New Deacon Orientation	7 8:45am Women's Covenant Group	8 6:45am Men's Breakfast at the Virginian 12 Noon Women's Bible Study 1:15pm Staff Mtg	9 After School Program 5:15 Praise Band Rehearsal 6:00m Fellowship Dinner 6:45-7:45 Programs for all ages 6:45 Adult Choir	10 12 Noon Men's Group @ Jackson Whole Grocer Community Room Offices closes at 4pm Staff Christmas Party	11 Office closes at 1pm	12 8:00am MENS GROUP TOYS FOR KIDS in Fellowship Hall
13 8am Worship Service 9:00am Adult Classes 10:15 Choir Cantata followed by All Church Potluck CYF Ice Lantern Sale 11:45-12:30 Children's Choir Practice	14 8:45am Women's Covenant Group	15 6:45am Men's Breakfast at the Virginian 12 Noon Women's Bible Study 1:15pm Staff Mtg	16 After School Program 5:15 Praise Band Rehearsal 6:00pm LAST Fellowship in December Dinner 6:45-7:45 Programs for all ages 6:45 Adult Choir	17 12 Noon Men's Group @ Jackson Whole Grocer Community Room 5:30pm Little Lambs Christmas Program in the Sanctuary 7:00pm Young Adult Fellowship	18 Office closes at 1pm 4-8pm Caroling & Potluck	19 8:00am Men's Discussion Group PCJH Youth Lounge 2:30pm Children's Choir 3:00pm Pageant Rehearsal
20 8am Worship Service 9:00am Adult Classes 10:15am Worship Service CYF CHRISTMAS PAGEANT	21 8:45am Women's Covenant Group	22 6:45am Men's Breakfast at the Virginian 12 Noon Women's Bible Study 1:15pm Staff Mtg	23 No Wed After School No Fellowship Dinner No MS/HS Youth or Adult Classes No Adult Choir	24 No Little Lambs 5pm Intergenerational Service w/communion @ Hotel Terra in Teton Village 5pm Christmas Eve Service at PCJH 10pm Candlelight Communion Service at PCJH	25 JOYOUS NOEL Office Closed	26 8:00am Men's Discussion Group PCJH Youth Lounge
27 The Story Chapter 13 8am Worship Service 9:00am Adult Classes 10:15am Worship Service w/ Children's Sunday School	28 8:45am Women's Covenant Group Little Lambs Closed	29 Little Lambs Closed	30 Little Lambs Closed	31 7:00pm Young Adult Fellowship Little Lambs Closed	JANUARY 1, 2016 Little Lambs Closed	

A WORD FROM ASSOCIATE PASTOR STEVE WEBER

HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS ... COME ON ... YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO SING!

Pastor Steve Weber



I admit that I like most Christmas music. I don't even mind hearing too much Christmas music in the grocery store. I like how the music of the season permeates our culture. It is not unusual to catch a store clerk humming along or lip synching "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," a carol that expresses so well the story of God's apparent love for all humanity in bestowing the world with a child who is His Son. People end up singing solid theology without even realizing it.

I also like the songs that are part of the holiday season that have little to do with Jesus but sing nonetheless a tale of joy and goodwill toward all. My kids know that at some point in the Christmas season I will get all misty-eyed when I hear Randy Travis sing that one line: "Through the years we'll always be together if the fates allow." I'm not really sure what happens. I suppose it strikes a deep chord of hope and love. Music does that.

It is no surprise then that Christmas really began in song. First, Mary's song, the "Magnificent," and then the lesser know, but equally significant, "Song of Zechariah." The father of John the Baptist who lost his ability to speak when the angel Gabriel informed him he would father a child in his old age, a child who would prepare the way for the coming Messiah. By the time little John was born Zechariah was a believer. In a sense he was one of the first believers in God's great movement toward us in Jesus Christ. Zechariah's faith was aroused and he just had to sing.

They are beautiful words:

*"... because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace."*

I wish we had the melody. But we have Zechariah's heart for the Lord. And that is enough.

This month, more than any other, we sing our faith; we celebrate this grand movement of God into the world mostly with songs. The choir will have its cantata, and that is always a treat, but you and I, well, we have the shower and the car and, if our families don't mind too much, we have our homes where we can launch into all our favorite holiday tunes. Singing might be the one, sure way to celebrate the birth of Jesus in a way that gives justice to the magnanimity of the incarnation. What other response could there be to "the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us" that even comes close to opening our lungs and lips in melody?

Christmas is upon us! Let the songs play and may they find us singing along, filled with faith in God's one great movement toward us in Jesus Christ. Now where's that old Andy Williams Christmas album my mom always played?

*The Presbyterian Church
Of Jackson Hole
P. O. Box 7530
1251 South Park Loop Road
Jackson, WY 83002
December, 2015*

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit #189
Jackson, WY
83002



The Mission of The Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole is

PASSING ON THE FAITH

as we GATHER to love God;

GROW to know and follow Jesus; and

GO and make a difference.

*All are welcome and all are needed as we advance this significant mission for the
21st Century.*

www.pejh.org