

December 2016



Hadley and Delilah help decorate the Chrismon tree during Hanging of the Greens, November 20.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Deepening our Discipleship	1
Day School News .....	2
Rhonda Pearsell.....	3
Operation Christmas Child ..	3
Joyful Noise .....	4
Stewardship .....	5
Outdoor Nativity.....	5
Elementary Study .....	6
Youth Prayer Room .....	7
Presbyterian Women .....	7
Sanctuary Symbols.....	8
Presbyterian News .....	10
Upcoming Events.....	11
Acolyte Schedule .....	12
Birthdays.....	12

## Deepening our Discipleship

Rev. Rebecca Luter

I share with you a poem by Ann Weems that speaks to me. Perhaps it will speak to you as well. May your Christmas be *JOYFUL!*

### **This Year Will Be Different**

Who among us does not have dreams  
that this year will be different?  
Who among us does not intend to go  
peacefully, leisurely, carefully toward Bethlehem,  
for who among us like to cope with the  
commercialism of Christmas  
which lures us to tinsel not only the tree  
but also our hearts?  
who among us intends to get caught up in tearing around  
and wearing down?  
who among us does not long for:  
gifts that give love?  
shopping in serenity?  
cards and presents sent off early?  
long evenings by the fireside with those we love?  
(the trimming devoid of any arguing about who's going to  
hang what where,  
the aroma of cinnamon and nutmeg mingling with the pine  
scent of the tree,  
and carols gently playing over our idyllic scene) and the  
children! The children cheerfully talking about giving  
instead of getting?

(Continued on page 9)

## Day School News

Listening to young children's voices singing in the sanctuary was a beautiful way to begin the joyful season.

On Day School Sunday, November 20th, Mr. Doug orchestrated children singing praises to God. How Glorious! The children sang songs that they sing in weekly chapel. We are so thankful that our children have this special chapel time to learn and think about God.

Operation Christmas Child boxes were dedicated as children and families brought their shoebox to be placed under the lighted tree. These boxes filled with Christmas gifts will be delivered around the world. Many children that would not have Christmas presents will receive a shoebox of toys to enjoy.

The virtues that our school will be focusing on during this blissful season are gratitude and generosity. The church and school come together with the project Operation Christmas Child. Constructing the boxes, buying items, and packing the boxes is a great way for children to be aware of thankfulness and giving.

In December the halls of the Farmington preschool will be decked with red and white candy canes and precious handprint wreaths. There will be gold glitter stars and reindeers



everywhere. Angels and manger scenes with baby Jesus will be adored.

We will celebrate with children singing at our traditional Christmas music program on December 12th and 13th at 10am. Parents and Grandparents will fill the sanctuary to hear the heavenly sounds of children's voices singing "Away in a Manger."





**M**s. Natalee, our three year old lead teacher, is teaching the children about Joseph and his Coat of many Colors. Students Madison Thorn, Nora Tolbert, Wes Sullivan, and Grant Gatewood love to talk about the Bible stories that they are learning about in the classroom.



Since 2012, Rhonda Pearsall has served the Farmington Family as our Bookkeeper. She has accepted a position for a small family CPA firm that allows her more flexibility with

working from home. We will miss her. Rhonda is a quick and accurate accountant, and a kind and patient person. We wish her and her sons, Garrett, Zach, and Cody, the best.

Carolyn Demaree, a member of Farmington Presbyterian, served for many years as bookkeeper prior to retiring in 2013. She has graciously agreed to serve as Interim Bookkeeper as we work to fill the position.

If you, or someone you know, is an accountant interested in a part-time position, please send a resume to Rev. Rebecca Luter at [rluter@farmingtonpres.org](mailto:rluter@farmingtonpres.org).



Students at Farmington folded boxes to be used during Operation Christmas Child. Farmington completed and sent 53 boxes to be distributed around the world to children of all ages. Thank you all for your help and generosity.

## Christmas at Farmington



Joyful  
NOISE

**Thursday, December 1**

**Hope and Healing Service**

**7pm**

If you find that the holidays are difficult for you or their approach is causing you sadness or anxiety; if the last year has been difficult for you; or if you have experienced a loss in the last year, you will want to attend this service. Led by Rev. Rebecca Luter, this service offers an opportunity for you to grieve, to remember, and to quietly contemplate the gift of hope that is born to us. Please share this information with friends who might be blessed by attending.

**Sunday, December 11**

**Christmas Caroling**

**3pm**

An afternoon of visiting those unable to attend worship and sharing the joy of Christmas. We will meet at the church and divide into groups to go caroling and gather back together when we're finished to warm up with some hot chocolate and other treats.

**Wednesday December 14**

**Dinner / Children's Christmas Pageant**

**5:45 pm**

Our final Wednesday night dinner of 2016 will be our annual Children's Pageant directed by Pat Sherman. Join us for a festive service in the Sanctuary as we celebrate the gift of children and the Christ child. Pageant will begin after dinner at 6:30 in the Sanctuary.

**Sunday, December 18**

**Christmas Joy Offering**

**11:00 am**

By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you provide assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and to ministries developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

**Sunday, December 18**

**Lessons and Carols**

**6:00 pm**

An evening of lessons and carols presented by the Chancel and Children's Choirs directed by Charles Billings. A reception will follow in the Fellowship Hall.

**Saturday, December 24**

**Christmas Eve**

**5:30 pm**

An evening service of candle light and communion. Come and worship the new born King.

**December 25**

**Christmas Day**

**11:00 am**

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace!" There will be no Sunday School on Christmas day to allow families to celebrate the morning of our new hope in Christ.

**E**very year, the Farmington property is festively decorated for the season of Advent. This is not done without a little heavy lifting!

The Farmington Men continued their tradition of setting up the Outdoor Nativity on November 26. Rain or shine, the men piece together the manger scene in front of the church. This year, they were grateful for the sunshine and warm temperatures.



## Stewardship Season



**I**f you have not submitted a 2017 pledge, it is not too late! Our stewardship goal this year is 100% participation. We have asked everyone to prayerfully consider making a pledge of financial support now for the year 2017. Even if you are unable to commit to a pledge, please respond so we can meet the 100%

participation goal. Please return your pledge card to the church office or e-mail Paul King at [nomonarch@comcast.net](mailto:nomonarch@comcast.net) indicating the amount you would like to pledge per week, month, quarter or year.

Thank you from the Stewardship Committee!

## Elementary



**J**oy is a response to the character of God.

When God created the world, He made it to be a place of peace and contentment. In the Magnificent Paradise, God provided fruit trees that were pleasing to the eye and good to eat. And He personally walked with His creation! But when sin entered the world, so did greed and jealousy. As circumstances changed and life presented more challenges, people found it harder and harder to be happy. However, even now in this broken world, God wants us to have joy.

Even though we try to find joy through our stuff, or our vacations, or our relationships, joy isn't dependent upon any of those things. Joy is about being content beyond our circumstances. We can have joy when we recognize that God's plan is greater than our own. Joy is a response to our trust in God.

Jesus is the reason we find joy.

God sent His only son as a baby, born in humble circumstances. Jesus wasn't what anyone expected, but this was how God wanted to rescue the world. God made good on the promise He made hundreds of years before. This December, we pray that through the story of Jesus, kids realize that God loved them so much that He sent His Son to be here on this earth. The story of Christmas can remind us through every season, regardless of our situation, there's a reason to

celebrate what it means to have a relationship with God.

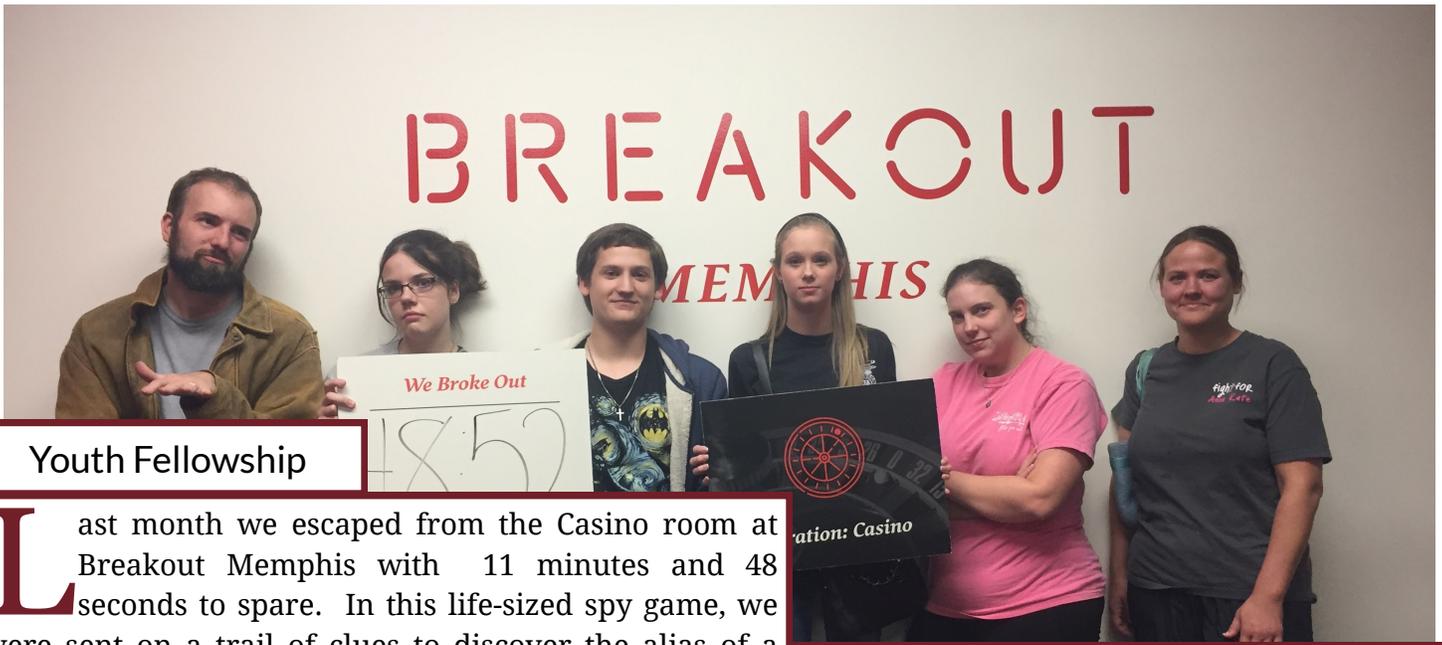
That's why it's important for us to help our kids and families discovery more about joy—finding a way to be happy even when things don't go your way.

Our Memory Verse for December comes from Philippians 4:4. When Paul wrote this letter to the church at Philippi, he wasn't saying to have joy only when it's easy. Paul was writing from prison and learned the secret of having joy no matter what his circumstances looked like. Paul's faith in God made him strong and gave him the ability to find joy, even in the difficult times.

In Philippians 4:4, we read, "Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!" (NIRV) As kids memorize this verse, we hope they remember that their joy is not tied to their circumstances. Instead, we find joy when we realize that we belong to God. When we trust God no matter what, we can find joy knowing that whatever happens He is in control.

We will spend the month of December taking a closer look at the way joy shows up throughout the Christmas story.

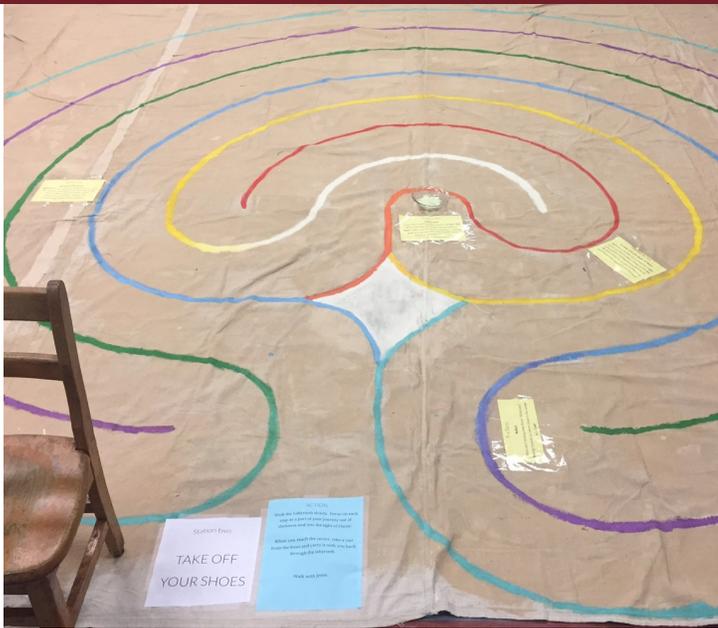




**Youth Fellowship**

Last month we escaped from the Casino room at Breakout Memphis with 11 minutes and 48 seconds to spare. In this life-sized spy game, we were sent on a trail of clues to discover the alias of a missing agent, and bring down the syndicate responsible for his disappearance.

**Youth Room Prayer Circle  
YOU ARE INVITED!**



On a clear dark night in the Fall I look for the constellation Orion. Without fail, he is there with his bright utility belt as his claim to fame. But what if I looked up and saw something new? A new bright hole punched in the dark fabric of the sky right below Orion's Belt. Four stars instead of three. I would notice, because I have been looking.

The wise men stopped to consider the stars and it led them on a journey to discovering the Christ child. The youth room has been set up as a prayer room for the season of Advent. Follow the path and practices to break from the routine and discover a new way to find joy in the midst of the noise.



Farmington Presbyterian Women are cordially invited to a Christmas gathering at the home of Bonnie Blair on Tuesday, December 13 at 6:00 pm. Come join us for a time of fellowship and continuation of the Bible study Who Is Jesus – According to John. Please bring a savory or sweet finder food to share. A sign up sheet will be on the women's bulletin board or call Carolyn Demaree 754-4944. If you will be in need or would like a ride to the gathering please call Carolyn.

# Lord, Prepare Me...

**T**he Sanctuary is a place of worship, safety, rest, and expression of our faith in art, symbols, and ceremony. We fill the space with music, liturgical readings, lessons from Scripture, and traditions that moves us from being an individual to being a community of faith. It is no wonder that our space is filled with symbols reflecting our communal beliefs and practices. However, the meaning behind these objects, words, and symbols is not always clear to the next generation of followers and guests from outside our community.

What would you tell a guest about the meaning of the Chrismon Tree? Why is it white and gold? What are the ornaments and what do they mean?

What about the Nativity? What is the meaning expressed in the mother, father, and child depicted in a beautiful but plain muslin material? Welcome to our Sanctuary and the meanings that lie within it during the Season of Advent.



Chrismon Tree

**Did you know?** The word Chrismon is a combination of the first parts of two words, Christ and monogram. Many of the Chrismon decorations are just that, monograms of the Christ. Other Christmons on the tree are actually symbols for our Lord—they tell what He is like. Still other designs, by representation, tell about his life. The monograms, symbols, and representations that are used are not new with us; their basic designs are centuries old, some as old as the Bible itself.

## Nativity Scene

New to our Sanctuary

After many years of use and several broken pieces the porcelain Nativity set remains in the box for the 2016 Advent season. Sandy Wann, Paula Patterson, Iris Lawing, and Faye McKinsey in discussion with members of Worship and Administrative committees, selected and purchased the nativity that now sits safely behind the choir.

The pieces are made from painted muslin and porcelain. Resting between the Bible on the communion table and the cross that hangs above the chancel, this Nativity is a symbol of the Word made flesh in Christ Jesus who gave all of himself for the salvation of the world.



## Advent Wreath

**Did you know?** An Advent Wreath is usually an arrangement of five candles, one to signify each of the four Sundays before Christmas and one to signify Christmas Day and the birth of the Christ Child. In an advent wreath, the candles for the four Sundays are arranged in a circle around the one candle for Christmas Day. It is customary to use three purple or blue candles (the liturgical colors for Advent representing Christ's royalty) for the first, second, and fourth Sundays, a pink candle for the third Sunday of Advent to symbolize joy, and a white candle for Christmas Day to symbolize Christ's holiness.

**Did you also know?** We use evergreen trees not simply for the pretty color or the sweet smell. Evergreen is a symbol of everlasting life.



**Did you know?** This symbol is a combination of the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. God, who is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, proclaims that the home of God is among mortals—with us! So, as we consider our Advent and Christmas journey, let us turn to the rest of the poem.

*(Continued from This Year Will Be Different, page 1)*

Who among us does not yearn for  
time for our hearts to ponder the Word of God?  
moments of kneeling and bursts of song?  
the peace of quiet calm for our spirit's journey?  
This year we intent to follow the Star  
Instead of the crowd.  
But, of course, we always do  
intend the best.

(And sometimes best intentions tend to get the best of us!)

This year, when we find ourselves off the path again  
(and we invariably will!)

Let's not add yet another stress to our Advent days,  
That of "trying to do Christmas correctly"!  
Instead, let's approach the birth of our Lord  
With joyful abandon!

-Ann Weems, *Kneeling in Bethlehem*

# Presbyterian Update

## Presbytery Committee of Nominations

At the last Presbytery Committee on Nominations meeting, 61 positions were filled across our presbytery. Members of Farmington are included on this list of delegates and leaders from our area. Here is a list of the committees and the members of Farmington taking a leadership role in the Presbytery of the Mid-South.

### GA Delegates 223<sup>rd</sup>, June 16-23, 2018

Alternate Teaching Elder: Rev. Rebecca Luter

### Administrative Board

Moderator of Presbytery 2017: Kirsten King

Moderator of Presbyterian Women: Kirsten King

### Commission on Ministry

Sandy Wann

Rev. Rebecca Luter

### Committee on Bills and Overtures

Steve Demaree

### Committee On Communications

(newly established committee)

Doug Barr

### Committee on Missions

Steve Demaree

Bonnie Blair

### Pinecrest Board

Melissa Still

### Permanent Judicial Commission

Bonnie Blair

### Committee on Nominations

Bonnie Blair

## Farmington Session Update

Session approved donating \$4000 to Rev. Sharon Junn's ministry in Asia from the 2016 budget year and committed to supporting her ministry long term as well as we discussed our philosophy of service and mission support and budgeting implications.



## Creative Team at Farmington

Images, sounds, and textures are memorable ways of communicating beyond words or text. What would it look like if we opened the door to experiencing worship with all our senses in 2017? The Worship Committee is forming a "Creative Team" to plan a more visual worship service for the Season of Lent. If you would like to join this committee or would like more information, please contact Paul King, Rebecca Luter, or Doug Barr.

*Germantown Presbyterian Church presents Sounds of the Season featuring Kallen Esperian, soprano Tom Bryant & Gary Beard, pianists The Memphis Brass Quintet The GPC Chancel Choir*

*Sunday, December 4, 2:30 pm*  
*Free and open to the public*

*2363 S Germantown Rd \* 901/754-5195*

# Upcoming Farmington Events



## Committee Meetings

**Christian Education**  
12:30 pm Sunday, Dec. 4

**Congregational Care**  
10:00 am Monday, Dec. 5

**Nominating Committee**  
5:45pm, Monday, Dec. 5

**School Board**  
5:30 pm Thursday, Dec. 8

**Property and Grounds**  
7:30am Friday, Dec. 9

**Service**  
6:00 pm Monday, Dec. 12

**Session**  
6:00 pm, Monday, Dec. 19

**Worship**  
12:30pm, Sunday, Dec. 18



## Dinner Offerings:

Dec. 7—Pot Roast

Dec. 14—Chicken Tenders, followed by  
Children's Christmas Pageant

## Christmas Caroling

---

### December 11, 3pm

The Farmington family will go caroling Sunday, December 11 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. We will meet at the church and divide into groups to go caroling and gather back together when we're finished to warm up with some hot chocolate and other treats.

## Lessons and Carols

---

### December 18, 6pm

Hear the Christmas story through word and song on Sunday evening, December 18 at 6:00 pm presented by the Chancel Choir. This service is always a Farmington Family favorite as we celebrate the coming of our Lord. We hope you make plans to attend and invite your family and friends to come as well. Following the service there will be a reception in honor of our Chancel Choir. The reception committee is asking for your help in providing a finger food for the occasion. The committee kindly asks that the finger food already be plated on clear glass or silver plate and can be placed in the kitchen the day of. Help will also be needed in the area of setting the food tables and clean up afterwards. There will be a sign up sheet on the bulletin board by the Fellowship Hall.

## December Birthdays

1	Jackie Hall
2	John Thomas
3	Natalie Lively
3	Julia Lively
3	Elizabeth Luter
19	Grayson Perkins
9	Michael Wann
10	MaryShelley Ritchey
11	Mike Schneider
11	Melissa Ramirez
12	Molly Sweet
13	Susie Fister
18	Hudson Barr
19	Loyd Hudson
19	Ed Byrne
21	Kenny Williams
21	Rachel Doelling
21	Carol Lyons
22	Linda Turner
23	Lu Schneider
25	Melanie Oest
25	Chelsea Davis
26	Caroline Churchwell
27	Nancy Mitchell
30	Neil Sherman
30	Ann Palasz
31	Heather Moore

If your birthday is not listed, please contact the church office to be added. We would like to celebrate with you.

## Acolyte Schedule

Dec. 4	Olivia Mittag
Dec. 11	Camille Hempel
Dec. 18	Cole Ritchey
Dec. 25	Elizabeth Luter
January 1	Nicholas Luter

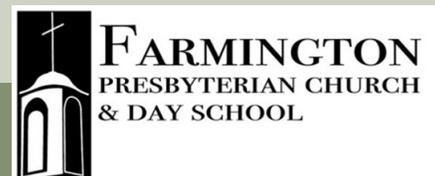
## Staff Extensions

Rev. Rebecca Luter, Pastor, Ext. 23  
Doug Barr, Director of Christian Education, Ext. 29  
Cyndi Bevington, Administrative Assistant, Ext. 21  
Carolyn Demaree, Interim Bookkeeper, Ext. 22  
Linda Turner, Managing Director of Day School, Ext. 24  
Gretchen Burch, Program Director of Day School, Ext. 28  
Anthony Jones, Maintenance Technician

## Session Members

Administration – Kirsten King  
Christian Education – Laurinda Ingram  
Clerk – Melanie Oest  
Congregational Care – Susan Bryant  
Fellowship – Mary Shelley Ritchey  
Property and Grounds – Jerry Hosier  
School Board – Charlie Smithers  
Service – Lance Palmer  
Worship – Sandy Wann

If you have content for the January edition of New Vision, please email Doug Barr no later than December 19 at [Doug@farmingtonpres.org](mailto:Doug@farmingtonpres.org)



Farmington Presbyterian Church and Day School  
8245 Farmington Blvd. Germantown, TN 38139  
[www.Farmingtonpres.org](http://www.Farmingtonpres.org)

