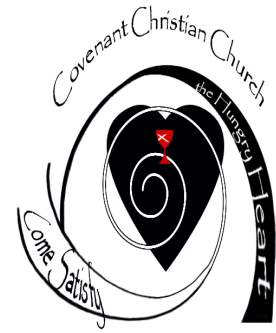


Covenant Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
2911 S.W. Cary Parkway Cary, NC 27513
Phone: 919-481-4715 Fax: 919-481-4016
Email: covenantcc@bellsouth.net
Web: www.CovenantChristianChurch-Cary.org



Sundays
Worship: 9:00am & 11:00am
Sunday School: 10:00am

Wednesdays
Youth Groups & Adult Studies 6:30pm
Worship: 7:30pm

Volume 21 No.12

November 29, 2007

Omphaloskepsis...It's Greek to Me!

A few years ago, knowing of my interest in words and building my vocabulary to feed my habit for *Scrabble* and crossword puzzles, a Covenant member introduced me to a website, www.wordsmith.org, to receive the Word of the Day each morning. One of the words that captured my attention has a Latin & Greek base. While you and I are more prone to use the English translation, I want to offer it to you in its original form: *omphaloskepsis*. Can you figure it out? A literal translation is “navel examination,” or as we say, “navel-gazing”—presumably an activity that Adam & Eve could not do! ☺

Of course we know that navel-gazing has to do with introspection and contemplation and is used in reference to spending way too much time focusing on our own lives. A little bit of *omphaloskepsis* goes a long way! But as with most things in life, there are two ways of looking at it.

Introspection and contemplation are also important to our faith journey. And during this sacred season of Advent, I dare say that *omphaloskepsis* goes a long way as well—looking inward; mulling over; drawing strength; digging deep within; processing what we already know while allowing room for new insights. Focusing on “me and mine” is monumentally different from taking time to find meaning and purpose in preparing our hearts and minds for celebrating God breaking forth into the world through the birth of Jesus Christ.

This time of year presents us with all kinds of opportunities to celebrate and enjoy this wonderful Advent/Christmas season, here at Covenant and within the greater community. I invite you to exercise your spiritual *omphaloskepsis* by sharing in the many Covenant traditions of the season and as you think about at least one other person who would be blessed by being here too. Together may we journey to Bethlehem, seeking God's presence in our lives, longing to discover, “Emmanuel, God with us; revealed in us...”

Blessings, Joanne

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And Now a WORD from the Moderator...The Ghost of Christmas Past

If I remember Dicken's character in *A Christmas Carol*, the Ghost of Christmas Past gave old 'Neezer a quick, though unpleasant, review of Scrooge's life in vivid detail. My family and I have only been members of this faith community for a bit over 6 years, yet I have heard many stories about “the old days”, first in a community center, then the Masonic Lodge and then in our current facility; and how Covenant has touched the lives of more and more people. There are many GREAT stories out there and I encourage you to find out more about these stories.

I, however, am more excited about the future. If I look at the Spirit of Christmas Future, I see many exciting opportunities for us to strengthen our faith and outreach. The Program Council has initiated a number of meaningful opportunities for us to deepen our faith relationships. The General Board is working on ways to help us be good stewards of the resources and talents God is providing through us.

I encourage you to continue to look at ways that you can be a part of this vibrant, dynamic community of believers with your resources of time, talents & finances. It's a terrific time to share in this Advent season. So, join with me as we continue to *Share the Feast*. **Chris Hitch**



Come Home to Covenant for the Holy-Days!

We are about to begin the most blessed season of Advent that leads us to the birth of the Christ Child. In the midst of this Advent/Christmas season it is so easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle and find ourselves running on empty by the time December 25 rolls around. We have times of worship and celebration to guide us on our journey to Bethlehem. You are warmly invited by God in Jesus Christ as together we make our way through this holy time. Plan now to take some "Holy Time Out" and share in this joy-filled sacred season.

Advent also gives us a wonderful opportunity to continue to "Unbind the Gospel" as we invite our friends, family, neighbors and others to join us for the many special activities here at Covenant. Invitation Flyers have been sent out to our many guests with the schedule of events and are also available in the church entryway for you so that you may invite others to join with us...

Christmas Blessings to you and yours... Your Invitation Ministry Team

Sunday, December 2 9:00 am 11:00 am	1st Sunday of Advent- Candle of Hope Lighting of the First Advent Candle Hanging of the Greens Service
Sunday, December 9 9:00 am & 11:00 am	2nd Sunday of Advent -Candle of Peace Christmas Cantata "Sing the Songs of Bethlehem" by K. Lee Scott
Sunday, December 16 9:00 am & 11:00 am 5-7:00 pm	3rd Sunday of Advent -Candle of Joy Lighting of the Third Advent Candle with special music for the Advent/Christmas season Christmas Play, "Looks Like Another Silent Night" followed by our Holiday Tasting Party— Bring your favorite holiday finger food to share...
Wednesday, December 19 7:30 pm	Service of Healing & Remembrance Gathering as a community of faith to worship with prayers & carols for renewal & healing
Sunday, December 23 9am & 11am	4th Sunday of Advent - Candle of Love Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle with special music for the Advent/Christmas season
Monday, December 24 6:30 pm & 9:00 pm	Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols/Candlelight Communion

Childcare available for all services and events

Hanging of the Greens Service *Sunday, December 2, 11:00am*

We will decorate the sanctuary for the Advent/Christmas season and share the traditions behind the symbols of the season during the 11am worship. We'll celebrate the various stories & legends behind each decoration. One of our Covenant traditions is trimming the Sanctuary Tree beginning this Sunday and continuing through Christmas Eve. So when you arrive for worship you will be given an ornament to place on the tree at a special time. Each week we will place ornaments that symbolize the Advent watchwords of Hope=Star; Peace=Dove/globe; Joy=Angel; Love=Heart.

Service of Healing and Remembrance *Wednesday, December 19, 7:30pm*

Each of us moves through the holidays differently. Even before Thanksgiving, Christmas songs were blaring in the malls, Santa had already arrived and the Raleigh Christmas parade had already made its way down Hillsborough St. long before we'd had that first bite of Thanksgiving dinner! Is it any wonder that so many of us feel like Scrooge is our new best friend? And if these aren't reasons enough to cause us to have the Christmas blahs and blues, simply add financial worries or health concerns of loved ones or your own. Maybe someone dear to you has died. Maybe your life includes broken dreams or a broken relationship; doing things out of duty rather than sincerity.

Make your way here for the Service of Healing & Remembrance within a loving, supportive community of faith that helps us slow down a bit; touch base with the true spirit of this holy time; tune out the hustle and bustle to pause for a few moments to offer God whatever is painful or empty in your life and to make room for God's joy. Invite someone you know who would benefit from this special service as we seek the presence of the living Christ, the Light of the World. Childcare is provided.



The Tastes of Christmas

What are the tastes of Christmas for you? Did your grandmother always make gingerbread men? Did your mother always serve your favorite pasta dish or sandwich on Christmas Eve? Did your dad smoke a turkey? How about your aunt's coconut cake or your own pinwheel cookies? Does your family prefer eggnog or mulled cider? Whatever your special holiday foods, we hope you will bring them to share at the

Christmas Tasting Party following the play on December 16. Gifts of food are part of our celebrations of Christ's birth. Share your special recipe foods and enjoy the delicious dishes provided by other families! We continue to "Share the Feast".



2007 CHRISTMAS CANTATA
"Sing the Songs of Bethlehem" by K. Lee Scott
Sunday, December 9, 2007
9am and/or 11am Worship Services
Presented by the Music Ministry of Covenant

Come, Satisfy the Hungry Heart



Sunday, November 11, we welcomed **Shawn, Rocio, Fabrizio & Carmine Anderson** who live at 3000 Fletchermill Ct, Apex, 27539; 662-9444. Their Shepherding Elder is Jack Reilly

Prayer Concerns

Our Love & Prayers are with: Diana & Greg Stelmack & family in the recent death of her grandmother, Fran Calkins...

Recent: Jackie Diberto; Virginia Lafaber; Julie Mitzelfeld; Frances Green;

Continuing Prayers for: Vickie Vanderford; Denise Loughridge; Mary Toney; Betty Johnston; Hannah Stiles; Amarvi Thompson...**Parents of:** Ann Hall. **Mothers of:** Betsy Mebane; Ann Washington; Renié Palmer; Sandi Velez; Dave Deardorff. **Fathers:** Megan Larsen; Sharon Frost; Debbie Miller. **Daughters:** Jack Reilly; Monteith's. **Son of:** Jim Johnston. **Grandmothers of:** Darla Baldwin; Diana Toney; Greg Stelmack; Carolyn Allen; Bill Rivers. **Grandfather of:** Darla Baldwin. **Sisters of:** Anna Perry; Darla Baldwin; Hazel Brothers. **Brothers of:** Art Brothers; Sharon Frost; Carol Carson. **Great-Uncle of:** Terry White. **Aunts of:** Cathy Downs; Larry Linguist. **Uncles of:** Vicki Wilkinson; Terry White; Melanie Bunn. **Niece of:** Patricia Mills; **Nephews of:** Melanie Bunn; Joe Busby. **Great-Nephew of:** Jody & Jay Barish. **Cousins of:** Terry White; Bob Kennel; Barbara Crumpler; Elaine Fry; Larry Linguist; Jim Hartman; **Sisters-in-Law of:** Hazel Brothers; Rocio Anderson; Mary Lou Jackson.

Remembering Others: Ralph Messick; Carrie Barnett; Hazel Schuller; Cameron Wall; Ron Walters; Don Styles; Sharon Johnson; General & Regional Church Leaders; Disciples new church starts.

Please remember to contact the church office covenantcc@att.net if you wish the names listed in "Remembering Others" to remain on the current list after 2 weeks...

General Board Meeting

Saturday, December 1, FOLLOWING Women's & Men's Breakfast at 10:30a

Congregational Meeting, December 9

Immediately following 11a worship to consider the 2008 Operating Budget

Let's Satisfy Some Hungry Hearts & Stomachs by Filling the Food Pantry...

Habits are hard to break...so let's get in the habit EVERY week as you shop for your groceries to remember those in our community who struggle to make ends meet; who skip meals or go to bed hungry. Put some non-perishable items in your cart for them. Involve your children in this "teaching moment" activity. Then bring the food items to the church's entryway each week and place them in the blue tubs. They will be taken to the Food Pantry at Christian Community in Action, here in Cary to provide Christmas feasts for others.

Disciples Men Learning & Doing

After a delightful November program arranged by Jack Reilly (where we learned a lot about life and golf), our Disciple Men are turning to "work" over the next few months. Believe it or not but we'll be doing some additional work on "The Shed" as well supporting the landscaping project between the church property and Cary Parkway. We'll also be working with Warmth for Wake in January.

Also, remember that we have been invited to the Women's Ministry Breakfast on December 1 at 8:30a. With questions or suggestions please contact co-chairman Mike Joyce.

Bob Kennel, Secretary

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Covenant's Women's Ministry News...

"Come to the Table" for Breakfast...

The CCC women's ministry quarterly breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 1, 8:30-9am (breakfast); 9-10am (program). The Interfaith Food Shuttle will present on what their program is all about. This is in keeping with our study theme "Come to the Table." We'll have pancakes and all the trimmings, graciously prepared by Betsy Mebane and Mike Joyce. The men are also invited to this breakfast. We hope to see y'all there. *Babysitting will be provided.*

Women's Ministry Cookbook

The women's ministry is putting together a cookbook to sell at the 2008 Fun Raiser/Arts and Crafts Fair. The theme for the cookbook is "Come to the Table." We invite all -- men, women, youth & children -- to turn in a recipe or two. If you like, you can write a sentence or two about why you chose that particular recipe(s) to share.

So, where do I put my recipe? The recipes go in the purple, fuzzy basket on the table outside of Mary Lou's office. If you have any questions, please see Lisa Yanchunas (656-7078) or Patty Cole (388-2556). Let's put our recipes together to make a great cookbook!

Women's Ministry Bible Study

Our next bible study is Tuesday, December 11, at the church beginning at 7:30 pm. We normally meet in the first classroom down the hall on the left. This is a great opportunity to fellowship with other women and learn about this year's intriguing New Day theme, "Come to the Table." Every session stands alone, so come to one or come to all!

Pecans for Sale!
Buy some today for
your holiday recipes!
\$8.25 for halves/\$8 for pieces
Checks payable to Covenant C. C.



Wanna Spread A Little Love?



On Wednesday, December 5, at 6:30 p.m., Kids to Kids will meet to make polar fleece blankets for Project Linus. The children would love to have some helping hands, so please join us.

If you can't help make the blankets, but would like to participate, please consider making a donation to help pay for the fabric. Donations can be made to Covenant Christian Church with 'Kids to Kids - Project Linus' on the memo line. For more information, please contact Jody or Jay Barish: 460-2820.

Thanks for spreading the love!

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Looks Like Another Silent Night



“Oh Come All Ye Faithful” to the
Covenant Christian Church
Disciples of Christ
Christmas Play
December 16th, 5:00 pm
(Holiday Tasting Party to Follow)

Practice Dates and Time

- Sunday, December 2nd: 1:00pm for Scenes 1-6, 2:00pm for Scene 7 (children's pageant)
- Sunday, December 9th: 1:00pm for Scenes 1-6, 2:00pm for Scene 7 (children's pageant)
 - Saturday, December 15th: 10:00am Dress rehearsal

If you have any questions or want to help in any way, contact the church office:

covenantcc@bellsouth.net or 481-4715; or Kathy Kidwell: 460-8931; or

kathy.kidwell@accesspointinc.com . We will present the play December 16 at 5:00pm prior to our annual Holiday Tasting Party. Mark your calendars now & invite others...

Looking towards God's Future...



Covenant Youth Ministry

Calendar of Events for:

December

- 1 (Sat)** - CYF Sponsored "Drop and Shop" from 5-8:00 pm
- 2 (Sun)** - "Hanging of the Greens" during the 11 AM Worship (Parent Meeting after worship)
- 9 (Sun)** - Christmas Cantata and CYF sponsored "COOKIE JAR" pick-up after worship
- 14 (Fri)** - Deliver "SINGING CHRISTMAS CARDS" (meet at 4:30pm) & shopping (see ad below)
- 15 (Sat)** - Christmas Play Practice at 10:00 AM



2008 CYF Summer Mission Trip has been set!

July 20-26 in Covington, LA

We will be helping rebuild a portion of the Gulf Coast devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Your support is valued as we raise funds for this trip over the next few months.

Here are some upcoming opportunities to help Covenant Youth raise money for their mission trip!

- Bring your child to "Drop and Shop"
- Purchase a "Singing Christmas Card" to be delivered to family and friends
- Buy a "Cookie Jar Mix" for holiday gifts (order deadline : Tuesday, Dec. 4th)

COVENANT YOUTH

Christmas Caroling and Shopping

Friday, Dec 14

7-9pm

Immediately following our Singing Christmas Card deliveries, we will head to Cary Town Center for a bite to eat and shop for Angel Tree Gifts to donate.

"It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!"

Contact Rev. Perry for more information.

"Happy Birthday to You, Happy Birthday to You,
Happy Birthday Dear..."



SARA WARREN- 13th

Happy Birthday to You!"

Hope to see you all at our special holiday worship services:

Wed, Dec 19- Service of Healing and Remembrance

Mon, Dec 24- Christmas Eve Service at 6:30 or 9:00pm



October 2007 Financial Information

General Fund	
Beginning Balance	\$ (25.98)
Receipts	\$ 18,693.81
Disbursements	\$ 18,906.74 -
Transfer	\$ 4,248.68 -
Ending Balance	\$ 4,009.77
Capital Campaign General	
Beginning Balance	\$ 4,098.68
Receipts	\$ 700.00
Transfer	\$ 4,268.68 -
Ending Balance	\$ 550.00

Thanks to all who continue to generously support the ministries of Covenant Christian Church throughout 2007. As the year comes to a close, please know that in order to meet the 2007 tax year deadline, all contributions must be received in the church office by Sunday, December 30, to be deposited on December 31.

<p>Congregational Meeting, Sunday, December 9 Immediately Following 11am Worship To consider the 2008 Operating Budget</p>

Many thanks to all who have turned in an estimate of giving card in support of the 2008 Operating Budget. If you have not yet indicated your intention to support this budget, please fill out an estimate of giving card or contact the church office: covenantcc@bellsouth.net **BY DECEMBER 7**, to indicate your support of the mission and ministry of Covenant Christian Church. We are looking forward to committing our resources to God throughout the coming year as we anticipate God's Holy Energy being unleashed among us; taking us to new heights of ministry and service! Trust and believe...



***“...And the stockings were hung by the chimney
with care...in the hopes that...”***

Here's an opportunity to fill Covenant's Stock-ing this holiday season: As you make end of year decisions that will affect your 2007 personal income tax, you may want to consider donating your appreciated stock to CCC. The tax benefits are hard to beat for a couple of reasons:

- 1) the full value of the appreciated stock is deductible as a charitable donation and
- 2) you do not have to pay capital gains tax on the value of the appreciation. Your personal tax advisor can help you assess specific benefits. Stock donations may be used to fulfill balance of unpaid 2007 pledge.

Contact the Church Office for procedural instructions (481-4715).

Prepare Now for a New Way to Make Your Donations in the New Year

We also want to encourage any members/guests to setup **automatic bill pay** with their bank so that a check is sent to us each week or month, whether you are able to be in worship or not. The information that you need when setting up an automatic payment is as follows:

Billers Name: Covenant Christian Church

Account number: GENERAL FUND

Billers Address: 2911 SW Cary Parkway

Billers City, State, Zip: Cary, NC 27513

Billers phone number: 919-481-4715

The account number can be GENERAL FUND/ SANCTUARY FUND/CAPITAL CAMPAIGN/or MEMORIAL FUND. Further questions? Contact Betsy Mebane, Treasurer: betsy_mebane@hotmail.com.

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Library Corner...

One Wintry Night by Ruth Bell Graham: illustrated by Richard Jesse Watson

The birth of Christ is incorporated in the story of a young boy who finds himself lost and snowbound one wintry night in the mountains returning to his grandfather. He finds the home of a grandmotherly woman who gives him shelter until the blizzard ends.

During his stay, she feeds him, nurses his sprained ankle and tells him the story of the first Christmas. She starts with creation and moves through Abraham, Moses, David and the history of Israel to Mary and Joseph

It is beautifully illustrated with moving narrative. A book families could read as a group of children read alone. If reading is not your favorite pastime, the pictures are worth sharing with little children.

Other Christmas reading in our library are:

S9 Mary's Baby

S25 The baby Jesus

S33 T'was the night before

B1 37 & S53 Santa, are you for real?

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Miss a Sunday? Want to hear what happened in worship?

We are now able to provide CDs of the 11:00am Sunday morning worship each week. Contact the church office: 481-4715; covenantcc@bellsouth.net or stop by to pick one up or request it to be mailed.

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Now Here's a Word from Mary Lou...

Updated Membership Lists are available via email... just call me and I will send you the attachment...or you can pick up a copy on the table outside the church office.

Attendance Counts! We need to know when you're here for worship; church school; meetings and events here at Covenant...Please remember to sign the attendance registry and pass it down your row even if the Worship Leader forgets to ask you to do so...The names of our guests are important to Invitation Ministry too!

AND...one more thing...All Staff, New Officers, Leaders and Ministry Chairs: Please, please...have your December Newsletter articles to me by **December 14, due to all the holidays** so I can get it posted on line and mailed to those without email in a timely manner. It takes us all to make this work!