

## Covenant Christian Church

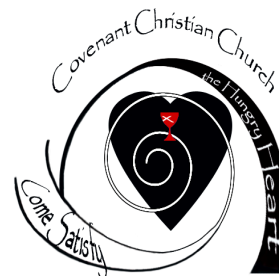
(Disciples of Christ)

2911 S.W. Cary Parkway Cary, NC 27513

Phone: 919-481-4715 Fax: 919-481-4016

Email: [covenantcc@bellsouth.net](mailto:covenantcc@bellsouth.net)

Web: [www.CovenantChristianChurch-Cary.org](http://www.CovenantChristianChurch-Cary.org)



### Sundays

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

### Wednesdays

7:30pm Taizé Worship

Volume 22 No.12

November 25, 2008

### *Yes, indeed, the celebration is about to begin!*

But why then do I already feel behind? I guess I start out each Advent/Christmas season feeling this way; mostly because the first Sunday of Advent usually follows on the heels of Thanksgiving Day. There seems to hardly be any time to truly shift holiday gears, unless I allow the merchants and the ads off the television and those crammed in the daily newspaper to dictate my sole preparation.

So as Thanksgiving Day passes and the leftovers no longer take up space in my refrigerator, I will find myself jumping right into the holiday spirit by dragging down the Christmas boxes from the attic; rearranging the furniture to make room for the tree; unpacking the mantle decorations and placing them in no particular order for the moment; making room for the Christmas china; and actually getting the tree up—sans lights & ornaments more than likely. For those of you who think I am way too fussy about the chairs in the sanctuary each week—don't even bother to stop by my house until the all clear has been sounded when the lights are finally to *my* satisfaction! ☺

So...let the season begin. Who can stop it anyway? But as it unfolds, each of one of us needs to figure out which things we can have control over concerning the speed and intensity of the weeks ahead. We are the gatekeepers and as such, we need to be able to apply the brakes and make every attempt to not be overwhelmed or overpowered by it all. And in attempting to do so, my thoughts today are about God and why God chose to come to earth as a baby...not as a baby prince; not as a baby guru; not as a baby of some rich and powerful leader...but as a baby born to humble peasant parents.

In *The Drama of Christmas*, Morton Kelsey suggests an answer. "The Divine wanted to attract us, not overpower us." I guess the overpowering part first comes with the care and feeding of a baby—especially this particular baby; let alone the sense of overpowering that comes later when we encounter this Jesus in his preaching, teaching and healing! But for now, we've been given this baby to care for.

Marilyn Brown Oden reminds us that you and I are invited to be alert; to watch; to wait; to pray; to make ourselves vulnerable—open to God being at work in our lives. We are called to welcome God's surprises as we hear the old, old story of this Baby born in Bethlehem with new ears and as we experience it once again with a new heart...Let the Advent Adventure begin and may our hearts be stirred...*Blessings, Joanne*

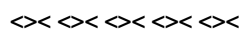
*And Now a Word from Your Moderator...*

**Notes from the November 16 General Board meeting:**

- We are getting closer to having a **new church sign** to mark our entrance on Cary Parkway! The Board approved a v-shaped design that can be seen from both directions, the contract has been signed, and we are going through what we hope will be the final approval from the Town of Cary. Construction should begin in December...Stay tuned!
- The **Congregational Meeting** has been rescheduled to convene immediately following the 11:00 a.m. worship on **Sunday, December 14**. Please plan to be present for this important business meeting. Items to be brought before the congregation for approval are:
  - (1) Approval of the 2009 Budget**
  - (2) Approval of a number of revisions and additions to the Constitution and By-Laws.** It has been a number of years since we reviewed this document to ensure it reflects accurately how we live out our mission together at Covenant Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) today. There are several edits, updates and revisions to be considered together. The General Board has been studying these revisions for some months now and will submit them to you for action. The proposed changes were emailed (or mailed if you aren't on email) to you for your information and review the end of November.
- Various ministry and fellowship group reports were presented and will be addressed in other places in this newsletter.

There is much exciting activity around Covenant these days. We invite you to take full advantage of the fun, fellowship, beauty and worship of Advent that awaits you here at Covenant! Invite your friends to share in this special season with you.

*Karen Nolan, Moderator*



*Thanks to the Writers for Seasons of Gratitude Meditations*

Over the last few months the stewardship ministry has sponsored the Season of Gratitude meditations sent out by e-mail each Monday. The stewardship ministry would like to thank those who wrote and contributed these meditations. Appreciation goes to Patty Cole, Cathy Downs, Karen Nolan, Renié Palmer, Dick Reaves, Sally Shelly, Carole Tyler, Jeanne White, and John White for sharing their thoughts on aspects of Covenant Christian Church for which they are particularly grateful. We hope these meditations have sparked other thoughts of gratitude for the many blessings at Covenant.

*John and Jeanne White*

# Come, Satisfy the Hungry Heart

**Our love and prayers are with:** Amy & Jon Gaffney in the recent death of Amy's grandmother;

**Recent:** Ted & Priscilla Glasener's daughter & family, whose house was destroyed in the Southern California fires

**Continuing Prayers for:** Vicky Vanderford; Mary Toney; Betty Johnston

**Parents of:** Anna Long-Slade; Patty Cole; Ann Hall, Sharon Frost; **Mother of:** Betsy Mebane;  
**Fathers of:** Megan Larsen; Debbie Miller; Mark Huncik; Brenda Cleary; **Daughter of** Sally Shelly;  
**Son of:** Jim Johnston. **Grandfathers of:** Trey O'Quinn; **Grandmothers of:** Amy Gaffney; Greg Stelmack; Carolyn Allen. **Grandson of:** Mary Lou Jackson **Sister of:** Hazel Brothers.

**Brother of:** Art Brothers. **Aunts of:** Jeff Miller; Melanie Fagert; Betsy Mebane, Cathy Downs; Larry Linguist. **Uncle of:** Jeremy Hopkins; **Nephews of:** Melanie Bunn; Joe Busby;

**Great-Nephew of:** Barishes; **Cousins of:** Mary Lou Jackson, Elaine Fry; Larry Linguist.

**Sisters-in-Law of:** Hazel Brothers; Betsy Mebane.

**Remembering Others:** Carol Day; Connie Linkous; Co-worker of Renié Palmer; Hazel Schuller; Friend of Robin Miller, Ruth Ann; Kara Crowell; Rosie Stockbridge; Elizabeth Pawelka; General & Regional Church Leaders; Disciples area new church starts.

**Contact the church office: 481-4715 or [covenantcc@bellsouth.net](mailto:covenantcc@bellsouth.net) if you want any of the above names to remain on the current list after 2 weeks**

## Important December Dates

Elders' Meeting, December 2, 7:00p

Women's Ministry Breakfast, December 6 at 9:00a...

Women's Ministry Bible Study, December 11, at 7:30p at Church

Men's Ministry Breakfast, December 13 at 8:15a

Congregational Meeting Sunday, December 14

After 11:00a Worship to consider:

The 2009 Operating Budget &

Several revisions and additions to the Constitution and Bylaws

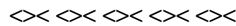


## Christmas Food Baskets From Our Doorsteps to the ends of Wake County!

Covenant, in partnership with Urban Ministries of Wake County, is helping to provide holiday meals for our neighbors in need. We are blessed to have more than enough to share with those who are hungry. And in these days of economic uncertainty, there are so many more people who can benefit from our help. Let's see how many bags we can provide as we fill up the church's entryway! What a great lesson in sharing what we have with others as an example for the children and youth among us. Let them help with the shopping!

The shopping list includes the following items:

- |              |                               |                  |
|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Main Course: | \$25 gift card from Food Lion |                  |
| Side Dishes: | Stuffing                      | Potatoes or Yams |
|              | Canned Fruits                 | Canned Veggies   |
|              | Cranberry Sauce               | Bisquick Mix     |
| Dessert:     | Cake Mix & Prepared Icing     |                  |
|              | Pie Filling                   |                  |



## Caring for God's Green Earth

Christmas is just around the corner and the Green Team has the perfect stocking stuffers or gifts for friends, neighbors, your hairdresser, mail deliverer, etc. Both the canvas bags and the new Nylon bags are ideal! They are also the perfect way for you to bring home all the ingredients for your Christmas feast. The bags are on display and can be purchased Sundays or anytime throughout the week.

If you haven't seen the new Nylon bags be sure and check it out; it folds up into a tiny pouch and is perfect for carrying in a purse or briefcase.

Also, remember donations to the Green Fund could be the ideal way for you to simplify your Christmas gift list and help Covenant "go green" at the same time. Donations can be made in honor of or in memory of a loved one.

***Marian Hartman & Ro Thompson, Co-Chairs of Outreach***



Kids to Kids want to thank everyone that supported our Nothing But Nets fundraising efforts. We raised \$340.00 and we hope you enjoy the handmade cards. This money will be able to purchase 34 nets for families to prevent the spread of malaria. Thanks so much for your generosity.

### *Wanna Spread A Little Love?*



Kids to Kids will be doing one of its favorite projects on Wednesday, December 3, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. We will be making polar fleece blankets for Project Linus to comfort children in local hospitals. This year we have a special treat - the women of No Idle Hands will be joining us! We look forward to seeing you there. If you have any questions, please contact Jody or Jay at 460-2820 or [jodylb23@yahoo.com](mailto:jodylb23@yahoo.com).

*Thanks for spreading the love!*

***Invitation Ministry Invites You to  
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. This special season gives us a wonderful opportunity to continue to "Unbind the Gospel" by inviting our friends, family, neighbors and others to join us for the many special activities scheduled at Covenant.

A mailing has been sent to all members and active guests with the schedule of our upcoming programs & activities for this holiday season. If you have names and addresses of anyone else you want to invite, you may forward this electronic copy of the newsletter to them or contact the office and ask that a hard copy of the invitation be sent. Everyone needs some "Holy Time Out" to appreciate this joy-filled sacred season and we look forward to sharing it with you...

***Christmas Blessings, Your Invitation Ministry Team***

**Sunday, November 30**

9:00 am & 11am

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent**

The Lighting of the First Advent Candle of **HOPE**

**Wednesday, December 3**

6:30-7:30pm

7:30-8:00pm

K2K Linus Project Blankets (Kdgn-5<sup>th</sup> graders)

Taizé Worship

**Sunday, December 7**

9:00 am

11:00 am

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

The Lighting of the Second Advent Candle of **PEACE**  
& Placing ornaments of Hope & Peace on the tree

***The Hanging of the Greens Service***

**Wednesday, December 10**

7-8:00 pm

Advent Devotions followed by Taizé Worship

**Sunday, December 14**

9:00 am

11:00 am

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

The Lighting of the Third Advent Candle of **JOY**  
& Placing ornaments of JOY on the tree

A Cantata for Christmas, ***The Wondrous Story***  
by Nancy Price & Don Besig

**Wednesday, December 17**

7:30pm

**Service of Healing & Remembrance**

Gathering as a community of faith to worship with prayers & carols for renewal & healing

**Sunday, December 21**

9:00 am & 11am

5-7:00 pm

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

The Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle of **LOVE**  
& Placing ornaments of LOVE on the tree

Our Annual ***Children's Christmas Play*** followed by  
our annual ***Holiday Tasting Party***

**Wednesday, December 24**

6:30 pm

**Christmas Eve**

Lessons & Carols and Candlelight Communion  
And Special Time for the Children

***Hanging of the Greens Service  
Sunday, December 7, 11:00am***

We will decorate the sanctuary for the Advent/Christmas season and share the traditions behind the symbols of the season, Sunday, December 7, during the 11am worship. One of our Covenant traditions is trimming the Sanctuary Tree beginning with this service 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 during the service each week. Each Sunday we will place ornaments that symbolize the Advent watchwords of Hope=Star; Peace=Dove/globe; Joy=Angel; and Love=Heart.



***The Covenant Christian Church Choir  
Presents***

***The Wondrous Story  
A Christmas Cantata***

***Words by Nancy Price & Don Besig  
Music by Don Besig***

***As part of the 11 am Worship  
Sunday, December 14, 2008  
Come Celebrate  
the Christmas Story in Song!***

***Service of Healing and Remembrance  
Wednesday, December 17, 7:30pm***

Each of us moves and makes our way through the holidays differently. Christmas songs have been blaring in the shops and mall; Santa has already arrived and the Raleigh Christmas parade made its way down Hillsborough St. last weekend--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 alone 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 joy.

If so, make your way to Covenant's sanctuary for the Service of Healing & Remembrance within this loving, supportive community of faith that will help 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.



## ***Sunday, December 21, 5-7pm***

...Practices began November 16 so the sounds of the fun and laughter of little children all wanting to play a big part echoes throughout the Church! The Children's Christmas Play will be performed before our annual Holiday Tasting Party, December 21, 5-7pm. Childcare for infants and toddlers provided.

This year the play is written and directed by Rev. Carolyn Allen and her mother, Linda Allen. There are parts for children of all ages, from toddlers to teens. Parents, please know there is still time for your child/ren to participate. But you need to let Carolyn know before December 7 if your child is interested in being in the play: 453-2011, [nchornedfrog73@yahoo.com](mailto:nchornedfrog73@yahoo.com)

After all, we can never have too many angels and shepherds! ☺

Final practice dates and times: Sunday, December 7 & 14 after 11:00a Worship  
Dress Rehearsal, Saturday, December 20 at 10:00a

### ***And Immediately following...***

### ***...We'll Enjoy the Many Tastes of Christmas***

What are the aromas and tastes of Christmas for you? Did your grandmother always make gingerbread men? Or create a Gingerbread House? 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 Yule Log cake or your own mint brownies or thumbprint cookies? Does your family prefer eggnog or mulled cider? Or good ol' hot chocolate? Yum! I'm getting hungry just thinking about all this!

Whatever your special holiday foods, we hope you will bring them to share at our annual **Holiday Tasting Party** following the Children's Christmas play on December 21. The festivities begin at 5pm and end at 7pm. Gifts of food are part of our many celebrations of Christ's birth. Share your special recipe foods and enjoy the delicious treats provided by others! See you then...



Christmas Eve  
Wednesday, December 24  
6:30p  
Lessons & Carols  
Candlelight Communion  
Special Children's Moment  
Childcare for Infants & Toddlers





## Covenant Women's Ministry News

Are you ready to listen? Are you ready to coach?  
Are you ready to build? Opportunities await us, my friends!

Mark your calendars now for our 2nd Quarterly Breakfast-Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, from 9-10:30am at the church. We are honored to have Pastor Carletha Ward as our guest speaker this day. Carletha is a gifted teacher, coach, and encourager. She will lead us on an inspiring journey as we explore the concept of ***Serving as Coach***. You won't want to miss this one. We look forward to seeing you there!

*Looking ahead...*

- **The Blitz Build-A Habitat for Humanity Experience!**

This is a building experience specifically for the Disciples Women. The next build takes place January 18-23 of 2009 and will be held in Greensboro. Please contact Marilyn or Ann if you are interested in learning more. This is an opportunity for great fellowship with an even greater cause!

- **It's "soup weather" once again.**

Please continue to clip and save your Campbell's soup labels for Christmount!

*Peace and joy to you this blessed Advent season,  
Marilyn Williams & Ann Washington*

◊◊◊◊◊◊◊◊◊◊



**DISCIPLES MEN ENDING THE YEAR STRONG!**

We have a big Breakfast coming up on Saturday, December 13 at the church at 8:15 am. We are inviting the women as well for an outstanding program by Demetrius Marlowe, an NC State professor as well as President of the National Association for Academic Advisors for Athletes. He will lead a discussion on the Faith and Race: Implications from the results of the Presidential Election. The presentation is designed not be political in nature.

Questions? Call Mike Joyce, (349-3349) President, or Bob Kennel (557-0847), Secretary



# THE CHRISTMAS SHOPPE AT COVENANT



Simplify your Christmas shopping this year and make it more meaningful at the same time. This year you have the opportunity to do your Christmas shopping on Sundays at church! A variety of gifts await you...from stocking stuffers to gifts that honor all those people you care about by giving gifts in their name. Consider the possibilities:

## Wonderful small gifts and stocking stuffers:

You can pick out individual items, or consider putting together a gift basket of goodies!

- **Pecans**...\$8 proceeds benefit the General Fund at Covenant
- **Covenant Aprons**...\$5 proceeds benefit the General Fund
- **“Green” Bags** (Canvas-\$3 or 2 for \$5/ Nylon bags 3 for \$10) proceeds benefit the Green Fund
- **Cookie Jars**...\$5 proceeds benefit the Youth Mission Trip
- **SERVV coffee & chocolates** proceeds benefit SERVV International

**It's so easy! Just choose your gifts from the sales table and put your cash or check in an envelope at the sales table; make checks out to Covenant Christian Church and earmark it for whatever gifts you are buying); and put it in the wooden box.**

## Opportunities to purchase gifts on-line:

**SERVV**... [www.servv.org](http://www.servv.org) A catalog is available for you to look; go to the website for further browsing and to order gifts. Purchases from SERVV are directly creating employment and training for artisans and farmers in 36 countries. (You could also go to Ten Thousand Villages store in Cameron Village for SERVV gifts).

## Alternative Christmas Gifts:

Instead of giving more things, give more meaning by making a contribution in someone's honor:

- **Heifer International**... [www.heifer.org/catalog](http://www.heifer.org/catalog) The Heifer catalog (also known as The Most Important Gift Catalog in the World) is available for you to select a variety of choices: a trio of rabbits, a flock of chicks, a pig, a milk menagerie given in the name you choose. The person will receive a card explaining your gift and the significance of it. Giving a Heifer gift makes a difference in individual lives and entire villages around the world.
- **Church World Service**... [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org) Look through the CWS “Best Gifts” catalog; then go on-line to make your selection. Seeds and tools, sewing supplies, a beehive and a solar stove are just some of the options!

## Alternative Christmas Cards:

Maybe this year you choose to give a donation to the Green Fund in lieu of sending Christmas Cards to friends at church. If you would like to do this, just make your donation indicating it is for “Christmas Cards” and Christmas greetings will be sent to the honoree.

## October 2008 Financial Information

General Fund		
Beginning Balance 09.30.08		\$ (10,542.43)
Receipts		\$ 15,890.03
Disbursements		\$ (18,235.37)
Ending Balance 10.31.08		\$ (12,887.77)

***“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have.” (Hebrews 13:16a)***

Go to [www.CovenantChristianChurch-Cary.org](http://www.CovenantChristianChurch-Cary.org) to see photos of how your contributions support Covenant's programs and ministries of the many programs your gifts help to provide.

We would like to encourage members/guests to setup **automatic bill pay** with their bank so that a check is sent to us each week or month. The information that one needs when setting up an automatic payment is as follows:

Billor Name: Covenant Christian Church  
Account number: GENERAL FUND or whichever Fund you would like it to go to.  
Billor Address: 2911 SW Cary Parkway  
Billor City, State, Zip: Cary, NC 27513  
Billor phone number: 919-481-4715

<> <> <> <> <> <>



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

Can you believe it? There is only one month left before we turn the calendar pages to 2009. Even in the midst of all our economic challenges, you may be beginning to look at end of the year decisions that will affect your 2008 personal income tax. If so, 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 the balance of your unpaid 2008 pledge to Covenant or to make a special gift.

Contact the Church Office for procedural instructions: [covenantcc@bellsouth.net](mailto:covenantcc@bellsouth.net) or 481-4715

<> <> <> <> <> <>

### ***Here's a Word from Mary Lou...***

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

YOU Count! 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...We need to know when you're here for worship; church school; meetings and events. The names of our guests are important to Invitation Ministry too!

If you have any changes in your address; email contact; phone number, college addresses of your son or daughter; or other important contact information, just let me know so we can keep everything current.

***Thanks, Mary Lou, Administrative Assistant***