

# 2<sup>nd</sup>'s Matters

December 6, 2017

- **Grace Portenga**, Mariel Poel's mother and member of Second Church, fell and broke two ribs and has a compression fracture. Please pray for healing and relief from the pain.

## From Your Pastor's Desk

The season of Advent is ripe with eager expectation for what will be celebrated: Christmas! During Advent we wait and we prepare; we sing songs in recognition of the world's need and our yearning for the promised Savior to come. And then when Christmas arrives we sing the songs celebrating his birth. In this way Advent is like the observance of Lent prior to Easter where with eagerness we wait until Easter to sing of the Resurrection! Commonly during Advent a few Christmas songs may slip in early, and on the 17th the Sunday School program will tell the story of Christmas a week before the big day, but largely our worship during Advent is in contrast to the impatience of our culture. Our practiced patience for Christmas is evidence of our sure confidence that as Christ has come once, so he is coming again!

## Worship This Sunday, December 10

We will light the second Advent candle and the message will be the third in the series on the Five Solas of the Reformation. Romans 3:28 and 5:1 will be the texts for "Sola Fide" (Faith Alone). Our offerings will be for the General Fund and Fremont Christian School.

## Worship Schedule For December:

December 17, the Third Sunday of Advent: "Solus Christus" (Christ Alone), and the annual Sunday School Christmas program, "New Star."

December 24, the Fourth Sunday of Advent: "Soli Deo Gloria" (Glory to God Alone).

December 24, 10 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, led by FYSH.

December 25, Christmas morning worship services will be held at First CRC (9:30) and at Trinity CRC (9:30).

December 31, Old Year observance.

## Stock the Pantry!

For December the requested items are soup and crackers.

## Prayer Partners

With the holiday season quickly approaching, please continue to remember your students in prayer and let them know that you're thinking of them.

## Christmas Eve Choir

We'd like to have a special choir for our Christmas Eve candlelight worship service (10 PM). Louise Slager has volunteered to direct the choir and rehearsals begin Sunday morning, December 10, in the fellowship hall downstairs following the worship service.

## ARO Thank You

A big thank you to Second Church members who helped fill the Christmas shoeboxes for Appalachia Reach Out. There were 55 boxes (5 more than expected) that went to the children in Appalachia.

## Love Offering

An envelope was placed in mailboxes this past Sunday labeled "Love Offering" to show our good will and appreciation for our church staff this Christmas season. If you would like to participate, please place your offering in the collection plate in the provided envelope by December 17. You may specify how your gift is dispersed if you desire. Please Note: any late offerings that come in following December 17 will be added to the General Fund.

## Community Events

### Fremont Christian School Fundraiser

Fremont Christian School is collecting gently used shoes for a fundraiser until the first week of January. We have collected 1,000 pairs of shoes already, with a goal of 2,500. Would you be willing to look through your closets to see if you have any shoes you no longer wear that could still be worn and be a blessing to someone in another country? Any kind of shoe and any size shoe are being collected. There are collection boxes at both Fremont Christian School buildings. We are collecting shoes until the first week of January. Thank you!!

## Trinity Candle Light Worship, December 17

You are invited to a candle light worship service at Trinity CRC at 5:30 PM on December 17. This is planned as reflective and contemplative one hour service using a series of music and readings with a short meditation.

## WMC Annual Christmas Collage, December 19

The highlight of the Christmas season, which showcases our very gifted bands and choirs, is right around the corner! Please mark your calendars for **Tuesday, December 19 at 7:00 PM** (notice **day & time** change!) for Western Michigan Christian School's annual Christmas Collage, to be held at the Frauenthal Center for Performing Arts in downtown Muskegon. Tickets are available in the school office and at the box office of the Frauenthal the night of the collage for only \$10. A program fit for a King...don't miss it!

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### The Gospel Tree

There once was a shining Christmas tree  
Standing out where all could see.  
Its brilliance captured every eye  
And seemed to cheer each passerby.

"The lights are so bright," they would say  
And hesitate to walk away.  
The tree stood proud ablaze with light  
For every light was burning bright.

Then some bulb was heard to say  
"I'm tired of burning night and day;  
I think I'll just go out and take a rest  
For I'm too tired to do my best;  
Besides I am so very small  
I doubt if I'd be missed at all."

Then a child lovingly touched the light,  
"Look, mother, this one shines so very bright.  
I think of all the lights upon the tree  
This one looks the best to me."

"Oh my goodness," said the light  
"I almost dimmed right out of sight.  
I thought perhaps no one would care  
If I failed to shine my share."  
With that a glorious brilliance came  
For every light had felt the same.

Our Gospel, like this Christmas tree,  
With little lights which are you and me,  
We each have a space that we must fill  
With love, and lessons and good will.  
Let's keep our tree ablaze with light,  
With testimonies burning bright.  
For our Gospel is a living tree  
That lights the way to eternity.