

000 YOUR OLIVET NEWS 000

OLIVET UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
CORNER OF 12TH & NORTHAMPTON STREETS
EASTON, PA 18042 610-258-7990

DECEMBER 2009
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Included in your
Olivet News
December

Sponsors & Outstanding Help

Pastor Page: Christmas –
Mysterious Thing

Support Camp Brainerd

OYEA

ProJeCt of Easton

Ringin in Holiday News

December Calendar

Up-coming Events

December 6

Communion will be served at our 10:00 am worship service

December 13

Hanging of the Greens Service/White Gift Sunday

Congregational meeting to follow

December 20

Worship at 10:00

Join us for our pre-Christmas celebration
Theme: Leaping for Joy

December 24

Family Service at 5:30 pm

Inspirational Candle Lighting Service at 7:00 pm

December 26

A Special service of Christmas Music, and devotions

January 3

Communion will be served at out 10:00

Advent and Christmas

Already we are into the Advent Season. Our twelve foot Christmas tree has been erected (thanks to Rich Wamsley, Darryl Davis and Kay Davis) and decorated (thanks to all who prepared for and attended our Christmas Tree Trim party). In the Sundays to come we will be building on the anticipation of the season looking forward to the day when we will celebrate our Savior's birth and look toward the promised redemption we receive through Jesus Christ.

On the **Second Sunday of Advent** (December 6) we will celebrate **communion**. Our service is focused on the preaching of John the Baptist, a voice of one crying out in the wilderness "prepare the way of the Lord." As John looks forward to the coming of the Messiah, we too look forward for the day when God will complete HIS good work among us. (If you get this after the 6th, please blame me and not our editor – I was on vacation at the end of November and she was working and waiting for me to get my article in.)

On the **Third Sunday of Advent** (December 13) we set aside the Advent theme and recall the meaning of some of the decorations and symbols that adorn our homes during the Christmas season in our annual **Hanging of the Greens Service**. Come and celebrate the joy; sing some of the old Christmas Carols and be amazed at what the coming of Christ really means. We will also celebrate **White Gift Sunday** (feel free to bring in canned goods wrapped in white paper) where we will take a special collection to support the work of the Board of Deacons for next year. A meeting of the congregation will take place after the worship service to elect officers for next year and approve the Pastor's terms of call.

On the **Fourth Sunday of Advent** (December 20) we will hear the story of two women with unexpected pregnancies. One is a barren woman who is now with child whom will be named John and become John the Baptist. The other is a young virgin who has conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit. In their coming together we hear of one child (John) leaping in his mother's womb and the mother of the other child (Jesus) proclaiming the good news of what this child's birth will mean for the world in which we live.

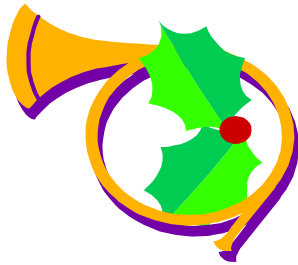
On **Christmas Eve** we gather for two services. At **5:30** we will have a **Family Service** entitled "Joy to the World." Join us for this fun and interactive service where we will retell the story of Jesus birth. At **7:00** we begin our traditional and inspirational **Candlelight Service**. Come as we celebrate the light coming into the world.

On Sunday, December 27, our Session will lead our service with special readings from the poetry of Ann Weems, lots of music and lots of Spirit. Join us for the festive celebration.

Please make Olivet a part of your Christmas plans this year and invite any friends or family members to join you.

Pastor BOB

am worship service



Christmas can be Merrier!

Just Take The
EASY ROUTE to
Holiday Shopping
Let Olivet's
SCRIP
PROGRAM

Shop for you!

Don't miss the last date to order gift certificates this year (Sunday, Dec.13). Sign up after Worship NOW. It's Easy!! Dottie Ward has a large list of merchants who participate. Also listed is the percentage to be returned to Olivet on each card ordered. The Dec.13th order should be here before Christmas.

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who orders and uses SCRIP gift cards. If you haven't, place an order NOW! You'll be glad you did.

Any questions? Call Dorothy Ward-610-258-7625

Editors Note: Thank you Dottie for the boost of energy and caring you give to the SCRIP Program, and for keeping it a alive for Olivet.

MISSION

SAFE HARBOR

Olivet Church has a long-standing sharing program with Safe Harbor. On the third Thursday of each month, lunch is provided.

The December luncheon coordinators are: Chris Gary and Cub Scouts.

Our thanks to Don Roberts Jack Gardner & Walt Leuenberger for November Lunch.

Christmas Stockings

Each year at Christmas Santa (looking more like the Circle Gals, and the members of our congregation) fill Christmas Stockings with personal, living essential products for our home bound members, and residents of nursing homes.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Note: The congregation's response to the recent Harvest Home appeal to feed the hungry, is very much appreciated.

Community Stars

We Thank!!



REDNERS'

for its "Save- A-Tape" program, which gives Olivet a 1% rebate on all food and gift shopping purchases.

After shopping remember to turn in register tapes!!
PLEASE!! – Do not cut off the bottom of the tape. "Save-A-Tape" must appear on there tapes in order to qualify for rebate.

**Shine On
Redners' !**



AL'S CLEANERS

You can help Olivet receive rebates from Al's Cleaners by using Al's Cleaning services.

**Get ready for Christmas
and New Year's frivolity.
Let Al's refresh your
clothing by washing or dry
cleaning./**

**Important: Tell Al you are
a member of Olivet Church
so that we get our rebate.**

**Al, You're
Special**



Christmas: A Mysterious Thing

Christmas is a season of . . . mystery. You might think that a surprising statement. After all isn't Christmas about joy, about peace on earth, about a baby laid in a manger and angels and shepherds and wise men. Of all the things we might say about Christmas, why would I use the word mystery?

I use the word mystery because the birth of Jesus, the incarnation (to use a churchy word) is something that defies our expectation when we consider what has taken place. It all seems a bit much, from a young girl who is visited by an angel with the news that she will bear a child although she is a virgin to a call to poor shepherds minding their flocks to wise men traveling hundreds of miles to see the child. Yet the most astounding thing for us to consider is that the baby who is laid in a manger is God and yet a human being like you and I – talk about a mystery

Some are more comfortable demystifying the story. They might argue that Mary was not really a virgin. The shepherds just wandered by. The wise men are metaphors for gentiles who would become believers. Jesus was just human endowed with gifts but no more divine that you or I. While it might be easy to dismiss all we read in the narratives of Jesus birth as simply stories meant to teach a broader point, for me to dismiss the stories as metaphors or allegories is to miss the astounding thing that God is doing for us.

Consider what sort of God we have who would humble himself and become human for our sake and for the sake of our salvation. Consider the worth that every human being has when we consider how much love God has for us to do this thing. Consider how much we can learn about what it means to be human by looking at how Jesus lived. Consider how we might really live through good times and bad times knowing that Jesus lived as we do yet without sin and still calls us brothers and sisters. Consider the cross; consider the empty tomb and then you will understand what we celebrate when we relate the miraculous story of Jesus birth; this mysterious thing that God has done.

And along the way we get to meet ordinary people who welcomed this miracle that God is doing, Elizabeth (the mother of John the Baptist) and her husband Zachariah (who was a bit of doubter himself), Mary who welcomed what God was doing through her with great faith and Joseph who rejected the mores of his world to remain with Mary despite the scandal; those poor shepherds who heard the good news and came to worship the baby and lastly those wise men from the East who came to pay homage to the new born king.

This Christmas season take stock in what God has done in the incarnation; this mysterious and loving act. Celebrate the child and worship him that you might welcome the good news into your heart and affirm the blessings of this gift not only on Christmas but forevermore.

Pastor BOB

Over the last year, a special Task Group of the Lehigh Presbytery has undertaken a study to determine whether or not camping ministry is important for the Presbytery. Pastor Bob and Kim Ward had the privilege of serving on that Task Group. While it quickly became apparent that camping ministry in some form ought to continue there was some question as to whether it was viable and economically possible to continue supporting the Presbytery's camp at the Brainerd Presbyterian Center.

A group of friends and alumni of the camp heard of its closure was being considered and proposed that they be given an opportunity to see if they can make the ministry at Brainerd feasible. The Task Group was impressed by their enthusiasm and their willingness to have measurable benchmarks to access their progress. The Task Group voted to recommend that the ministry at Camp Brainerd be continued for next year with clearly defined benchmarks including raising \$34,000 from donors and increasing camping attendance by 15%. Should those goals not be met, the Presbytery will discontinue camping ministry at the Brainerd property beginning in 2011, provide scholarships to other Presbyterian Camps for at least one year and evaluate how best to do camping ministry in the future. The Presbytery voted in November to adopt the Task Groups recommendation to continue the camping ministry in the Lehigh Presbytery for 2010 with the benchmarks established with its main focus on the Brainerd Presbyterian Center.

Olivet has long been a supporter of the Brainerd Presbyterian Center and we have held special offerings over the last few years to support its ministries. Our Youth Group has gone on several retreats and some of our young people have attended summer camp there. The Session believes it to be important that the ministry continue and have decided on a different approach to raise money to assist the Camping ministry. Beginning in December and throughout the next year we have placed a water jug in the rear of the church. We are asking all those in attendance each Sunday to drop one dollar in the jar. If just thirty of people do this, we will have raised over \$1,500 by the end of November next year. But with our attendance hovering between 60-70 people we can even do better than that.

So please if you are able consider giving a dollar each week in worship to help save Camp Brainerd. If you would like to make a donation to the camp directly you can mail a check made out to Friends of Brainerd, 1301 M. Easton Belmont Pike, Stroudsburg, PA 18360 or you can of course make a check out to Olivet and mark that it is for Camp Brainerd.

O Y E A HAPPENINGS DECEMBER



NOEL



OYEA'S Schedule - Join Us!

Dec. 13th 5:30 to 7:30 pm -
Regular meeting

at First Presbyterian Church

Dec. 17th 6:00 to 8:00 pm - Senior
Supper at Olivet

Dec. 20th - OYEA Caroling

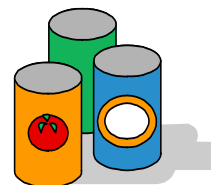
Recruiting Youth for OYEA- -5th grade to High School - -See Nicole Vogel to apply.

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## Remember

## ProJeCt of

## Festive!



For 40 years ProJeCt has been helping people help themselves!! **And it can't be accomplished without the help of other people who care and support the needs of our at-risk community.** That's where YOU come in!

The Food Pantry needs: canned soup, canned fruit, juice, saltine crackers, ground coffee, cereal, and pasta sauce.

Other needed items are: gift cards for pharmacy, clothes and food; children's backpacks, school supplies, flash drive memory sticks, new or gently used strollers, locking file cabinets; or brochure display racks and Casio FX269 calculators. **OF COURSE, MONETARY DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**



# Ring

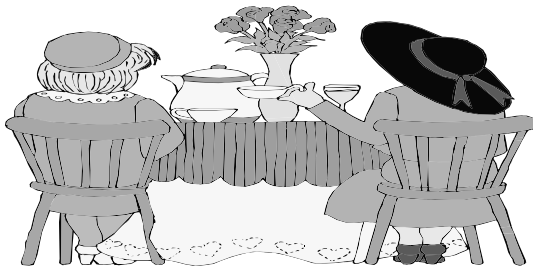
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## December 2009 FLOWER SPONSORS

- Dec 06 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Simmons  
Mr. & Mrs. Randy Wilson
- Dec 08 John T. Koch  
Mrs. Eleanor Zelezen
- Dec 13 Mrs. Elmer G. Boyd
- Dec 20 & Dec 24  
Christmas Poinsettias sponsored  
by Olivet congregation
- Dec 27 Open

## LADIES' CIRCLE MEETINGS



### Early Circle News Christmas Meeting

Wed. Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> – 10:30 am

Breakfast at OASIS- Restaurant Hosted by Jerry DeWalt

### Evening Circle News

Christmas Meeting

Thurs. Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 pm

**WILLIAMS Restaurant**

Note: Dear Evening Circle Thanks for the goodies you sent me. I'm enjoying them, they're very nice. My roommate and I really like every-thing. Thanks for thinking of me when I'm away at college. And, hopefully I can see everyone soon.

**Thanks again.** I miss you. **Dalton McGary**

## December 2009 BULLETIN SPONSORS

- Dec 06 Don Roberts
- Dec 08 Mrs. Elmer G. Boyd
- Dec 13 Robert Nansteel
- Dec 20 Mrs. Eleanor Zelezen
- Dec 24 John Koch
- Dec 27 M/M Walter Leunberger

## NURSERY CARE SCHEDULE

### December

- Dec 6<sup>th</sup> – Nicole Vogel
- Dec 13<sup>th</sup> – Amber Wilson
- Dec 20<sup>th</sup> – Christine McGary
- Dec 24<sup>th</sup> - - Christmas Eve -  
Volunteers needed!!
- Dec. 27<sup>th</sup> – Katie Piatt

## "COOKIN' UP NEW RECIPES"

Many thanks for providing recipes for Olivet's new Cook Book.

The new cookbook IS HERE!

Think of adding Olivet's new cookbook when you're planning your Christmas shopping list.

Surely, moms, dads and most anyone who enjoys cooking will welcome the wealth of good "tried and true" recipes.

Wow! Books are being sold for \$10. A bargain price!