



# Steeple Notes

First Presbyterian Church of Huron

Pastor Joel Stevenor

January 2017

## A NEW YEAR MESSAGE

### JOIN US ON JAN 15TH

Join Us for our Annual Congregational Meeting following worship service on Sunday, Jan 15th. A luncheon will be served before the yearly reports are given. Your vote is needed. Members must approve the 2017 budget and Pastor's Compensation.

### FORGIVENESS

Helen Whitney (filmmaker) will be at the University of Findlay from Feb 27-Mar 2. One of her films, FORGIVENESS: A Time to Love and a Time to Hate, will be featured during her visit and the focus of her public lecture. Her free public talk on Forgiveness will be at 7:30 pm on Tuesday, Feb 28th, at the Alumni Memorial Union on the UF campus. You can learn more about Helen Whitney at her website [www.helenwhitney.com](http://www.helenwhitney.com).

### THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who donated bags of food for the Helping Hands Food Pantry. We collected 27 bags for our Christmas Dinner drive. Your generosity was greatly appreciated by the recipients.

*You are kind, God! Please have pity on me. You are always merciful! Please wipe away my sins. Wash me clean from all of my sin and guilt.* Psalm 51:1-2

I cannot begin to think how many times I have prayed this prayer. We have all sinned against God. The word of God tells us that if we sin against God that we must pray and ask for forgiveness and it will be done. Sounds too easy, right?

When I was a kid I would get in trouble a lot! And once I realized that I did something wrong—something that really hurt someone's feelings—I had to ask for forgiveness from that person. Even after I apologized, some people just wouldn't let go of what I had done. They would hold it over my head to make me feel even worse about it (I have to admit that I am guilty of doing exactly the same thing to others).

We say that we forgive a person, but we don't really forgive them. Instead, what we are doing is just forgiving them for that one moment. The grievance is still in our minds and hearts and we hold on to it with both hands.

When we do something wrong to God and we ask for forgiveness, it's forgiven. Bam! That's all. God will not hold the grievance over our heads. God loves us so much that when we do something bad and then ask for forgiveness from the bottom of our hearts, he forgives us.

This is a season of not keeping score of the wrongs of others. It is easier to ask others not to keep a scorecard on our wrongdoing, but it is very difficult not to keep score on others. It is a challenge to give up holding grudges for the new year and to practice forgiveness. So the next time someone hurts you and then asks for forgiveness, forgive them and try not to hold it against them. Once they see that you're doing that, perhaps they will try and do the same.

Kelsey Chandler

Acworth, GA

Prayer: **Father God, please help me to be a more forgiving person. Grant me patience and love. Thank you Lord for your everlasting love that you have shown to me. Help me now to show that forgiving love to others. In Jesus name, Amen.**

# EPIPHANY & THE WISE MEN

Epiphany is celebrated on Jan 6th. It is the time the Three Wise Men gave their gifts to Jesus.

**Melchior** was the king of Arabia and India and the eldest of the three kings at the age 116. His appearance substantiated his position: his beard was long and white and a dramatic contrast to the crimson robes that were his signature color. Melchior was said to have waited a lifetime for a star to appear in the heavens. Once it did, there was no question that he was destined to join the other two kings for a journey to Bethlehem. Melchior's gift was gold. It is written that he also brought silks and precious stones to Bethlehem. Eight days after seeing Jesus in the stable, Melchior went to the temple to pray and then peacefully died with his lifelong mission fulfilled.

**Balthazar** was the Prince of Africa and the King of Saba. Of the three kings, he was the one who traveled the farthest. His journey had been so long and exhausting that by the time he met the other two kings, his clothing was in tatters. It is unclear whether he packed special clothing to wear once he arrived in Bethlehem or if the other two kings gave him clothing. Balthazar's gift was myrrh (a true gift of his homeland) and symbolized suffering. Myrrh is an aromatic resin that comes from the bark of thorny, African trees. It was prized throughout the Holy Land because it was said to deter vermin from invading the house. On the day of the Feast of the Epiphany, Balthazar died after saying prayers at the temple. He was 112. Just days after burying Melchior, Gaspar found himself burying his other travel companion.

**Gaspar** (also known as Gaspard, Caspar, and Jaspar) was the youngest of the three kings at 109 years of age. He was actually the king of many kingdoms and had many titles including "King of Tharsis" and "Emperor of the World." In his homeland, he was said to have lived in such splendor that he sat only on pillows fashioned of gold-embellished tapestry. This regal king is most often depicted wearing an elegant turban. Lyric poets have described Gaspar's headdress as wrapping around his head like a blossom of almond trees. Gaspar's gift was frankincense. This fragrant, African aromatic symbolized prayer. This gift was so beautiful that some stories tell of Gaspar spilling a chest of diamonds before the child.



## CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCE TREE

This was our first year for the Christmas Remembrance Service. Many ornaments were blessed during the service. There are some interesting ornaments, and everyone has enjoyed sharing the memories of loved ones. Ornaments from this year will be saved for next year's tree. If you would like to add an ornament to next year's tree, we will be having another Remembrance Service next year.

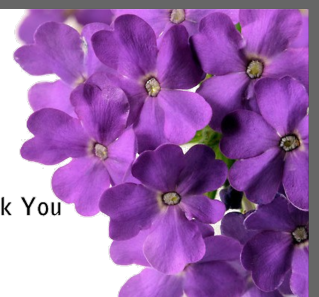


Thank you to all the singers and musicians who shared their talents during the Christmas season and especially on Music Sunday.

*Thank you to my church friends for the lovely flowers. Thank you for your calls, cards, and visits. May God bless you with a Merry Christmas and Good New Year.*

*Marian Howland*

Thank You



# NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Did you know that the beginning of the year used to be celebrated on March 1st. Julius Caesar changed the beginning of the year to be January 1st. January is named for Janus who is the Roman god of beginnings and endings. For this reason, he is depicted with two faces—one that sees the future and the other sees the past. When Rome turned to Christianity as its official faith, they kept New Years Day. The celebration was changed to emphasis the practice of fasting and prayer aimed at living the New Year in the New Life of Christ. Here are some famous New Year Resolutions written by Jonathan Edwards, an American Puritan (1703-1758).



- ◆ Resolve never to do anything out of revenge.
- ◆ Resolve never to speak evil of anyone.
- ◆ Resolve to examine carefully, and constantly, what that one thing in me is, which causes me in the least to doubt of the love of God; and to direct all my forces against it.
- ◆ Resolve to inquire every night, before I go to bed, whether I have acted in the best way I possibly could.

And while many Christians today resolve to practice gratitude, encounter the Lord each day, stop overworking, and make a difference in their community; there are those who challenge us with lighter resolutions:

- ◆ Wear swim fins to the mall and act like everything's perfectly normal.
- ◆ Attempt to play an accordion while standing on one foot.
- ◆ Spend an afternoon with a friend making snow angels (or sand angels).
- ◆ Quack like a duck at least three different times during a day of your choice.
- ◆ Sing in the shower.      ◆ Build a castle out of playing cards.      ◆ Go to a playground and swing on a swing.



Thank You!



Many thanks to all who participated in our 3rd Annual Bake Sale. A special thank you to all the bakers (including

Bob Muntz for his famous Raspberry Bars). Between the purchases and generous donations, \$473 was raised for the building fund. Thank you so much for your support!

Some mornings it's just not that easy to get my act together!



If you are an IRA owner and are over age 70½ this year, you must take your required minimum distribution (RMD) by the end of the year. Normally any IRA distribution, including your RMD, is taxable to you, but a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is tax-free as long as certain rules are followed.

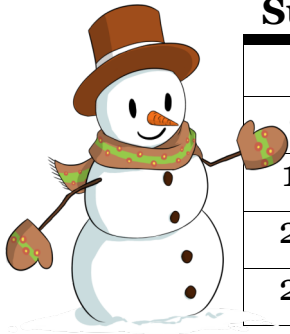
Under the IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution rules, if you are actually age 70½ or older on the date of the distribution, you can give your RMD or any amount up to \$100,000 directly to charity tax-free. The IRA funds must be transferred directly to a qualified charity. The charitable donation from your IRA can satisfy your RMD for the year. You can't take a tax deduction for the charitable contribution - but, unless you itemize deductions, you don't get a tax deduction for charitable contributions.

The reason why you likely will save taxes using a QCD is because it's a tax-free distribution. Because it's tax free, it won't increase your adjusted gross income (AGI) and thus won't affect items on your federal income tax return that are negatively impacted by a higher AGI.

If you are over age 70½ and have an IRA, consider using the QCD to pay your pledge to our church. It should save you money! Ask your tax professional if you have any questions.



# January 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



- Jan 2 Mary Christine Metzger
- Jan 3 William Roose
- Jan 4 Janet Zimmer
- Jan 9 Robert Fidler Sr
- Jan 11 Marian Howland
- Jan 11 Sue Patrick
- Jan 12 Rita Phillips
- Jan 15 Chris Mischler
- Jan 16 Emma Horan
- Jan 17 Barbara Gettman
- Jan 20 Scott Ransom
- Jan 23 Bethany Schippel
- Jan 24 Ron Cook
- Jan 26 Sheri Ransom
- Jan 29 Rachel Pratt
- Jan 30 Emma Corwin

- Jan 3 Little Wonders Return to School
- Jan 3 PW Circle at 7 pm
- Jan 5 Handbell Choir Resumes Practice
- Jan 9 Bible Study Starts Again
- Jan 11 Christ's Community Meal at 5 pm
- Jan 11 F&M Meeting at 7 pm
- Jan 12 N&M Meeting at 7:30 pm
- Jan 15 Congregational Meeting & Lunch
- Jan 18 Session Meeting at 7 pm
- Jan 20-27 Pastor Joel's Vacation
- Jan 23 Steeple Notes Deadline
- Jan 25 Christ's Community Meal at 5 pm



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

As you can see, we are in need of ushers and hospitality volunteers. There is a sign up sheet for ushers in the Narthex and a sign up sheet for hospitality in the Fellowship Hall. You can also call Becky in the church office.

	Ushers	Liturgist	Hospitality	Flowers
Jan 1		Cynthia Brown Mathews		Mark & Pat Koch
	<b>Communion Servers:</b> Pastor Joel <b>Set-up:</b> Pastor Joel			
Jan 8		John Blakeman		
Jan 15		Agnes Toldy		Mark & Pat Koch
Jan 22		Casey Wittmer		Ward & Fern DeLamatre
Jan 29		Steve Koenig		Brian & Katy McGraw