

of Jesus as he is revealed in the Bible. Jesus said, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9).

Most importantly, Jesus became a man in order to die for our sins. Since it was men and women who broke God's law and fell under God's wrath, the true atonement could only be made by one who was a man. Jesus became a human being so that he could offer himself for the sins of his people, since he alone was able to suffer the penalty of death in his human nature and yet conquer through life in his deity.

In the ancient world there were many myths about gods who came down to earth for a little while, until they got tired and returned to the clouds. But nowhere in the ancient world was there ever an idea of God becoming man, the Word taking up flesh, out of his desire to save us. But this is our joyful Christmas message: "Lo, within a manger lies / He who built the starry skies... / Thus to come from highest bliss / Down to such a world as this!" What does this say about God's desire for our salvation – that he actually stepped into our world and became one of us! How great is God's love for each of his people, that he would send his Son to die for us and thus to enable us to live with God forever in glory! This is the gift we celebrate with thanks to God at Christmas.

John says that Jesus not only dwelt among us, like God's tabernacle in the midst of the exodus tribes of Israel, but that he showed us his glory. There is so much glory associated with Christmas, and I hope you all – especially our children – can sense some of the glory, of which the angels sang in the fields of Bethlehem – during your Christmas celebrations. But, according to Jesus, the true glory for which he came was revealed at the cross. On the brink of his entry into Jerusalem before his crucifixion, Jesus declared, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified" (Jn. 12:23). Jesus was not talking about the Hosannas of Palm Sunday but about the agonies of his atoning death. On the cross, God showed us the true shame of our sin, since even one so perfect as Jesus had to suffer death for it. But on the cross, God also showed us the true glory of his love, since he was willing to give even his own Son if that is what it took for us to be saved. Now, it is by seeing the glory of God's grace on the cross that sinners like us are saved. Is Jesus, who was born in the manger to die on the cross, your glory?

Today, the glory of Jesus, "the Word", shines into our hearts through the writings of the Bible (2 Pet. 1:19). So we hold in a book the truth of God in all its glory, provided for us through the ancient prophets and apostles of Jesus Christ. If we have received God's grace at the cross of Christ, then let us love and desire the knowledge of God's truth in his Word. Let's make sure that this Christmas season we celebrate God's gift by spending some time in the Bible. Then let our Christmas gift to him be our trusting devotion to Jesus and our delight in worshiping God with thanks in our church and together with our families. In this way, may the Lord give you all his richest blessings this Christmas season.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Rick Phillips

CHURCH INFORMATION

The West End Herald Editor: RE Melton L. Duncan, Sr.

Website: www.spcgreenville.org

Telephone: Office (864) 232-7621

Fax: (864) 232-7622 * Email: info@secondpca.org

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Information Centers: Church Services information 1 * Directions 2

Hospital Information 3 * Upcoming Events 4 * Church Directory 5 * Monthly Activities 6

Church Services: Sunday: Sunday School - 10:00 AM

Morning Worship - 8:30 and 11:00 AM * Evening Worship - 6:00 PM

Wednesday: Supper - 5:45 PM * Prayer Meeting and Bible Study - 6:45 PM

Upcoming Events

Dec. 16	The Lord's Supper at the evening service
Dec. 17	Young At Heart
Dec. 18	Jr. High Christmas party at the Maralits
Dec. 19	NO WEDNESDAY EVENING ACTIVITIES
Dec. 19	Youth Christmas Caroling
Dec. 20	College/20s SS Christmas party at the McCarthys
Dec. 21	Sr. High Christmas party at the Detmers
Dec. 24	Lessons and Carols
Dec. 24-26	Church Office Closed
Dec. 26	NO WEDNESDAY EVENING ACTIVITIES
Dec. 30	Christmas Hymn Sing in the sanctuary
Dec. 31	Church Office Closed

Young At Heart

The Young At Heart Christmas Luncheon will be Monday, December 17, at 11:45 am in the Fellowship Hall. A special catered Christmas lunch will be \$7.00 per person payable at the door. Our Christmas program will feature special Christmas music by Allison Detmer. Make plans to join us as we enjoy good food, fellowship, and a wonderful program.

Rivertree Singers Concert

Rivertree Singers Concert
Tuesday, December 18, 2012; 7:30 pm
Second Presbyterian Church
A free concert of sacred and secular Christmas Music

December Schedule

- ⇒ There will be no Wednesday night activities on:
Wednesday, December 19th
Wednesday, December 26th
- ⇒ The Church Office will be closed:
December 24-26
- ⇒ The West End Herald will not be mailed the week of Dec. 24th.

Christmas Eve Service

LESSONS AND CAROLS
Saturday, December 24th, 6:00 PM
*We will marvel with the heavenly host
as we hear the good news of our Savior's birth
retold in Scripture and song.*

Sunday School Christmas parties

- ⇒ Acts Class—Dec. 14th at 6:30 pm at Robert and Jenny Spears
- ⇒ Westminster Class—Dec. 15th at 7:00 pm at Joel and Alice Barnetts
- ⇒ Jr. High Class—Dec. 18th at 6:30 pm at Joseph and Ashley Maralits
- ⇒ Fellowship Class—Dec. 20th at 6:30 pm at Tim and Cindy Crunks
- ⇒ College & 20s Class—Dec. 20th, 7:00 pm at Jim & Jordan McCarthys
- ⇒ Sr. High Class—Dec. 21st at 6:30 pm at Diane Detmers

Christmas Hymn Sing

Sunday, December 30, 2012
Immediately following the evening worship service in the sanctuary
Join us as we sing your favorite Christmas Carols from the Trinity Hymnal.

2012 PCA Ministerial Relief Christmas Offering

RBI's Ministry of Relief has been providing financial assistance and encouragement to retired PCA pastors, missionaries, church servants and their families for 38 years. The predominant assistance we provide is to widows of PCA Teaching Elders. Without this financial assistance they struggle to afford the basic needs of life. In fact, many would live in near poverty without the assistance we provide. The annual Ministerial Relief Christmas Offering is the principle source of funding to meet the needs of these widows and other PCA church servants. *We need your help more than ever.* According to the recent PCA Retirement Readiness Survey conducted by RBI, the number of retiring PCA pastors will triple over the next 25 years. Since 82% of wives outlive their husbands by an average of 11 to 14 years, a large portion of those pastors retiring will leave widows who will outlive their retirement accounts resulting in incomes at or below the poverty level. Over the next 25 years, the number of families needing Ministerial Relief will quadruple. Without a substantial increase in church participation in the Ministerial Relief Christmas Offering, the Relief Fund will be depleted in 18 years. By 2035, the annual needs will exceed \$5 million.

This Lord's Day there will be an insert and an offering envelope in your bulletin. We encourage you to participate in this important ministry and ask you to please remember to pray for our widows and retired and disabled pastors in need.

2013 Offering Envelopes

The 2013 offering envelopes have been placed on a table outside the church library. Please stop by and pick up your envelopes. The Diaconate ask that all members use offering envelopes for accounting purposes. If you or any of your children need a box of envelopes, please contact the church office, ext. 18.

Year-End Contributions

Just a reminder that to obtain a 2012 charitable contribution deduction for income tax purposes, contributions must be received by the church no later than December 31, 2012 or postmarked by December 31, 2012.

Treasurer's Report

December Offerings:

The 2012 budget including Missions and Benevolences contingencies is \$1,015,773. Through November, contributions are \$913,072 leaving a difference of \$102,701. Contributions last December, 2011 were \$109,159. The 2012 budget can be met or exceeded if contributions in December are similar to the December 2011 contributions. With your financial support the 2012 budget can be met.

Thank You

On behalf of the Choir, we would like to thank the WIC, and a special thanks to Judy Bishop for the beautiful reception you gave for us after "The Messiah" on Sunday evening.

—From the Choir to our Church Family, have a Blest and Merry Christmas.

To All Women In the Church: Phone or Email?

The prayer chain is an effective way to communicate our urgent prayer requests with one another in real time. For the prayers of a righteous man availeth much! If you are not already on the prayer chain, please let us know your preference of either joining the telephone chain or the email chain. Come and join with the host of praying saints at Second as we continually pray for one another in times of need. To be added to the prayer chain contact Lynda Duncan at lrduncan@charter.net or leave me your phone # for the phone chain at 864-350-2693.

Church Calendar

Sunday, December 16

8:30 AM **MORNING WORSHIP**
 9:50 AM Children's Chapel
 10:00 AM **SUNDAY SCHOOL**
 11:00 AM **MORNING WORSHIP**
 4:45 PM Regular Adult Choir Rehearsal
 5:30 PM Season of Prayer in the Chapel
 6:00 PM **EVENING WORSHIP**
 6:00 PM Wee Worship Choir

Monday, December 17

11:45 AM Young At Heart Christmas Luncheon & Program
 6:00 PM Sr. High Girls' Team 2 Basketball game at home
 7:00 PM Sr. High Boys' Basketball game at ARP
 8:00 PM Sr. High Girls' Team 1 B'ball game at Christ Church

Tuesday, December 18

4:30 PM I-Mites and Mites Basketball practice
 6:00 PM Boy Scout Troop 828
 6:30 PM Jr. High Christmas party at the Maralits
 7:00 PM Jr. High Boys' Basketball practice
 7:30 PM Rivertree Singers Concert in sanctuary

Wednesday, December 19

Regular Wednesday evening activities cancelled

6:30 AM Men's Bible Study
 5:30 PM Youth Christmas Caroling
 8:00 PM Sr. High Boys' Basketball practice

Thursday, December 20

5:30 PM Jr. High Girls' Basketball practice
 6:30 PM Fellowship SS Class Christmas party at the Crunks
 7:00 PM College & 20s Class Christmas party at the McCarthys
 9:00 PM Men's Basketball game at W. Pres.

Friday, December 21

12:00 PM Men's Bible Study and Fellowship Lunch
 6:30 PM Senior High Christmas party at the Detmers

Remembering One Another

Remember in prayer this week the following shut-in member.
 Also, send her a note of encouragement.

Caroline Ryer
 110 Willow Place #212
 Easley, SC 29640

Praying For One Another

Remember in prayer this week the following members.

Chuck and Carolyn Fields
Rebekah
Shannon Flaherty
James and Beth Francis
Carrington Ann and William Burke

Nonprofit Org.
 U. S. Postage
 PAID
 Greenville, SC
 Permit No. 559

The Second Presbyterian Church

105 River Street
 Greenville, South Carolina 29601-2537

Return Service Requested

WORSHIP AT SECOND
THE LORD'S DAY
DECEMBER 16, 2012

MORNING WORSHIP
 8:30 & 11:00 AM

WORTHY TO TAKE THE SCROLL
 Revelation 5:1-10

Anthem:
 What Sweeter Music
 Hymns: 208, 198, 173
 Dr. Richard D. Phillips preaching

EVENING WORSHIP
 6:00 PM

THE SABBATH REST
 Hebrews 4:1-5
 Hymns: 199, 188, 420
 Psalter: Psalm 7 (verses 9-17)
 Dr. Richard D. Phillips preaching

«Title» «First Name» «Last Name»
 «Address Line 1»
 «Address Line 2»
 «City» «State» «ZIP Code»



The West End Herald

Vol. CXX, Edition 50

The Second Presbyterian Church
 Corner of River and Rhett Streets
 Greenville, South Carolina

December 10, 2012

Letter from the Senior Minister The Word Became Flesh

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory” (Jn. 1:14).

Our Christmas celebrations are like Israel's exodus from Egypt. This great migration took on a beautiful splendor, as Israel was laden with the treasures of the Nile, just as our Advent season glitters in red and gold. But the true glory of the exodus was not the shimmering colors of Egyptian riches, nor even the uplifted faces of the people following Moses to the Promised Land. Rather, the true glory of Israel was the glory of God in their midst through the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant. So it is for us with Christmas: our true glory is that of Christ himself, as he is proclaimed, trusted, and praised in the midst of his people. This was the apostle John's teaching in his Gospel as he spoke of the meaning of Christmas: “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14).

Unlike the other Gospels that tell the events of Jesus' birth, John's Gospel tells the story of Christmas in theological terms. John 1:14 states the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ. Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, yet the second person of the Trinity did not come into being at this birth. Rather, John says, “the Word,” that is, God the Son, took up a human form and nature to add to his eternally divine nature. Christ's incarnation means that God's Son became human in the fullest sense, without losing any of his divinity. Being sinless, his is uncorrupted, true humanity, as God had originally designed it.

Let me give some of the reasons why Jesus Christ took on our flesh through the womb of Mary. One reason is so that God could know us experientially and thus fully sympathize with us in our needs. Because Jesus became man, he is able to have compassion on us in our trials and he knows what it is to feel sorrow and joy as a human being. Hebrews 4:15 says, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.” As such, Jesus also sets an example for us to follow, as he leads us through this life in the way that he has blazed for us.

A second reason why Jesus became man was to show us the glory of God in a form that we could receive. God is spirit and is invisible in his true nature (1 Tim. 6:16). Therefore, God the Son clothed himself in human form so that men and women could see and understand the character of God. We can know God's holiness and love by seeing it in the human life