

WOODLAWN WINDOW

January 2020

Woodlawn Presbyterian Church
2612 12th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33704



John F. Underwood, Pastor
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Dear Friends,

In all my growing up years I don't think I ever saw a Florida scene on a Christmas Card. Maybe I saw a gag card sometime—Santa recuperating in Miami, perhaps—but I don't think so.

I saw lots of snow scenes: outdoor nativity displays in the snow; white, New-England-style churches in the snow; horse-drawn sleighs dashing through the snow; chickadees singing in snow-covered pine-trees. Sometimes I saw cards that left the scenery out altogether and were covered instead with big, bright, sparkling snowflakes in silver, white, blue, or gold.

It comes as no surprise that Florida does not offer any of those snowy scenes.

But let me share something interesting that happened to me a year ago. While I was in Bethlehem last November, I bought my wife a hand-carved nativity of olivewood. It showed a great angel enfolding the whole scene in its wings. Sheltered inside those wings were the figures you would expect to see in a nativity—Mary and Joseph keeping watch over the Christ Child in a manger. But those wings also sheltered something unexpected—a palm tree beside the stable.

A palm tree! Shades of Florida!

In truth, I should not have been all that surprised. From before Bible times and continuing today, palm trees have been commonplace in the Holy Land. The ancient city of Jericho was called the City of Palms before the Old Testament was written—it says so in Deuteronomy 34:3.

In the early generations of Christmas art it was not unusual to see palm trees in depictions of the birth of Jesus. I remember visiting an ancient church in Ravenna, Italy and seeing a sixth century mosaic. It depicts the three wise men coming to present their gifts to the baby Jesus. As they come in procession to the Christ Child, they pass in front of a row of palm trees.

(Ironically, I saw that scene and those palm trees on a rare day when Ravenna, and all the surrounding Adriatic coast of Italy, was covered with several inches of January snow.)

In the nativity scenes of those early years you would be far more likely to see depictions of palm trees than of snow. Palm trees—sometimes; snow—never!

You are not likely to see a Christmas nativity set with palm trees today, but you might come across a Christmas palm tree in a Christmas legend that is about six hundred years old. The legend elaborates the story of Jesus' escape from Herod's assault on the children of Bethlehem.

According to the legend, after an angel comes to Joseph in a dream and warns him to take Mary and the baby and flee to Egypt, the family flees in such haste that no one has time to prepare to travel. As a result, the Holy Family is no sooner free of the pursuit of Herod's soldiers than it is at risk from a lack of provisions. They do not have enough food or water to get them to Egypt.

Just as they are running out of supplies, they come to a palm tree.

Artists call the scene, "The Rest on the Flight into Egypt." Help is at hand, but the family's deliverance does not come easily. There are ripe dates on the branches of the palm tree, but the dates are out of reach. Neither Mary nor Joseph can climb the tree to get them. There should be a spring of water to nurture the palm tree, but there is no sign of a spring anywhere in sight. Then a miracle occurs. The baby Jesus speaks! He commands the tree to bend down. The palm bows its tall trunk and lowers its high branches so that Mary and Joseph can easily pick all the dates they need. Then the baby Jesus commands the tree to lift its roots. It lifts a great root out of the ground, revealing a hidden spring that waters the tree.



Mary and Joseph are able to fill their goat skins with all the water they will need for the rest of their journey.

Can you imagine being saved by such a palm tree in snowy New England?!

Let the good Christian folks up north dream of a white Christmas. We can walk outside in our short sleeves, with no hint of snow for hundreds of miles around, and be at least as truly in touch with Jesus' nativity under our sunny skies, looking at the lovely palm trees that surround us.

Have a joyful, blessed, and holy Christmas and a New Year full of faith and life.

Pastor John

FAITH COMMUNITY NEWS

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:5

Keeping our hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean running water. Germs can get on hands when using the toilet, changing a diaper, handling raw meat, handling a pet, or touching any object that has germs on it because someone coughed or sneezed on it. When these germs get onto hands and are not washed off, they can be passed from person to person and make people sick.

People frequently touch their eyes, nose, and mouth without even realizing it. Germs can then get into the body and make us sick. Germs from unwashed hands can get into foods and drinks while people prepare or consume them. Germs can multiply in some types of foods or drinks, under certain conditions, and make people sick.

The CDC recommends cleaning hands in a specific way. Hand washing with soap removes germs from hands. Soap with an antibiotic is not recommended, to prevent an increase in antibiotic resistant germs.

1. Wet hands with clean, running water (warm or cold). Apply soap.
2. Lather hands by rubbing them together with soap. Lather the backs of hands, between fingers, and under nails. Soap and friction help lift dirt, grease, and microbes from skin so they can be rinsed off of hands.
3. Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds. (hum "Happy Birthday") twice.
4. Rinse hands well under clean running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry.

Use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (check label) if soap and water are not available. Hand sanitizer works best when the hands are not greasy or heavily soiled.

For further information on hand washing go to cdc.gov/handwashing

Wendy Siedlecki RN
Faith Community Nurse

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Thank you to everyone who helped with the "Hanging of the Greens" on Sat., Nov. 30. It was a terrific turn out - great team work. The Sanctuary glows with the spirit of Christmas. All the tasty refreshments were much appreciated.



Thanks to everyone who brought food to our congregational Christmas dinner. It is a special time to celebrate together the birthday of Jesus Christ with family and friends.

Super Bowl Sunday is Feb. 2. After worship we gather to celebrate the Souper Bowl of Caring. This is a major fund raiser to help our local agencies supporting those in need in the community. We collect your donations in large soup pots after worship and then enjoy a variety of soups prepared by people with a favorite soup recipe. We need 8 -10 soups serving 8 -10 people. Bread is served and cookies for dessert.

It is a simple meal to remember those less fortunate. All of the funds go directly to local agencies. Look for sign-up sheets in January to let us know you are coming and whether you can bring a soup. Thank you.

Fellowship team: Helen Doherty, Freda Melody, Jane Orts, Wendy Siedlecki, Chairman

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

As we begin a new year, and as we enact plans and a budget for the new year, it is also a good time to reflect on the past year in terms of projects, finances, and people. In 2019, we began renting space to 2 neighborhood associations and an eating disorder support group. We power washed the exterior of the church building; replaced rain gutters and downspouts; started renting Hutchinson Hall to Reliance Church; renovated the kitchen in Hutchinson Hall; and engaged a new and better lawn care service. These are just a few of the highlights of the work accomplished by the Administration Committee. It should be noted there are a myriad of routine functions which are attended to by the Committee, e.g. A/C maintenance, pest control, minor plumbing and electrical maintenance.



The Committee is also tasked with financial and personnel management of the church. Financially the church came through the year in fine shape, ending the year with a budget surplus. Thanks to wise financial management in the past decade we have no outstanding debt and we always operate within our means. We have sufficient funds to be able to deal with emergencies as they arise, and we have the wherewithal to deal with some future building maintenance issues, e.g. replacement of aging major A/C units.

As we move into 2020, future projects may include installing drains for rainwater run-off to be directed to the street, improvement of

sanctuary lighting, improvement of the sanctuary sound system, replacing flooring in Fellowship Hall, and new curtains for the stage in Fellowship Hall.

As we bid 2019 farewell, the Committee also says thank you and goodbye to Janie Hodgson. While she will remain working to the office as church secretary, she will no longer work on the Administration Committee. Thank you, Janie, for your dedication and hard work.

As we bid Janie adieu, we need to fill her place on the Committee. Ideally, we need two or three more persons to serve. If you have skills and talents that lend themselves to building maintenance and financial and personnel management, we would welcome your presence. The more of us there are, the lighter the burden becomes. We need your help!

Mike Baker, Chairman; Janie Hodgson, Mary Lee King, Doreen Means and Bill Tinsley

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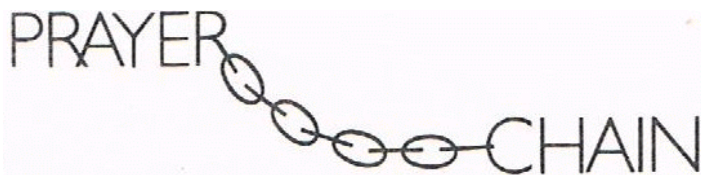
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trouble.



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In need of prayers for yourself or others? We have a very active prayer chain (completely confidential). Contact the church office, 822-4477, to add a name to the list.

**HAVE YOU REMEMBERED THE
CHURCH IN YOUR WILL?**

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Missions Committee has been made an ad hoc committee of the Session. All the former functions of the committee continue under the leadership of the Elders currently serving on the Session. We are still collecting and distributing clothes for CASA and Day Star. We also have our regular Food and Toy Drives at Thanksgiving and Christmas. At Easter we ask for gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing and at Christmas we ask for gifts for the Joy Gift.

If you have any questions, please speak to a member of the Session.



**PLEASE PRAY
FOR OUR
HOMEBOUND:**

Sally Blacker
Martha Dietrich
Jane Ellis
Zulema Groves
Barbara Ann
Munroe
Lois Scarbrough
Sandi Wojcik



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**HAVE YOU INVITED SOMEONE TO
CHURCH? WE HAVE MANY ACTIVITIES:
BIBLE STUDY, WOMEN'S CIRCLE,
BINGO, BOOK CLUB, SUNDAY SCHOOL
AND OTHERS.**

**FOR I THE LORD THY GOD WILL
HOLD THY RIGHT HAND, SAYING
UNTO THEE, FEAR NOT, I WILL HELP
THEE.**

ISAIAH 41:13

WOMEN'S CIRCLE



The Evening Women's Circle will meet on January 14, 2020 at 6 PM. We will be studying the New Horizon Bible Study entitled, "Love Carved In Stone, A Look at the Ten Commandments."

We begin with a covered dish supper at 6 PM and the Bible Study begins at about 7 PM finishing at 8 PM.

Please join us for fellowship and a lively discussion of the lesson.

All women are invited and welcome.



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GOD'S JANUARY CHILDREN

- 1 Jerry Smith
- 3 Dottie Huber
- 11 Carol Anderson
- 15 Sally Blacker
- 19 Lois Scarbrough
- 19 Ginny Staples
- 21 Mary Beth Carlisle
- 25 Deborah Reppel
- 27 Nancy Allison
- 27 Helen Doherty



GREETINGS and THANKFULNESS

Dear Woodlawn Family:
Thank you for your prayers and concern during Corky's extended illness and passing.

We also would like to thank those who sent cards and attended Corky's Celebration of Life Service.

Your thoughtfulness was greatly appreciated.

With love from Corky's family.

Wishing you ALL PEACE and LOVE this

Thanksgiving Season. Thank you for

all of your kindness. Much love,

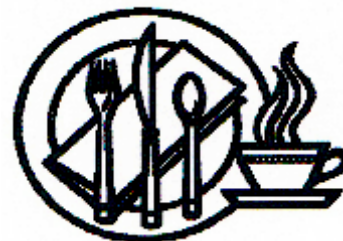
Zulema Groves

I thank you, God, for giving me LIFE,
so I can enjoy all things.

Peg McKeand

LUNCH BUNCH

2nd THURSDAY OF
EACH MONTH AT
11:30 A. M.
(NOTE – TIME
CHANGE)



JANUARY 9th @ 11:30 A. M.
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SOME IMPORTANT DATES:

- 01/01 NEW YEAR'S DAY
- 01/05 COMMUNION, 10:00 A.M.
- 01/09 LUNCH BUNCH, 11:30 A.M.
(note - time change)
- 01/11 BOOK CLUB, for time and
location check with Bert
or Wendy.
- 01/13 FEB. WW DEADLINE, 4:00 P.M.
- 01/17 Free BINGO, 6:30 P.M.,
Fellowship Hall
- 01/26 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING TO PRESENT 2019
REPORT FOLLOWING
WORSHIP SERVICE
- 01/28 SESSION, 3:30 P.M.,
CONFERENCE ROOM A

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FRIENDSHIP CLASS ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL



NEW HOUR: Sundays at
9:00 AM - 9:45 AM

Are you growing with the Lord?

Is your life improving as you get to know Jesus in
a deeper way?

Does his word have more meaning with each
passing day?

Bible study gives us new insights into the wisdom
it holds and how that wisdom helps us in our daily
lives. It teaches us how to be more discerning
and better founded in our relationship with our
Lord Jesus.



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NOVEMBER OFFICE REPORT

Date:	Contributions:	Attendance:
11/03	\$ 6,383.00	55
11/10	7,577.70	49
11/17	1,719.00	55
11/24	<u>16,248.00</u>	<u>55</u>
	\$31,927.70	54 avg.



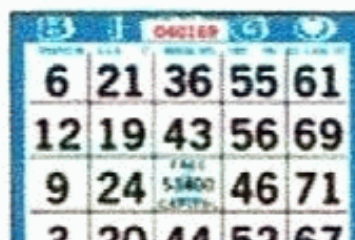
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VOLUNTEERS AT WOODLAWN

Woodlawn Presbyterian for many years has counted on the members and friends of the church to fulfill many of the jobs that must be done, sometimes every day and sometimes just a few times each year. How many of you know Andrea Tihal. If her name is not known to you it is because Andrea donates time behind the scenes, each month to check our financial records, balances our checkbook and closes out the books each month and at the end of the year. Those of us who work with her are so grateful for the time she donates to help us with our work.

Do you know that when our custodian is on vacation, we have several members who do the work she normally does? Lately, Dave Hodgson, Joe Orts and Mike Baker have picked up the slack and seen that the church maintains its neat and clean condition.

When you call the office for information or report a prayer request or come by for some reason, are you aware that all the people in the office are volunteers? We have no paid staff in the office. All the work including, but not limited to, paying bills, answering the phone, folding bulletins, writing letters, contacting someone when the copier breaks down, answering questions, preparing,


copying, folding and mailing the Woodlawn Window, filling out forms for everyone from the insurance company to the city and county, mailing a bulletin to everyone who has not been in church for a while, and so many other jobs.

Some of the people who volunteer for these jobs work every week, for some like Janie Hodgson, it is an every day job. Others, like Joanne Aerts, Joe Orts, Jane Orts, Doreen Means work at least once a week.

If you enjoy Sunday Fellowship after church you can thank another group of volunteers. These volunteers set up the tables, buy or make the food items, arrive early to start the coffee, leave church service early so they will be ready to serve the food when we arrive. After we leave Fellowship, they remain to clean up and put away for the next time. We can thank among others, Freda Melody, Wendy Siedlecki, Jane Orts, Carol Anderson and several others.

We are also grateful to those who run the audio equipment on Sunday: Kris Ragsdale, Dave Hodgson, Mike Baker and Bill Tinsley

I am sorry if I have left out anyone for there are many who pitch in when needed. Thank you.



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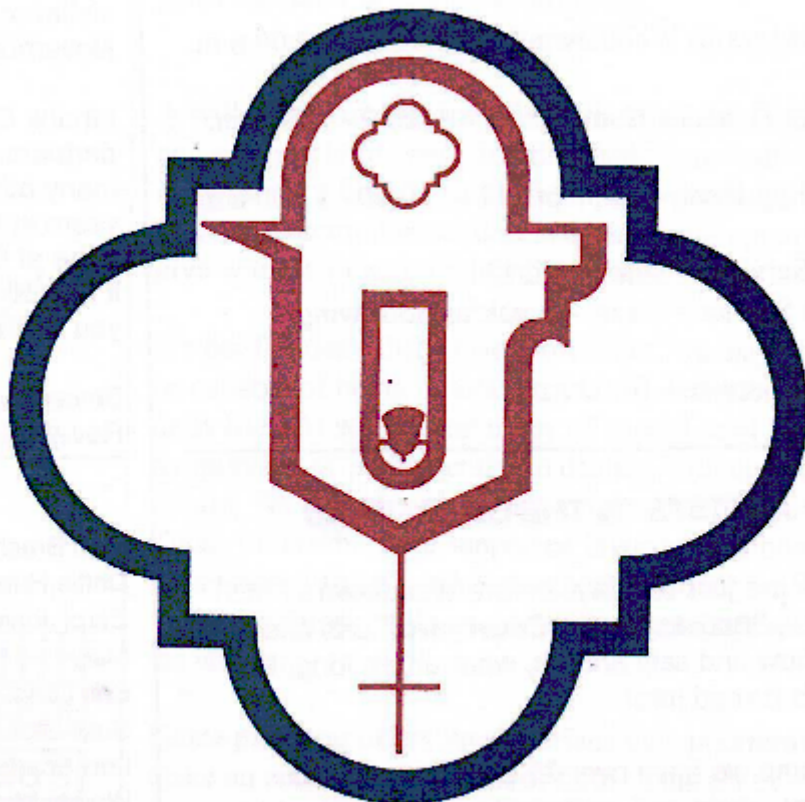
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January 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 7:00 PM -8:30 PM Eating Disorders Support Grp, Rm.B NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 4:30 PM CHOIR	3	4
5 10:00 AM WORSHIP COMMUNION	6 10:30 AM -1:00 PM Ladies Small Group, Fellowship Hall	7	8 10:00 AM -11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study, F. Hall 7:00 PM -8:30 PM Eating Disorders Support Grp, Rm.B	9 11:30 AM LUNCH BUNCH 4:30 PM CHOIR	10	11 BOOK CLUB, for time and location check w/ Bert or Wendy
12 10:00 AM WORSHIP	13 4:00 PM DEADLINE for WW NEWSLETTER	14 9:30 AM WORSHIP Cmte, Rm. A	15 10:00 AM -11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study, F. Hall 7:00 PM -8:30 PM Eating Disorders Support Grp, Rm.B	16 4:30 PM CHOIR	17 6:30 PM 3rd FRIDAY BINGO, Fellowship Hall	18
19 10:00 AM WORSHIP	20	21 9:00 AM ADMIN. Cmte, Rm. A	22 10:00 AM -11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study, F. Hall 7:00 PM -8:30 PM Eating Disorders Support Grp, Rm.B	23 4:30 PM CHOIR	24	25
26 10:00 AM WORSHIP 11:05 AM Congreg'l. Mt'g. to present 2019 Annual Report & 2020 Budget	27	28 3:30 PM SESSION, Confr. Rm. A	29 10:00 AM -11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study, F. Hall 7:00 PM -8:30 PM Eating Disorders Support Grp, Rm.B	30 4:30 PM CHOIR	31	

THE WOODLAWN WINDOW

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Bringing people to Jesus Christ, bringing Jesus Christ to people.

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