

VISIONS December 2010

When I was in middle school I was introduced to poetry through an after-school class run by one of my English teachers. I really got into it, writing many poems during that time. From time-to-time I come across some of my old poems and I think to myself, "I should really try writing poetry again sometime." But I never get around to it. Poetry is also the language that a large part of the Bible is written in. These are some of the most evocative and powerful pieces of scripture, the ones we remember the most, the ones we want to hear at important times in our lives. One poem in the Bible begins with these words: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want....." Another begins with: "For every time there is a season...."

This week we begin the season of Advent, that month of expectant waiting for the Christ Child. We know what happens at the end...Christmas comes—and we rejoice once again that Jesus is with us. I always think in this time of year about what the time of waiting must have been like for the people who God had announced the birth of the Baby Jesus to, the people who really did have to wait for all that time, and who knew that this new and amazing thing was about to happen. Maybe it is because I am a parent, but I think a lot about Mary and Joseph, what their time of waiting must have been like. Mary gives us a bit of a glimpse into what she was thinking about as she waited, and she does it in a song, in words that are some of the most poetic in the Bible:



"Oh, how my soul praises the Lord.

How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!
For he took notice of his lowly servant girl,
and from now on all generations will call me blessed.
For the Mighty One is holy,
and he has done great things for me.
He shows mercy from generation to generation
to all who fear him.
His mighty arm has done tremendous things!
He has scattered the proud and haughty ones.
He has brought down princes from their thrones
and exalted the humble.
He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away with empty hands.
He has helped his servant Israel
and remembered to be merciful.
For he made this promise to our ancestors,
to Abraham and his children forever."

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There is a lot in this season of Advent for us to get caught up in...lights, shopping, parties, celebrations, and gifts. In the end, the season is really about Jesus. The story of Jesus, of who he was, and what he has the power to do. It is more like a poem than a story with a definite ending. Poems make you dream, they get your mind wandering, and they can send your spirit to new places. Take some time in this Advent season to open up your Bible and look for some of the poetry in it. Re-read Mary's song of praise, and open up your Spirit to let the Christ Child enter in new and unexpected ways this year.

Happy Advent, Merry Christmas, Blessings in this Season to You.....

Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shannan".

Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo

["Nativity" by He Qi, a Chinese Artist]

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Our Christmas Eve Services are as follows:
5:30pm – Christmas Eve Family Service and Pageant.

9:30pm – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

DECEMBER WORSHIP

Dec 5th : **Second Sunday of Advent**

Sacrament: Communion

Scripture: Isaiah 10: 1-10 &
Matthew 3: 1-2

Sermon: “Not Everyone Liked the Baby Jesus”

Dec 12th: **Third Sunday of Advent**

Sacrament: Baptism of Samuel Newman

Scripture: Isaiah 35: 1-10 &
Matthew 11: 2-11

Sermon: “Leadership from the Underside”

Dec 19st: **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Scripture: Isaiah 7: 10-16 &
Matthew 1: 18-25

Sermon: “What is it about Babies?”

Dec 24th: **5:30pm, Family Service Christmas Eve**

Scripture: Lessons & Carols from
Isaiah & Luke & John 1: 1-14

Dec 24th: **9:30pm, Christmas Eve**

Sacrament: Communion

Scripture: Isaiah 9: 2-7 & Luke 2: 1-20 &
John 1: 1-14

Sermon: “Birth, Death, and New Life”

Dec 26th: **Henry Coates Preaching**

“IN LIEU OF CHRISTMAS CARDS”

An annual tradition at WAPC is making a donation to the church “in lieu” of sending Christmas Cards to fellow members.

The donations are used to assist our Christmas gift program. Send your donations to the church office by **December 12th**.

Givers will be listed in the church bulletin.

CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP SERVICE

All women and friends are invited to our covered dish dinner and candlelight worship service on **Tuesday, December 14th**, starting at 6:15pm.

Bring a covered dish and let the Christmas Worship set your thoughts on Christmas.

Make a reservation through Circle chairpersons or the office.

An uplifting service & fellowship will help you get in the Christmas spirit. Our own Shannan will be delivering the message.

Please come to this wonderful event sponsored by P.W.

COOKIES, COOKIES, COOKIES

We all love cookies!

PW will have their annual **Cookie Walk on Sunday, Dec. 19th** at 11am in the Parish Hall. Cans of cookies will be \$4.00 each. Think about cans of cookies as gifts.

Cookie Bakers are needed. Won't you prepare a batch of cookies 2-2 ½ inches in diameter? Label cookies for nuts, diabetic, etc. Bring your cookies to the Parish Hall before church on the 19th.

Thanks everyone for supporting PW.

VACATION

Pastor Shannan will be on vacation Dec. 27 – 31. Rob Martin at Crescent Avenue is on call for Pastoral Care emergencies. He may be reached at: 908.756.2468. The Church office will be closed December 27th - 31st.

Giving for 2010 and Pledging for 2011

This is just a friendly reminder to ask members to catch up with your 2010 contributions before the 2010 year end. Remember your contribution is tax deductible in 2010, but only if you give in 2010 as after that it will lag into 2011.

Speaking of 2011, please forward your pledge amounts to our church office if there are any outstanding. This will help greatly with the budgeting, planning and cash flow management process.

Thank you.
Respectfully yours,
Garrett Hansen

Treasurer

CIRCLE OF GRACE

Circle of Grace will meet at the home of Colleen Parlman on **Monday, Dec 6th at 6:00 PM** for Christmas Party and Dinner.

CIRCLE OF HOPE

Circle of Hope will meet on **Tuesday, Dec 7th at Giovanna's at 6pm.**

CIRCLE OF JOY

Circle of Joy will meet on **Sunday, December 12th at 5:30 pm** for a Christmas Dinner at the home of Beverly Krausse.

January 6, 2011: 7:30pm at Beverly Krausse's home, Ellen Lake hostess.

2010

CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE PROGRAM

Christmas Giving Tree gifts are due back to the Parish Hall on **December 12th**. Any questions, please contact Peggy Bunnell or Faye Steinau.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY WINTER MEETINGS

The Prayer Shawl Ministry of WAPC now has a name. We are "Hearts, Hands & Stitches." Our members feel that this name reflects who we are and what we do. The ministry continues to meet monthly. We stitch at our meetings and on our own time to create comforting shawls. Our Winter meetings are scheduled as follows:

Tuesday, January 11th, at the home of Gwyn Gronlund

Tuesday, February 8th, location to be announced

Tuesday, March 8th, at the home of Gail Smith

There will be no evening meeting in December; however some of us will be attending an Advent Knitting Retreat hosted by the Skillman group on December 11th. If interested, please contact Gwyn before Dec. 3.

All evening meetings are held from 7:15 pm to 9:30 pm.

We have a time of quiet, prayerful stitching, plan our projects, and have refreshments, of course. All are welcome to join.

You may speak to Gwyn Gronlund for more information (908) 754-1251

DID YOU KNOW!

The Bereavement Hospitality Committee was set up by Dot Fenz in 1996, to be of assistance to members of the church at the time of a death in the family. The purpose of this committee is to coordinate an informal luncheon or dessert to be served in the Parish Hall following a funeral or memorial service. Members of the committee set up, serve and cleanup in addition to supplying coffee, tea and dessert. The family of the deceased is responsible for the main course and paper products. If in need of this service or you would like to serve on this committee, please call Faye Steinau.

WOMEN'S CRAFT GROUP

Bring your scrapbooking, knitting, or other projects and come enjoy each other's company, plus get a break from your busy week. We meet on Friday evenings from 7:30 – 9:30 PM - sometimes in the church library and sometimes at someone's house. We even go on field trips occasionally! Come join us whenever you can – just call Gwyn Gronlund (908-754-1251) or Marilyn Cortright (home: 908-753-2859, cell: 908-295-4754) to find out where we will be meeting that week!

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

If you would like to help out with a new local mission, we will be partnering with Crescent Avenue on the third Thursday of each month to serve meals at the Plainfield YMCA shelter. You can be a cook (who prepares food ahead of time and drops it off), a server, a helper, or all three! This is a great way for families to participate in mission together. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Ellen (Velasquez) Billard who is the Elder co-chair of our Mission Committee at: 908-757-2929

ECO-TIPS

To Care for God's Creation

Energy: The average US home has enough air leaks to equal an open window. Sealing and insulating your home can save you up to 20% on heating and cooling costs, and upwards of 10% on your total energy bill (Energy Star). Find an experienced certified contractor, or follow Energy Star's do-it-yourself guide to sealing and insulating:

PRAYER LIST

Prayers of healing and strength for *Hope Dolan*.

Prayers of healing for *Christopher & Christin Hopp's twin girls*, born premature.

Prayers of healing and comfort for *Doug Grote* on the passing of his mother. Cards may be sent to Doug Grote 1319 Chetwynd Ave., Plainfield, NJ 07060.

Prayers of healing for *Harry Hooker*, recovering from surgery.

Prayers of healing for *Tim Cortright*.

Prayers of healing for *Bob Hildebrandt*, recovering. Cards may be sent to: 5 Easton Road, Toms River, NJ 08757

Prayers of healing for *Barbara Goellner* who is undergoing treatment for cancer.

Prayers of healing for *Joyce Veress*, Shannan and Juan's friend, who is battling breast cancer.

Prayers of healing for *George and Colleen Parliman*.

Prayers of healing for *Elwood Whitely*, at home.

Prayers of healing for the *City of Plainfield* and for the end of gun violence.

Prayers of healing for *residents of the Gulf Coast and animals of the oceans*.

Harry Krausse, at home.

Mary Wirth, Pat Dell Bene O'Mara's grandmother.

Amanda Lake, prayers of strength and courage.

Vi Krieg, at home.

Alberta Vosburgh, at Arbor Glenn Continuing Care, Rm. 636.

Helen Stagg, in Cranford Extended Care Facility.

Helen Miller, at home.

Henry Coates and Kori Phillips, Our Seminary Interns.

Edwin Estevez, Jr., our Seminarian.

FLOWERS FOR THE SANCTUARY

There are many opportunities to provide flowers for the sanctuary this fall and winter. **The 2010 Flower Chart** is posted on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. Please sign the chart for the Sunday of your choice and complete all required information on the signup sheet. It is the responsibility of the donor to contact a florist (or bring flowers from your garden)

If you do not have a florist, **Gray's**, Rte. 22, in Watchung has been a good source (908 757-0400). If you want Grays' to deliver, make sure you instruct them to do so.

Leslie Hansen is also interested in doing flower arrangements; she may be called at 908 604-0337. Leslie will place your flowers in the Sanctuary on Sunday morning when she comes for choir.

Gail Smith, PW Flower Chairperson
(908-753-1249)

CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS to DIRECTORY

Please make the following corrections/additions in the Directory:

Bunnell email - jsbunnell@verizon.net

Mullen email – Juliemullen1@verizon.net

Lake email – lakee@live.com, Tyler (Goodman)

Ellen Velasquez is now **Ellen Billard**.

Jacob and Shelby Watters – 908.296.4026

Colleen Parliman email – goldenmomcp@comcast.net

Griffin phone # - 908.377.9042

SULLIVAN, JOHN 732-218-5480
708 Cricket Lane
Woodbridge, NJ 07095
Jts1166@aol.com

NEWMAN, CRAIG
(Sam) 908-548-8039
74 Farragut Place
North Plainfield, NJ 07060
Craig_man@hotmail.com

SMITH, BIELKA & (DREW)
(Zamea) 908-422-0102
621 Parkview Avenue
North Plainfield, NJ 07060
Bielkasmith89@gmail.com

January Birthdays

Emanuele Ferri	1-Jan
Bethann Herbert	1-Jan
Gwyn Gronlund	4-Jan
Devyn Ledder	4-Jan
Meghan Ronk	6-Jan
Olugbesan Adelaja	8-Jan
Sean Slattery	9-Jan
Amanda Lake	11-Jan
Fiona Madeline Murphy	11-Jan
Nancy Van Derbeek	13-Jan
Erik Ledder	15-Jan
Louise Thul	17-Jan
Jake Watters	20-Jan
Peggy Waldman	22-Jan
Zoe Christine Peloso	22-Jan
Kriss Beck	22-Jan
Melanie Taylor	28-Jan
Christopher Ronk	31-Jan
Gabriele Gerhard	31-Jan

Worship Services & Regular Meetings

Regular Sunday Schedule:

9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
10:00 a.m. Worship
10:20 a.m. Church School
11:00 a.m. Coffee/Fellowship

Weekly

Wednesday Bible Study	10 a.m. in Lounge
Wednesday Choir Rehearsal	7:30 p.m.
Thursday Bible Study	7:30 p.m.-Lounge

Monthly

1 st Sunday	Holy Communion
1 st Sunday	FISH (Food Bank) Collection
1 st & 3 rd Sunday	Confirmation Class(12-1:30)
2 nd Sunday	Healing Service
2 nd Monday	Session meets at 7:30 p.m.
3 rd Monday	Trustee's Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
2 nd & 4 th Sunday	Youth Group 11:30-1p.m.
4 th Sunday	Men's Breakfast
4 th Monday	CHATS - 7:15 p.m. in Library

WAPC Schedule of Regular Events

Sunday Schedule:

9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
10:00 am Worship
10:20 am Church School
10:55 am Coffee/Fellowship

Monday Schedule

8:15 am Head Start
2:30 pm ASP
7:15 pm CHATS (4th Monday)
7:30 pm Boy Scouts Parish Hall

Tuesday Schedule

8:15 am Head Start
9:30 am WIC (Tuesday)
2:30 pm ASP
7-10 pm Iglesia Cristo Mi Rey Parish Hall & classroom

Wednesday Schedule

8:15 am Head Start
10:00 am Bible Study
2:30 pm ASP
7:30 pm Chancel Choir

Thursday Schedule

8:15 am Head Start
2:30 pm ASP
7:30 pm Bible Study

Friday Schedule

8:15 am Head Start
2:30 pm ASP

Saturday Schedule

7-10 pm - Iglesia Cristo Mi Rey Parish Hall & classroom
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Visions is published monthly.

The due date for articles for the *January* newsletter is: **Monday, December 20, 2010**

Pastor: *Shannan Vance-Ocampo*
Pastor Emeritus: *Brooks Smith*
Student Pastors: *Henry Coates & Kori Phillips*
Director of Music: *Sam Chapin*
WAPC After School Program – 908-755-8202
ASP Director: *James Winston*
Visions Editor: *Kathleen Golmont*

Key Cards

We have a new policy for replacement of key cards. Due to the cost of the cards we will need to collect a fee of \$10.00 for replacement of lost key cards.



Poinsettias

Once again we are beautifying our Sanctuary for Christmas worship.

All who wish to share in this way of celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior are invited to fill out this form and place it in the offering plate, or leave it in the church office.

All orders **must** be received with cash or a check.

Please make checks payable to: **PW in WAPC.**

Orders with payments must be in by Sunday, December 5th.

Your Name _____

Please write in how many of each you would like to order:

_____ Pink Poinsettias @ \$11.00 each

_____ Red Poinsettias @ \$11.00 each

_____ White Poinsettias @ \$11.00 each

_____ I will pick up my plant **after** the Christmas service at 9:30 p.m. on December 24th.
Make sure to claim the correct color plant/s you ordered. Thank you.

_____ I would like the committee to deliver my plant(s) to a member of our Church Family
at home and/or ill.

My plant is given:

_____ In Memory of _____

_____ In Honor of _____

_____ To God's Glory for _____



Merry Christmas Advent Celebration

All invited – 1 day to 100 years – everyone!

Saturday, December 5th

5:30 pm – Punch Bowl
6:15 pm - Covered Dish Dinner

Reservations a must!

Christmas Program Fun for the Kids
Free-will offering to help cover costs

Please fill out this form and place it in the offering plate or leave it in the church office by, *November 29th*.

Your Name _____ # Adults: ___ # Children: ___

Please specify what you will bring:

Main Dish _____

Salad _____

Vegetable _____



DECEMBER CHURCH SCHOOL

Join us for church school during December as we celebrate Advent and the Birth of the Baby Jesus! We have great things planned, lots of fun, and our yearly shared leadership of the 5:30pm Worship Service on Christmas Eve!



See you at church school!

	December 5	December 12	December 19	Christmas Eve December 24	December 26
Scripture & Lesson	Matthew 3: 1-12 <i>John the Baptist</i> Making collages of John the Baptist	Matthew 11: 2-11 <i>Jesus and John Meet</i> Craft Sunday	Matthew 1: 18-25 <i>The Birth of the Baby Jesus</i> Making Dioramas	Christmas Eve Worship Services @ 5:30pm and 9:30pm Children who are helping lead 5:30pm service, please be at church at 4:45pm for final practice!!!	No Church School Christmas Weekend Worship with your Family Childcare Room Open
Teacher(s)	TBA	Rachel W	TBA		
Special Information	Practice during Church School for Christmas Eve Worship Service	Please bring in a shoe-box of your child's to church for project next week	Practice During Church School for Christmas Eve Worship		

Summer 2011 Youth Group Mission Trip

June 26-July 1, 2011

Stony Point, New York

Co-led by Pastor Shannan (Watchung Avenue) and Pastor Rob (Crescent Avenue)

Join the youth of Watchung Avenue and Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Churches for our Summer 2011 Mission Trip. We'll be going to Stony Point, NY to help with the building of a new arts building for the Stony Point Center, one of only three national conference centers of the Presbyterian Church (USA). In the evenings we will have the opportunity engage in Bible Study with the Community of Living Traditions—an interfaith (Jewish, Christian, Muslim) young adult ministry group that resides at the Stony Point Center and is committed to nonviolence. Together with them we will learn about the common roots of our faith and how together we can be agents of peace in the world.

We are very excited about this trip that will offer the youth of our congregations the opportunity to do physical and spiritual work as we build up ourselves as disciples of Jesus Christ!

Cost \$600/participant

Each participant is asked to contribute \$200 towards the cost of the trip, to fully participate to help fundraise towards our trip, and our two congregations will help with the rest. *Scholarships are available—see Pastor Shannan*



Register via the WAPC office with your \$100 deposit made out to "Watchung Avenue Presbyterian Church". Note "youth mission trip" in the memo line. Please register ASAP



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(908) 322-5552

www.parkergardens.com

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