

# The Vision

The Primary Weekly Communication Instrument of  
The United Baptist Church of Northern Virginia

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*The United Baptist Church Vision is "to develop an intentional relationship with God, as in Jesus, so that our lives demonstrate the transforming effect and supreme importance of such a relationship for us, our society, and our world."*

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## Celebrate Emmanuel!

### *Christmas Cantata*

presented by the Sanctuary Choir

*Welcome to Our World:*

*Celebrating Peace on Earth*

Sunday, December 20

10:55 a.m.

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### *Christmas Eve Candlelight*

#### *Service*

Thursday, December 24, 5 pm

(Preceded by Organ/Piano Christmas Recital  
by Betty Hicks and Charles Potter beginning  
at 4:45 p.m.)

Consider bringing an offering to be given as an act of worship, even as the Magi brought their gifts to the One whose birth we celebrate.

### **Youth Delivering Christmas Cards to Raise Money for Hypothermia Program**

Once again our youth are delivering Christmas cards. A box is set up near the Mission Nook or in the church office to receive your cards for delivery. You are then asked to make a donation to the fund they are using to help provide some meals for the Hypothermia Program which operates out of the Bailey's Crossroads Homeless Shelter. See Twyla's column for more details.

### **YEAR-END GIVING**

As a reminder, by law only those gifts received (or postmarked if mailed) on or before December 31, 2009 can be credited to your Record of Contributions for 2009. Also remember that the church office will be closed on December 31. You will be mailed offering envelopes for 2010 prior to the first Sunday of the year.

## Unravelings...Wayne Yawn

I passed through a mall recently going somewhere and stopped to observe kids lined up with their parents to speak with Santa Claus. Ancient memories popped up, of me standing in such a line 60 odd years ago. I remember the excited anticipation of telling Santa exactly what I wanted; my dreams and hopes. I remember my fear of both this strange looking old man and my fear whether I had been good enough for him to grant my wishes Christmas morning. Silent to Santa but singing loudly in my ears I heard, *"You better watch out, you'd better not cry, Santa Claus is coming to town. He's making a list, checking it twice, gonna find out who's naughty or nice..."* To be honest, I think this scenario shaped my concept of prayer to God more than did the Bible, and my church did not really help me question this. After all, it is almost impossible, not to think of the Father of our Lord Jesus, also as an old man with a white beard, minus the red suit. Especially if I think of prayer as a behavior to tell God what I think I want, critically in times of urgent need.

Popularly, I think prayer is thought of as asking God for what we want. In turn, we are taught we will receive our wants depending on whether we have been "naughty or nice;" or whether God thinks it is best for us (that is, God has a predetermined plan controlling our lives, so if we don't get our requests, it is because God knew it was not best for us. But what about the times when God let bad things happen, but didn't keep them from happening?). Doesn't this concept of God turn out to make God capricious and feared (not fear as respect, but fear as afraid of and we'd better watch out) and doesn't this concept make God not particularly friendly or One we could be free to be ourselves around or even want to talk to very much.

Is this Jesus' image of God and of prayer? Did he teach try to get God to do what you want or think you need? Didn't he teach us to obey God, not to placate a Santa Claus, but obey God to be all God gifted us to be? So, the Christian life is about BEING and not placating a Santa Claus god. So, what is prayer if it is not reminding God of what we want or need. What is prayer if it is not promising or bargaining with God? I am coming to think prayer is time spent humbling myself (not my way, but God's of thinking/acting for the sake of my being and humanity's being our created potential). I think prayer is time spent listening to my life and to your life (to my gifts/powers and to yours; to my challenges and to yours—physical, economic, social, educational, spiritual, etc.)—AND listening to God "tells me" how I can use my existence or being to serve you. And in the glory that is God, in serving you, it makes me more whole/human too! Maybe prayer is looking within rather than outside me to find help with how I can serve people. And the list of persons and issues for me to serve is that which scrolls across my mind like on a TV screen. This means prayer is time to raise my consciousness of you and of myself. God in Jesus has already taught us how to be with you with servant, intention driven love of everybody so that all exist for everybody else and not just for themselves. Jesus has already taught us how to behave and not behave, that is not to placate God, but to improve existence or being. So, this **Advent**, as we have been calling it a time of spiritual house cleaning," I need to clean out my inadequate views and expectations of prayer to make room for Jesus' view to be born this Christmas. Come, not Santa Claus, but dear Jesus! Well?

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday Bible Study – 9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.  
Worship Service – 10:55 a.m.

### December

- 16 9:00 a.m. Sandwich Ministry
- 10:30 a.m. Instrumentalists' Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
- 5:45 p.m. Begin Serving Dinner
- 6:15 p.m. Youth Missions
- 6:30 p.m. Discipleship Study
- 7:35 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 17 12:00 p.m. Lunch n Life at UBC
- 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study (Conference Room)
- 2:30 p.m. Mended Hearts Ministry
- 19 10:00 a.m. Choir Dress Rehearsal
- 20 8:30 a.m. Prayer Group (Conference Room)
- 10:55 a.m. Worship – *Fourth Sunday of Advent*
- Choir Christmas Cantata
- 1:00 p.m. Youth Christmas Event
- 21 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting and Christmas Lunch
- 23 9:00 a.m. Sandwich Ministry
- 10:30 a.m. Instrumentalist's Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
- NO Evening Activities
- 24 Church Office Closed (Christmas Eve)
- 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship
- 25 Church Office Closed (Christmas Day)

## CONSOLIDATED MISSION OFFERING BEING TAKEN

*Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's Global Missions Offering* is our highlighted mission partner for the month of December. Global mission giving and the Christmas season have a long history among most of us. Consider a gift that will make a difference on this holiday season.

### RECEIVED TO DATE:

Alma Hunt Virginia Mission	\$760.25
World Hunger - Baptist World Aid	1,043.25
NorthStar Church Network Missions	638.25
CBF Global Missions Offering	828.25

**TOTAL RECEIVED TO DATE: \$3,272.00**

### YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

There are several ways you can help the Hypothermia Prevention program this winter. A sheet with ways you can help is available on the table near the Mission Nook and outside the sanctuary. Pick one up and make a difference!

## Youth News...Twyla Turner

There will be **Youth Missions** on Dec. 16 to be working on our Christmas mission project painting ornaments for children in the hospital. There will be a specific pattern to follow. Call or email Twyla by Wednesday, at noon, if you need a ride. I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

Join us this Sunday in **Youth Sunday School** as we start on this new part of our Bible study. Your input is very important. Come with ideas of topics to discuss as we look at how God's word can help us find answers to daily living.

### **CHRISTMAS CARD DELIVERY**

Help our youth to help others during this holiday season by allowing them to personally deliver your Christmas greetings to friends and family in the congregation. The Youth will once again be delivering your Christmas cards throughout the Christmas season. We will continue to deliver your greetings through the Christian season of Christmas, which ends January 6<sup>th</sup> with Epiphany. Any cards not able to be delivered in person by January 3, will be mailed. The youth accept donations for this service which they will use for their winter project.

This winter project is unlike others we have done in the past. We will not be working with one or two families, but will instead work with the **Bailey's Crossroads Hypothermia Program** which operates out of the **Baileys Crossroads Homeless Shelter**. With the money that we raise from our Christmas card delivery, we will purchase food that can be used to make breakfasts and lunches. We would also like to purchase or collect donated personal items that are needed at the shelter. These items include towels, socks, aspirin, shaving cream, umbrellas, washcloths, deodorant, pens, pencils, toothbrushes, toothpaste, razors, and combs. Our goal is to collect enough money to provide breakfast and lunch (for 50 people) twice between now and March and also to donate some of the items listed that are needed in the shelter. We have also had some adults volunteer to help with preparing dinner, so we hope to be able to help in that way as well.

Please help us to be able to take on this project by allowing us to deliver your Christmas cards to other church members during the holiday season. If you do not see the box in which to drop your cards and donations on Sunday morning, ask Twyla.

Make some plans to spend some of your Christmas break from school with some of the special activities we will have planned for the week after Christmas. If you are interested in **a day in NYC, Youth Paintball and Kid's Club** contact Twyla by email immediately for all the details!!

### **Major Dec. Student Ministry Events---**

Today-Jan. 3--Christmas Card delivery  
Date TBA—Youth Christmas Event at Meadow's  
Dec. 24—Christmas Eve Service -4:45 p.m.  
Dec. 27—Kid's Club  
Dec. 28 —a day in NYC!!  
Dec. 30— Youth Paintball

## ***Thoughts on Advent*** by Sally Norris ...

On a hot, windy summer day I attended a yard sale in our neighborhood. As I was browsing, the wind blew a rack of hanging clothes on top of a lady right opposite me. She fell flat on her back on the hard concrete driveway. I ran immediately to her aid. Her right lower leg, ankle, and foot were swollen. I hastened the people who were running the yard sale to get me a towel, an ice pack. I wrapped her injured leg, foot and ankle, and elevated her foot and leg. The swelling subsided fairly quickly as well as the pain she endured. She indicated to me she was diabetic and had become hypoglycemic. After resting awhile and feeling better, she returned to her home.

I went to pay for my purchase from the yard sale. The lady running it refused to take my money. She was so appreciative of what I had done. Anything I can do to help people at any time is part of me. After some persuasion she took the money for my purchase.

Later on that same day, I returned to the yard sale with Scott, thinking he might want to purchase something. As we were leaving the yard sale, we saw this Hoover upright vacuum cleaner. I asked, "How much is this?" She replied, "For you, there is no charge." Something I never expected.

I just knew it was the right thing, helping that injured lady, expecting nothing in return. I give from the heart.

### **NEW MEMBER ADDRESSES**

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Banks (Melisa)  
Madison, Samantha, and Shane  
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Falls Church, VA 22042  
703-532-3441

Mr. John V. Upton, Sr.  
6107 Hyacinth Drive  
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