

Central Scene

Central Presbyterian Church

Church Mission Statement

To celebrate God's love, nurture growth, share our faith, and serve the needs of others

Church Membership

Membership in Central Presbyterian Church is open to all who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. New members will be received upon baptism and profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or by letter of transfer.

Words from the Pastor

So This is Christmas...

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they set it on a lampstand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. (Matthew 5:14-15)

So this is the season again. Strings of lights are on the rooftops. Trees are up with colorful decorations. Lights are everywhere. The flashes of lights defy the deep darkness of winter. Beautiful Christmas lights bring us the sense of festivity. Without Christmas lights, our winter scenery will be a dull, cold and dreary one. One can't imagine Christmas Season without Christmas lights. Christmas is a festival of lights. It is because, in this season, we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, who came to us as the light of the world.

The Gospel according to John says that Jesus is the light: "In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness... (John 1:4-5) And Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." Jesus came to us as the true light more than two thousand years ago. So, is the world any brighter since?

We look around and we realize that we still are living in a dark world. The sinfulness of humankind knows no upper limit. Human arrogance also touches its highest. People do whatever they want. The ever-increasing hatred and violence create much sadness, sufferings, and deaths. This world is getting darker and darker. So we yearn for our Savior. And ask, "WHERE IS THE LIGHT?" But then we remember this... Jesus said, "YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THIS WORLD." Certainly, you and I cannot be the true light by ourselves. But we have Jesus, the true light of the world. On that first Christmas evening in Bethlehem, the true light came to us already. The light is in the world, in the heart of every and each Christian believer. And He promised us "I will be with you always." We cannot be the true light, but we are the bearers of the true light.

Now the question is this; "So this is Christmas. What have you done?"



Upcoming Events

Sunday December 3rd

Congregational Meeting to elect new Session Members
Moravian Love Feast at 5:30 pm

Sunday December 17th

The Children's Christmas program & fellowship at 5:30 pm.

Wednesday December 20th

The children will be Christmas caroling at Trinity Village at 5:45 p.m.. Everyone is welcome to join in.

Thursday December 21st

Blue Christmas Service at 6:30 pm for those remembering loved ones.

Sunday December 24th

Christmas Eve Evening Service at 5:30 pm

**The Youth will have 2 practices
Sunday, December the 10th at 4pm
& Saturday, December 16th at 4pm
to prepare for their program**

**We are collecting cans of cranberry sauce for Neighbor to Neighbor.
Please contribute by December 15th.**

Advent Sundays: If your family would like to light Advent candles please let Lynda Vick know.

Choir Practice Wednesdays at 6:30pm

Noon Bible Study Thursdays

Evening Bible Study Thursdays at 6:30pm

History of Hymns

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Charles Wesley

For countless Christians around the world, “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” signals the beginning of Advent.

It was first published in 1744 in Charles Wesley’s *Hymns for the Nativity of Our Lord*, a little collection so popular that it was reprinted 20 times during Wesley’s lifetime. Published in two eight-line stanzas, this hymn is now generally sung in the Advent season rather than during the nativity of Christ as the title of the collection indicates.

The Wesleys published several small collections of hymn texts that were affordable for a wider number of people. They were usually on themes associated with a particular season of the Christian year or the sacraments. These volumes offered a way to disseminate Methodist theology and enhance the personal devotional life of those in the Society. The collections also provided a corpus of songs to sing together when the Society gathered.



Charles Wesley

Interestingly enough, “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” appeared in an American Methodist hymnal in 1847, nearly 30 years before it was included in a British Methodist hymnal. Only the rare North American hymnal omits this hymn now. It is part of the fabric of our preparations for the Incarnation.

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” has the quality of a petition—a prayer that implores Christ to be among us. Imperative verbs are used six times in the two stanzas found in the hymnal: “*Come*, thou long-expected Jesus”; “From our fears and sins *release* us”; “*Let us find* our rest in thee”; “Now thy gracious kingdom *bring*”; “*Rule* in all our hearts alone”; “*Raise* us to thy glorious throne.” The cumulative effect of these petitions is a tone of supplication. Wesley succeeds in recalling the deep longing of ancient Israel for the Messiah—the Promised One.

He also draws upon another cumulative technique, the repetition of a single word for effect. In this case it is the word “born” which appears four times. Each time “born” is sung, an aspect of Jesus’ mission to a troubled world is revealed: “Born to set thy people free”; “Born thy people to deliver”; “Born a child and yet a king”; “Born to reign in us forever.”

British hymnologist J.R. Watson notes that this hymn’s “uniqueness comes from its skillful conjunction of several elements into one simple-sounding discourse. Those elements include the Old Testament promise of the Messiah, ‘Israel’s strength and consolation’ who has been long expected and who will set his people free; the New Testament story of the birth of the child who is also a king (Matthew 2:6); and the idea of the Christ-child not only as the strength and consolation of Israel, but also the hope of all the earth, a Christ who is born for the Gentiles as well as the Jews.”

While many hymns of the Advent and Christmas season recount parts of the narrative of the Christmas story,

Charles Wesley offers us a poetic theological discourse that allows us to apply the story of Christmas to our lives. Perhaps the greatest example of this is to be found in Wesley's famous Christmas hymn "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"—a hymn that moves theologically well beyond recounting the story of Christ's birth to an exploration of its meaning.

Although we live in a different time than Charles Wesley, the longings of people's hearts are just as deep. We long for security, love, relationships, meaning. To those who open themselves up to its message, this hymn identifies with that longing at the deepest levels of our existence. Where there is no longing, there can be little meaning. Hope is central to Christian experience.

And where will our longing, our hopeful waiting lead us? Where is the ultimate home of our hope? In the final line Wesley takes us there: "Raise us to thy glorious throne."

Dr. Hawn is professor of sacred music at Perkins School of Theology, SMU.

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"
Charles Wesley

1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

2 Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

MORAVIAN LOVE FEAST

Sunday December 3rd

at 5:30 p.m.



The children will be Christmas
caroling at Trinity Village
Wednesday December 20th
at 5:45 p.m..



Everyone is welcome to join in!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Sunday December 17th at 5:30 p.m.

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Thursday December 21st at 6:30 pm

for those remembering loved ones.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

will be held at 5:30 pm



Central Presbyterian Church

6300 Trinity Drive

P.O. Box 1105

Pine Bluff, AR 71613

...a congregation of the
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
through Synod of the Sun and
the Presbytery of Arkansas.

Directory

Office Number (870) 879-9074

Email: office@centralprespb.com

Website: www.centralprespb.com

Pastor:

Reverend Jai D. Kwak

pastor@centralprespb.com

Secretary:

Justine Anton

Nursery Attendants:

Laura & Zac Cosner

**Treasurer &
Clerk of the Session:**
Betty Coles

Presbyterian Women Moderator:
Kay Cromwell

SESSION

Class of 2017

Denise Mosley

Laura Cosner

Betty Coles (Clerk)

Weston Mosley

Class of 2018

Kay Cromwell

Mike Kelley

Lynda Vick

Bill VonTungeln

Standing Committee Moderators:

Betty Coles

Budget & Finance

Laura Cosner

Fellowship & Nurture

Kay Cromwell

Missions & Outreach

Mike Kelley

Building & Grounds

Denise Mosley

Education

Lynda Vick

Worship & Music

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the January issue of
Central Scene is Friday December 15,
2017. Please let us know if you would
like to continue your subscription by
emailing us at
office@centralprespb.com.

Daily Scripture Readings December 2017

1st Sunday In Advent	Isa. 64:1-9	Ps. 80:1-7, 17-19	1 Cor. 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37
2nd Sunday In Advent	Isa. 40:1-11	Ps. 85:1-2, 8-13	2 Peters 3:8-15a	Mark 1:1-8
3rd Sunday In Advent	Isa. 61:1-4	Ps. 126 or Luke 1:46b-55;	1 Thess. 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
4th Sunday In Advent	Isa. 9:2-7	Ps. 96	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)
1st Sunday After Christmas	Isa. 61:10-62:3	Ps. 148	Gal. 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40

December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Congregational Mtg. Moravian Love Feast at 5:30 pm	4	5	6 Choir Practice 6:30 pm	7 Noon Bible Study Evening Bible Study at 6:30	8	9
10 Youth practice for Program	11	12	13 Choir Practice 6:30 pm	14 Noon Bible Study Evening Bible Study at 6:30	15 Deadline for collecting canned cranberry sauce for Neighbor to Neighbor	16 Youth practice for program
17 Fellowship Luncheon The Children's Christmas program at 5:30	18	19	20 The children will be Christmas caroling at Trinity Village at 5:45 p.m.	21 Blue Christmas Service at 6:30 pm	22	23
24 Cantata 11:00am Christmas Eve Evening Service at 5:30 pm	25	26	27 Choir Practice 6:30 pm	28 Noon Bible Study Evening Bible Study at 6:30	29	30
31 Trinity Village Vespers 4:00pm						

Events:

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Fellowship Luncheon
The Children's Christmas program at 5:30 pm.

Wednesday December 20th

Children Christmas caroling at Trinity Village at 5:45pm.

Thursday December 21st

Blue Christmas Service at 6:30pm.

Sunday December 24th

Christmas Eve Evening Service at 5:30 pm

Noon Bible Study Thursdays

Evening Bible Study
Thursdays at 6:30pm

Choir Practice Wednesdays at 6:30pm

A B C D E G H I J L
 N O P R S T V W Y

I bring you _____
 of great _____ that will be for

_____ Today in the
 town of David _____ has

been _____ to you; he is

_____ the _____



Central Presbyterian Church

P.O Box 1105

Pine Bluff, AR 71603

Happy Birthday

01 Kodee Vick

04 Mary Light

06 Lan Kelley

11 Shelia Horn

11 Bernice Collins

17 Denise Mosley

28 Chris Walker

30 Rich Cromwell

Anniversaries

01 Sheila and Jimmy Horn

28 Jane and David Judkins

28 Laura and Rick Pierce