

# Good Tidings

The Newsletter of Brick Presbyterian Church

December 2014

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## Wilderness Winter Nights and a Reassuring Light -- Pastor Doug's Pondering

December skies are dark and grey with short days and bone chilling cold nights  
Reflects a world where voices want their say, and nations engage in war and fights  
People like ISIS threaten, torment and kill others in God's name they claim  
Yet the Lord of the Universe in heaven weeps as they bring about religious shame  
God's children race about the earth with stress filled appointments on calendars crammed  
Multi-tasking as they hurry up and wait in bumper to bumper traffic in gridlock jammed  
Souls sit in doctor's offices wonder and in anxiety wait  
Glancing at magazines with ads the hearts desires to bait  
While others in the stillness of a home that seems to be missing someone sit alone  
Longing are they for some reassurance, a call, some sign that gives inner peace and sets for them a new tone  
Some folk are racing here and there in a barren desert, thinking "If I keep busy, I won't have to deal with what makes me moan"

Yet in that wilderness of longing and secret pain a voice cries out to those wandering about and hiding beneath shells of stone

The calls to souls oppressed by greed, loneliness and despair which seem so very strong  
The voice calls those who've had more than enough all that's tragically gone so very wrong  
The voice says to the faithful remnant; do not lose faith or hope  
There will come One whose strength will help you more than cope  
Make haste O faithful remnant, your call is to now go and prepare the Holy One's way  
Call forth justice, feed the hungry, befriend the lonely, lift the burden of a neighbor is His way.  
Show forth love that's greater than hate  
And offer forgiveness before it's too late  
Declare a shining Light and great Hope that pierces the dark void of winter's night  
Point to that Hope that descends upon us like an inviting and warm radiant Light

Open the human heart so the Light can enter, like it once did an ancient stable  
It comes inviting the humble in spirit to commune at Great and Holy Table  
A table where none are made to feel disgrace  
Nor are any made to feel out of place

The Light descends upon us all and continues for those of eyes of faith to shine  
In all the wilderness places where one may wander and find longing humankind  
The light comes with unassuming love that's gracious and mild  
It comes inviting those who are as vulnerable, as Mary's Holy Child  
Yes, it's humble, yet strong as Joseph's Son  
It comes offering a grace to make us all one

It comes in a love that casts out fear and overcomes all in life we may dread  
With a power that can raise us from the dead  
This Light comes into the brokenness so our wounds may heal  
Absolving sin so in Christ our true humanity may now reveal  
That great Light of lights comes to shine upon our world's dreary darkness  
With love it scatters the sinful forces of apathy, hatred and harshness

As angelic host triumphantly hail the one born King of kings  
Let us all join the heavenly choirs to forever joyfully sing  
That the Light of the world born in a stable because there was no room at Bethlehem's Inn  
May come anew and finding the doors of our mortal souls wide open to offer room within

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## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

We invite you to celebrate Christ's birth with us on December 24<sup>th</sup> at Brick Presbyterian Church. Our Christmas Eve services are a wonderful way to worship the One born the King of kings. So come and bring family and friends for a special time of worship.

**5:00 p.m.** Christmas Eve service will feature our Praise Team and Jr. Praise Team Christmas music and kids.

**8:00 p.m.** Christmas Eve service will feature more traditional style music with our choir and soloist.

Both Services will feature the lighting of candles at the end of the service.

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## Worship Schedule

There will be only one Worship Service on December 28, 2014 which will be held at 10:00 A.M. Please come and bring the children and enjoy a service praising our Lord and thanking Him for the gift of His Son.

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## CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS



The envelopes for the flower donations can be found in the pews starting on **November 23, 2014** and remaining until **December 14, 2014**. If you would like to donate a poinsettia for Christmas, please do so during this time frame to ensure inclusion in the bulletin. Also, please print clearly on the envelope.

Thank You for your cooperation.



## SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>  
4:00 pm

Christmas Program / Festival  
See bulletin for more details!

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### Junior High Youth Group



The Youth Groups would like to thank the congregation for their generous donations and support with our “Earn Your Wings Project” that provides underprivileged children with Christmas presents.

We will also be handing out Christmas Ornaments with every donation on December 6<sup>th</sup> during the Christmas Festival and on December 7<sup>th</sup> in between services.

The Shop and Lock will be on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm and pick up will be December 13<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am. We look forward to seeing everyone who has participated in the Youth Group and as always it will be a very eventful evening.

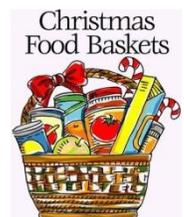
The Youth Groups will be Christmas Caroling at the Geraldine Thompson Nursing Center. Time and date to be announced.

*“Entering the house where the baby and Mary his mother were, they threw themselves down before him, worshipping. Then they opened their presents and gave him gold, frankincense and myrrh.” Matthew 2: 11*

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### DEACONS

The Board of Deacons would like to thank everyone for their continued support of our food pantry. As the holidays are rapidly approaching, we will soon be making food baskets to help our community. The generosity of our congregation is a blessing to so many.



### Fundraising News



1. **Bon Ton Community Days:** Thank you to everyone who came out to Bon Ton and supported our coupon book fundraiser! Once again because of your and Bon Ton’s support we raised much needed additional funds to help our church over the holiday season.
2. **Fall Craft Show: November 22<sup>nd</sup>.** Thank you for coming out to our second Craft Show. We love having this fundraiser and seeing you and the many new friends that come in to our Family Life Center throughout the event. We look forward to more fundraisers like this!
3. **Food For Thought Cards:** Stop by the Narthex and see Tim selling Food For Thought greeting cards to support our food pantry. Please come and check out our new holiday cards including Christmas and Hanukkah. All proceeds of this fundraiser will go to supporting our Deacons food pantry
4. **Stream Energy:** As always, see Patrice outside the FLC to sign up for Stream Energy through Brick Presbyterian Church. Whether you sign up for electric or gas or both, Stream will



make a generous monthly donation to our church as well as giving you additional savings on your energy bill! Just bring your energy bills to Patrice to see if we can help you help us!

Thank you for all your support over the past year. We hope you've enjoyed these events that help us raise extra funds to sustain the good things our church does in the community. Please keep an eye open for upcoming events in the New Year. As always we'll post information in the bulletin and on the website as soon as we have them scheduled. See you in 2015!

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**Holiday Health & Safety Tips** – *The holidays offer a perfect opportunity for enjoying loved ones, celebrating life, being grateful, & reflecting on what's important. They are also a time to appreciate the gift of health. Support health & safety for yourself & others by following these holiday tips!*

**Wash your hands often.** Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Wash your hands with soap and clean running water, rubbing them for at least 20 seconds. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands

**Stay warm.** Cold temperatures can cause serious health problems, especially in infants and older adults. Stay dry, and dress warmly in several layers of loose-fitting, tightly woven clothing

**Manage stress.** The holidays don't need to take a toll on your health and pocketbook. Keep your commitments and spending in check. Balance work, home, and play. Get support from family and friends. Keep a relaxed and positive outlook. Make sure to get proper sleep.

**Travel safely.** Whether you're traveling across town or around the world, help ensure your trip is safe. Don't drink and drive, and don't let someone else drink and drive. Wear a seat belt every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle. Always buckle your child in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt appropriate for his/her height, weight, and age.

**Be smoke-free.** Avoid smoking and breathing other people's smoke. If you smoke, quit today! Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or talk to your health care provider for help.

**Get check-ups and vaccinations.** Exams and screenings can help find potential problems early, when the chances for treatment and cure are often better. Vaccinations help prevent diseases and save lives. Schedule a visit with your health care provider for a yearly exam. Ask what vaccinations and tests you should get based on your age, lifestyle, travel plans, medical history, and family health history.

**Watch the kids.** Children are at high risk for injuries. Keep a watchful eye on your kids when they're eating and playing. Keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items, choking hazards (like coins and hard candy), and other objects out of kids' reach. Learn how to provide early treatment for children who are choking. Make sure toys are used properly. Develop rules about acceptable and safe behaviors, including using electronic media.

**Prevent injuries.** Injuries can happen anywhere, and some often occur around the holidays. Use step stools instead of climbing on furniture when hanging decorations. Leave the fireworks to the professionals. Wear a helmet when riding a bicycle or skateboarding to help prevent head injuries. Keep vaccinations up to date.

**Handle and prepare food safely.** As you prepare holiday meals, keep yourself and your family safe from food-related illness. Wash hands and surfaces often. Avoid cross-contamination by keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs (including their juices) away from ready-to-eat foods and eating surfaces. Cook foods to the proper temperature. Refrigerate promptly. Do not leave perishable foods out for more than two hours.

**Eat healthy, and be active.** With balance and moderation, you can enjoy the holidays the healthy way. Choose fresh fruit as a festive and sweet substitute for candy. Limit fats, salt, and sugary foods. Find fun ways to stay active, such as dancing to your favorite holiday music. Be active for at least 2½ hours a week. Help kids and teens be active for at least 1 hour a day.