

Kirk News

Dec 2011–Jan 2012 • Issue 219

Kirk in the Hills is a Christ-centered Community Called to Deepen Faith, Serve Others, and Foster Fellowship



Kirk in the Hills

Sunday Worship

9:00 a.m. Family Service

11:00 a.m. Traditional Service

Christian Education Hour

10:00 a.m. Adults and Children

In This Issue:

Worship Schedule	2
Dr. Pritchard's Column	3
Music News	4
Children, Youth & Families	6
Congregation News	8
Small Groups	10
Kirk Seniors	11
Parish Register	11
Women of the Kirk	12
Men of the Kirk	12
Our Faith in Action	14
Outreach & Mission	15



Special Christmas and New Year Services

Since Christmas Day falls on a Sunday this year, the Kirk's worship schedule offers plenty of opportunities to celebrate the holiday in worship and make it a 'holy day.'

Christmas Eve Services

11:00 a.m. – Service for Young Families with Very Young Children

4:00 p.m. – Family Service for Younger Families

6:00 p.m. – Family Service

8:30 & 11:00 p.m. – Holy Night Services

Christmas Day Family Worship Service

Sunday, December 25, 11:00 a.m. in the sanctuary (*please note, only one service*)

No Sunday School

New Year's Day Family Worship Service

Sunday, January 1, 2012, 11:00 a.m. in the sanctuary (*There will be one service with communion in the sanctuary. No Chapel Communion today.*)

No Sunday School

Inspiring Music to Grace the Season

Sunday, December 4 at 7:30 p.m. – Advent Chancel Choir Concert presented by the Chancel Choir and Orchestra

Sunday, December 11 at 6:00 p.m. – Carol Festival presented by the Youth Choirs

Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m. – Service of Lessons and Carols presented by the Chancel Choir

All of these music events take place in the sanctuary. For more details on all music events, please see pages 4-5.





Worship Schedule

Sunday Worship

Family service in the sanctuary at 9:00 a.m.;
traditional service at 11:00 a.m.

December 4	Mark 1:1-8	Rev. Carol Tate
December 11	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	Rev. Tres Adams
December 18	Luke 1:26-28	Dr. Keith Provost
December 25	11:00 a.m. service only (no Sunday School)	
January 1	11:00 a.m. service only (no Chapel Communion today; no Sunday School)	

Cedarholm Chapel Communion

*A brief service of Holy Communion, with meditation, at 8:00 a.m.
on the first Sunday of every month*

December 4	
January 1	no service

Taizé Services

*A brief service of prayers, song, scripture and silence held in the beauty of
Melrose Chapel on the first and third Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m.*

December 7
December 21
January 4
January 18

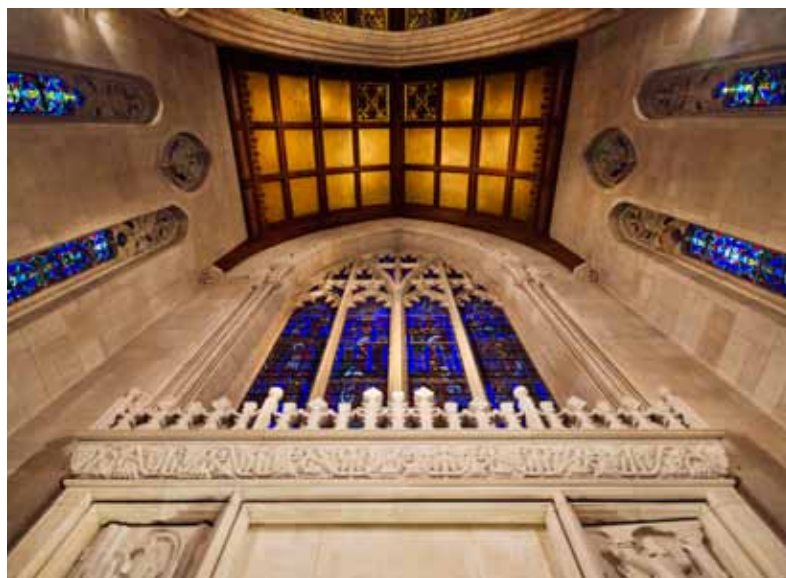


Photo courtesy of Hart Hollman, Detroit Symphony Orchestra

Service of Comfort and Hope – Wednesday, December 14 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

We are all aware of the joy the holidays can bring. However, for many people the holidays can be a difficult time. As a church we should make sure that in this season of joy we don't forget those for whom it is a less than joyful time.

We offer a worship service of comfort and hope for those who are hurting, not only from a loved one's death, but also for those who have experienced loss through divorce, depression or any one of life's many other challenges.

Annual Meeting and Reports to the Congregation

The Annual Business Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation will be held in the sanctuary on Sunday, January 8 at 9:50 a.m. following an abbreviated first service. Nominations will be made for service as Deacon, Elder, and Trustee for the class of 2014 and the pastors' terms of call will be presented for approval.

On Sunday, January 22, the new officers will be installed: Deacons at the 9:00 a.m. service, Elders and Trustees at the 11:00 a.m. service.

On Wednesday, February 1, reports of the life and work of the congregation will be presented at the annual Celebration of Kirk Life congregational gathering. Dinner will be served that night and reservations will be required by calling (248) 626-2515, ext. 334 by Monday, January 23.

Look for more information on these events on the Kirk website and also in the @ The Kirk weekly publication.

Reminder: Year-End Contributions

Any year-end contributions must be received in our office by the close of business on Friday, December 30 or, if mailed, must be postmarked by December 31, 2011 to be eligible for 2011 tax credit. We are grateful for the contributions received to date in 2011!



Sundays and Other Days

By Dr. Norman M. Pritchard, Pastor

Busy Sundays

Lots of people are asking how the new Passport to Faith format is working on Sunday mornings, and the answer is, "Quite well."

The new format was introduced with two main purposes in mind. One was to give children experience and understanding of worship and to give additional time to Sunday School classes. We believe that it is vitally important that the Kirk resource our Sunday School ministry to children and families, especially given that Sunday School is now likely to be the only major place outside of the home where children are exposed to Christian teaching and values. If we do not nurture our children in the Christian faith, we will have failed them seriously. It is tremendously important, therefore, to do all we can to enhance our Sunday School ministry.

The other purpose was to offer a meaningful opportunity for adult Christian education on a Sunday morning to complement the 'Wonderful Wednesdays' program that Rev. Carol Tate is leading so engagingly. We were fortunate indeed to be able to offer a program of seven different classes, over a range of interesting topics, for adult enrichment.

There is a lot of enthusiasm around the adult classes, even though calendar conflicts have kept some members absent when they would have preferred to be present; in the meantime Sunday School classes are going well. That is not the case for every family and we want to do what we can to make things work for as many people as possible.

That is one reason why we are extending the class that we have been offering Grade 3 students, 'Passport to Worship' and opening it to older students in Grades 4 and possibly even 5 where parents feel their children are not ready to participate in worship. Initially this class will offer an introduction to the wonderful new Bibles we were able to present to students on November 6, and this will be followed by a season program for advent.

I said a few Sundays ago that no sane pastors would try to change the whole pattern of a congregation's Sunday mornings in four weeks. Responsible planning, communication and preparation take much longer than that. But, after taking into account vacation schedules and Carol Tate's arrival the pastors only had four weeks of planning time and when one of my colleagues said, after several hours of grappling with choices and formats, "If we believe this is what God is calling us to do, should we not do it?" the issue was settled.

We readily acknowledge that sometimes the Holy Spirit gets blamed for things that the Spirit had nothing to do with, and only time will tell if we were right to believe that the Spirit was leading us in this way. But we certainly believe that God wants Christians to deepen and develop their faith and knowledge. God wants children to be nurtured in worship and the faith of the church; and we will continue to pray for God to lead us in ways that will make this happen effectively.

Beautiful Sundays

We are now approaching the wonderful season of Advent and Christmas and, in addition to our Sunday worship, there are special musical events to express the wonder of the season.

On Sunday, November 27, we mark the first Sunday of Advent with an all-age Advent program, heralding the season that leads to Christmas. The Advent season is also marked by some wonderful seasonal music, including the Christmas section of Handel's *Messiah* on Sunday, December 4 at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, December 11 sees the youth Carol Festival at 6:00 p.m. and the Service of Lessons and Carols follows on Sunday, December 18 in the candlelit sanctuary at 4:00 p.m. Full information on these events is available from the Kirk Office.

Beautiful weekdays too!

During this season the Kirk is busy with our caring ministries, offering to share the love of the season through the Angel Tree project of the Children, Youth and Families Ministry, the Adopt-a-Family project that many groups are supporting, and the youth choirs' Christmas caroling. We are grateful that so many Kirk members take time in this busy season to remember others and to share the joy of Christmas with them.

And through our worship and service, may the joy and blessings of Christmas fill your hearts!





Music

Kirk Chancel Choir Christmas Compact Disc

Sing Choirs of Angels, our Chancel Choir's compact disc, is available from the Music Office. Released last December, it makes an excellent Christmas gift. The price of the disc is \$15.



The disc presents a wide variety of seasonal favorites, including "Carol of the Bells," "In the Bleak Midwinter" (featuring soloist Judith Zorn), "Mary Had a Baby" (featuring soloist Nicole Greenidge), "So Blest a Sight" (featuring soloist Peiyi Wang), and other choral works. Also included on the disc are selections for organ, harp and violin performed by Kirk organist Glenn Miller, harpist Patricia Masri-Fletcher (Principal Harpist of the Detroit Symphony) and violinist Laura Rowe (Associate Concertmaster of the Detroit Symphony), and carillon selections performed by Kirk Carillonneur, Dennis Curry.



Advent Chancel Choir Concert – Sunday, December 4 at 7:30 p.m.

The Chancel Choir and orchestra present its annual Advent concert on Sunday, December 4 at 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. The concert includes part I of Handel's popular oratorio, "Messiah," and a variety of Christmas selections sung by the choir, with carols sung by all.

Tickets are \$12 general admission, \$10 for seniors and \$5 for students, and are available from the Music Office or at the door. All are welcome; come and hear our acclaimed Chancel Choir as they help usher in the holiday season!

Advent and Christmas Carol Festival Presented by Our Youth Choirs – Sunday, December 11 at 6:00 p.m.



On Sunday, December 11 at 6:00 p.m. the Senior, Intermediate, Treble Boys', Junior Girls', and Young Children's Choirs will present their annual Advent and Christmas Carol Festival in the sanctuary. There is no admission charge, and all are welcome to attend. Following the Festival a holiday reception will be held in Heritage Hall honoring our choristers.

The Festival is an annual highlight of their work and ministry, and celebrates the meaning of the season through the presentation of a variety of music. Each year new selections are presented alongside favorites which have become a tradition for our choirs. The Festival opens with "Once in Royal David's City" and progresses through carols and anthems from many countries, culminating with "O Come, All Ye Faithful." Come support our choristers as they celebrate the holiday season!

Service of Lessons and Carols – Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m.

The annual Service of Lessons and Carols, an oasis of beauty and peace during the frenzy of the holiday season, will be presented by the Chancel Choir on Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m. (a candlelit service in the sanctuary).

The service presents readings from Holy Scripture which trace the prophesy and birth of Christ, read by the clergy representatives from various congregational organizations and governing bodies, along with carols sung by the congregation and choral music which ranges from chant to spirituals, including works by John Rutter.

If you are looking for a worship opportunity in addition to the traditional Christmas Eve schedule or if you are going to be out of town on Christmas Eve but desire a chance to worship at the Kirk during the holiday season, the Service of Lessons and Carols is for you. This also is an excellent opportunity for members of the Kirk to reach out to their friends and invite them to experience the Kirk during this most beautiful time of the year. A free will offering will be received. All are welcome to attend.



Christmas Caroling



Each year the Youth Choirs go Christmas caroling as part of their service to the congregation and community. This year our choristers will go caroling the afternoon of Monday, December 19. The choristers visit the homes of members who are homebound as well as the Maple Village retirement community. The pastors assist in planning the itinerary, along with recommendations from Stephen Ministers and members of the congregation, though this is sometimes a challenge, given the limits of time and geography. If you have a loved one who is unable to come to church but would enjoy having carolers call on them, let the music office know and we'll do our best in trying to include them on this year's itinerary.

Christmas Eve Music

One of the highlights of the church year is Christmas Eve, and with all of the various worship opportunities offered at the Kirk the choirs are kept very busy as follows:

At the 4:00 p.m. Family Service the Young Children's Choir will be singing, with favorite carols sung by all.

At the 6:00 p.m. Family Service music is provided by the Senior, Intermediate and Treble Boys' and Girls' Choirs and the Youth Strings Ensemble. Their offerings will include selections sung during the prelude as well as anthems and carols during the service. Favorite carols are also included in this service for all to sing.

At the 8:30 and 11:00 p.m. Holy Night Services music will be provided by the Chancel Choir and also Patricia Masri-Fletcher, principal harpist of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. The prelude to each service begins 45 minutes prior; great and beloved choral music abounds, featuring various soloists from the choir, along with some new works and congregational carols.

Cedarholm Chapel Organ Renovation Completed!



The Cedarholm Chapel organ renovation project has been completed, with the scope of the project including replacement of worn-out mechanisms and the addition of four stops which greatly expands its versatility, particularly with music of a quiet nature. This project was made possible by a generous donation from the daughter of the organ's original donors. Watch for announcements regarding an event to rededicate the instrument.

Detroit Symphony Orchestra Neighborhood Concert Series



Photo courtesy of Hart Hollman, Detroit Symphony Orchestra

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra Neighborhood Concert Series includes four Saturday evening concerts at the Kirk: January 7 (with Leonard Slatkin conducting), February 4, March 10 and April 28. Details about the entire series including tickets are available in the literature racks or by visiting www.dso.org/neighborhood.

Looking Ahead –

Sunday, March 4 at 3:00 p.m. – *Conspirare*, the five-time Grammy nominated chamber choir of which Kirk Director of Music Glenn Miller and Chancel Choir soloist Nicole Greenidge are members, performs in concert in the sanctuary.

Conspirare
we sing life™
Craig Hella Johnson
& Company of Voices



Children, Youth & Families

Hope and Anticipation



By Rev. Tres Adams

The season of hope and anticipation is upon us. Through Advent, we anticipate Christmas and celebrate the hope we have through the birth of Christ. As January rolls in, we anticipate God's continued blessings into the New Year and hope in wonderful things to come.

Advent 2011: With the busyness of the Advent/Christmas season all around us, be sure to take the time to stop and reflect on God's love for you and his children. There are many of God's children in need, both among us and in the surrounding areas, to whom we are called to reach out and with whom we can share God's love. Be sure to count the many blessings you have received and make the effort to thank God for them. Make this Christmas all about more: give more, smile more, hug more, love more, do more in Christ's name!

New Year 2012: A new year brings a new calendar and a new opportunity for you to put God on your calendar first! Remember that as you look to the days, weeks, and months ahead, before you fill your schedule with the demands of the world, write God on the calendar first. Begin with each Sunday morning – then add your leadership meetings and the youth group meetings. Don't forget about choir rehearsals and Wonderful Wednesdays! We also have a Senior High mission trip in June, a Mid High mission trip in July, and Vacation Bible School in August. What a year ahead! When you let God run your schedule, you open up your daily life to follow the wonderful and blessed path that he has laid out for you! Put God first!

See you on Sunday!



Vacation Bible School

By Kelly Shriver

Vacation Bible School...Before Christmas?!

The tree is trimmed, the gifts are wrapped, the Thanksgiving turkey has been eaten...but the



Christmas ham is still ahead. Christmas is in full swing, which means, of course, it's time to start talking about Vacation Bible School. In the summer of 2012 we will travel through the Ishtar Gate, past the Ziggurats, and into the Hanging Gardens of Babylon with Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to learn that we can trust God with anything. Be sure to block off August 13-17, 2012 for an adventure in Babylon! Registration will begin in April 2012.

This year, our goal is to welcome 300 children to Babylon. In order to provide a fun, hospitable, and safe environment for so many children, we will need at least 150 adult volunteers and youth helpers. Our volunteers do everything: teaching, helping with crafts, decorating the Kirk, keeping up with all the behind-the-scenes paperwork, and so much more. There really is a role for everyone! If you are interested in helping out this year, we would love to talk with you about the ways you are most excited about being involved: please contact Kelly Shriver, kshriver@kirkinthehills.org or (248) 626-2515, ext. 124.

In the months ahead there will be more information and plenty more surprises...so keep reading the *Kirk News*, checking our website, and browsing @ *The Kirk* for all the most recent updates!





Youth Groups



By Kevin Krawczyk

How exciting to have the opportunity to worship our Lord Jesus Christ and celebrate his birth! That's what fall and winter mean to me. A time of preparation and thanks for the Christian believers all over the world who humbly sing praises to our God and Father in heaven!

During this awesome season of joy, our youth groups will be anxiously looking ahead to the summer months, specifically the youth mission trips. Our Mid Highs will be traveling to Pittsburgh in July, where they will be engaging with a ministry known as The Pittsburgh Project, a youth mission camp the Kirk has been involved with for years. Through the Holy Spirit, their hearts will change lives and their hands will repair homes for those in need.

Puerto Rico is where the Senior Highs will be traveling this year. This life-changing experience will not only bless our youth, but will touch the hearts of families in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ.

To support these ministries, several fundraisers will take place here at the Kirk. By your prayers, physical presence and financial support, our youth will have the opportunity to pass your blessing along to others in the form of mission and outreach. Make sure to keep these amazing groups in your hearts and prayers as we prepare to go out to participate in Christ's ministry to the world.

Kirk in the Hills Preschool

*Thank you, God, for Jesus,
Who was born on Christmas day.
He came to teach us how to love,
To live, to give, to pray. Amen*

This beautiful prayer and our monthly Bible verse, Matthew 2:1 – *Jesus is born*, will be the focus of the Kirk Preschool during the month of December when the children learn about the birth of God's glorious Son, Jesus. Highlights of this festive month will include home-made Christmas gifts and art projects, a trip to the sanctuary to hear the Christmas story told by Rev. Tres Adams, then caroling with Kirk Music Director, Glenn Miller. We will conclude the holiday by celebrating with our preschool families on December 15 and 16 during our annual Christmas programs.

Once the New Year has begun we will ring in the winter months with the Bible verse, John 1:3 – *God made all things*, and begin to explore the snowy world outside. The children will be sledding on the playground hill (weather permitting) and discover the hibernation habits of winter animals. Even our youngest learners in the Parent/Tot class will be engaged creating sparkly winter snowflakes at the art table.

God has given us his greatest gift! Come and see how the children celebrate!

Enrolling for Fall 2012

The Kirk Preschool has been offering a Christian-based preschool program to families for more than 25 years. Our mission is to provide a program that is rooted and grounded in God's love, and one that encourages each child to develop a positive self-image, a joy of learning and respect for themselves and others. We provide a positive foundation for learning by offering a curriculum that encourages the intellectual, social/emotional, spiritual, and physical development of each child. Music and science enrichment, storytelling, field trips, special visitors and family activities provide additional learning experiences. Our curriculum also includes Handwriting Without Tears® writing readiness activities. Extended day options include Lunch and Learn, which offers children enrichment opportunities in a small group setting, and a Spanish extended-day program with Yak Academy.

The Jr. Kindergarten class, geared towards young five-year-olds waiting a year to enter kindergarten, meets five mornings a week. In addition to our Jr. Kindergarten, the preschool offers Parent/Tot classes, 2- or 3-day a week classes for three-year-olds, and 3- or 4-day a week classes for 4-year-olds.

The preschool is currently enrolling children for the 2012-2013 school year. Kirk members have priority through January 15, when registration will be opened to the public. Please call Pauline Jackson, Preschool Director, at (248) 626-2515, ext. 132 for more information or to schedule a tour.





Congregation News

Stewardship Update

Consecration Sunday

The response to Consecration Sunday in October has been positive, but there are still many who have not responded with an Estimate of Giving for 2012. There is still time – stewardship is a year-long act of worship, whether you contribute weekly or only one time a year. Won't you please join your fellow Kirk members in the Consecration Sunday celebration by submitting your giving intention? You may do so by completing an Estimate of Giving Card that you have received in the mail, by calling the Kirk Finance Office at (248) 626-2515, ext. 115, or by using the secure online pledge form. You'll find the link for the online pledge form on the home page of the Kirk website under Membership and Giving.

Legacy Giving

If it has been a while since you looked at the Membership and Giving tab on the Kirk's website, you should plan a return visit: you will find something new and interesting. The FDOC (Financial Development Oversight Committee) has been working to create a "Book of Needs" (wish list) which contains ideas for members and friends who may like to contribute something extra. The list is still being developed and will be updated periodically; you may even have an idea or two to add to it!



The Kirk relies on the gifts of many – time, talent and treasure – to support our present ministries and sustain our work well in the future. The FDOC has been working to raise awareness about Legacy Giving with information on the Kirk's website, articles in Kirk publications, direct mailings, and events such as the recent Mom-to-Mom sale, and the upcoming May 2012 Legacy Benefit Dinner and Auction, *Broadway on the Lake*. We hope you will watch for information about the many aspects of Legacy and Special Giving. If you would like more information, please contact the Kirk's Business Manager, Jayne Zellers.

Broadway on the Lake – Save the Date

The Legacy Giving Auction Committee hopes you will join us on Saturday, May 5, 2012 for *Broadway on the Lake* – an evening of fine dining (with chef and member Jack Leone cooking) with a performance of Broadway show tunes by the Michigan Opera Theatre. In addition, the event will feature a live and silent auction to benefit the Kirk's Current Ministries Endowment Fund.

We need your help – we are looking for items to include in the auction. Perhaps you have a vacation home that you would be willing to donate for a week or some type of special service to offer. Theatre tickets, airline tickets, and gift certificates all make great auction items. We are already receiving items so we encourage you to make your donations now even though the auction is not until May.

If you have anything to donate, questions, or would like to volunteer to help with the event, please contact Sydrena Epstein at (248) 646-1910 or sydrena@comcast.net.

Stephen Ministry



Stephen Ministers care for people who are...

- grieving
- in need of long-term care
- experiencing losses as they age
- going through a crisis of childbirth
- the family and friends of people in crisis
- in a crisis
- dying
- hospitalized
- divorcing

Stephen Ministers.....

- listen
- pray
- maintain confidentiality
- explore feelings
- share Christ's love

Stephen Ministers are trained members of our church who will confidentially meet with you on a regular basis (usually once a week for about an hour). If you would like more information about Stephen Ministry or would like to request a Stephen Minister for yourself, please call Brian Sliwinski at (248) 495-2346 or Jennifer Morris at (248) 626-2515 ext. 117.

Imagine the possibilities when we love by listening!

The Stephen Ministry Network held its annual Seminar Retreat on Saturday, October 29 at Woodside Bible Church in Troy. Over 200 local Stephen Ministers and Stephen Leaders attended, representing many church communities. Attending from the Kirk were: Laura Ambrose, Marta Steffes, Cathy Payton, Ann Larkin and Julie Wright.

This year's retreat, *The Love of God in the Listener's Ear* sought to build and refine our abilities to *actively* listen. As we know, listening is a huge factor in effective caregiving and this year's presenter, Judy Schlueter, is a veteran at this skill. Mrs. Schlueter is the Manager of Spiritual Care Services at DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital in Detroit.

We thank God for our dedicated, faithful team of Stephen Ministers and we pray that God will continue to inspire and encourage them in their service among us.



Adult Education Hour – Sundays During Advent

By Rev. Carol Tate

Join us for the season of Advent in Adult Christian Education, November 27, December 4, 11, and 18. Advent is the season of waiting ... waiting for the coming of the Messiah with the prophets, waiting with Zechariah and Elizabeth, waiting with Mary, waiting with Simeon and with Anna. Henry Nouwen speaks of a spirituality of waiting – how we learn to be attentive to God’s presence in our lives. As we wait to celebrate the Incarnation, let us wait together during the Adult Education Hour with God’s Word in scripture, music, and art.

November 27 – Adults will gather in the sanctuary for a brief time of learning about the Jesse Tree and of viewing several of the windows in the Kirk that this Advent symbol utilizes. We will then adjourn to Heritage Hall for some hot chocolate and Advent cookies. Adults and senior highs will work together on a very attractive ornament that each Kirk family will be delighted to hang on their Christmas tree.



December 4 – There is a wonderful body of Advent hymns that offer fresh insights into the season. Members of the choir will support our learning these great new hymns. You will be surprised about the several meanings of Advent that will emerge – plus, you will love some of these hymns!

December 11 – Join us for a little Advent music from the choir that celebrates this time of waiting for God to come among us as Emmanuel, God-with-us. We will explore the texts and music and be uplifted by the beauty of the offerings by our Kirk musicians.

December 18 – The Fourth Sunday of Advent is liturgically the Sunday when we remember the courage and joy of Mary. Come for this exploration of Mary as we dig into the tradition that surrounds her, the song she sang in scripture, and how she has been presented in music and in art. From this Sunday, we will be ready to move into the next weekend of the joyful celebration of the Incarnation during the Christmas Eve services and the one service on December 25, the Nativity of Our Lord.

Passport 2 Faith: 2 Hours Together

Adult Education Hour

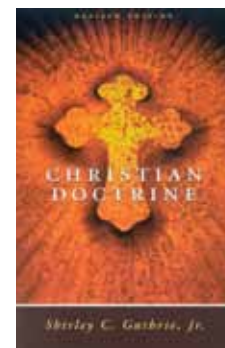
2012 will begin with a few new offerings in Adult Education. We’ll also continue with our tried-and-true favorites. Resolve to build your faith and Christian commitment by attending one of our many adult offerings. There’s something for everyone! Detailed brochures can be found in the information racks throughout the church or can be downloaded from the website at kirkinthehills.org.

Looking Ahead to Adult Ministry in 2012

Reformed Theology Returns on Wonderful Wednesdays

What do Presbyterians really believe? Do you know? Are you sure?

Our study of Reformed theology returns on Wednesday, January 11 and continues through Wednesday, February 15. We’ll complete the series, based on the book *Christian Doctrine* by Shirley Guthrie, Jr., with lively discussions on incarnation, atonement, the resurrection, the Holy Spirit, justification and the Church.



We will continue to have early and late study sessions (4:45–5:45 p.m. and 7:30–8:30 p.m.), but our Wonderful Wednesday meals will be discontinued.

Lenten Series

The topic for Lenten study in 2012 is Spirituality and will begin on Wednesday, February 29 in the same tradition as Wonderful Wednesdays (no meals, however). The study series will include a visit from guest speaker, Marjorie J. Thompson. Marjorie will prepare us for a deeper experience of Holy Week with an in-house retreat on Saturday, March 24 and in worship on Sunday, March 25. This promises to be an inspiring Lenten experience. Further details will be announced soon in future *Kirk News* articles, in *@ The Kirk* and on our website at kirkinthehills.org.

Marjorie J. Thompson is an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church (USA). She received her Bachelor of Arts in religious studies from Swarthmore College, and her Master of Divinity degree from McCormick Theological Seminary.



Small Groups

Book of the Month Club

The Book of the Month Club ladies are excited about plans for the months ahead and would love to have you join us! Please be sure to check @ *The Kirk* for details.

On Thursday, January 19 we will gather at noon to discuss Daphne du Maurier's classic, *Rebecca*. For those of you who like to plan ahead, we've chosen the following lineup:

- February *The Garden of Beasts*
- March *The Art of Racing in the Rain*
- April *Friday Night Knitting Club*
- May *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*

We meet on the third Thursday of each month at noon in Abbey 27, except for when we plan a special outing! Copies of our books are available for purchase in the Kirk's Adult Ministry Office. We look forward to having you come join the fun!

Barnabus Small Group

On Monday nights from 7:30-9:00 p.m., you'll find the Barnabas Small Group meeting at the home of Dave and Nancy Lau to enjoy fellowship, dessert and Bible study. Although we will not meet on December 26 or January 2, we will otherwise continue our study of the book of Acts. As we have a series of DVDs that depicts the Book of Acts, we look forward to occasional movie nights - and yes, popcorn is included! We welcome new participants and would also be happy to help you begin a similar group in your neck of the woods. Please call Nancy Lau at (248) 645-1895 for details.

Trinity Stitchers - A Ministry of Warmth and Prayers

On Sunday, October 30, Rev. Carol Tate shared the ministry of the Kirk Trinity Stitchers with the children during the 9:00 a.m. service. Pictured is Sue Gelbach wearing one of the beautiful prayer shawls made by the group, as she demonstrates for the children the knitting of a baby baptismal blanket. Children that are baptized at the Kirk now receive a hand-made blanket from the ministry. If you know someone who could benefit from a prayer shawl or lap blanket, please contact us. We would love to share our gifts.



Members of the Trinity Stitchers are varied in their talents - some knit, some crochet, some sew labels on the shawls and blankets, some deliver and present the shawls and blankets, some donate yarn, etc. If you are interested in joining us for an afternoon or evening to see if God is calling you to this ministry, please join us from 1:00-3:00 p.m. or 5:00-7:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Please check the Kirk website calendar for the gathering times or call the Kirk Office to check the schedule.

We will not hold our regularly scheduled meeting in December as we have a special outing planned on Tuesday, December 6. This would be a perfect time to join us in fellowship and fun as we venture off campus for an evening in downtown Rochester. First, we'll meet at Skeins on Main Yarn Company at 5:00 p.m. to browse and enjoy the beautiful textiles. Next, we'll stroll Main Street to enjoy the beautiful display of Christmas lights, and gather at O'Connor's Public House for dinner at 6:15 p.m. Please RSVP via email to skfile@comcast.net. Reservations at O'Connor's are necessary during this busy holiday time. No knitting experience required!

Pink Ribbon Sisters - Women Helping Women with Cancer

The Pink Ribbon Sisters, a support group for women helping women with cancer, will meet at the Kirk on Thursday, December 15 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. At our informal meetings you'll have an opportunity to share your experiences and feelings with those who are currently going through cancer treatment (any type of cancer) and/or those who have experienced cancer and completed treatment. We will also have a time for devotion and prayer. From time to time we bring in guest speakers who address issues that affect cancer patients.

We are happy to share our local resources with you. If you would like more information or have questions, please call Julie Wright at (248) 952-5306.



What Cancer Cannot Do

- It cannot cripple LOVE.
- It cannot corrode FAITH.
- It cannot kill FRIENDSHIP.
- It cannot silence COURAGE.
- It cannot conquer THE SPIRIT.
- It cannot shatter HOPE.
- It cannot destroy PEACE.
- It cannot suppress MEMORIES.
- It cannot invade the SOUL.
- It cannot steal ETERNAL LIFE.

Author Unknown



Kirk Seniors

December Luncheon – On Tuesday, December 13 (a week earlier than usual) the Kirk Seniors will enjoy a Christmas party in the newly-refurbished Heritage Hall. Our guest entertainers will be the Fox Run Barbershop Quartet. Come and enjoy a delicious lunch and help us welcome in the Christmas season. Bring a friend. Please make checks payable to *Kirk Seniors* for \$12 to reach the Kirk by Thursday, December 8.

January Luncheon – On Tuesday, January 17 the Kirk Seniors will feature a Movie Matinee. Join us to view *The King's Speech*, followed by lunch and fellowship. We start at 11:00 a.m., so plan to arrive before the movie begins. Please make checks payable to *Kirk Seniors* for \$12 to reach the Kirk by Thursday, January 12.

February Luncheon – On Tuesday, February 21 the Kirk Seniors welcome speakers David and Lin-Lin Chock, speaking about their interesting trip to Patagonia, a region located in Argentina and Chile. It is rich in Spanish history from the time of Magellan in 1520. Come and see something new and beautiful. Join us for lunch and fellowship. Please make checks payable to *Kirk Seniors* for \$12 to reach the Kirk by Thursday, February 16.



Women with Memories

In *Love Inside a Widow or Widower*, Anna Farmery describes true love as someone “who helps you to reach beyond yourself and who sees you more truly than anyone else ever has or ever will. I love those words and believe in our time of grief we can pull on that love – because in getting through the bereavement we need to reach beyond what we think we are capable of... but remember that love, their love which encouraged you to think and achieve more than you ever thought yourself capable of.”



This is one of the memories that all women who no longer have their husbands beside them can draw on daily. We don't feel we have “lost” our husbands. They are always with us. We keep them in our hearts forever.

We would like to invite Kirk women, who hold their husbands in their hearts and share this common bond, to join our small group. What we will all have in common is that our husbands are no longer living. We are known as “widows” but most of us do not like that title. Meeting together two or three times a year, we have an opportunity to share in fellowship. For more information, please call Ann Hartzell at (248) 681-4814, Crystal Thomas at (248) 926-9737 or Joline Markovich at (248) 626-8776.

Parish Register

Deaths

Robert Richmond

Roland Baumann

Marriage

John H. Coe and Lauren E. Claudia

Baptisms

Ayrshire E. Baer

Reagan A. Lau

Ethan L. Smith

Thomas R. Bolton

Janet Griffiths

Megan M. Moir

Donald Quinn



Women of the Kirk

Women of the Kirk Annual Retreat – April 13–15, 2012

Hearken, all you wonderful women of the Kirk! Yes, I'm speaking to YOU! An inspiring opportunity is coming up the weekend of April 13, 14 and 15. We are blessed to have a warm and exciting retreat planned with our new associate pastor, Rev. Carol Tate. The 2012 Women of the Kirk Retreat will be reflective in its approach and will hopefully bring out the best that God has given us. We're counting on your presence, so plan early to join us at the Weber Center in Adrian, Michigan – a short distance from the Kirk and well worth the trip. If you would be interested in helping with the retreat, please contact chairpersons Phyllis Mazure at (248) 299-5361, phylmazure@aol.com or Jayne Dodge at (248) 626-7142, lowellandjayne@gmail.com.

Winter Gathering – Saturday, February 4

Women of the Kirk are invited to go together as a group to see the *Rembrandt and the Face of Jesus* exhibition at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Our trip is planned for Saturday, February 4 for a tour and lunch. Our time-frame will be announced as soon as plans are firm. In the meantime, if you are interested in attending, please contact Cathy Payton at whoop108@comcast.net. This will help us plan our numbers for the group tour.



Women's Annual Picnic – Save the Date

Women of the Kirk will enjoy a picnic on the beautiful Kirk grounds on Wednesday, June 13, 2012. Mark your calendar and plan to join us!

Men of the Kirk

Usher Appreciation Breakfast

Save the Date! The Kirk will show its appreciation to our Usher Corps on Saturday, December 3 at a Pancake Breakfast.

Friday Men's Breakfast Series

Have you been to a Friday Men's Breakfast lately? The series has been a regular feature on Friday mornings at the Kirk since 1995 and has brought many outstanding speakers. The tradition continues as we host more



entertaining and informative speakers with a wide range of topics of interest to both men and women. The Breakfast Series is open to all men and women members, family and friends of the Kirk.

Make the Breakfast Series part of your weekly routine! Join us at 7:00 a.m. in the St. Andrew's Room for breakfast, fellowship and guest speakers focusing on a variety of informative topics. The cost is \$10 and no advance reservations are necessary.

- December 2 Tim Excelby, Birmingham Police Department Chaplain – *Incorporating Faith Into Your Work*
- December 9 Tim Streit, Co-founder & Managing Director of Huron River Ventures – *Funding New Growth Companies in the Rust Belt*
- December 16 Bill Ritter, Pastor Emeritus, First United Methodist Church, Birmingham – *Topic TBA*
- December 23 Christmas Break
- December 30 New Year Break
- January 6 Dr. Keith Provost, Temporary Supply Pastor, Kirk in the Hills – *Topic TBA*
- January 13 Lily Epstein Stotland, Co-owner, Vesco Oil – *9/11: A Personal Story & Journey of Healing*
- January 20 Jason Mangum, CPRP, Director of Parks and Recreation for Novi – *The Value of Parks and Recreation in Cities Today*
- January 27 Major General Richard Stone, Deputy Surgeon General for Medical Readiness – *Resilience Training and Identifying Issues*



Souper Bowl of Soup Competition – Saturday, February 4, 5:30–7:00 p.m.

Mmm Mmm Good!

On the night before the “other” Super Bowl, you are invited to bring your favorite homemade soup to church to support our Youth Groups.

Men of the Kirk and the Youth Group Leadership are teaming up to host the 2012 Souper Bowl of Soup Competition. Do you have a favorite recipe? Maybe you just like to chow down on great soup? If you do and want to support our youth mission trips, please join us in this fun event.

This year we judge three categories: Chili, Hearty and Vegetarian. So simmer up your favorite recipe and prepare for a 5:30 p.m. start on Saturday, February 4. Breads and drinks will be provided to complement your great soup! Everyone will cast their votes and awards will be awarded in each category.

We continue this year with a humongous football skills challenge for the kids, plus awards! What a hoot! Can you imagine footballs flying around the refectory? (Shhh...don't tell Norman!)

There will be a free will offering to help with financing our youth and their mission trips.

Since my youth, God, you have taught me, and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds. Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come. Psalm 71:17–18



Adopt-A-Road



Men of the Kirk invite Kirk members and friends to join in the Adopt-A-Road project started a few years ago. Men of the Kirk are committed to maintaining the shoulder of Long Lake Road from Telegraph to Middlebelt on a regular basis. The spring cleanup is scheduled for April 7–16, 2012. We'll announce the exact date soon so plan to pitch in as we keep our section of Long Lake Road debris free. More details to come as plans develop!

Christmas Cards

Men of the Kirk Christmas cards are available for purchase in the Adult Ministry Office for \$.50 each.

The ivory cards are embossed with an image of the Kirk and the following scripture passage:

I bring you good news of Great Joy. Today in the town of David a savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10

For more information, contact the Adult Ministry Office at (248) 626-2515, ext. 117.



Blood Drives

The Men of the Kirk will sponsor four blood drives this year! Please mark your calendar for the dates below. More detailed information will be available as the drives approach. Look for details in @ The Kirk or on the website at kirkinthehills.org. Thank you, Ian Dittus, for your organization of the Kirk's blood drives!

Monday, February 6, 2012
Monday, June 4, 2012
Monday, August 6, 2012
Monday, October 1, 2012

Kirk

Our Faith in Action

Because you give, with God's help, we can do great things.

By Sydrena Epstein

Small Groups

Participation in small groups at the Kirk has served to enlighten, encourage, challenge, reinforce and stimulate the sharing of burdens, hopes, fears and joys. Most everyone has the feeling that they want to connect with others... share things in common. Small groups draw us into more familiar circles within our church family.

Each of the small groups is made up of 8-12 people that meet regularly, usually outside of the Kirk. They can be sermon-based or formed for book study, Bible study or even for mission purposes. The groups can be formed geographically, by lifestyles (singles/couples/parents), by need (divorce/grief/caregivers) or by interest (knitting/sports/dining and movies). You might even have an idea for a small group that you would like to start and need guidance doing so.

By joining one (or more) of the Kirk's small groups, you might find new friends sharing your interests, as well as setting aside time for yourself to do something enjoyable. Most importantly, by joining a small group you have an opportunity to develop meaningful fellowship and stewardship within the Kirk church family.

If you would like to learn more or get involved with a small group, email Bob Heuer at smallgroups@kirkinthehills.org, or call the Kirk Office at (248) 626-2515.



Two Pound Challenge Continues

Earlier this year, Kirk members were asked to participate in the Presbytery's Hands-On Mission program called the Great Tomato Giveaway, which was part of a larger program called Garden Gatherer's Initiative. The focus of this project was to increase awareness of the issue of hunger locally. The idea was to grow tomato plants and when ripe, bring the fresh tomatoes back to the Kirk. These tomatoes and other produce would then be delivered to a soup kitchen or pantry to help feed the hungry and homeless. This project was supported by Outreach and Mission along with the Deacons who have gathered your donations each week and delivered them to Baldwin Center in Pontiac.

This past summer, Dr. Provost issued a "Two Pound Challenge." He stated that on any given Sunday we have approximately 500 people come to church; if each person were to bring two pounds of fresh produce we could gather 1,000 pounds of fresh produce each week to help end hunger in Oakland County.

Kirk member Yvonne Rundell told the farmer she was buying corn from about the challenge, and he told her to come back each Sunday night and she could have his surplus. At the end of the season, Farm Boy Produce in Auburn Hills donated over 600 pounds of squash to give to a Place of Refuge and to Baldwin Center, adding to the generosity of the past growing season! Dr. Provost told the manager of a Dollar Store in Allen Park the reason he was buying produce, and each week that manager donated his extra produce; one Sunday it was over 100 pounds of fresh lettuce, radishes and carrots.

You can help! When you come to worship on Sunday, bring two pounds of any type of fresh produce which you can drop off in the Fireside Room, the 2nd Floor Abbey or Heritage Hall during the between services coffee hour.

Kirk Choristers



One Sunday each month, many a proud parent has an opportunity to beam with pride as their son or daughter sings in the morning worship service. And then there are the oohs and aahs as the wee ones file in with the chancel choir. These young choir members are referred to as the Kirk Choristers.

Kirk Choristers are made up of several different choral groups: the Junior Girls (grades 2-6), Treble Boys (grade 2 until voice change), Intermediate Girls (grades 6-8), Senior Boys (voice change through high school) and Senior Girls (grades 9-12). At the youngest end of the spectrum is the Young Children's Choir (pre-kindergarten through grade 1). If this hasn't confused you, imagine trying to be the person who must coordinate all of these ages and vocal ranges. That person is Glenn Miller, our Music Director and he does a superb job.

The children do not have to audition, but they must commit to rehearsing once each week as well as singing in worship approximately once each month. A major emphasis is placed on the development of music reading skills, churchmanship, teamwork and self-discipline - all in addition to having singing skills.

Music is an integral part of the worship service and it is wonderful to see the contributions of our Kirk Choristers at such a young age.



Outreach and Mission

Ministry With Pontiac



Our Ministry With Pontiac is seeking volunteers to help third graders with simple spelling and grammar at the Jefferson/Whittier Elementary School Publishing Center. The school is conveniently located only a few minutes from the Kirk.

In this exciting endeavor, children write stories according to their teachers' instructions. Then the students take their writing to the Publishing Center where Kirk volunteers show the students easy corrections in grammar, spelling, and sequencing of storyline events. Through this interaction the students learn how to improve upon their overall writing skills.



Finally, after pupils finish their final drafts, a book is "published" for each individual with both a story and a short biography on its young author! The child may choose to keep this creation or gift it to a loved one.

This entire process affords a novel opportunity for achievement among these students. The impact of this experience on the children may long outlast the moments spent between each volunteer and student.

Making this opportunity possible requires a good number of volunteers. If you would like to inspire elementary students, we invite you to come join our morning tutoring teams! Contact Yve Ruiz at yve_ruiz@yahoo.com or Linda Juracek-Lipa at ljl@corvusint.com for more information.

God's Love in Action – Prayers Answered

Our church family has been praying for a young boy who has been in two foster homes and attended three different churches that are members of the Faith Communities Coalition on Foster Care. He has touched many lives in the Kirk family and within the faith community. He attended Camp Hosanna last summer, walked in CROP Hunger Walk and currently attends Jefferson/Whittier school where he has been working with a Kirk Tutor. He had asked for prayers that he be adopted, not because he was not loved by his foster mother but because he wanted a "forever home."

Recently we learned that he has been adopted! He has been through so much in his seven years and we can all thank God that he now has his greatest desire filled! How wonderful to see God's hand at work in the life of this child and our congregation.

Board of Deacons

Christmas is coming. It's time for the Board of Deacons to jump into action. Our Adopt-a-Family letters were mailed before the end of October, alerting the members of the Kirk's geographical units about how we can help families less fortunate than ourselves enjoy receiving Christmas gifts. Each unit does this project a little differently by selecting a different agency to help us find needy families. We can use the Salvation Army, Judson Center, Lighthouse and many other worthy sources for families in need. Kirk friends can send money, buy gifts, shop as a group and wrap gifts together. We also buy food for a nice Christmas dinner and to help stock pantries. The families and groups that will benefit from our gracious giving send us their names, sizes and wish lists and we do the rest. It is a wonderful feeling to be able to provide this assistance year after year. Thanks to everyone

for their gifts of time, talent and treasure. And thanks to God for showing us the way.





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Dennis N. Curry	Associate Director of Music & Carillonneur
Pauline Jackson	Director of Preschool

Kirk Staff Extensions

Adams, Tres	127
Cameron, Kathe	126
Cole, Claudia	121
Crossman, Gary	129
Curry, Dennis	172
Giudici, Joanne	115
Hartwig, Karin	112
Jackson, Pauline	132
Kenum, Katherine	114
Krawczyk, Kevin	116
Libcke, Bob	108
Leonard, Karen	104
Miller, Glenn	109
Morris, Jennifer	117
Pritchard, Norman	102
Provost, Keith	119
Shalla, Rachel	113
Shriver, Kelly	124
Stock, Audrey	134
Tate, Carol	122
Uhl, Tiffany	100
Zellers, Jayne	110

Other Departments

Adult Ministry	117
Baptisms	104
Children, Youth & Families Ministry	121
Church Life & Fellowship	113
Church Membership	126
Funeral/Memorial Services	104
Legacy Giving	305
Outreach & Mission	126
Music	109
Pastoral Care	104
Stephen Ministry	117
Weddings	104

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Kirk News (KN4) (USP017-956 is published bi-monthly by Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church, 1340 W. Long Lake Road, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302-1335. Periodicals postage paid at Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, Postmaster: Please send address changes to Kirk News, Kirk in the Hills, 1340 W. Long Lake Road, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302-1335.