

Hebron News

Hebron Presbyterian Church, Manakin-Sabot, VA *Our Mission is to "Spread the Word of God".*

From the pastor's desk . .

December, 2016

Pickett's Charge



Will a Newly Transformed Website Transform our Church?

We are very excited to bring our website (hebronpresbyterian.com) up to date. It will have all the bells and whistles that you would expect and we can hope that it will be an effective evangelism tool. It is true that people looking for a church do not use the Yellow Pages (remember them?) but they do a 'Google search'. And how we present ourselves on the Web influences their decision of whether to attend or not.

Some would say that the Web is the *wave of the future*. We had better catch it or we will be left behind. But will it really transform our church? And the bigger question, "What will they find once they come here"? I read an article in [Christianity Today \(CT\)](#) and they said something that makes Hebron look really good: *"The most important and biblical pieces of technology in a church today may not be the projector and the amplifier, but the crockpot and warming plate. Potluck suppers are a test of the redistribution of the community wealth that heaven and earth will offer."*

Yes, it will be possible with our new website to stay at home and watch past services that have been uploaded and made available at the push of a button. Ahhhh...now we can stay at home with our family, dressed in our pajamas and worship without all the bother. Really? Okay, so on occasion this could be a good thing when we're on vacation or unable to get out due to sickness or weather but as the CT article goes on to say, *"The Christian story is God made flesh.."* In other words, if God went to all the trouble of becoming man, surely this implies that real human relationships are important.

"Do we want to do to our church services what video did to movie theaters? Or what Facebook has done to friends having dinner together?" Many churches enable you to give online, check announcements online and even encourage 'tweeting' reactions to the service while still in the service. It's not uncommon to see church attenders fumbling with their phones throughout worship because we fear missing out on one hour of being offline.

"The church's true calling in a technological society is to do the slow, difficult work of embodying God's love, one embodied soul at a time." Technology changes but the human need for satisfying relationships has not. The church has the unique ability to not only offer real fellowship but true relationships bonded by The True Message of Jesus Christ. If technology can help us advance this cause then Hallelujah! But if it gets in the way, how will we recover what we have lost?

The new website will be up and running very soon. Pictures, sermons, events, links and more will be made available. We pray that it will simply be a tool aptly used so that people might come to Hebron, enjoy our potluck lunches and dinners, hear the Word of God taught and enter into meaningful relationships.

"Jesus rose from the dead and you....you can't even get out of bed"
Keith Green

God Bless,
Allen

All Together for Advent
Intergenerational Sunday School Series
11:30am-12:15pm in Holman Hall

Sunday, December 4

Christmas Around the World

Hear stories and memories from those who have celebrated Christmas in other countries, sing carols and enjoy treats from around the world.

Sunday, December 11

Meaning Behind the Music: Christmas Carols

Take a closer look at the lyrics to Christmas carols, learn more of their history and Biblical meaning, and of course, sing them together.

Sunday, December 18

Christmas Rediscovered

Dive into a study of Luke 2, the story of the birth of Jesus. Plus, make a Christmas ornament as a reminder of the true meaning of Christmas.

Adult Bible Studies - December

- Seeking a Word from the Lord Sundays 9:00am, Ralph Fields Room
- *Too Busy Not to Pray* Sundays 9:00am, Holman Hall
- Women of Hebron Thursday, December 8, 11:00am, Meeting Room
The Story
- Men's Group Sundays 6:00-7:30pm, Holman Hall
Leadership 101

Connect with us on social media! Click to follow us on:

Facebook



Hebron Presbyterian Church

Instagram



@hebronpc

Twitter



@hebronpres



Youth Night Out: Christmas Edition
[for youth in grades 7-12]

Sunday, December 18, 5:00pm-11:00pm

***Goodwill Scavenger Hunt *Dinner**
***Share the Love [Shopping for a Cause]**
***Starbucks *Christmas Movie**

Cost: \$25 per person

Session Notes

At the November Meeting:

1. We agreed that we would go forward in 2017 with our present staff. Budget cuts will be made regarding future needs such as improved lighting, putting on hold new hymn books and pew Bibles and church signage. We felt it would be counterproductive to eliminate staff in a time of growth and would send a negative message to our congregation and community. Therefore, we will continue to borrow from ourselves while making strides to improve our financial standing. (A more detailed letter will be coming soon.)
2. We have joined "The Fellowship Community", a large group of evangelical Presbyterians within our denomination in order to provide support for our church and for our Pastor Nominating Committee to have access to candidates who may be more in line with our beliefs.
3. A new statement will be published to replace the "Confessing Church" statement which is regularly printed in the bulletin.
4. December 18th will be a congregational meeting for the purpose of selecting new Deacons and Elders for the class of 2019.
5. Our next Session meeting is December 15th.

Reflections on our Great Hymns

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Author: Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)

This hymn was written in 1868, several years after Phillips Brooks had returned from a trip to the Holy Land. The experience of spending Christmas Eve in Bethlehem and worshipping in the Church of the Nativity, thought to be the place of Christ's birth, made an indelible impression on the young preacher. Three years later, while searching for a new carol for his children to sing in their Sunday School Christmas program, the still vivid memory of his Holy Land visit inspired Brooks to write this text.

Each stanza has a character of its own: The first is descriptive and sets the scene in the sleeping town of Bethlehem. The second takes the form of a poetic narrative of the Christmas event. The third is a reflection on the way in which God comes to humankind in Christ. The fourth is a personal prayer that the holy Child of Bethlehem may be born in us and abide with us always. All this is worth looking at in a little more detail.

*O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by:
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

On Christmas night little Bethlehem seems no different from usual. It is sleeping peacefully under *the silent stars*. But there is more here than meets the eye. God is working His purpose out, and all unknown to its people this is an historic night for Bethlehem. In its *dark streets* there is shining *the everlasting Light*, the light of Christ; for 'the true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world' (John 1.9) *The hopes and fears of all the years are met* in that climatic moment.

What happened that night is related in poetic language in the next stanza.

*O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary; And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.*

Christ is born of Mary; such is the great fact of Christmas; the heart of the whole matter and the central affirmation of this stanza. But surrounding the event itself the hymn-writer discerns much activity in the spiritual world. The angels were busy when Jesus was born! They are referred to both at the beginning and at the end of the stanza. It was the shepherds that made their great proclamation and sang their anthem, ascribing glory to God in the highest and announcing *peace to men on earth*.

*How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.*

The miracle of the Incarnation takes place so quietly. There is no pomp and show. No fanfare announces the event. *How silently* God comes! *How silently the wondrous gift is given!* Who would have dreamt that the phenomenon of God-become-Man would have taken place in so obscure a fashion? ‘God moves in a mysterious way’, as the poet William Cowper reminds us, ‘his wonders to perform’. And it was so in the supreme wonder of the Word made flesh. In similar manner he fulfils his purpose in human lives today and imparts to us *the blessings of his heaven*; and although *no ear may hear his coming*, Christ still *enters in* wherever *meek souls will receive him*.

So we make our own prayers to him:

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.*

The hymn begins with Christmas in Bethlehem; it ends with Christmas in the heart. It begins with Christ being born of Mary; it ends with Christ being born in us. The mystical poet of the seventeenth century, Angelus Silesius, wrote: *Should Christ be born a thousand times anew, despair, O man, unless he’s born in you!*

The spiritual birth happens when, *our sin* having been *cast out*, we allow Christ to *enter in* and take possession of our lives. Christmas thus has for each of us a contemporary message and personal meaning. Amid its festivities we must take time to pause and listen to *the great glad tidings* of the *Christmas angels* as if they were speaking directly to us, and then ask *our Lord Emmanuel* to *come to us* and *abide with us*—‘God with us’ forever.



Hebron’s Annual Community Tree Lighting Service

Friday, December 2nd at 7:00pm

*Join us for a special evening of music, food and fellowship
at our annual tree lighting service and carol sing-a-long.*

Don’t forget the hot chocolate and donuts.

Hebron Day School

“You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.”
 Matthew 2: 12b

We will celebrate the Christmas season with several activities this month. Our annual Christmas party will be held Wednesday, December 14, at 11:00am. The parents plan our activities for the morning which include a very special visitor from the North Pole! (Thank you, Mack Curle and his trusty elf, Paula!!)

Our annual Christmas Nativity Program will take place that evening, Wednesday, December 14, at 6:30pm. We would love to have our church friends join us for this event. The children will be working throughout December on their parts for the program. We will have 19 children taking part in this year’s nativity. The children in our Lovebugs and Little Ducks classes will also participate and will present Santa, Rudolph and friends! Refreshments of cookies and punch will be served after the program.

Our last day of school this year is Friday, December 16. Hebron Day School will be closed December 20-January 1. We will reopen on Tuesday, January 3, 2017.

Looking ahead, it’s hard to believe that we are busy planning for the 2017-2018 school year. Beginning in early January, registration opens to returning students, siblings and Hebron church members. Please let us know if you know of anyone who might be interested in our program. We will have an application packet available to send out.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all of Hebron families and friends a very happy, healthy and blessed Christmas and New Year. God Bless.

Shirley Bonovitch
Director

December Volunteer Schedules		
	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Nursery</u>
December 4	Cricket & Robin Williams	Mack Curle
December 11	Jim & Rachel Parker	Tanya Powers
December 18	Troy & Alison Raines	Volunteer Needed
December 24	Jim Dunlap & Ken Mittendorff	N/A
December 25	Jamie & Tracy Kistler	Tanya Powers

DECEMBER CALENDAR

Thursday, December 1
 Women's Bible Study *Genesis Part 2* 9:00am

Friday, December 2
 AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House
 Community Tree Lighting Service 7:00pm

Sunday December 4
Second Sunday of Advent
 Adult Bible Study Groups 9:00am
 Worship 10:00am
 Communion
 Prayer available in Pastor's office
 Sunday School: *Christmas Around the World*
 Men's Group 6:00-7:30pm Holman Hall

Tuesday, December 6
 AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House
 Women's Bible Study *The Best Yes* 9:30am

Wednesday, December 7
 Choir Rehearsal 6:30-8:00pm

Thursday, December 8
 Women of Hebron 11:00am - Chapters 27 & 28

Friday, December 9
 AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Sunday, December 11
Third Sunday of Advent
 Adult Bible Study Groups 9:00am
 Worship 10:00am
 Prayer available in Pastor's office
 Sunday School: *Meaning Behind the Music*
 Men's Group 6:00-7:30pm Holman Hall

Tuesday, December 13
 AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Wednesday, December 14
 Day School Christmas Party 11:00am
 Day School Christmas Program 6:30pm
 Choir Rehearsal 6:30-8:00pm

Thursday, December 15
 Session 7:00pm

Friday, December 16
 AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Sunday, December 18
Fourth Sunday of Advent
 Deacons Meeting 8:45am
 Adult Bible Study Groups 9:00am
 Worship 10:00am
 Prayer available in Pastor's office
 Sunday School: *Christmas Rediscovered*
 Youth Night Out: Christmas Edition, 5:00-11:00pm
 Men's Group 6:00-7:30pm Holman Hall

Day School Closed December 20-January 1

Tuesday, December 20
 AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Wednesday, December 21
 Choir Rehearsal 6:30-8:00pm

Friday, December 23
 AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

PRAYER CONCERNS

John Bullard
 Polly Anderson
 Susie Smyth
 Diane & T. C. Anderson
 Bibby Raines
 Sandy & Rossie Fisher
 Barry Thackston, Fayette Thackston's father
 Michael Babb, *long-time friend of Robin & Cricket Williams*

Bob Pickett, *Pastor Allen's father*
 Rob Pickett, *Pastor Allen's brother*
 Ceil Bare, *Scott Parks' sister*
 The Atkinson Family,
friends of Dan & Martha Rogers

Denny Rudzinki, *friend of Jamie Kistler*
 Ted Phillips, *Barb Young's brother*
 Ben Watkins, *Tricia Miller's brother*
 Mia Barksdale, *Paula Curle's sister*
 Tristen Edwin Jenkins, *Shirley Bonovitch's great nephew*

Barbara Kaplan, *Alison Raines' mother*
 Karen Ball, *Patsy Rice's daughter*
 Steve Cobb, *former Student Minister at Hebron*
 Tee Thackston, *Fayette Thackston's brother*
 Glenn Parrish, *Sandra Parrish's husband*
 Danny Mizelle and Our Military Personnel

Please call the church office if there are any changes to be made to the Prayer List.

PASTORAL CARE

The committee consists of Martha Rogers (784-5768), Nancy Parrish (457-4058) & Lindy Thackston (784-3586). Share any births, deaths, illness or other concerns with one of these ladies.

FLOWERS FOR JANUARY

Alison Raines & Lindy Thackston

Saturday, December 24
 Christmas Eve Service 5:00pm

Sunday, December 25
 Christmas Day Worship 10:00am
 Prayer available in Pastor's office

Tuesday, December 27
 AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House
 Newsletter Deadline

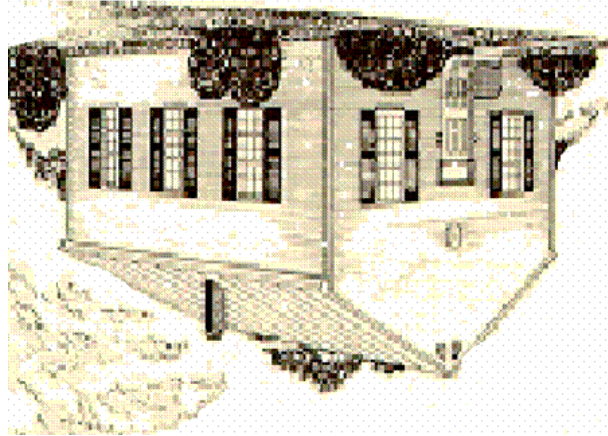
Friday, December 30
 AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Hebron Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Church of Jesus Christ, Reformed in theology and Presbyterian by way of organization. It is related to the Presbytery of the James, the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, and to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

Our Mission is to Spread the Word of God

“A Historic Church with a Living Mission”

Hebron Presbyterian Church
Founded 1843



HEBRON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1040 SHALLOW WELL ROAD
MANAKIN-SABOT, VIRGINIA 23103
(804) 784-4018

*You are invited to join us for our
10:00am Worship Service*