

“THE MEADOWS MESSENGER”
A Communication of Quaker Meadows Presbyterian Church
December 2019, Issue



October and November Financial Reports

We hope that you find this information helpful as you pray for this congregation and evaluate your giving and participation in the worship, work and mission of this part of the Body of Christ. Sincerely, the Session and Pastor.

Tithes and Offerings needed for each week of 2019 = \$1,709.06. This figure is based on a total 2019 budget of \$88,871.00 which was approved by the Session.

OCTOBER

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (43 weeks)	\$6,836.23
Actual Tithes and Offerings received (43 weeks)	\$4,722.00
This results in a budget shortage for this month	(\$2,114.23)
Total Expenses (43 weeks) resulting in a shortage for the month	(\$830.09)

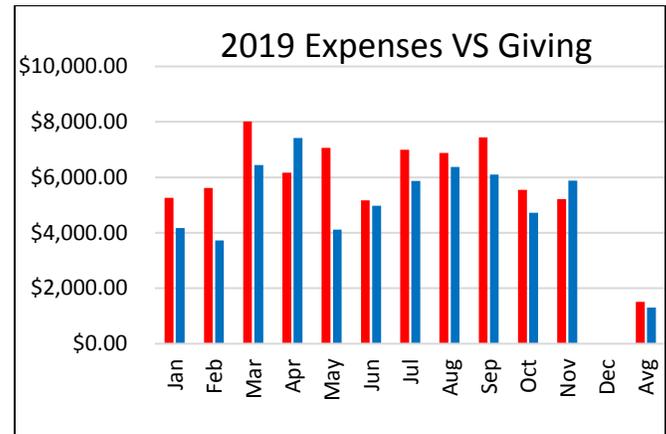
NOVEMBER

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (3 of 4 weeks)	\$5,127.17
Actual Tithes and Offerings received (3 of 4 weeks)	\$5,880.00
This results in a budget overage for this month	\$752.83
Total Expenses (3 of 4 weeks) resulting in an overage for the month	\$661.48

YEAR TO DATE

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (46 weeks)	\$78,616.65
Actual Tithes and Offerings (46 weeks) received	\$59,801.00
This results in a budget shortage to this point	(\$18,815.65)
Total Expenses (46 weeks) This results in a shortage to expenses for the year	(\$9,581.49)

For those of you who understand a chart better than a bunch of numbers, below is the 'picture' of our YTD finances for November 2019 (through week 3 of 4):



Expenses VS Income

Session Highlights

Stated Meeting – October 27th

The Session:

- Reviewed the financial report for September. Will review again next month after a correction is made.
- Approved the remainder of this year's pledge (\$500.00) to be sent to the presbytery.
 - Discussed the 2020 spending plan (budget). Approved for review by the congregation for two weeks as required by the by-laws of the church.
 - Requested that members of the congregation be informed that they can sponsor any line items which will be zero for 2020 by making a donation for that item. At the time of this newsletter we have sponsors promised for seven out of the ten zero line items.
- Received the September financial report from Circle # 2.
- Approved a request that the Tallent Family be invited to sing on November 24th after a Thanksgiving-themed covered dish lunch (2:00). Also approved that a love offering be

collected for them and that they be allowed to sell CDs.

- Set the examination of elders for the class of 2022 for our next meeting, November 17th.

Some Bible Trivia

The theme for this month is: villains

1. Who plotted to have the entire Hebrew nation completely exterminated?
2. Who committed the first murder?
3. Who acknowledged that Jesus was innocent but allowed him to be crucified anyway?
4. Who had John the Baptizer beheaded?
5. What evil king of Israel was led into even more wickedness by his beautiful and scheming wife? What was his wife's name?
6. Who ordered the killing of infant boys in Bethlehem?
7. Who made numerous attempts to swindle Jacob, but failed?

The Story of Christmas Spiders



In a quiet cottage in the woods lived a gentle widow and her eight children. The widow worked very hard to keep her children warm and well-fed, but money was not plentiful. When the air grew crisp, and the snow began to fall, the widow knew Christmas was coming. But instead of feeling joyful as the holiday approached, she felt sadness and sorrow. She knew that she did not have

enough money to buy her children any gifts to open on Christmas morning.

“I cannot afford new toys or books,” she thought, walking home through the woods one night. “What will I give my children?”

On Christmas Eve the family ate their simple Christmas dinner together, and the widow tried to conceal her worries. After tucking her excited children snugly into bed, she pulled her chair close to the fire and tried to erase the visions of their little disappointed faces from her mind. After all, what fun is Christmas morning without gifts to open?

“Perhaps a Christmas tree would make my children happy,” the widow sighed.

She put on her coat and hat and walked through the woods in search of the right tree. She chose a small but beautiful evergreen, chopped it down with her husband's ax, and brought it to the cottage.

For hours, the widow carefully decorated the fragrant tree branches with colorful fruits, bits of ribbon, and Christmas cookies. Then she blew out her candle and went to bed, hoping the tree would make her children's empty Christmas a little bit brighter.

While the tired widow slept, tiny spiders crept from the cracks and corners of the cottage. They had watched her hard at work, decorating the tree for her children. Onto the branches they jumped, spinning delicate strands of silky web which gracefully covered the small tree from trunk to top. It was a beautiful sight.

When the family awoke on Christmas morning, they could not believe their eyes. The webs of silk had been turned into pure silver, covering the tree with dazzling brightness! During the night, Santa Claus had come with gifts for the children and saw the tree covered with spider webs. He smiled as he saw how happy the spiders were, but knew how heartbroken the widow would be if she saw her tree covered with spider webs. So he turned

the silky webs into pure, shining silver. The next morning, as the widow watched her children sing and dance around the beautiful shining tree, she knew it would be a wonderful Christmas after all!

From that day forward, people have hung strands of shiny silver tinsel on their Christmas trees in honor of the poor widow and her tiny Christmas spiders. By Stephanie Herbek

The Pastor's Ponderings

There is an important word that sums up what Christmas is most fundamentally about, and it is not "Santa," "gifts," "eggnog" or "family." It is not even "peace" or "goodwill." The word is "incarnation." Christmas is the celebration of the truth that God has become incarnate, meaning that the eternal, immortal and invisible God has taken on flesh (a human body) and entered our world in the person of Jesus Christ.

The Latin verb *incarnatio* is derived from two words "*in*" and "*carno*," which quite literally means "to make into flesh." For those of you who like Spanish food, have you ever wondered what chili con carne means? It means chili with (con) meat (carne). In a literal sense, then, Jesus came "in the meat" – that is, in the flesh. He was clothed in humanity.

Jesus did not come into existence when he was born to Mary and Joseph – he has existed from before creation (John 1:1-18; Colossians 1:16-17; 1 Peter 1:20; John 17:5). At Christmas the eternal Son of God became the human known to us as Jesus. The Nicene Creed affirms that Jesus: "came down from heaven, and was incarnate."

There are at least three reasons why the incarnation of Jesus is an essential doctrine for the Christian faith:

1. The incarnation affirms the goodness of physical existence. It is common to believe that physical matter is somehow inherently inferior to the spiritual world. This has led many Christians to devalue their physical bodies, to neglect the

responsibilities and delights of earthly existence, and to conceive of heaven as a disembodied ghostly existence. The fact that a holy God was willing to unite with a physical body in the person of Jesus (1 John 4:2) affirms that God approves of physical matter and earthly existence. He came not to destroy this world, but to redeem it and make it new (Colossians 1:20).

2. The incarnation means that God was willing to get involved. When things go wrong, there is generally no shortage of people willing to voice their criticisms and complaints, but very few actually step into the problem, get their hands dirty, and try to bring about a solution. The incarnation means that the God of the Bible is not an aloof deity barking orders from afar. Instead, he was willing to get involved (John 1:9). He got his hands dirty. He lowered himself, entered into the muck and mess of this broken world, endured the pain and grief of walking on this earth, and accomplished full restoration and healing through Jesus' death and resurrection from the dead (Philippians 2:5-11).

3. The incarnation makes it possible for sins to be covered. There is a passage in Leviticus 17:11 that tells us that "it is the blood that makes atonement by the life." In order for our sins to be covered, blood must be shed. But if God is an invisible spirit, how can He shed blood? And if He cannot shed blood, how can atonement be made? The incarnation is the answer. "(Jesus) had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17). Indeed, Jesus was born to die ... and to live again, that you and I might find life in Him.

In Jesus, God affirms the value of our humanity, God participates in earthly life and provides for a means to regain what was lost in the Garden of Eden. At Christmas God who reveals himself as God-with-us in the flesh in the person of Jesus and continues to be with us even today through

the work of the Holy Spirit. Ray Stevens is famous for saying that Santa is everywhere, “he’s everywhere,” but no matter how important Santa seems to be to the celebration and spirit of Christmas for most people, Santa never agreed to die for our sins, and Santa cannot promise us eternal life with all the healing and wholeness that it brings.

So, as you gather with family and friends this Christmas season remember the deeper, and more important, meaning of Christmas: it is the time when the eternal Son of God took on the flesh of a human being so that he could reclaim and redeem us from the forces of evil and death. Thanks be to God that he will allow nothing to keep us from his love (Romans 8:38-39).

(The article above is an adapted combination of a blog by Rev. Bob O’Bannon of New Life Presbyterian Church in (PCA) in Yorktown Indiana AND a blog by Rev. Pilgrim Benham of Calvary Chapel Shoreline in southwest Florida.)

Pastor Yvonne

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(See Luke 2:1-16) 12-19-2011
IT HAD A STAR ON TOP SO I FIGURED IT SHOULD HAVE A MANGER AT THE BOTTOM

Some Bible Trivia Answers

1. Haman, minister of Persia – Esther
2. Cain – Genesis 4:8
3. Pontius Pilate – John 18 & 19
4. Herod Antipas – Matthew 14:10

5. Ahab – 1 Kings 16 (his wife’s name was Jezebel)
6. Herod the Great – Matthew 2:16
7. Laban, his father-in-law – Genesis 29-31

Backpack Ministry Update



Each week 7 children receive food supplements for the weekend. Above is a photo of one month’s worth of food, packaged and ready to be given to the children.

Bring Harvest Home

Again this year we gathered food to help provide the ingredients for a Thanksgiving feast for approximately 36 families.



Some of the food was donated by the students and other folks of Table Rock Middle School.



On November 21st, the folks above packed food boxes for about 36 families. On November 25th, those boxes were given to the families so that they might have a big Thanksgiving feast like most of us did. Thanks to all of you who participated in this ministry of caring for our neighbors. We are grateful to God that he has blessed us with enough resources to share.

Christmas Boxes

We also gathered personal hygiene items, educational supplies, card games and flip flops for 9 to 12-year old girls for our participation in Operation Christmas Child. The Christian Education Committee and our children packed the 50 boxes with all the goodies and Donna Harney delivered them to the collection point.



Thanks to all of you who participated in completing this ministry for 2019.

**Doings at Quaker Meadows
Presbyterian Church**

Ministry with the Children

December 01st – Pastor Yvonne (sermon),
Christine Rose (downstairs)
December 08th – Heather Kramer (sermon), Rita
Whisnant (downstairs)
December 15th – Kathy Staton (sermon),
Christine Rose (downstairs)
December 22nd – Ruth Pershing (sermon), Lelia
Bruder (downstairs)
December 29th – Heather Kramer (sermon),
Lelia Bruder (downstairs)

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, December 04th – Nov/Dec birthday
luncheon, Timberwoods @ 11:30
Thursday, December 05th, 12th and 19th – Bible
study, pastor's home @ 12:30
Monday, December 09th – Circle #1, Ruth
Preston's home @ 10:00
Tuesday, December 24th – Christmas Eve
Communion and Candlelight service @ 6:30
Monday, December 30th – Circle # 2, fellowship
hall @ 6:00

Birthdays

Anna Burkett – Dec. 02nd
Phillip Pershing – Dec. 09th
Jerry Bradshaw – Dec. 14th
Anita Woods – Dec. 14th
Nicholas Johnson – Dec. 29th
James Sanford – Dec. 31st

Cover image: http://www.weathercast.co.uk/nc/weather-news/news/article/can_holly_forecast_winter_weather.html

The Christmas spider story:
<https://people.howstuffworks.com/culture-traditions/holidays-christmas/inspirational-christmas-stories9.htm>

The Christmas spider image: <https://in2english.net/2017/12/04/the-legend-of-the-christmas-spider/>