



PresbEnews

December 14, 2016

A mid-week newsletter of First Presbyterian Church - Jody McDevitt & Dan Krebill, co-pastors
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Special Services for Advent and Christmas

Advent is a time when people who don't have a church home often gravitate toward a church. Invite a friend who may be seeking, and remember to be a welcoming presence at any of these special services this month!

Saturday, Dec 17,	5 pm	Christmas at Rockhaven (see article below)
Sunday, Dec 18,	3 pm	15 th Annual Messiah Sing (see article p. 2)
Saturday, Dec 24,	5 pm	Christmas Eve Family Service, led by children and youth of our congregation
	8 pm	Christmas Eve Traditional Service, with Worship Choir and First Bells
	11 pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service
Sunday, Dec 25,	10:30 am	Christmas Day Blessing of the Animals (No 8:30 service)
Sunday, Jan 1,	10:30 am	Worship God as the New Year begins (No 8:30 service)

What's special about Christmas at Rockhaven this year?

This Saturday, December 17, at 5 pm in the Rockhaven Chapel, the Christmas story will be told and Christmas carols will be sung. Dan Holland and Scott Thrasher will share the message in an original dual monologue (would that be a duologue?) And we'll have some wonderful musicians sharing their music of the season: Holly Aloise, Emily Thrasher, Maren Haynes, and Cheryl McNicholas. Come join us!

What's always special about Christmas at Rockhaven is the peace and rustic simplicity of being in the chapel when it's cold outside, with a wood stove warming the room and candlelight reminding us of the light of God coming into the world. What's always special is to hear the Christmas story once again, to share fellowship in the dining hall afterwards, and to be reminded of God's love given to the world. Plan to be there, for a peaceful reminder of what's most important about this season.

Enhancing Our Conversation With God

"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words."

Romans 8:26

First Presbyterian Church Messiah Community Sing

Sunday, December 18 at 3pm

Lukas Graf, Director , Carrie Krause, Concert Master

Featuring Second String Orchestra

Soloists: Catherine Savery, Claire McCahan,

Andrew Major, Darin Small

Organist: Joanna Ellison

*Community Choir rehearsal is
Saturday, December 17 at 1:00p.m.
Please notice change in rehearsal
time from previous years*



Giving to First Presbyterian Church

In addition to traditional methods, First Presbyterian Church offers the option of making financial contributions to the church electronically via the web or by texting. Contributions via the web can be made from the online giving link on the church's website, www.fpcbozeman.org or by scanning this QR code with your Smartphone. To give by text, simply text the amount of your gift and any designation to 406-278-6267. Thank you!





*The church staff would like to wish everyone
a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
Thank you all for a blessed year!*

*The church building and office will be closed on December 26 and 27 for
Christmas Holiday and on January 2 for New Year Holiday.*

Christmas Day Blessing of the Animals

It was 2011 when Christmas Day last fell on a Sunday, and that's when our church tried something new. While in many churches a service of "Blessing of the Animals" is held in October, honoring the feast of St. Francis, we thought that Christmas Day was also a fitting time to welcome animals into our building. After all, animals welcomed Jesus into their home on the first Christmas!

The service was so well received by both humans and their beloved pets that it became a tradition, and this year we will observe our 6th annual Blessing of the Animals service. We have welcomed (and blessed) dogs, cats, rabbits, goats, chickens, a lizard, stuffed animals, and a number of pictures of favorite horses over the years. The pets have behaved extremely well, and their people have followed suit.

So on Christmas Day 2016, we will hold one service only, at 10:30 am, and pets on leashes are invited to attend.



Dear Friends,

I want to thank you for your continued support of Presby Cats, and in particular me, as I have gone through studies at MSU. You have seen me through a period of incredible growth and helped me through times of grieving and joy over the past 5+ years. It has meant more than I can possibly express to have been part of this church while I've been here. I'm looking forward to my next adventure as I move to Boise, ID to work for Hewlett Packard Enterprise as a Software Engineer. Know that I will miss this community and sharing my music with you, but I will forever treasure this time.

If you ever find yourselves in the Boise area, please reach out to me!

Again, thank you for all you have done for me and God's blessings to you in the future.

Monica Whitaker

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**Be an Advocate for Your Community!
YOUR presence, YOUR voice matter**

SAVE THE DATE!!

WHAT: MAC Day at the Legislature 2017
Citizen Lobbying and Luncheon

WHEN: January 23, 2017
All Day

WHERE: Capitol Rotunda in Helena, MT

Join us on a bus and head to the state capitol!

The Montana Association of Christians (MAC) and YOU will meet with our senators and representatives on important social justice issues this 2017 Legislative Session.

- Hospitality toward vetted and documented immigrants and humane treatment for all
 - Children & Strengthening Families
 - Prisoner Reintegration
 - Abolition of the Death Penalty

Get on the BUS!

Buses will be departing from **Great Falls, Billings, Bozeman, and Missoula.**

You can fuel up with complimentary coffee and pastries during the ride to Helena. We will prepare you for the day with up to date information on specific bills and who to meet up with during our time at the Capitol.



What you Need to Know for MAC Day!

Check out MAC's four priority issues and decide which one YOU are most passionate about! Visit <http://www.macmt.org/legislative-agenda.html> to learn more about our key issues.

Go to <http://www.macmt.org/advocacy-toolbox.html> to find your legislators and request a meeting during the luncheon at 11:15 in the Rotunda on January 23, 2017.

Sign –up with our newsletter to receive the most up to date information at macmt.org. More information and details will be sent through our newsletter, and posted on our event page on macmt.org.

Can't join us?

You can still be an advocate, your voice still matters. Contact us at mac@macmt.org or through our web page to learn how you can be there in spirit!

**Like us and follow us on Facebook
@MontanaAssociationofChristians
& Twitter @MT_Christians**



Birthdays this week

*12/15 Mary Hektner
12/16 Larry Gowney
12/19 Ashely Hickert*

The fall Church Directories are hot off the press, please pick one up at the church office or in the back of the sanctuary.



Drop off your prescription and non-prescription eye glasses and dark glasses as well as hearing aids and cell phones in the Bozeman Lions Club collection box across from the bulletin board as you enter the fellowship hall at the east entrance. For information contact Richard Reiley at 388-7840 or <http://e-clubhouse.org/sites/bozemanmt> .

Holland-days...

by Dan Holland

I learned a new song this week. It was during the process of planning the worship service for Christmas at Rockhaven. The service will include lots of interconnected parts and collaborations, so we have been bouncing ideas off each other. As a part of that Scott and Emily Thrasher asked me if I was familiar with the song *How Can I Keep from Singing?*. I had to admit that wasn't familiar with it. Fortunately I have a friend that is familiar with every song ever sung, Mr. Google.

The words to the song first appeared as a poem in the New York Observer in 1868. A year later Robert Lowry put music to the words and published them together in a song book entitled *Bright Jewels for the Sunday School*. My friend then goes on to tell me that the Quakers adopted the song as one of their hymns and it slowly grew in prominence. I reprint, without permission, those original words below:

My life flows on in endless song;	No storm can shake my inmost calm
Above earth's lamentation,	While to that refuge clinging;
I hear the sweet, tho' far-off hymn	Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
That hails a new creation;	How can I keep from singing?
Thro' all the tumult and the strife	I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin;
I hear the music ringing;	I see the blue above it;
It finds an echo in my soul—	And day by day this pathway smooths,
How can I keep from singing?	Since first I learned to love it,
What tho' my joys and comforts die?	The peace of Christ makes fresh my
The Lord my Saviour liveth;	heart,
What tho' the darkness gather round?	A fountain ever springing;
Songs in the night he giveth.	All things are mine since I am his—
	How can I keep from singing?

I mention that these are the original words, because there have been changes throughout the years. In the 1950s Doris Plenn changed some of the words to make it less a Christian anthem and more a protest song. Pete Seger and other folk singers began to sing this new version and brought the song into even greater prominence. My friend is all too happy to show you video clips of many different recordings of this song.

I point this out not to demonstrate how clever I am at navigating the internet. Rather it is because I have been struck by the simplicity of the title of the song. How can I keep from singing? Although it is not a Christmas song, it does highlight a truth of our Advent tradition. We can't help but sing to celebrate our Savior's birth. May you sing long and loud.