



*Family and Youth Corner:*  
*by James Norris*

**“Contentment”**

I’ve always found it strange that Black Friday comes the morning directly after Thanksgiving. In fact, many stores are opening earlier and earlier to the point that some people actually begin lining up for black Friday deals *on* Thanksgiving Day. One is supposed to be a day wherein we stop working and gather together with our families to give thanks and celebrate the blessings that God has shown to us over the previous year. It’s a day of reflection and celebration and one of the days I most look forward to every autumn. However, the next morning is when we as a culture put Thanksgiving behind us and begin thinking about Christmas; not as our minds are turned toward the incarnation, but, rather, toward presents and getting the best deals on the newest things. These two days seem so very opposite to me in their views of contentment, which is why I find it so strange they’re next to one another, even over-lapping in practice!

I don’t bring this up to be a curmudgeon. I certainly love giving and receiving gifts (and in the most *inexpensive* way possible). But I do want to exhort us toward Christian contentment in the midst of a culture that screams for you to want more, more, and more. There is a mentality around the holidays that seems to fly in the face of the tenth commandment.

As Christians, we’re called to reflect Christ, who laid aside the riches of heaven to become a humble servant for our sakes. The Apostle Paul exhorts us then to “have this mind among yourselves” (Phil. 2:5-8). So, instead of thinking about what gifts you want, think about new ways, big and little, that you can serve those around you. You could volunteer to help clean around the house, even when it’s not your turn. You could rake your neighbors’ leaves for them. You could babysit for free, giving a young couple a desperately needed night out. If you ask your parents, I’m sure they can find many ways for you to help!

As we continue to give thanks for all of God’s goodness toward us (try writing down a list of all the prayers God has answered this year!), let’s remember that we are not of this world, so we ought not to think like this world. Instead, let’s encourage one another to be content with what God has provided and serve others as Jesus did. “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:19-21).

~James Norris

**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD UPDATE:** We received 67 gift-filled shoe boxes for Samaritan’s Purse Operation Christmas Child this year! Pray that the gospel of Jesus Christ will be shared with each child and family and that they would look to Christ as their Lord and Savior. ~Thank you!

**Jr & Sr High Christmas Party**  
**Friday, December 11, 6:30 PM**



For more information, please contact James Norris (norrismeister@gmail.com).



**MISSIONARY MISSIVE:**

*Steve and Hilary Walton*

*Ministry to the Military International – PCA*

*By Carolyn Root*

Covenant Fellowship Church in Stuttgart continues to grow, even though the number of attendees fluctuates from one week to the next. Three new families have joined the church. Two young men who have been attending since the first service have come to faith in Christ and joined their parents as communicant members. One new family drives all the way from Ulm to worship there. An American family who joined recently had their two youngest children, ages 7 and 9, baptized; and the parents and oldest son, 11, took membership vows. The evening service, which has a German translator, has attracted many Germans seeking a faithful church.

Robin Dammer, the young German man who has preached at the church several times, has completed his Biblical school studies and is now considering a call to plant a church in Munich, or possibly to attend seminary in the U.S. He is a gifted young man with a heart for spreading the Gospel. Please pray for his decisions regarding this call.

This past summer the Waltons traveled back to the States. Steve preached and shared about their ministry. The family celebrated Steve’s parents’ 50th wedding anniversary in Arkansas along with Steve’s sister and her family. Then they drove to Georgia, where Steve had chaplain training and attended the PCA General Assembly. Hilary attended some events for wives of chaplains and training for teaching English as a second language. At the close of General Assembly, Steve and Branch returned to Germany. Branch finished out his school year, which ended July 31. Sam and Hilary stayed another two weeks, so that Sam could take a driver’s education class and pass his test for his license, visit three colleges, and attend Winthrop University’s freshman orientation. Sam’s decision to attend Winthrop was influenced by its well-established photography program, RUF program, and a PCA church nearby. Being close to both Asheville and Greenville, he has a good network of support.

They also found a good school for Branch to attend which would prepare him for college in the U.S. He is now attending 8th grade at the International Christian School of Stuttgart, and preparing to attend high school at Black Forest Academy, a boarding school about 2½ hours away. It has many things he needs and the sports teams he very much desires.

In July Hilary assisted at Camp des Cimes, a Christian camp in Bourg d’Oisin, France. She and a couple from Texas cooked lunch and dinner – hard work but refreshing.

Please pray for the Waltons’ ministry and for adjustments for them and their sons while away at school. They are thankful for your support and for the many accommodating friends who provided fellowship, meals, and lodging during their summer visit. Steve and Hilary would love to have visitors and short- or long-term help (elders, deacons, Sunday school teachers, biblical counselors, just friends... etc.) to come alongside to assist the work there. Visits under 90 days require no visa. If you are available and interested in participating, please contact them.

**Mailing Address:**

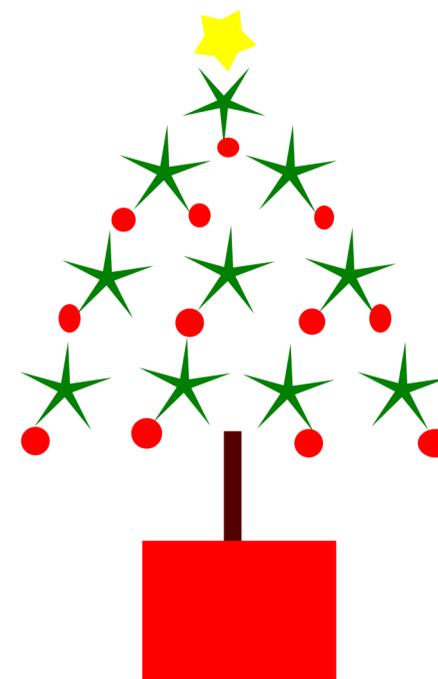
Rev. and Mrs. Steve Walton  
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**Address for Contributions:**

Covenant Fellowship Church – Stuttgart  
P.O. Box 657  
Waynesville, NC 28786  
(no personal notes to this address)

*December 2015*

*January 2016*



*Fellowship Presbyterian*  
*Church*

# DECEMBER 2015 & JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

## Fellowship Presbyterian Church

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### “Christmas Memories”

by Martin H. Martin

As we are all entering the last month of the year, scurrying about to finish projects at work and to get ready for the coming holidays, I have been reflecting a bit on three of my favorite Christmases. I share these thoughts with the hope that they will in some way encourage us as we celebrate the incarnation of our Savior.

In some ways, my most memorable Christmas is the first I celebrated as a Christian. I did not, like many of you, come to Christ as a child. I do not remember attending special Christmas services when I was young; or if we did, my heart was too cold to take notice. For me, Christmas was about stuff! I looked forward to getting toys, and the older I got the more expensive they became. Since I doubt any of our children read these articles, I will confess that in the weeks prior to Christmas I would sneak around finding what “Santa” might have stashed around the house! I could not wait for Christmas morning when I got to open my toys and wander around the neighborhood with the other kids showing one another what we got.

The Christmas of 1979, however was different. I walked down the stairs long before Mom & Dad got up (they had threatened me with death if I woke them before a certain hour!); but instead of turning right into the living room with the Christmas tree, I turned left into the den, turned on the TV and found a Christmas service. I cannot remember anything in the pastor’s message, and I don’t remember what presents I opened later, but I remember it was the first time that Christmas meant more to me than just giving and receiving gifts.

That is not to say that I don’t enjoy giving and getting gifts. In fact, the second occasion I want to share had to do with *how many gifts* we got that Christmas. I suspect many of us have experience the “too much” syndrome of Christmas – we have so many presents we can’t all find a place to sit to open them, we have to periodically stop to collect the old wrapping paper and take it outside, and the younger kids seem to be so caught up with opening the next gift that they don’t stop to appreciate the one they are holding in their hand.

One of my favorite Christmases is the one on which we each got just three gifts. It wasn’t because we were that broke, though we all feel broke after Christmas! It was because Celanie and I decided to simplify the holiday, to make it less about a room full of stuff and more about the coming of Christ and enjoying time with one another. And I think everybody enjoyed their three gifts more than the sofa-full they have had some other years.

Finally, some of my most precious memories of Christmases have been when it has fallen on a Sunday, and this is why – Celanie and I have really enjoyed gathering with our church family at Fellowship! We love seeing everyone show up in their new clothes and Christmas sweaters to join our hearts in praise to Christ Jesus, our God and Creator, who became a fully human child to live, die and

rise for our salvation! That has happened twice since I have been at Fellowship. On one occasion it was during a time when some were going through terribly difficult things in their lives. On the other it seemed to be a pretty “normal” time. But on both occasions I remember how much we loved being with the body on a Lord’s Day when we specifically celebrated the incarnation.

So let me encourage you in this season to enjoy some “family time” that will be in some ways a *first* and in others a *last*. Consider that this will likely be the *last* Christmas we celebrate in our current sanctuary! It will be wonderful to worship next year in our new sanctuary. In fact, in 2016 Christmas will again fall on a Sunday! But our current sanctuary has served as a gathering place for the saints for over thirty years! Some of us remember our children fidgeting in the seat next to us! Some of us set our children in the floor in their car carriers, whereas they now sit next to us with heads higher than ours! The Lord has blessed us beyond measure, so let it be a time to reflect on His goodness as we gather to praise His name.

Finally, Let me encourage you with a *first* – this December will be our *first-ever Christmas Eve Service* at Fellowship Presbyterian Church! On December 24 at 5:00 PM we will gather for a simple celebration as the household of faith. This will be something different than our Service of Lessons and Carols on December 13 – that service will be more elaborate with a reception to follow. But on Christmas Eve we will gather for a brief service – to sing a number of our favorite Christmas carols and hear a brief homily from the Word of Christ. We won’t all see each other on Christmas day; but for those able to make it, we will celebrate together as a family on Christmas Eve. We hope you can make it!

Whether this Christmas season is one of difficult providences for you or unusual blessing from the Lord, take the time to celebrate and give praise to our Savior, who set aside His rightful place in glory, to live in humble poverty as a baby and a man, to purchase our salvation and adopt us into His family!

Grace and peace, Pastor Marty



### Lessons & Carols:

**Sunday, December 13, 6:00 PM**

(Followed by a **Christmas Reception**)

Our traditional service of **Lessons & Carols**

(Scripture readings, choir anthems and congregational carols) will be held

**Sunday, December 13, at 6:00 PM**, followed by a **Christmas Reception**  
(heavy hors d’oeuvres & Christmas cookies/ desserts).

**Please sign-up to bring** a tray of **hors d’oeuvres** or a **Christmas dessert**.

**Sign-up sheet is in the narthex.**

**Christmas Eve with the Family!**

**Thursday, December 24, 5:00pm:**

(**Christmas Eve Service**)

**Remember to invite your friends and neighbors!**

Extra Bible bookmarks, “**Advent Readings for December**”  
are available in the narthex.



### CHURCH NOTES:

The sacrament of the **Lord’s Supper** will be celebrated during **morning worship on Sunday, December 6 & Sunday, January 10** and in the evening on **Sunday, January 24** (a **Mercy Offering** will be received during this service as well).

The Adult Choir will rehearse **Sundays, 4:30 PM.**

**Wednesday Suppers Resume January 13 with Pizza & Work Night!**

Plan to join us **Wednesday, Jan. 13** for **Supper** (pizza, salad & dessert) followed by a **Work Night** (set up tables, etc. for next Sunday’s lunch)

**Note: Regular Wednesday Suppers & Activities Begin January 20**  
**5:30 PM: Supper** (catered meal; cost: \$3.50/adult, \$2.50/child, \$15 max/family)  
**6:30 PM: Devotional & Prayer Time** (adults); **Catechism** (children)

The office will be closed **December 21—January 1**  
for **Christmas and New Year’s holidays.**



There are **Session meetings** scheduled for **Monday, December 11 & January 14, 7:00 PM.**

*Ladies, you are invited to attend a **Baby Shower** in honor of*

***McCuley Stubbs (& daughter!)***

***Thursday, January 7, 7:00 PM, Fellowship Hall.***



**Sunday, January 17, 11:00 am:**  
**Dedication Service for Our New Sanctuary!**

**February Newsletter deadline is Tuesday, January 19.**



*The Ladies’ Tuesday Morning Precepts Bible Study (an inductive study of the book of Ephesians) will begin **Tuesday, January 26, 9:45—11:15 A.M.** at the church (child care available). Sign up sheet is in the narthex.*

### SERVING IN DECEMBER:

Elder of the Month: Garry Moes    Deacon of the Month: Jeff Wayne, Jr.  
Greeters of the Month: Grayson & Eliza Martin    Nursery Coordinator: Angela Stubbs  
Security Coordinator: Frank Murphy    Ushers: Troy High, Ron Reinink & Bill Wilder



### SERVING IN JANUARY:

Elder of the Month: Terry Richards    Deacon of the Month: Sam Stubbs  
Greeters of the Month: Michael & Erika Grasso    Nursery Coordinator: Angela Stubbs  
Security Coordinator: Frank Murphy    Ushers: Troy High, Ron Reinink & Bill Wilder

