



# The News of Las Placitas Presbyterian Church

## December 2009

### From the Pastor's Study

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here - Until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel - Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

We want it right now! We live in an instantaneous world, with immediate news and e-mails instead of snail mail. We can buy our gifts over the Internet without ever leaving our desks. Our cars are fast. Our food is faster, and our world seems to be changing the fastest of all.

In the malls and in our mailboxes, Christmas is already here. Shopping days are counted, maybe shopping hours. Party dates are already filled in. The pre-Christmas sales have already begun. Lights are up, decorations are out, the Christmas pounds are already beginning to show on the waistline. Christmas music is blaring everywhere....

Except here. There is still some darkness here—mournful plain songs—old songs of want—of waiting. Haven't we waited enough? Especially here? It's been two years without an installed pastor, we have just now elected a PNC—we know about waiting....

But something happens in the waiting, in the watching. We begin to see how much we are missing. How much we really need. How much we have taken for granted. You have learned much in your waiting.

In the deepening gloom, the gathering darkness of Advent, we begin desperately to search for light. The Light. The Light that was coming into the world. Without the darkness, the Light would lose its meaning.

Christmas is the time to celebrate the coming of the Light into the world. It is time to proclaim "unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given, and his name shall be Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." The Savior of the Nations. Our Savior. Only when we encounter the worlds and our own ache for

salvation can we truly celebrate with joy the birth of Jesus.

The waiting will end. The sanctuary and our hearts will burst with the songs of Christmas. We will run through the night to kneel at the manger. But it is night we will run through, appreciating the light of the Daystar even more for what we have come through.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel - Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

Blessings, Elizabeth



### Worship in December

This Advent we are looking at the ways that God calls to us to be present in the miracle of Christmas. Nov. 29, we are called to watch and wait. Dec 6, we are called to be part of the miracle. On Dec 13, we are called to share the story with our children as we celebrate the Children's Pageant. December 20, we are called to remember using the wonderful words of the Christmas readings from Scripture and the music of our Christmas Cantata. On **Christmas Eve at 7:30pm**, we are called to celebrate the birth of Jesus – God coming down to be with us forever. On December 27, we are called to remember our baptisms as we rejoice with Jeff and Elizabeth D and Angela P at the baptisms of their children.

### Sing it Again One last Time

Sunday, December 27 at 9:15am – Join us for this casual worship service and carol sing. Send Pastor Elizabeth your Christmas Carol requests. Bring your children and grandchildren in their pajamas and let them stay for this special service. We will also celebrate the baptisms of Thomas and Jonah D and Raven P during worship.

### Pieces of Art

This Advent and Christmas season, our bulletin covers will be drawings made by our Sunday School children. Look for some wonderful creativity!

### **Advent Meditation Books are here**

Please pick a copy and make this part of your daily practice during Advent. It will truly make Christmas much more meaningful.

### **Poinsettias will decorate the Sanctuary the Sunday before Christmas. Luminarias will decorate the church grounds on Christmas Eve.**

If you would like to celebrate, honor or memorialize someone or some occasion, please fill out the form found in the bulletin. Poinsettias are \$10 each. Luminarias are \$10 per dozen. If you are writing a check to LPPC, note "Poinsettia/Luminarias" on the memo line. Place the form in the offering plate, or drop by or mail to the church office (867-5718).



### **Blessings Day Christmas Project**

"It is more blessed to give, than to receive."

Las Placitas Presbyterian Church is joining with the San Antonio Mission again this year in a Christmas Project called Blessings Day.

The names of children are collected from the Sandoval County Area local elementary schools, Placitas, Algodones and other Sandoval County Schools plus all the families with children from Casa Rosa.

The Rio Rancho Bikers Run collects toys and the Sandoval County Sheriff's Department delivers them to the mission to be wrapped and then delivers all the bags to the families. The Jardinières de Placitas, will supply the turkeys from T&T and there are food boxes set up at Albertson's and other places for collection of canned goods for the family food boxes.

The cards with the children's names will be available on November 15 in Fellowship Hall. Two families might like to go together if it is a large family. The cards will contain a name, sex & size for clothing.

Suggestions are: pants & a shirt, warm ups & for the little ones. There are a lot of clothing sets of pants & tops available at stores. Just remember, these children don't have much so anything will be welcome. Good used clothing is also appropriate if it is in really good condition. These gifts should be wrapped and the card securely fastened to the package. We don't want to miss anyone. Please bring your presents to the church by December 5.

Help is needed to wrap the toys and put the boxes together at San Antonio Mission on Saturday, December 12 from 10:00am to 4:00 pm and on Sunday, December 13, from 11:00 am till 4:00 pm. Please stop by.

You may also contribute a cash donation if you so desire. Please make the check out to Society of St Vincent de Paul, Inc and see that Joan D, Bill L, Charlotte L or Clara S gets them. They will see that you get a tax donation receipt.

Remember we are all blessed, even in these hard times, so let us share some of what we have with those that are not as blessed as we are.

This effort has been coordinated with LPPC Fellowship, the Deacons and the folks from The San Antonio Mission to make it a success.

### **New LPPC mugs are now available for purchase**

If you would like to help support the new freezer fund as well as go home with a beautiful LPPC mug, please stop by the Fellowship Hall after the services on November 29, December 4 and 11. The entire proceeds of \$10 each will be donated to the freezer fund. Many thanks for your support from the Membership Committee.

**Please turn in your Time and Talent Surveys** as soon as possible if you have not done so before, or are making changes to your commitment. Thanks!

**Following is a note from Sharon M** who has relocated to Tulsa, OK. If you would like her new address, contact the office.

"Dear LPPC Friends:

Thanks for the wonderful send-off last Sunday. It has been such a blessing being a part of LPPC for the last 16 years. I will never forget the many joys we shared, as well as the prayers for my twin granddaughters and how you grieved and comforted me when my dear Jim died. You are all very special and will always have a place in my heart. May the peace of Christ be with you!" ~SM

### **Light a Candle for Hope: Prayer Vigil for International Climate Change Meeting in Copenhagen—Wednesday, Dec. 2, 5:00-6:30pm.**

Sponsored by: New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light in collaboration with Cathedral Church of St. John Episcopal and other faith communities.

Gather at Civic Plaza in downtown Albuquerque and walk in candlelight procession to Cathedral Church of St. John Episcopal, 318 Silver for interfaith prayer vigil. (Bring your own candle.)

### **Monday Night Adult Study**

Come join the Monday night group. They will meet the first two Mondays of December at 7:00pm in the Upper Room. There will be a viewing and discussion of the DVD, "A Child's Christmas in Wales" on December 14.

### **Christian Education for Children**

Plans are underway for our annual Christmas program on December 13 that will include youth, Sunday Schoolers and the "littlest" angels. Come and join us for this special worship service and stay for the tamale dinner.

### **Annual Tamale Dinner Potluck**

On December 13 after worship, don't miss our annual church family celebration of the Christmas season featuring the traditional holiday food of our founders—delicious tamales, red or green, beef or chicken, supplemented by YOUR POTLUCK contributions. Bring your special holiday side dish or dessert to share with the group following the children's Christmas pageant. Tamales may also be ordered ahead of time and picked up that day. Price is \$16/dozen for pork with red chili, and \$18/dozen for chicken with green chili.

### **Women's Bible Study – Christmas Brunch**

Join us from 10:00 to 11:30 am on December 9 for a Christmas breakfast potluck and sharing of Christmas stories at Elaine S's house. The group meets again on the second Wednesday of January (13).

### **Sunday Morning Adult Forum – The Road to Bethelam – 9:15–10:15 am, Upper Room**

Dec 6—Pastor Elizabeth will lead us in an exploration of The Road to Bethlehem—A look at how the story of Christmas has changed in the past 2000 years.

Dec 13—The Road to Bethlehem, Part 2—Our stories of Christmas

Dec 20, 27 and January 3 - NO Adult Forum.

### **Christmas Open House –December 20, 3-5pm**

Take a breather from your Christmas preparations and join Elizabeth and Ben for some Christmas goodies and fellowship.

### **Solstice Poetry by Candlelight at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church**

Winter settles on the mountain and the cold moves downwards. The north facing slopes hold the snow now. The Elders huddle at the crest and pull their green and white blankets snug. The longest night is coming. Solstice.

You can celebrate this passage and welcome back the slowly stretching days at the Winter Solstice Candlelight Poetry Reading at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church, scheduled for Monday, December 21, at 7PM in the sanctuary—a tradition now for twelve years.

This year's theme is "Winter and the Mountain," and some twelve poets from Placitas and other parts Southwest will each read a poem to the light of a single burning candle. Each poem is followed by a short interlude of silence to provide the listeners (as well as the poets) a moment of contemplation at the close of another year.

After the readings, refreshments will be served in the church's fellowship hall--a chance to meet and chat with this year's readers.

The Winter Solstice readings are a regular offering of the Earth Care Fellowship at LPPC and The Partnership for Earth Spirituality, as part of the Earth Vespers series.

All are invited. If you have questions about this year's event, please contact John G at 867-5718.



### **Christmas Joy Offering Are You Prepared for Christmas Joy?**

For more than seventy-five years an offering at Christmas has been a Presbyterian tradition. Gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering support eight racial ethnic schools and colleges related to the PC (USA) and the Assistance Programs of the Board of

Pensions, which benefit active and retired workers of the PC (USA) during times of need. Through the Board of Pensions Financial Assistance Programs, the Christmas Joy Offering recognizes the faithfulness of current and retired church workers by providing funds to help them through difficult times.

To help retired church workers and their surviving spouses, the board offers Income Supplements to raise incomes to a level where retirees can live modestly and continue to maintain their independence.

Each of these grants is an expression of Presbyterians' faithful witness to and sharing of the love of Christ for all people. Shared and Emergency Assistance Grants can help people with various financial needs resulting from unavoidable problems: an unemployed spouse, a flood or tornado, a seriously ill child, or unexpected family expenses. Again and again, recipients of grants large and small say that as important as the financial assistance was, what really sustained them was the knowledge that the church was standing with them in their time of need. Our Joy Offering will be taken on Sunday, December 20 and on Christmas Eve.

## **Casa Rosa Continues to Grow as Holidays Approach**



Each week the food bank has one or two or several new consumers that come on Saturday morning to participate in what is offered at Casa Rosa. During the month of October the number of clients swelled to 64 households on one Saturday and 61 on another. With Thanksgiving approaching we were wondering how we were going to provide that many consumers with Thanksgiving dinner. Then the blessings began to flow in.

Bruce S and his wife Grayce, who sponsored Casa Rosa's first Mobile Food Pantry last February, called and offered to donate fifty-two turkeys. These were coordinated and distributed by the Deacons to Casa Rosa consumers as well as others in the Placitas area that might not otherwise have had as bountiful a Thanksgiving dinner. LPPC members and friends, La Puerta Realty, and Casa Rosa (via Roadrunner) provided other items for the baskets. The Deacons supplied any missing items to complete the holiday dinner boxes, supplemented from the Deacon's fund. It was truly a concerted joint effort.

Additionally, John S, State Farm Agency, arranged a Thanksgiving Day Turkey Feast Giveaway, joined by community partners Southwest Ice Cream of New Mexico, Wal-Mart, and PB&J Family Services. Twenty-five complete Thanksgiving dinner baskets were provided, specifically for Casa Rosa clients. Numbered tickets for the baskets were distributed at Casa Rosa and then picked up by the

participants in Bernalillo the weekend before Thanksgiving.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to all the generous individuals, businesses and LPPC members and friends who made it possible for so many people in the Placitas area to enjoy a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner this year. We are always grateful for all the blessings that are poured out on Casa Rosa.

The Holiday Sale, where Casa Rosa had the "Adobe House" pins and a limited number of "Women" pins for sale, was a big success. The *Designs by Lucinda* pins were on sale at the table in the big tent as well as in Fellowship Hall outside the Chili Pepper Café. Many people bought "The Gift that Gives Twice." The profit from each pin sold allows the food bank to provide approximately thirteen meals to Casa Rosa consumers.

Coats for Casa Rosa project continues through the winter months. We have received coats, sweaters and other warm garments from members and friends of LPPC as well as La Puerta Realty, Jardineros de Placitas, and community members. At least twenty coats/sweaters are given out each week at Casa Rosa so the need is ongoing for gently used items. Clean out those closets and bring any coats, sweaters, hats, gloves, and scarves that are in good repair and that you no longer need. All will be greatly appreciated at the "pink house".

Upcoming events include a food and beauty product drive held at La Bonne Vie Beauty Shop and Spa prior to Christmas. Coming up in January, Deborah at YogaCrossroads, a small business in Placitas, will be having a food and toiletry drive for Casa Rosa. She will offer free yoga lessons for a fee of five nonperishable food items or toiletries.

Another upcoming event that many Casa Rosa clients will be recipients of is Blessings Day. This Christmas project was started seven years ago by the Optimist International Club in Placitas and has been continued by St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Mission, LPPC, Jardineros de Placitas, Italian American Club in Rio Rancho, and the Sandoval County Sheriff's Department. The purpose is to see that children who might not otherwise receive Christmas presents, do receive gifts, and that families receive food for a Christmas dinner. The staff at Casa Rosa has collected information from families for participation in this holiday event.

We continue to need volunteers on Friday mornings for the offloading and shelving of food from Roadrunner. The truck arrives between 8:45 and 9:15 and we are usually finished by 11:00am. We also need volunteers on Saturday morning for distribution to the clients—early shift 8:30-10:30am or second shift 10:30am-12:30pm. The early shift is always the busiest and needs the most volunteers.

Volunteers are also needed for the next Mobile Food Pantry being held Wednesday, December 9, with distribution 10:00am-12:00noon. We have five volunteers from Sandoval Civitan already, but we usually need about twelve people to process all the food, monitor the tables, assist consumers with their bags, and clean up afterward. Please join us!

If you can volunteer for any of these times please contact Charlotte L through the church office (867-5718) or Ginny R, Volunteer Coordinator.

Thank you to all who have expressed Thanksgiving and the true meaning of Christmas by giving to those less fortunate. I have learned over the years that when I give to others it is returned fourfold to me.

## Meet our Members!

### BUNNY B



Bunny was born in Beaumont, TX when her Dad was stationed there in the Navy. Her Mom was from Virginia. After the service, the family moved to Roanoke, VA where Bunny grew up. She graduated from Randolph Macon Women's College with a degree in Art Studio. She has always loved art and started at the age of nine painting in oils. Bunny actually was given a scholarship to Randolph Macon in biology but soon discovered her real passion was art. Bunny loved school and as a result was valedictorian of her high school class and a member of Phi Beta Kappa in college.

Bunny's nick name came from her grandmother who after seeing a rabbit in chenille on her baby blanket, called her Bunny. It stuck.

While a senior in high school, Bunny earned first place in the southwest Virginia Science Fair. That award earned her a trip to the International Science Fair in Albuquerque. Bunny fell in love with Albuquerque and the southwest, and told her science teacher that she was going to live here someday. After earning her under graduate degree,

Bunny decided to pursue her Master's degree at UNM in Art History and has lived here every since.

Bunny met Leland at the First Baptist church in Albuquerque where his Dad was a Deacon. After marrying, Bunny worked for the Folk Art Museum in Santa Fe for ten years. She traveled the US researching textiles until the children were born. Then she was a research associate for the museum and worked from home. After living in Albuquerque, they moved to Placitas in 1975. They wanted to move to Placitas because of the open spaces that Bunny remembered and loved from living in Virginia. Catherine H's husband built their home where they still reside. Her children were 1 and 3 at the time.

Bunny's interest in batiks started in 1980 when a visiting artist from Australia taught the batik process to the Mom's of kids at Placitas Elementary School for one week. She has pursued this line of art since then. She has traveled to Japan twice – she said it was hard to beat the cherry blossoms in Kyoto. She purchases her kimono silk in Kyoto and will be taking another trip there this year (2009). She has been hosted twice in Kuala Lumpur, which was quite an honor. The people there show amazing hospitality. Her art has taken her to exotic places and has given her the opportunity to meet some extraordinary people in her close knit art community. Bunny hopes to someday travel to Scandinavia and New Zealand.

Bunny has been a studio artist since 1975. One of her greatest achievements was being chosen as the Featured Artist at the 2009 Fiber Arts Fiesta in Albuquerque. She also met Georgia O'Keefe when Georgia came to Randolph Macon to receive an honorary degree. Georgia was asked to critique the student artist's work. Her comment on Bunny's work was that the painting was very good but not the frame! (A photo of Georgia and Bunny is on the Membership kiosk).

The three things that Bunny wouldn't like to live without are: living by a mountain, having open space around her and having a place to make a mess! Her favorite TV program growing up was Bonanza.

The Bowens have been members at LPPC since 1980. She really likes being part of a local faith community. She loves that we are welcoming, supportive spiritually and open to diversity.

## Some History

When the Bowen's first joined LPPC, service was in the Upper Room and enchilada dinners and many other social activities were in the basement where the kitchen was located. There were usually 30 people worshipping in the Upper Room on any Sunday and the pews were nearly as comfortable as they are now.

The "toilet situation" seems to always be mentioned in these profiles. Since Willie's time, the new toilet had water that flushed and was located where the Sanctuary is now. There were two but one wasn't working. Since the electric to the single light bulb didn't work, the door had to be open while in use so you could first see where the resident spider was and then find your way. If the door was closed you knew no one was using the facility.

At this time there was an extension agent who came out monthly to teach the adults 4H projects. They learned several unique crafts such as how to make pinto bean fudge and how to repair the fan belt on a vehicle with a pair of panty hose. This was in the late 70's and early 80's.

The Bowen's would visit Vivian G. D's parents to pick apricots in the village. The Spanish settlers had planted the apricot and other fruit trees. Bunny has a huge apricot tree in her back yard as a result of pits going into their compost pile. There used to be so many fruit trees in the Village that the blossoms in the springtime looked like you were in a fairy land.

There were usually 30 people worshipping in the Upper Room on any Sunday with pews that weren't nearly as comfortable as they are now.—seems to repeat earlier sentence

Ed D was one of the early characters. He was an artist from Maine. He moved to Placitas after WWII. He built his home in Bernalillo and donated it to the Sandoval County historical Society. His home is where the historical society is located now next to Santa Ana casino. He kept the church in good working order doing painting and general maintenance. Ed also built some of the buildings in Old Town.

People might not know that Bunny's favorite job was during college when she worked on a small dude ranch in northern Colorado. She would prefer to live in a truly rural area by a mountain range. Placitas has been a compromise.

~Wendy I and Betty C

## Christmas at LPPC



### **December 6 – Second Sunday in Advent – Communion is celebrated**

8:15 & 10:30am worship services  
9:15 am - **Adult Forum** – “The Road to Bethlehem”  
– A look at how the story of Christmas has changed over the years – Led by Pastor Elizabeth

### **December 9 – Women’s Bible Study and Christmas potluck, 10-11:30am—Elaine Sullivan’s**

### **December 13 – Third Sunday in Advent**

8:15 and 10:30am worship services  
9:15 am - **Adult Forum** – “The Road to Bethlehem”  
Part 2 – Our stories of Christmas  
10:30 am Service– **Children’s Pageant - Tamale Dinner follows at 11:30am**

### **December 14 – Adult Study – 7:00pm - Viewing Dylan Thomas’ “A Child’s Christmas in Wales”**

### **December 20 – Fourth Sunday in Advent**

10:30am (one service only) - **A Christmas Cantata of Lessons and Carols**

3-6pm **Open House** at Pastor Elizabeth’s

### **December 21 – Winter Solstice Poetry Reading , “Winter and the Mountain ” – 7pm**

### **December 24 - Christmas Eve at Las Placitas!**

7:30pm –**Candlelight Service with Communion**  
Come for Las Posadas in the village and stay for the evening

### **December 25 – Merry Christmas! Office closed**

### **December 27 – First Sunday after Christmas – Baptism of Thomas and Jonah Dickson and Raven Perez.**

9:15 am (one service only) **Special Christmas Carol Service** followed by a **continental breakfast** at the Church.

### **December 31 – New Year’s Eve – Office open**

### **January 1, 2010 – Happy New Year! Office closed**

### **January 3 – Second Sunday after Christmas**

10:30am (one service only) – Guest Preacher

**January newsletter deadline:  
Monday, December 28th, noon**



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**Las Placitas Presbyterian Church**

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