

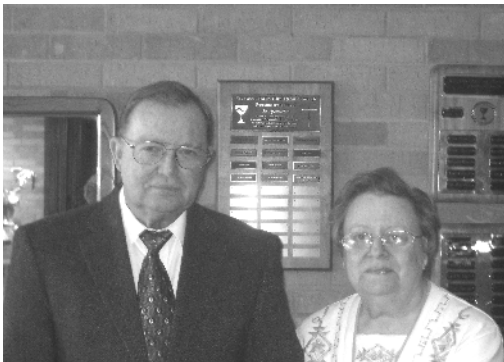
The OAKBRIDGE

Western Oaks Christian Church
8100 NW 23rd Street
789-8812

December 16, 2009

AMONG OUR OWN

Welcome New Members by Deana Smith, Membership



It is with great pleasure that we welcome our two newest members to WOCC. George and Dean Lunsford came forward Dec. 13, 2009. They have been worshipping with us for a number of months and transfer their membership from the First Christian Church of OKC.

Dean is a life long Disciple and George grew up in the Methodist Church. They enjoy our Fellowship Dinners and other special events like The Hanging of the Greens and Tasting Party. Of course, they also find Sunday morning worship meaningful.

George retired from the U.S. Postal Office in 1999. Dean is a homemaker and managed a needlework store for 5 1/2 years. She likes to quilt and scrapbook. George enjoys woodworking. These folks were married June 23, 1958, that would be 51 years ago! They have two daughters and one grandson. George and Dean live at 3113 Tudor Rd. Oklahoma City, OK 73122. Their phone number is 951-5933. Dean's e-mail is GrandmaDeanOKC@aol.com. Dean's birthday is April 6th and George's is March 4th. Please extend a warm welcome and make them feel right at home, as they become more acquainted with their new church family!

WELCOME

Youth News

by Shannon Fleck, Assistant Minister with Youth



It seems like a very quick 27 months ago that I composed my introduction letter for the Oakbridge. I remember writing the words about my life to that point and wondering what this new ministerial adventure would hold. I can report that this ministerial position has held many blessings and many adventures that have shaped my formation for ministry and I am very lucky to have had these many moments.

Alas, I find myself sitting and writing my farewell letter for the Oakbridge of Western Oaks Christian Church. I have made the decision to leave my position as the Assistant Minister with Youth at Western Oaks Christian Church effective January 1, 2010. This decision came after much struggle, prayer, heartbreak, and discernment; and did I mention prayer? However, in the end, I feel this is the decision I am called to make.


For the past two years, I have journeyed a minimum of 500 miles per week in order to fulfill obligations to both the seminary in Tulsa Oklahoma and Western Oaks. This commitment to commuting has taken its toll and I have reached a point of no longer being able to continue. This is simply a matter of pragmatics regarding my school schedule and location, after all, there is not much homework, reading or church work that gets completed while steering a car for several hours a week.

Additionally, I have started to feel a consistent call on my heart to explore more fully a call to Pastoral Ministry. This is something that has been bubbling inside of me, and something that deserves respectful discernment as I conclude the last 3 semesters of seminary. I owe this recognition of call to the confident and supportive hands of this congregation as you have allowed me to participate in our public worship settings over the last year.

Please know that I leave with this place etched on my life. You have welcomed me and loved me through my first official steps of ministry. There are far too many names to list on this page in recognition of my boundless thanks, so I simply say THANK YOU to all. Thank you for your support, grace and for your hearts. Please know that you will always have a piece of mine and that Western Oaks has been and always will be a comfortable and beautiful place of "home".



**Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
Thursday, December 24th
7:00 p.m.**



Children's News

by Ursula Lichtenberger, Associate Minister with Children



**Parents, Grandparents,
guests, and children,
Please join us as we
Meet the Christ Child
at the Children's Christmas Eve
Service
December 24th, 2009
5:00 p.m.
in Schwind Hall**



Staff Gifts

by Robert Frantz

During this Christmas Season, as Christians, we take time to slow down, recognize our life's blessings, spend time with our families and friends, and celebrate the gift of Jesus Christ to the world. As a congregation, we traditionally share our joys with our church staff through a special giving opportunity. There is no requirement, precedent or minimum giving level. This is a simply a chance to show our appreciation for their work in making our ministries more meaningful, effective, and enjoyable.

If you would like to participate in the gifts to the staff members, please use the special envelopes in the church bulletins and in the church foyers marked for staff gifts. We do request that those gifts be made by December 23rd so that they may be presented to the staff on December 27th this year.

Merry Christmas to All of our Church Family! *Robert Frantz*

Youth Minister Resigns

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee of Western Oaks Christian Church has been notified that Shannon Fleck our Assistant Minister with Youth has resigned her position, effective December 31, 2009. Shannon shared her decision with the youth group last Sunday night. (Please be sure to read Shannon's letter of farewell in this Oakbridge) We accept her resignation as we acknowledge all of the positive experiences which she has created for our youth and as we further acknowledge her dedication to the youth and to our youth program, her spiritual growth during her time at seminary, and the many blessings that her preaching and teaching have given to our whole congregation. Shannon will be honored at two receptions on Sunday, December 27th immediately following the 9:00 am and 11:00 am worship services. Please join us on this Sunday to say good bye and Godspeed.

REACHING OUR CITY

by Tom Russell, Community/Outreach Chairman

Kevin Rogers, Executive Director at R.O.C. writes, "Why do we do what we do, or why compassionate ministries?" His answer is, "It's what the people of God do."

During this very busy season, he sends Western Oaks Christian Church a big thank you for the Christmas toys donated. He also appreciates the cash gift from our church and the members who volunteered and helped with the toy distribution.

If you have not visited R.O.C., I urge you to go by 7710 N.W. 10th and see for yourself:

The Food Pantry

The Free Health Clinic for those without health insurance

The Child Development Center

The After School Program

The Vine (assisting women build skills for work and home)

The Legal Clinic

Another place to visit and drop off our excess stuff is the Resale Store at Rockwell and N.W. 16th south of the 7-11 store.



Letters from the Children of Western Oaks CC
(copied per original letter)
‘The Story of Jesus’ Birth in Bethlehem”



Mary & Josouph had a baby. His name was Jesus. Latter not far from the stayble. A angile told the 3 shepherd’s that there’s a baby. A lot of angiles sung a song called glory in the highest. So they went to where Jesus was. They told everyone that Jesus was born. A king herd about the new baby. 3 wise men got Jesus gold. But the king wanted him not to be the king so he tricked the wise men into making him to kill Jesus. (There were also animals.) A star in the sky shows the people Jesus.

Sebastian

Joeph and his feonsay mary went to the bethlaham to have a baby in a manger. A star came and then the shepereds that she will have a baby with stripes of cloth. Then the king meet up with some wisemen. (The wisemen brot him gold frankincencs and murny.) king said go and find the savor and when you find him come and tell me and I will join you. But the wisemen took another path and went to their own country.

Judge

One stary might Mary went to a hill to pray because she wanted to get as close to God as she could get. While she prayed she heard a voice when she looked up Mary saw God said “you will have my child.” Then Mary and her husband went forth to move to Jerulsalum after a month they found Jerulsalum and they ask the keeper of the houses if he has a place for them to stay he said there’s a stable were you can stay at and Mary and her husband went to the stable and that night three wiseman noticed the northern star was showing the brightest .So they took their prize possessions and went forth and followed the northern star and then found the stable that Mary and her husband were staying in and the three wisemena noticed all the sheperds were gathering there too for the birth of Jesus and at that same time that Jesus was being born Christmas was being born too.

Adrianna

After everybody went home Baby Jesus opened His birthday presents and played with them.

Jesse



Christmas is Jesus Birthday. He was born in a Brick House. A shooting star was over Bethleher and a guy was waving. Some other mans brought presents to Jesus but no cake.

Mandie

One night people came to a desert & they saw a shiny star shining very brightly very brightly in the night pointing some were at a manger so Mary & Joseve came to stay for shelter. Then the three wise men came to the King & the king said I'll tell you what...go to the child...then signal me & I'll goin your worship. So the three wise men went to the farm & gave peure gold to baby Jesus but...did not signal the king then came back to there city bethlaham & saw the true real king. The angels came and said do not be afraid for I have gust wonderful news: Jesus is going to be born today in this stable Mary and Joseve became very happy when they heard the wonderful news.

Erich

Josif and his feonsay went to the manegere and had the baby and the angel side to the shepperds Mary had her baby and all the people came to see him and this man side that he was going to try to kill him. The wise men came to see him and broy them Godl and stuff.

Ashley

Joseph and Mary went to bethlaham to be counted. They could not find a room at the inn. So they had to stay in a manager. And Mary had a baby named Jesus. And shapards were watching the sheep. Scholars came and then the wisemen came on camels and they brought him gold, frank-sencents, and Mur. The king wanted to kill him.

Alec

Mary and Joseph where walking through town they were thinking where was mary going to have her babe all the ins where full so they had to go to a manger the three wise man where led by a very bright light they had brought gifts for the baby, gold, mer, and another thing and at the night baby Jesus was born in a hay stack with other animals around. The End.

Jacob

Mary and Joseph had a baby and his name was Jesus. Mary was so happy and so was Joseph.

Lillian

Joseph was a carpenter. When Mary was going to have a baby. Joseph had know clue. Her parents either. Untill Mary told her parents. Her parents told her that see needed to move away. Mary told Joseph and told them they had to move to. So they moved away on donkey and stop at a stable. Joseph went to go find food befor Mary had her baby but it was to late. Joseph came running to the stable the baby was laying in the hay with his mom asleep.

Jordan

Thanksgiving Thanks!

by Fern Melton & Sandra Cook, Fellowship co-chairs

Heartfelt THANKS to EVERYONE who assisted with the Thanksgiving Dinner.

From moving tables, baking and serving pies, using the secret dressing recipes, mashing the tators, serving drinks, donating roasters, and just filing in where necessary we truly appreciate all the extra helpers. Approximately 250 members, extended families and friends were served on Sunday. What a blessing it was to break bread...and a few other goodies...with our extended families.

We have a lot to be thankful for at WOCC.



2009 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA DONATIONS

FROM	IN HONOR OF	IN MEMORY OF
Cathy Routon	My Grandchildren	
Charlene Newkirk & Charles Gilland		Dave Newkirk Aladine Gilland
Harvey & Rita Norris	Our Five Grandchildren	
Twila Ballard		Lloyd & Bernice Jorgensen (Her parents)
Vernon & Sandra Cook	Our Children & Grandchildren	
Ed & Mary Garrison		Lester & Gwen Alley George & Edith Garrison
Lonnie & Jane Maytubby		Our Parents: Lester & Gwen Alley, Chief & Sally Maytubby
John & Eunice Lassiter		Mary Ann Lassiter Frank Bachman
Christine & Jay Wagner & Erich Dr. Del Hamm		Greg Long Dolores Hamm
Bob & Dorothy Ferguson	59th Wedding Anniversary (12/27/09)	
Margo Thein		Ralph Thein
Gloria Davis		Bob Davis
Bobby & Dianne Beck	Children: Donella, Jason, Mitsy Grandchildren: Ethan & Lillian	
Carol Short		Bo Akin, Naomi Rice & Chuck Short
Vickie Moore		Mary, Hobart & Jimmy Moore
Bill & Sue Halpain		Our Parents
George & JoAnn Goodner	Our children's family: Ures & Caldwell	
Kari & Taylor Simmons	Mother: Shirley Kitchens	Father: Bud Kitchens
Carolyn Guthrie		Dr. Charles R. Guthrie
Ken & Linda Whitt	Jim & Brenda Whitt's Marriage	Our Parents & Uncle Art
Dorothy Uhl		Bill Uhl
Marilyn Chalk		Ray Chalk
Rema Emerson		Whitney Emerson & Frank Sessions
Bob & Deana Smith	Keith, Christina, Heather, Sheldon	Sheldon & Helen Smith
	Jill & Janet Smith	Lowell & Ruth Swansen
Pat Gentis		Mary Lou Gentis
Lonnie & Rita Walker		Wanita & Lonnie Walker, Mary Bearden
Lynda Smith	Abigail & Addison Smith (daughters)	

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE & TITHES / OFFERINGS

Dec 6	Contemporary Sunday Traditional Service	58 <u>167</u> 225	General Fund Capital Fund	\$ 9,789 1,837
			General Fund Capital Fund	\$ 9,824 3,355
Dec. 13	Contemporary Sunday Traditional Service	72 <u>151</u> 223	Capital Fund Christmas Offering	330

Year End Giving by John Regan

According to the IRS, charitable contributions given to the church must be received by December 31st in order to be tax deductible for this year. The church office will be opened until 12:00 noon on Thursday, December 31st. This has been a challenging year for our economy and families in our congregation. Like many congregations we are behind in our pledges for the 2009 general fund budget. If you are in a position to catch up on your pledge or you have fulfilled your pledge but can give a little more before the end of the year, the church would welcome your support! Thank you for your generosity and faithfulness!

PRAYER CONCERNS:

Judy Elam (sister of Shirley Ruedy); **Clara Barker, Heidi Scherler** (Faith Lairson's sister); **Mary Nelson; Nancy Porter, Wilmoth Thomas; Marlene Word**

Those serving our Country: **Don Bowman, Jonathan Mai** (friend of Robert Wilkerson); **Lucus DeKinder, Don Mercer** (son of Joe & Jane Mercer), **Leland Beason**, (McAffrey's nephew); **Phillip Ferguson**, (Bob/Dorothy Ferguson's grandson); **Becky Chown** (John Lassiter's granddaughter) Peace Corps -Central South Africa; **Jordy Rossoll** (friends of Wendy Wilkerson);

From the Pastor's Perspective:

by Rev. John Regan

Growing up in the Roman Catholic faith Christmas Eve was my favorite worship service. When I was ten years old I attended my first Midnight Mass. We arrived early at 11:30pm to sing carols and enjoy pre service music. The church was full with people standing in the aisles. During the procession the church filled with incense. Communion was the last act of worship before we headed home. About 1:15 am we gathered at the family dinner table to share our Christmas morning breakfast. After the meal we opened our presents around the Christmas tree. My brothers and I stayed up into the wee hours to play with our stuff and my parents went to bed. This became our annual tradition for years to come. Some of my most joyous family memories are from Christmas Eve. I pray that your family will share the rich Christian tradition of song, worship, communion, and candlelight this Christmas Eve. If your are in town we will see you at 7:00 pm in our sanctuary. This year invite a friend or neighbor who may be alone. During the holidays we are called to be light and warmth to those who are hurting and cold. Never underestimate the power of a single candle on Christmas Eve!

Grace and Peace,

John