

# MCPHERNOTES - DECEMBER 2011, JANUARY 2012

A newsletter of the McPherson Free Methodist Church

Volume 6; December 2011 and January 2012

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## “WHY JESUS GOT BORNed...”

There are literally thousands of websites explaining the meaning of Advent, this Season of expectant waiting and preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ. But perhaps one of the most profound and accurate explanations comes from the youngest among us. Listen in on this conversation between siblings as they sat at the breakfast table of their child care provider this past week right here in McPherson.

Child One (four-year-old): *Do you know that Christmas is coming?*

Child Two (two-year-old): *Yeah...*

One: *Do you know what that means?*

Two: (bright-eyed) *Santa's coming!*

One: *Yes, but something even more important than Santa...*

Two: (confused) *What?*

One: *Christmas is Jesus' birthday!*

Two: *Weawy? (translation – Really?)*

One: *That means we have to clean out our hearts.*

Two: *Cwean (clean) out our hearts?*

One: *Yeah...we have to clean out our hearts so that Jesus can come and live there.*

Two: *But Jesus already lives at Miss Tammy's house.*

One: *Jesus can live lots of places. He lives in Miss Tammy's heart too. He likes to live in all our hearts so that we can take him with us wherever we*

*go. Jesus helps us to be good. He wants to help us. That's why Jesus got borned so that he could live in our hearts and help us out. That's why we have to clean out our hearts before Christmas! Understand?*

Two: *Yeah....*

Oh, that we *ALL* might come to understand, as the little children do, what this Season is all about.

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Photo by Kelsey Photography

## STAFFING TRANSITIONS

Sunday, November 20, the decision of Rebekah Neighbors to resign as Director of Worship Arts was made public. Rebekah served the church for almost 2 ½ years during which time she faithfully and prayerfully helped prepare the hearts and minds of the congregation to enter into worship week by week.

Pastor Dallas Burgeson is stepping into an interim role as Associate Pastor for Worship and Discipleship. Various aspects of his associate pastor position are being reassigned to accommodate for the shift in ministry responsibilities among us. Take special note of Dallas's article (page 2) regarding imaginative, missional ministry through the arts, and the ways in which you can enter into this ministry as you exercise your biblical imagination for the cause of Jesus Christ.

adVENT  
at  
MaCFMC

December 4  
December 11  
December 14  
December 18  
December 24  
December 25  
January 1

CCC Christmas Vespers  
Children's Christmas Program  
Chili and Caroling  
Christmas Brunch  
Christmas Eve Service  
CHRISTMAS WORSHIP  
New Year's Day Worship

7:00 pm  
6:00 pm  
6:00 pm  
9:15 am  
5:00 pm  
10:00 am  
10:30 am



## REFLECTING ON A NEW SEASON

As we begin advent and another new year for the Church, it is good for us to stop and take inventory of both our individual and corporate stories in light of God's story, and vice versa. Scripture is said to have a "surplus of meaning" for us, and many of us have just completed reading every word of it together. This being the case, what do we now perceive that this coming year holds for us? What old, old stories had we forgotten? What new story is currently being written in the life of this church body? How do these realities engage with one another?

God has created each of us with an imagination, and as we have just completed the Bible in 90 Days, we are in a particularly privileged position in our time and place to do what missional church expert Alan Roxburgh calls "cultivating a Biblical imagination." The Bible not only gives us principles and propositions for us to grab onto in the middle of the chaos of life, but through the power of story it empowers us to perceive present circumstances both familiar and unfamiliar with fresh and penetrating perspective. Nowhere is the power of story more transforming than when it is incarnated through the arts.

As we enter into this new Church year together, many of us with raw hope and raw heartbreak intermingling, I would like to invite the people of this church who feel called to it to begin to cultivate with me a Biblical imagination in the area of Worship Arts.

My leadership here is not likely to look just like it has at other times in this church, but then again, we are not the same people we were in other seasons either! I believe God would like to do a work of healing, mission, and transforming imagination through our collective engagement with music, drama, visual arts, dance, speaking, writing, and perhaps many other ways than any of us have considered.

God has put it on my heart to do my best to facilitate and cultivate the collective gifts and imagination of this people for His glory at this point in our story together. I believe we are in a place where we can begin to re-imagine Worship Arts here – not plotted along some tired-out continuum of traditional vs. contemporary – but by discerning what God is doing right now in and among us through the Spirit's inspiration of individual artists of all kinds. As we do this, we can come to inhabit forms and stories that are both new and old, developing a creative community that exists not merely for the sake of the wider congregation, but for the community of McPherson and beyond.

I would encourage you to be in prayer with me as we look in January at bringing together those among us with a passion for imaginative, missional ministry through the arts. If you happen to be one of those people, feel free to drop me a note with some of your thoughts!

## LIBRARY NOTES

Several of our *new* DVD titles are missing: they haven't gone through the check-out process. One of these titles, *Hachi*, has been missing since September. The check out process is easy and seamless—the instructions for borrowing are plainly posted at the check-out cabinet.

DVDs may be borrowed for one week, and book titles may be checked out for one month. Please help us keep the library system an accessible and fair privilege for all.

### New titles:

Bryan Davis' young adult trilogy, *Echoes from the Edge*, is an imaginative blend of fantasy and inspiration. This fast-paced adventure starts with murder and takes the reader into an alternate universe where nothing is as it seems. Even adult readers are enjoying these titles. Look for Mr. Davis in the "new" section in the library, located on the east wall of the parlor.

There is a bit of everything unfolding as we process title after title; we're anxious for you to have

the privilege of reading new material by a long list of excellent authors. Children's and young adult titles financed through the Adopt-A-Book drive have begun arriving and will be taking residence on our shelves shortly. New titles for men have also filtered into the work flow and you can expect to see these very soon as well. The process of weeding out very old titles from the existing collection is ongoing; keepers from this collection will take their place alongside new titles.



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# CHILDREN & YOUTH

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Photo by Kenney Photography

## WINTER PLAYDATES:

December 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29;  
January 5, 19, and 26.

January 5 will be Pajama Day! Kids can come to playdate with their pajamas on and will snack on pancakes!

Please note that there is no playdate on 1/12 due to Jan's trip to a Children's Pastor's Conference.

## PLAYDATE FIELD TRIPS:

On December 8, the group will meet at Jan's, then tour Pizza Hut and sample some pizza. On January 26, meet at Jan's house and then head to bumper bowling!

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Save the date for the Children's Program on December 11 at 6pm! Following the program everyone is invited to the Fellowship Hall for punch and cookies.

Practice for the Children's Program will be on December 7 from 5:15 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. 3's-K meet in room 226 and grades 1-5 meet in the theater room. Pizza will be provided afterward.

The final rehearsal is Saturday, December 10 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. 3's-K meet in 226 and grades 1-5 meet in the parlor. Both groups will head into the sanctuary for practice. Have children to the church by 5:30 p.m. on 12/11.

## BREAKFAST AND BINGO

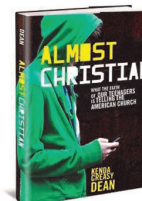
Breakfast and Bingo, an activity for kids from age 3 to grade 5 is planned for Saturday, January 21, from 9:30-11:00 a.m. at Jan's house (308 N Elm). Call 241-6775 for more information or to RSVP.

## MARKETPLACE

Marketplace will return from its Christmas break on Wednesday, January 4. Pizza will start the evening at 6 p.m. followed by activities including the Gator Slide, Twister, and bean bag games in the Fellowship Hall, wrapped up with a craft in room 226 and the Treehouse room!

## A MEANINGFUL CONNECTION

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of attending the National Youth Workers Convention in Atlanta, GA. While at the convention, I participated in a round-table discussion with author Kenda Creasy Dean. Dean wrote a book that was released earlier this year entitled *Almost Christian: What The Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling The American Church*. (This book is in the church library; check it out!)



Dean talked a lot about her book, and her interpretation of some research that was published in 2006. Her conviction was that if the Church wants to see Christian faith "stick" in our young people, then the adults must demonstrate a faith that's worth holding on to.

She also suggested that if congregations want to see inter-generational connectivity (which, by the way, this one does!) then we must become intentional about building those bridges. I believe that one of the ways this happens is simply by learning someone's name—and even a bit of their story.

Because of this, I want to use the McPherNotes as a platform to help encourage these relationships. Beginning next year, each issue of the McPherNotes will contain profiles of two students in this youth ministry (including their picture). Our hope is that you will read these profiles and then when you see those students on a Sunday morning, Wednesday night, or perhaps somewhere in the community, you will feel a bit more confident in creating an inter-generational connection.

Here's the truth: if you want to see a teenager's eyes light up, show them that you know their name, and that you're interested in what's going on in their life.

Sometimes...that's more than enough.

# DECEMBER

4	12:00 pm 7:00 pm	Second Sunday of Advent Newcomer's Lunch (Fellowship Hall) CCC Christmas Vespers (Sanctuary)
7	5:15 pm 7:35 pm	Children's Program Rehearsal Pastor's Cabinet (Pastor Deb's Office)
10	10:00 am	Quiz Meet in Lawrence, KS Children's Program Rehearsal (Sanct.)
11	12:00 pm 6:00 pm	Third Sunday of Advent Youth Dinner (Fellowship Hall) Children's Christmas Program (Sanct.)
12	4:30 pm	Outreach McPherson Mtg. (The Well)
14	6:00 pm 7:35 pm 8:15 pm	Chili and Caroling (Fellowship Hall) Finance Team Meeting (Deb's Office) Trustees Meeting (Dining Room)
18	9:15 am	Fourth Sunday of Advent No Sunday School Christmas Brunch: no (Fellowship Hall)
19	7:00 pm	BOA Meeting (Dining Room)
23		Office Closed—Merry Christmas!
24	5:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary)
25	10:00 am	No Sunday School Christmas Worship (Sanctuary)
26		Office Closed—Merry Christmas!
27-30		Office closes at Noon all week

# JANUARY

1	10:30 am	New Year's Day Worship (Sanctuary)
2		Office Closed—Happy New Year!
4	7:35 pm	Pastor's Cabinet
5	6:30 pm 7:00 pm	TWIGS Bible Study (9 weeks) (Parlor) Missions Committee Meeting (Parlor)
9	4:30 pm	Outreach McPherson Mtg. (The Well)
11	8:15 pm	Trustees Meeting
13-14		Regional Quiz Meet at CCC
15	12:00 pm	Youth Dinner (Fellowship Hall) Society Meeting following Youth Dinner
18	7:35 pm	Finance Team Meeting (Deb's Office)
21	9:30 am	Kids' Breakfast and Bingo (308 N Elm)
25	7:35 pm	BOA Meeting (Dining Room)
29	6:00 pm	Hymn Sing (Sanctuary)

As a general note, all "thank you" notes and announcements are posted and regularly updated on the bulletin board in the lobby.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Many thanks to all who donated items or volunteered time and energy on November 5. Outreach McPherson was able to distribute a record 180 Thanksgiving baskets this year!

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

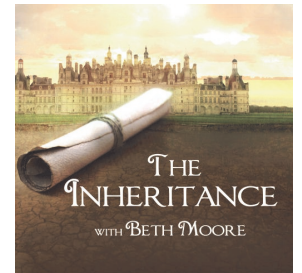
Marketplace children put together 38 OCC shoeboxes, which were added to almost 40 more boxes from the rest of the church body and shipped to kids worldwide.

## CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

The traditional Christmas Brunch will be held on Sunday, December 18 at 9:15 am in the Fellowship Hall (No Sunday School). Please bring some Christmas goodies (casseroles, sweet breads, fruit, etc) to share.

## TWIGS: TODAY'S WOMEN IN GOD'S SERVICE

The next ladies' Bible Study will follow Beth Moore's "The Inheritance" DVD series. The first night is Thursday, Jan. 5 and will continue on Thursdays for nine weeks—until Feb. 23. Join the group and exercise "letting go" and letting God be in control!



# WINTER WEEKLY EVENTS

SUN	9:15 am	Sunday School (Various Locations)
	10:30 am 7:00 pm	Worship Service (Sanctuary) REMIX (on 12/18 and resumes 1/15)
TUE	6:30 am 1:00 pm	Sr. High Prayer Group (601 S Ash) Staff Meeting
	5:15 pm 6:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:35 pm	Bible Quiz Practice (Youth Area) Teach us to Pray (Parlor) Marketplace (Children's SS Rooms) JOLT! (Resumes 1/11) Worship Band Practice (Sanctuary)
THU	8:00 am 9:00 am 6:30 pm	TOPS (Taking off Pounds Sensibly) Play Dates at Jan's (308 N Elm) Women's Bible Study (Begins 1/5)
	SAT	7:00 am

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