



The Presbyterian Church, 123 West Hill Street, Wabash, IN 46992-3049  
www.wabashpresbyterian.com | office@wabashpresbyterian.com | 260-563-8881

## PASTOR'S DESK

# What to Expect When You're Expecting

By Pastor Jonathan Cornell

*"Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Luke 1:28*

There is good reason that the human gestational period lasts up to 9 months. Having experienced it thrice, I realize that there is so much worrying and preparing that needs to happen. I'm not talking about nurseries and car seats, but pondering the implication that a new life is coming into the world.

But this experience of waiting expectantly goes much beyond this. Having walked with families through medical challenges, stretches of joblessness, or relationship fractures, the experience of waiting and anticipating life to finally change is one that is fraught with emotion.

The players in the Gospel narrative all experience the Angel Gabriel's news differently. Zechariah's disbelief silences him (mercifully); Elizabeth, descendent of Priestly royalty is humbled when she learns that her teenage niece would bear the Messiah. Joseph ponders the crippling shame of his fiancé now with a baby bump that wasn't his doing. Divorce or endure the shame of remaining by her side?



The experiences of these players are profoundly relatable when we look at it from a distance. Each of us probably has a story that relates in one way or another. But what do we do?

The wisdom of our parents stands up here as well. Don't make life decisions based on emotion and impulse. Instead, do as Mary did, "ponder these things in your heart." Ask questions. As one of my pastoral heroes Earl Palmer was fond of saying: God only has three answers for us: yes, no, and wait. And if the Spirit's leading is not immediately apparent, just remain still.

Advent is a wonderful time each year for us to remain still—I know that sounds impossible in light of the hubbub of the season. This will be our discipline this December. I am not unrealistic, I know there is lots to plan for, meals to prepare, family to host, gifts to purchase, these all bring such warmth and love to our lives.

But, I want to suggest this idea, when the holiday task list begins to overwhelm, think of Mary, think of Zechariah, think of Joseph, think of Elizabeth. They had no other recourse than to wait in their own way for something wonderful to happen. And it's in the waiting that all of their anxieties, all of their preconceived notions, all their wonderings, become brilliantly clear in the light of God's plan.

Then, as the Scriptures say, "in the fullness of time," perhaps when we're not even looking for it, Emmanuel quietly comes. Expect it.

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Jonathan Cornell  
Pastor

Email: [jonathan@wabashpresbyterian.com](mailto:jonathan@wabashpresbyterian.com)





# Community & Missions

*Loving people  
with the heart of Christ  
in the heart of Wabash*

## Feed Our Community

You are always encouraged to bring canned/dry goods for the F.I.S.H. food pantry and drop them off in any of the boxes throughout the church. This month, we are collecting Toilet Paper and Dish Soap.

## WPC MISSION PARTNERS

- Peabody Retirement Community
- Kemmerer Village
- Meals on Wheels
- City of Refuge (Ghana)
- Thammavongsa Family Mission
- Wabash Ministerial Association's Assistance Program
- Wabash County Habitat for Humanity
- White's Residential & Family Services
- Winchester Community Center
- 85 Hope
- Arc of Wabash County
- The Access
- Campus Life
- F.I.S.H.
- Character Building of Wabash County

## Advent Schedule (Continued)

**Access Blanket Drive** – The staff at the Access Youth Center has requested that warm blankets be donated. Many of their students have said that they lack the necessary blankets to keep warm at night. Please bring blankets to the Fellowship Hall any time before December 9<sup>th</sup>.

### Advent in Godly Play

**Sundays, November 26<sup>th</sup> to December 17<sup>th</sup> - 10am, CE Building**

Students Pre-K through 4<sup>th</sup> grade will have the opportunity to remember and celebrate Advent during our 4-week lesson series. Each week, we'll focus on a different part of the Christmas story.

### Advent Cantata – The Longest Night

**Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> - 10am, Sanctuary**

We will be led in worship by our Sanctuary Choir in a service of hope and encouragement. This is particularly for those who find this time of year especially difficult, or know of someone who struggles during the Holidays. You are encouraged to invite someone you know who may be ministered to by this offering.

### Christmas Caroling

**Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> - 10am, Sanctuary**

You are invited to join as a group of WPCers to go-a-caroling around our community. Please see Janet Halderman if you are interested, we will leave shortly after worship and will carpool. No childcare will be available that day so that families can worship and celebrate together!

### Family Christmas Eve Service

**Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> - 10am, and 11 pm Sanctuary**

We welcome you to Christmas Eve this year. The time of waiting and expecting is over, it's time to celebrate—not with a bang, but a whisper. Alleluia. This year WPC is offering two Christmas Eve Services for you to choose from.

**10am Family Worship Service** – There will be no Godly Play or Nursery this morning as we worship together with the whole family. There will be Christmas Carols, the nativity story, a special message for kids, and a happy birthday Jesus celebration. No childcare will be available that day so that families can worship and celebrate together!

**11pm Christmas Eve by Candlelight** – One of the most beloved and anticipated services of the year as we welcome the birth of Jesus under the cover of night, by the light of a few candles.

# December Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 <b>Friday Book Study</b> (11am)	2
3 <b>Luther Class &amp; Choir Practice</b> (9am)  <b>Worship (10am) &amp; Fellowship Hour</b> (11am)  <i>Loose Offering: Gas Vouchers</i>	4 <b>Choir Practice</b> (5:30pm)	5	6 <b>Choir Practice</b> (5:30pm)  <b>Community Meal</b> (6pm)	7	8 <b>Friday Book Study</b> (11am)	9 <b>Jubilee</b> (9am)  <b>Access Holiday Meal</b> (5pm @ Access Youth Center)
10 <b>Luther Class &amp; Choir Practice</b> (9am)  <b>Worship (10am) &amp; Fellowship Hour</b> (11am)	11 <b>Monday Bible Study</b> (1pm)  <b>Choir Practice</b> (5:30pm)	12	13 <b>Choir Practice</b> (5:30pm)	14 <b>Missions</b> (6:30pm)  <b>Buildings &amp; Grounds Team</b> (7pm)  <b>Worship Team</b> (7pm)	15 <b>Friday Book Study</b> (11am)	16
17 <b>Luther Class &amp; Choir Practice</b> (9am)  <b>Worship--Cantata</b> (10am) & <b>Fellowship Hour</b> (11:15am)  <b>Christmas Caroling</b>	18 <b>Helping Hands Ministry</b>  <b>Choir Practice</b> (5:30pm)	19	20 <b>Choir Practice</b> (5:30pm)	21 <b>Presbyterian School Christmas Program</b> (6:30pm)  <b>Session</b> (7pm)	22 <b>Friday Book Study</b> (11am)	23
24 <b>Luther Class &amp; Choir Practice</b> (9am)  <b>Worship—Family Christmas Service</b> (10am) & <b>Fellowship Hour</b> (11am)  <b>Christmas Eve Service</b> (11pm)	25 <b>CHRISTMAS Office Closed</b>	26 <b>JULIET Women's Breakfast</b> (8am @ Fried Egg)	27	28	29 <b>Friday Book Study</b> (11am)	30
31 <b>Luther Class &amp; Choir Practice</b> (9am)  <b>Worship (10am) &amp; Fellowship Hour</b> (11am)						

## Business Notes

### November Session Minutes

- Toys have been purchased for Jubilee on Dec. 9th.
- Searching for Session Members for 2020.
- Rough draft of 2018 Budget was shared.

### Loose Offering | WPC's Gas Voucher Program

The loose cash that is collected on December 3<sup>rd</sup> will help provide gas vouchers to those in our community who come to the church for aid (i.e., getting to doctor's appointments, job interviews, etc.).

### Financial Report

	<u>Oct.</u>	<u>Total 2017</u>
Income:	\$31,716	\$293,472
Expenses:	<u>40,056</u>	<u>297,044</u>
Balance:	<b>-\$8,340</b>	<b>-\$3,572</b>

*\*We used \$13,000 from the Endowment Account to cover our expenses in October.*

**[Give online.](#)** Use our secure site to set up recurring gifts (like pledges) or for one-time gifts (like paying for a Bible study book or supporting our Mission Partners).

## Worship & Connect

### Perspectives Class

The city of Wabash has the privilege of being a location for a series of classes offered by Perspectives, a disciple course designed to mobilize the church to God's mission. Perspectives helps believers see God's work in the world and God's call on their lives. Their leadership and discipleship tools have helped members discover how they can effectively become part of the global Christian movement. A series of 15 classes will be offered starting January 7, 2018. For more information about time and location, visit [perspectives.org](http://perspectives.org) and watch for brochures and additional articles in the church bulletin.

### Annual Meeting

All members and non-members are invited to join us for our annual meeting, scheduled for either Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> after service. Exact date is yet to be determined but will be announced.

## Connect & Serve

### Community Meal

Our next meal is Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. We'll have some "Minute to Win It" type games there for any who are adventurous enough to try! We encourage you to use the time during the other weeks of the month to get to know others in the church through meals, coffee, and outings. If you're interested in serving on a team to prepare the meal for one month this year, please see Denise Leep. If you're interested in helping lead games, please contact Kari Bartkus.

### 2017 End of Year Giving

All gifts for 2017 need to be dropped off at the church office by Friday, December 29<sup>th</sup> at 12:30pm, placed in the offering on Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, or postmarked by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

### 2018 Pledges

Forget to turn in your 2018 pledge? Just drop it off or send it to the church office.

### 2018 Per Capita

Members, per capita for 2018 is \$39.99. By paying this, you help support the staff and ministry of our presbytery, synod, and general assembly.



## DIG DEEPER

## Follow Me Now

By Kari Bartkus

There's something about Jesus that made people want to follow Him. I wonder if it was the power in His teaching. Or the love in His eyes. Or maybe even the astonishment and thrill of His healing touch.

But there was also something about Jesus that caused some individuals to pause, not quite ready to commit to that radical of a life change.

When I read the story about a man who said, "Lord, let me first return home to bury my father" (before he followed Jesus), I know there are many things culturally I don't understand about that request. Had his father just passed and he wanted to grieve? Was his father still years away from dying and he was putting off the commitment and cost of giving Jesus everything he had? Why was this so important to him?

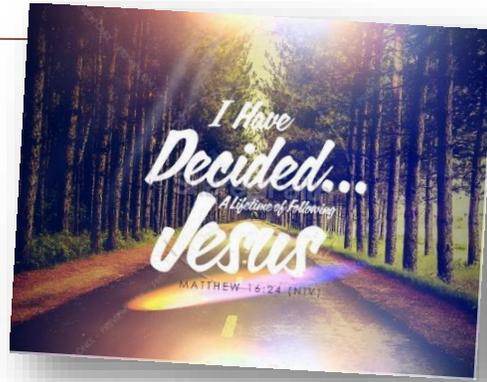
Yet Jesus responds, "Follow me now."

Some may see this as a command of Jesus, spoken sternly, or at least with a serious edge. I, however, can't help but hear it as an invitation. An invitation to let go of all my worries and cares and questions and simply follow Jesus in that moment.

- "Lord, let me first get settled in this new job..."
- "God, let me first save up enough money to have a little nest egg before I begin to give to You..."

*"There is no way to follow Jesus without him interfering with your life. Following Jesus will cost you something. Following Jesus always costs something."*

~ Kyle Idleman



- "Lord, let me first stay home for a few years before venturing back into the work force like You seem to be calling me to do..."

Or perhaps your comments are more like this...

- "Lord, but what if I'm nice to her and nothing changes?"
- "Father, I know You want me to commit to this serving opportunity, but I'm just so tired..."
- "God, what if I do my very best at this job and yet they let me go anyway?"

While I believe that Jesus loves our honest hearts and wants to hold those questions and concerns for us, I also know that He calls us to obedience and trust. Thus, His invitation to "follow me now."

Am I in any way putting off following Jesus? Or am I obeying Jesus with everything I have? Am I being loving? Generous? Serving? Am I abiding in Him? Am I praying? Am I being faithful with what I've been given?

If not, that's where I start. I follow Him, right here, right now. I try not to worry about tomorrow or make excuses to not follow Him today. If He truly is my Lord, my Savior, how can I help but follow Him wherever He leads me, knowing He is full of love and goodness, and completely worthy of my wholehearted devotion?

Kari



Kari Bartkus  
Director of Children's & Family Ministries  
Email: [kari@wabashpresbyterian.com](mailto:kari@wabashpresbyterian.com)

SIGN UP!

**Wabash Presbyterian Church**

123 West Hill Street  
Wabash, IN 46992

**Phone:**

260-563-8881

**Office Hours:**

Mondays-Fridays  
8:30am-12:30pm

**Email:**

office@wabashpresbyterian.com

**Website:**

www.wabashpresbyterian.com

**Facebook:**

www.facebook.com/  
wabashpresbyterian

**Loving people with the  
heart of Christ in the  
heart of Wabash**

***Perspectives on the World Christian Movement***

December is a great time to consider what God is doing during this exciting and hope-filled time of year in places around the world. We invite you to consider learning more about God's Global Mission of mercy and grace by taking part in a course called Perspectives on the World Christian Movement.

"Through Perspectives, Christ followers learn about the concept of living out a World Christian Lifestyle."

Courses take place on Sunday afternoons and run 15 weeks starting January 7<sup>th</sup> and take place at Wellbrooke of Wabash. Cost is \$275 and financial assistance is available.



*See more info on  
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*Merry Christmas from WPC!*