
SOUTH CHINA COMMUNITY CHURCH



Rev. Paul Harwath, Pastor

November 2012

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Advent is almost upon us...this is a time of preparing for the coming of our Lord. People have forgotten that Christmas starts on December 25 and ends 12 days later on January 6 with the Feast of Epiphany, also called "The Adoration of the Magi." A lot of us have taken down all our decorations by this time. This year, why not be old-fashioned and start some new, old traditions in your family? Celebrating the 12 Days of Christmas can be a learning experience and so much more meaningful than just following the secular culture of our time.

Advent at South China Community Church will have many opportunities to prepare our hearts for Christmas day. We will be having a Christmas program including little angels acting the Christmas story, along with much music. We will have an Advent adventure at the church for the young ones in your home - a great time for adults to do some shopping! We will have two Christmas services: one on Christmas Eve and the other on Christmas morning. Please come and join us in fellowship.

If you would like to talk to me, my home phone number is (207) 385-0799 or you can call my cell at (605) 201-4295. - *In Christ, Pastor Paul*



CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

By the time you read this message, Thanksgiving will have come and gone. Every day should be a day of Thanksgiving as we have so much to be thankful for: our families, our extended families, our church, our community and our country. A special thanks to all those who have served and those now serving in harm's way to keep our country safe. Most of all, we give thanks for everlasting life given to us by Jesus on the cross.



The Christmas season is now upon us! We're planning the evening of November 30th for hanging of the greens, starting at 6:00 PM. This will be followed by a pizza party and desserts.

As we begin to follow the events leading up to the birth of Jesus, let us remember the true meaning of Christmas and not all the hub-bub of shopping, wrapping and giving of gifts. Take time to listen to Christmas music, visit shut-ins, volunteer, and try to make sure everyone can share in the spirit of a happy Christmas season. May the blessing of God be with you and your families - *Remember: Teach a child to love before someone else teaches him to hate! Sheldon Goodine, President*

New Business:

Two Council positions are ending in December. If no one is found to fill Sheldon Goodine's and Diane Rawson's positions, both are willing to stay on, but the by-laws would need to be amended to reflect that. Upcoming by-law changes will also include adding Rosie's paid position as part-time secretary; establishing a "contract" for Chris Faris, Choir Director; and looking into readdressing ages/readiness for receiving communion and completing Confirmation.

Pastor Paul reported that the new homeless shelter in Waterville is up and running, but has a need for toiletries for young men and women. It was discussed that a small tote bag with these items be prepared to hand to each person coming in. Perhaps this is a project we can work on as a church.

Also, ideas for next Christmas include having the children go to shut-ins or the nursing homes to sing and have a Santa (with elves) distribute gifts. - *Diane Rawson, Elder*



Communications & Outreach

May we share in the JOY of our Savior's birth this Christmas season! That is the message we hope to get out into the community. As always, December is looking to be a very busy month (see calendar listing). Please share these times with your neighbors and friends so the joy of Jesus can spread.

In November, we held very successful Dessert and Silent Auctions! We raised over \$600 and had a lot of fun, too. The monies will go in the General Budget, with an emphasis on Missions and Benevolences and possibly helping provide some needed items for the new homeless shelter in Waterville. We hope to make this event an annual activity if the desire of church membership.

Although one of the musical groups I tried to obtain for December was not available, there still is plenty of music to be had. Hopefully in January or February, we will have a quartet from Mainely Harmony present a program to help break up the winter doldrums.

Bernie will be filling in for me while I am gone to Florida, but because he's "laid up," he will need some help! Love ya, Bernie, and I'm sure someone will pitch in with you. My elder term is up at the end of December, but I am willing to stay on until someone else wishes to take over for me. Have a blessed and meaningful Advent and Christmas! - *In Christ's service, Diane Rawson, Elder*



Worship

First, I would like to thank everyone for a wonderful first year as Worship Leader. I could not do any of it without the help and support of you, the congregation, and the Almighty Lord above! Below are items we have been working on and need your continued support: music, sound system, prior service recordings, and the upcoming volunteer schedule for 2013.

Music: In the past three months, we have brought in a few more songs, "Shout to the Lord," "Here I Am to Worship," and "As the Deer," and we would like to bring in more. If anyone has a song request, please see me or put the request into the worship box located in the kitchen. Without requests from you, we have a difficult time selecting newer songs. We do have a license from CCLI to copy and use many of the newer (and older) songs that fall under copyright laws; there are others we would like to try out. Also, the special songs books have been reviewed and numbered by me and Diane (thank you Diane for your help). If you see a book still in need of attention, please bring it to one of us.

One last thing regarding music: **we need more voices!** I have heard some beautiful voices in the congregation. Anyone interested in singing in the choir? Please see Paula Vigue or Chris Faris, or just show up to Sunday morning practice at 9:30AM. All are welcome!

Sound System: We brought in one microphone, but really need to change our sound system. Sheldon Goodine is looking into having a gentleman assess what we would need and how much it would cost as many people in the congregation have stated that they cannot hear many of the readings. Having the microphone by the choir has not been convenient for those readers; we would need another set up in between the organ and the pulpit. Pastor Paul has suggested that we get one for the other side of the pulpit or one that would attach to the podium and have readers go up there to read. Possibly having some cordless microphones would be better? All said and done, a new sound system would be needed to accommodate this.

Service Recordings - DVDs: Requests have been made to view prior services and I would like to view a few myself. Carl Schroeder was kind enough to meet me at the church to see if we could record services with current equipment. We thought we had it figured out, but upon viewing, still received a blank screen. (although I didn't get the error message stating the disc was blank). So, I will be looking into something else to get these up and running. If anyone has some ideas or suggestions, I would appreciate meeting with you at the church sometime to check it out.

Something else that has been brought up in regards to this is to have a newer television that could support everything (audio, video, additional hookups). From what I have been told, the television we currently have does not support everything.



Volunteers Needed: Finally, it is that time of year to start getting reader volunteers for next year's Offertory Scripture and Children's Message. I would also like people to remember the list of

Greeters, Flowers for the Week, and sponsoring bulletins. I will continue the list of volunteers that we currently have, but would like to have some new people join in as well. If anyone on the list for 2012 would like to be taken off or someone would like to be added for 2013, please see Paula Vigue or call (207) 692-6980. If you want to do just one day or be included in the year's rotation list, just let me know. Anyone with a good story to tell, enjoys reading, or enjoys giving meaningful messages (for our children and others as well), I would love to hear from you!

Hoping that everyone had a very Happy Thanksgiving! I have had a lot to be thankful for: God has blessed me with wonderful friends, family, food, shelter, health, and an abundance of love and joy. May He bless you and yours this upcoming Christmas season and the New Year to come! - *In Christian Love, Paula Vigue*

Buildings & Grounds

Good News! The installation of the new heating system – including a new on-demand water heater - is complete and on line. Now we can begin to calculate the savings! Our budget for heating the church for 2013 will be \$3800; the budget for 2012 was \$5900. Our electric bill will be lower as the electric hot water heater has been removed. Both the old 137,000 BTU boiler and the hot air furnace are for sale - spread the word that any offer will be considered!

Three very energetic and capable church members met on Wednesday Nov. 14th to rake leaves and clean up the grounds. Good job, well done. – *Sheldon Goodine, Building & Grounds Chair*

Finance & Stewardship

Happy New Year! As the 2012 budget comes to a close, I am pleased to report the church and the various program chairpersons diligently worked within each of their proposed budgets in support of their specific mission to God and His church. It is because of investments like the CD which matured in August, the success of our fundraisers, the generosity of our congregation that continues to flow outwardly, and by the hands of God that we continue to thrive as a church in our community. For that, I thank everyone. Your part, regardless, of how small or large, makes a positive difference for the whole.



The annual stewardship pledge letter is in the mail, so please watch for that important document. Please take a minute and consider your pledge for 2013. Pledge commitments from the congregation help our

committee forecast a real working budget for the upcoming year. Your pledge commitment is critical in the pre-planning process of how we obligate money to support the various programs we have within SCCC and our community. Additional copies of the pledge letter can be found in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank you all for the opportunity to serve God and serve His church. I thank you for your

generosity, support and commitment to the SCCC; I am always available for suggestions or ideas that are in the best interest of our congregation. I can be reached by e-mail at Michelle_Darveau@yahoo.com or by phone 207.512.0936. - *May God Bless You and Your Family Always, Michelle Darveau*

LADIES STUDY GROUP: The Women's Thursday Study Group has begun reading a new book entitled, "*The Questions Christians Hope No One Will Ask.*" We are presently discussing creation vs. evolution and how to talk to unbelievers, focusing on evidence that backs up what we believe as Christians. We meet the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 11AM. Interested in joining us? Call me at 445-3118. - *God Bless, Joan Ferrone*



A local business was looking for office help and put up sign stating the following: "HELP WANTED. Must be able to type, be good with a computer and bilingual. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer."

A short time afterwards, a dog trotted up to the window, saw the sign and went inside. He looked at the receptionist and wagged his tail, then walked over to the sign, looked at it and whined. Getting the idea, the receptionist got the office manager. The office manager looked at the dog and was surprised, to say the least. However, the dog looked determined, so the manager led him into the office.

Inside, the dog jumped up on the chair and stared at the manager. The manager said "I can't hire you. The sign says you have to be able to type." The dog jumped down, went to the typewriter and proceeded to type out a perfect letter.

He took out the page and trotted over to the manager and gave it to him, then jumped back on the chair. The manager was stunned, but then told the dog, "The sign says you have to be good with a computer."

The dog jumped down again and went to the computer. The dog proceeded to open and use all the productivity software. By this time the manager was totally dumbfounded! He looked at the dog and said "I realize that you are a very intelligent dog and have some interesting abilities. However, I still can't give you the job."

The dog jumped down and went to a copy of the sign and put his paw on the sentence about being an Equal Opportunity Employer.



The manager said, "Yes, but the sign also says that you have to be bilingual." The dog looked at the manager calmly and said, "Meow."



10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT 'A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS'

1. Most of the voice actors were cast from kids in the director's neighborhood
2. Some of the child actors were so young, they couldn't read the script
3. Charles Schulz refused to let CBS executives insert a laugh track
4. Schulz actually hated jazz music
5. Linus's "True Meaning of Christmas" speech was almost cut
6. The network execs & sponsors hated the special & wanted to bury it
7. The producers thought it would be a flop & that they "ruined Charlie Brown forever"
8. Snoopy got all the action scenes because he was the easiest to animate
9. Some earlier runs of the special included product placements for Coca-Cola
10. It is the second longest-running Christmas special of all time



- † COMMUNION: DEC 2 – JAN 6 – FEB 3
- † ADVENT: DEC 2 – DEC 9 – DEC 16 – DEC 23
- † DIRIGO CLUB'S BREAKFAST - 8AM, 2ND
SATURDAY OF THE MONTH: DEC 8 – JAN 12 – FEB 9
- † MEN'S STUDY GROUP - 6:30PM, 2ND & 4TH
TUESDAYS: DEC 4 & 18 – JAN 8 & 22 – FEB 12 & 26
- † WOMEN'S STUDY GROUP A – 11AM, 2ND & 4TH
THURSDAYS: DEC 13 & 27 – JAN 10 & 24 – FEB 14 & 28
- † WOMEN'S STUDY GROUP B – 6PM, EVERY OTHER SUNDAY: DEC 9 & 23 – JAN 6 & 20 – FEB 3 & 17. PLEASE SEE EMILY FOR DETAILS/SCHEDULES!
- † CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS, 6:30PM, 2ND
WEDNESDAY: DEC 12 – JAN 9 – FEB 13
- † CONFIRMATION CLASSES: TBD
- † ADVENT ADVENTURES FOR KIDS: DEC 9, 12-3PM (FEE)
- † CHRISTMAS PLAY/MUSIC + SPAGHETTI SUPPER: DEC 16 @5:30PM
- † KOINONIA (FAMILY NIGHT), 6PM
3RD WEDNESDAY: DEC 19 (BETH PRESTON'S TANZANIA TRIP) – JAN 16 – FEB 20
- † CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: DEC 24 @7PM
- † CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE: DEC 25 @9AM
- † DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER: FEB 17



CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD

(Source: <http://www.portharbor.com/santa/xsattrad.htm>)

Belgium

Children in Belgium believe it is kindly Saint Nicholas who brings them their presents. They believe he rides a horse, so they leave him hay, carrots & water for the horse outside their house on December 6.



China

Christians in China light their homes with beautiful paper lanterns. Santa is called *Dun Che Lao Ren*. Children hang stockings just as we do.

Czechoslovakia

A large, delicious dinner with many courses is served. Courses are like appetizers, followed by soup, salad, the first meat dishes, & so on until dessert is served. This meal is served on Christmas Eve; it doesn't matter how big the family is, there is always a place set at the table for the Christ Child.

Denmark

Santa is known as *Julemanden*; he arrives in a sleigh pulled by reindeer with a sack full of gifts. Danish children know the elves as *Juul Nisse* & believe they live in the attics of their homes. Instead of cookies & glasses of milk, they leave rice pudding & saucers of milk out for them.

England

We've acquired several customs from England. The first is the use of Christmas trees; this was made popular during the reign of Queen Victoria & Prince Albert. Prince Albert came from the country of Germany & missed his native practice of bringing in trees to place on the tables in the house. One Christmas the royal couple brought a tree inside the Palace & decorated it with apples & other items.

The second custom is known as “Boxing Day,” celebrated the first weekday after Christmas. Small wrapped boxes with food & sweets, or small gifts/coins are given to anyone who comes calling that day.

Santa is known as *Father Christmas* & he wears long red robes with sprigs of holly in his hair. Instead of mailing Christmas lists, children throw them into the fireplace & *Father Christmas* reads the smoke. England is also where the tradition of hanging stockings by the chimney began, due to the fact that Father Christmas once accidentally dropped some gold coins on his way down the chimney which got caught in a drying stocking. Instead of opening gifts as soon as they wake up, English children wait until the afternoon.

France

Santa is known as *Pere Noel*; he’s accompanied by *Pre Fouettard*, who keeps track of who’s been good or bad. In some parts of France, *Pere Noel* brings small gifts in early December (Dec 6) & comes back to deliver more on Christmas. In France, children get to open their gifts on Christmas, but the parents & other adults have to wait until New Year’s. Children place their shoes by the fireplace in hopes that le Pere Noel/Father Christmas or le Petit Jesus/Little Jesus will place gifts for them. They also have dinner at midnight on December 24; this is called Le Reveillon, with a cake called La Buche de Noel served after the dinner.

Tiny clay figures are used in the Christmas crèche or mangers. These figures are unique as they’re dressed in what is popular in provincial clothing that year. The figures are Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, the Wise Men, the Shepherds, & Angels.



Italy

In Italy, the main exchange of gifts doesn't occur until January 6th, the day traditionally believed that the Wise Men reached the baby Jesus. Italy has *La Befana*, who brings gifts for the good & punishment for the bad. She’s the same character as Russia's *Babouschka*, who refused to give the Wise Men food & shelter. The nativity scene may have first been set up by Saint Francis of Assisi in a cave outside of a village; the villagers were so impressed by the display, that now many of the communities compete for the best nativity.

India

Houses are decorated with strings of mango leaves; lights are placed on the window sills & walls & a star is hung outside. A sweet holiday treat called thali is brought to neighbors & friends.

Japan

The Japanese decorate their stores & homes with greens. The only part of Christmas that they celebrate is the giving of gifts. Hoteiosha, the priest, is like our Santa Claus & he brings the children their presents.

Mexico

Mexico calls Christmas *Navidad*. Christmas is celebrated for nine days with Las Pasadas. It’s a time where people dress as Mary & Joseph, traveling from house to house asking if Mary may stay the night. They’re told the inn is full, after which the door opens back up & all are invited in for a party with food, songs, & piñatas for the children. The piñata is made of paper mache & filled with all kinds of goodies; the object is to break it open with your eyes blindfolded, after which the children dive for all the goodies they can pick up. On the ninth night, they’re told, “Yes, there is room for Mary in the stable,” and all come in for food, followed by



attendance at church to celebrate the birth of the Christ Child.

The Netherlands

Santa is known as *Sinterklaas* & he came to Sweden originally by boat, setting out on Dec 6 from Spain. He makes his gift deliveries by horseback. The children leave their shoes out, filled with hay & sugar for Sinterklaas' horse. In the morning, they find their shoes filled with candy & nuts. When Sinterklaas appears to the children, he takes the form of their father or a favorite male relative.

Poland

From Christmas to New Year's, the streets are lined with lovely stalls called *Joselki*; each one is painted with scenes from the Christmas story. The booths are elaborately decorated in tinsel & lighted candles.



Spain

The children of Spain leave their shoes on the window sills, filled with straw, carrots, & barley for the horses of the Wise Men, who they believe re-enact their journey to Bethlehem every year. One of the Wise Men, *Balthazar*, leaves the children gifts. Christmas Eve is called *Nochebuena*; families gather together to rejoice & share a meal around the Nativity scene.

Sweden

The Swedish people call Santa *tomte* & see him as a gnome who comes out from under the floor of the house or barn carrying his sack of gifts for them. He rides in a sleigh drawn by a goat. On Santa Lucia Day, the oldest daughter wears a wreath of seven candles on her head & serves a special meal of ham, fish, & rice pudding.

At dawn on Saint Lucia's Day, December 13, the oldest daughter of the house dresses in a white robe & places a ring of candles in her hair. She

then wakes the rest of the family & serves them coffee, buns, & cookies.

Julkapp is another custom: a present is wrapped



in many layers of paper & then someone knocks on the door to a house & leaves the gift. The longer it takes for the present to be opened, the better the Julkapp.

Russia

Russia has someone named *Babouschka*, who brings gifts for the children. The tradition says that she failed to give food & shelter to the three Wise Men & now searches the countryside searching for the baby Jesus, visiting & giving gifts to all children as she goes. Santa was known as Saint Nicholas, but today is called *Grandfather Frost*, wearing a blue outfit instead of red.

The Russians use to celebrate Christmas with great joy & happiness before the Revolution of 1917, strolling up & down the streets with stars on the end of sticks that they called *Stars of Bethlehem*. People went to church services & shared a special meal at home. After the Revolution, the Soviet Government banned Christmas. Today, Russians celebrate New Year's Day with a special tree decorated like we do for Christmas & have a New Year's Day Children's party. The children join hands & sing songs as they walk around the tree, waiting for *Dyet Moroz*, Grandfather Frost, & his helper *Syregorachka*, The Snow Maiden, to bring their gifts.

Switzerland

Santa Claus is called *Christkind*, the Christ Child, coming to bring gifts to the children dressed in all white with a golden crown; he is helped by Saint Nicholas.



~ Christmas is not a time or a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and good will, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas.

- Calvin Coolidge, 1927



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