

The Covenant Renewal Service

**Providence Reformed
Presbyterian Church**

9124 Sappington Road, St. Louis, MO 63126
314-843-7994 www.providencestlouis.com



The Third Sunday in Advent

December 12, 2010

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Woman of the Week:

Sarah Wood

Today's Nursery Volunteers:

Morning Service – Schmidt

Sunday School – Pratt

Evening – Montgomery

Next Week's Nursery Volunteers:

Morning Service – Greeno

Sunday School – Bryan & Melanie Carter

Developing a Biblical Worldview — Join us in the fellowship hall for the adult Sunday school class on developing a biblical worldview. Audio recordings of the class can be found on the church's website.

The **College and Career Sunday School Class** is meeting in the Shields' home. All young adults are welcome.

High School Christmas Party — On December 20th, the high schoolers are invited to a church Christmas party. Bring a white elephant gift! The party begins at 7 PM and will be hosted by Phillip and Rachel Bozarth.

Directory Update — Please update your directory with Joe and Lurae's new phone number: 636-587-2290. Voicemail can be left at 636-543-6732.

Offerings and Expenditures to Date:

Offerings:	\$280,838.45
Expenditures:	\$304,364.57 *
Deficit:	(\$ 24,028.61)

* Expenses include \$12,875.00 cost to repair HVAC and \$38,552.87 cost to replace carpet.

Church Calendar

Tuesdays

7 AM Men's Bible Study

Wednesdays

7 PM Choir Rehearsal

Thursdays

9:30 AM Ladies Bible Study

December 19

6 PM Christmas Lessons & Carols Service

December 20

7 PM High School Christmas Party

Dec 29 - Jan 5

New Orleans Mission Trip

Christmas Lessons & Carols

Christmas Lessons & Carols — Our annual Lessons and Carols Service is next Sunday, December 19 at 6:00 P.M., with the Children's Prelude beginning at 5:35. This festive carol and anthem celebration includes music from four choirs (Adult, Youth, Elementary, and Preschool) and is a great opportunity to invite extended family, friends, and neighbors to hear the Christmas story read and sung. Please note the following:

Reception Help — Please sign up to bring cookies or finger food next Sunday morning on a serving platter for the reception to follow the service. Helpers are also needed to setup, cleanup, and serve refreshments - please sign up at WIC table in narthex. See Barb Hoover for more information.

Sunday School Music Rehearsals — Today and next Sunday, all choirs (Preschool, Elementary, Youth, and Adult) will be rehearsing the program in the Sanctuary. If your children will be participating in the program next Sunday night, please make sure they attend Sunday School (including Youth Choir practice at 11:30) this Sunday and next. Teachers, please attend music rehearsals with your classes

Youth Choir Dress Code (grades 7-12) — Ladies: white (or closest available light-colored) blouse or sweater/top, and black (or closest available dark) skirt and hose. Gentlemen: white (or closest available light-colored) dress shirt, necktie, black (or closest available dark) slacks, nice shoes, no jacket. Long sleeves are preferred.

Children's Prelude — If your child is planning to play a Christmas carol as part of the Children's Prelude, please notify Barb or Bill Hoover. Children may practice in the sanctuary or the music room today and next Sunday during the coffee break.

Schedule for Dec 19 PM:

4:00-4:45 PM Adult Choir rehearsal*

4:45-5:30 PM Youth Choir rehearsal*

5:30 PM Children's Prelude participants report to choir loft

5:35 PM Children's Prelude begins

5:45 PM Age 2 thru Grade 6 report to classrooms to line up

6:00 PM Service begins

*Sandwiches will be available beginning at 4:15 PM for singers and accompanying family members required to come at 4:45 PM or earlier.

If there are any questions, please contact Bill Hoover. Thank you!

The Lord's Service Explained

Advent Season 2010

The English word Advent is derived from the Latin *advenire*, "to come to." Advent has to do with the Lord's coming to us. The Lord *has* come to us (at the birth of Christ), *regularly* comes to us (especially on the Lord's Day), and *will* come to us (bodily again at the end of this age). Advent season, then, is a time to reflect upon all of the ways—past, present, and future—in which the Lord comes to us. Please remember that the purpose of Advent is not to imagine ourselves to be living at the time immediately preceding Christ's birth and so somehow *pretend* that we are waiting for him to be born. It is not time for a spiritual game of "make believe." Neither is the purpose of Advent to think sentimental thoughts about the baby Jesus. There is no real spiritual power in any of this. The purpose of Advent is to *expect* and *pray* for the coming of the Lord.

Although our own hymnal does not separate out Advent from Christmas hymns, a quick glance at any of the traditional Advent hymns will confirm that they petition the Lord to come (see #231, 145-149, and 235-243). During Advent we *remember* his first coming (he kept his promises to his people in the OT) and we pray that the Lord will remember his *promises* and come to us again, judging the enemies of the Church and delivering his people from all evil. During Advent season we petition the Lord to come again to us, both now and finally at the end of the age.

Use either the opening corporate prayer or the closing pastoral prayer from the service this morning in your family and/or individual devotions this week. The traditional Advent hymn #145 should be sung all this week.

An Advent wreath can be used to enhance your family devotions, but there is no need to attach any significance to each individual candle. All four candles can be the same color—dark blue or purple. Some modern Advent devotional schemes err in encouraging us to pretend we are living before Jesus' birth. It is best to use the Scripture readings below, reflecting on the way God keeps his covenantal promises. The family should reflect on all the ways the Lord comes to help us.

Advent Scripture Readings – This Week

Monday, Dec. 13	Isaiah 26:1-19	1 John 3:1-24	Psalms 110
Tuesday, Dec. 14	Isaiah 26:20–27:13	1 John 4:1-20	Psalms 67
Wednesday, Dec. 15	Isaiah 28:14-29	1 John 5:1-21	Psalms 91
Thursday, Dec. 16	Isaiah 29:1-14	Jude 1-25	Psalms 16
Friday, Dec. 17	Isaiah 29:15–30:14	Revelation 1:1-20	Psalms 62
Saturday, Dec. 18	Isaiah 30:15-26	Revelation 2:1-29	Psalms 72