

Skyland United Methodist Church
 1850 Skyland Terrace, N.E.
 Atlanta, GA 30319

Address Service Requested

**Making Disciples
 of All Nations**

CHURCH STAFF

John Freeland, Pastor

Andy Hammer, Director of Children & Youth

Janet Walsh, Minister of Music

Jose Garcia, Pianist

Kimberly Thomas, Church Secretary

Eleanor Flanagan, Comptroller

Ini Emmah, Fellowship Dinner Chef

Melissa Freeman, Nursery Attendant

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|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 12/1 Harold & Virginia Burrell | 12/15 John Freeland |
| 12/6 Tim Flanagan | Diane Smith |
| 12/7 Daniel Walsh | 12/20 Isabel de la Cruz |
| 12/8 Eleanor Flanagan | Max de la Cruz |
| 12/9 Blake Borg | 12/21 Martyne Gilleland |
| 12/11 Martha Pirkle | 12/25 John & Esther Stroud |
| Leslie Yates | 12/30 Mary Lou Dennisson |
| 12/14 Salvador Mendoza | John Holt |

PRAYER REQUESTS: Martyne Gilleland, Carolyn Mull, Helen Buffington, Dave & Evelyn Smith, Margaret Barnwell, Velma Jackson, Rhoda Hall, Pam Johnston, Jinnifer Hoyla, Shirley Bryant, Jan Boehn, Jeenece O'Donald, Chris Barber, John & Mary Turner, Jodi Holt, Edna Williams, Jack Cooke, John Stroud, Maude O'Donald, Harold Burrell, Lois Anderson, Diane Smith, Doris Hester, Joan Iddins, Steve Bryson, Porter Dobbins



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**ARTICLES FOR
 JANUARY SKYWRITER
 DUE DECEMBER 13**



SKYWRITER

From the Pastor's Desk

by Rev. John Freeland

Merry Christmas! The beginning of November Linda, Katie, Meredith, and I went to the Fox Theater to see Irvin Berlin's *White Christmas*. If you want my opinion; *White Christmas* is the best Christmas movie/show ever. It is the first Christmas movie we watch every year as a family - and - the song *White Christmas* is the best secular Christmas song ever! That's funny when I think about it "the best *secular* Christmas song." How does that even make sense. Aren't the two mutually exclusive? Certainly Macy's and Gimbels would not agree with that statement (see *Miracle on 34th Street, 20th Century Fox 1947*).

We are constantly reminded that Christmas can be a secular holiday. Phipps Plaza decorated for Christmas in October, and many others put up Christmas decorations well before Thanksgiving. I even saw Santa Claus walking around in my neighborhood -no wait, that was my neighbor around the corner, but he does look a lot like Santa with a white beard and a round belly (he wasn't laughing, so I don't know if it shook like a bowl

full of jelly). Now, I know what you are thinking; this is going to be another article berating the commercialism of Christmas. Read on and be surprised.

I love Christmas decorations, so I'm all the happier that stores are decorating even earlier. Priscilla the Pink Pig has been up at Macy's at Lenox for about a month now. You gotta love a ride on a pig train for \$3 that supports Children's Healthcare. Is it secular? Sure. I'm not sure what a pig has to do with the birth of Jesus, but so what. Maybe there was one in the manger - not likely, Mary and Joseph were Jewish.

Merchants are dropping prices to make the most of the giving spirit this Christmas. That's OK by me, I like paying less for the gifts I want to give (or keep). Santa is fat and jolly at the malls, and he is ready to hear your Christmas wishes. His beard and teeth are bleached white, ready for a Kodak moment. That's OK with me too since the fat red guy kind of represents the spirit of giving.

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The store clerks are instructed to greet their customers with a hearty "Happy Holidays!" Does that make me angry? No. It just gives me an opportunity to mess with them. To "Happy Holidays!" I figure I can reply, "Bah Humbug!" or I can say, "Merry Christmas!" I prefer the later. I like to delay walking away from the cash register to see if they will respond in like kind. Some times they just look at me like I'm stupid, and even that is OK.

I'm not sure how Georgia Power feels about it, but I love Christmas lights. We like to ride around and look at the lights (I'm sure QT and BP like it too). I like to see Santa and his reindeer on at rooftop or even on a lawn, but am especially thrilled when we spot a manager scene. So, even if Christmas is commercial and secular in so many ways, it is a good thing. How can Christians complain when the whole world is thinking about Jesus. Sure, many of them just don't get it,

but they still know that Christmas is ultimately about Jesus.

We can pick Christmas apart, or we can celebrate it. We can point out all the things that are wrong about "secular Christmas," or we can be thankful that for a few weeks out of the year, Jesus is in their face! So, from one Christ lover to another - Merry Christmas! and "may all your Christmases be white!"

Your servant,



The holiday season is a time to give back to those who have given so much to our church. Our staff at Skyland is committed to the Lord and this church and we have seen the fruit of that commitment in many, many ways. As we enter the time of Advent, please consider a donation toward bonuses for our wonderful and hard working staff at Skyland. Please make checks payable to Skyland UMC and designate for "staff bonuses". Thank you for your generosity! - SPPR Committee

The Latino Outreach Ministry is sponsoring a trip to see a living Nativity presentation (offered in Spanish) on Saturday, December 11 in Norcross. This is a very elaborate production, including a reconstruction of an entire town, live animals, and a cast of dozens. The van will leave the Skyland parking lot at 4:30pm. Please contact Sheila de la Cruz at (404) 354-4299 if you would like to share in this very special outing and experience the true spirit of Christmas *en español*.



The Chancel Choir will present "Celebrate the Gift", a Christmas Musical by Camp Kirkland on December 12th during the 10:00am worship service. With a blend of Christmas favorites, time-honored carols and some newer songs of the season, this cantata gives thanks to God for his indescribable gift, Jesus Christ.

Weekly Attendance

Date	Small Groups	10:00 Service	11:00 Service
10/24	71	53	60
10/31	63	53	51
11/7	77	52	65
11/14	64	43	58

Offerings

Date	Mile of Pennies	General Funds	Designated Funds
10/24	10.20	2,820.00	594.52
10/31	6.00	4,350.00	621.00
11/7	15.70	6,922.74	4,299.70
11/14	6.50	5,213.90	No designated funds

Please note that there will be NO organized prayer walks in December or January. Instead, please join us for community prayer in the chapel every Tuesday evening at 7:00pm

Designated Funds

Flowers	25.00
Good Samaritan	58.00
Missions	229.52
Wesley Walk	180.00
Youth Ministry	1,571.00
Sky Camp	200.00
Property Maintenance	3.70
Window - Hester Memorial	25.00
Choir	10.00
Toy Drive	150.00
Postage	10.00
Apportionments	2,500.00
Library Freeland Memorial	25.00
Stage Renovation	528.00



- 12/4 10:00am Fellowship Class (Cathy Wages' Home)
- 12/9 11:45am Sky Angels (Dining Area & FH)
- 12/11 6:00pm Walter Murphy Class (Fellowship Hall)
7:00pm Young Adults (Matt Hurd's Home)
- 12/13 6:00pm UMW Parlor Pals (Chin Chin)
- 12/14 1:00pm Friendship Class (O' Charley's)
- 12/19 4:00pm Youth (Youth Room)

Christmas Dinner

Please join us after the Children's Play on December 12 to enjoy a free Christmas dinner together with all our friends and neighbors. The menu will include ham, sweet potatoes, corn, fruit salad, rolls, and Mexican-style hot Christmas punch. Delicious desserts will be provided by the Walter Murphy class. After dinner we will all share in the toy giveaway!



Sunday, December 12

- Christmas Cantata - 10:00am
- Children's Play - 6:15pm

Friday, December 24

- Candlelight Service - 6:00pm

Friday, January 7, 2011

- Light Supper - 6:15pm
- Friday Night Fire - 7:00pm