

The Monthly Newsletter of  
 the Pleasant Valley United  
 Methodist Church  
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# The Link



## Worship Services

Sundays 9:30 AM  
 Sunday School Offered Every Sunday!  
 Church Office Hours  
 Monday—Wednesday-Friday 1:00 PM  
 to 4:00 PM

Address Service Requested

## *Lectionary*

### *Readings*

*Sundays In  
 December*

**December 2010**

December 5: Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12

December 12: Isaiah 35:1-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

December 19: Isaiah 7:10-16; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

December 24/25: Isaiah 62:6-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

December 26, 2010: Isaiah 63:7-9; Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23

## *Special Days & Offerings*

*December 5 Second Sunday of Advent*  
*December 12 Third Sunday of Advent*  
*Decoration of Tree*  
*December 19 Fourth Sunday of Advent*  
*Christmas Program-*  
*Christmas through the eyes of a camel*  
*December 25 Christmas Day*



Men's Bible  
 Study



Group. Join us  
 Sunday mornings as we  
 discuss Lectionary pas-



## Readers

- December 5: Jacque Williams
- December 12: Paul Foxx
- December 19: Nick Peck
- December 26: Emil Klein

FROM THE



PASTOR

Ever hear of “blue Christmas?” Elvis Presley recorded “Blue Christmas” in 1957 (written by Billy Hayes and Jay Johnson 1948). He didn’t think it would sell, but he went ahead with the recording. Little did he know that “Blue Christmas” would last through the years and become a classic. I just listened to someone on U-Tube sing it. He was no recording

artist, but as he sang.....tears started running down my cheeks. I was a mess. What was that? Did I just need a good cry? The lyrics are nothing special. It’s just a love song about not being together for Christmas. Elvis thought it was silly.

To me, “Blue Christmas” touches something deep within; it emotes feelings of loneliness, separation and longing for something. What is that longing for something? Is it to make things right? To be at peace? When I’m feeling lonely, I can be surrounded by people and still feel lonely.

I remember gathering for our annual family Christmas. Cory, John, Troy and Liv would pile into our “68” Volvo wagon. There was a one foot square piece of sheet metal on the floor, in the back, to keep our little Liv from falling through. One fender was green, one grey door, the rest of the car was blue. As we drove to my sister’s, I was anticipating connecting with all my relations: sisters, brothers, nephews, nieces, cousins, in-laws and all.

Upon arriving, my brother-in-law, Ilmand gave me a chewing out about the condition of my car. He was a terrific mechanic; he taught me almost everything I knew about Volvos. I got defensive and irritated over his criticisms. It took everything I had to overcome my angst. You see, I loved and admired him, but this was the pattern that developed over the years. It took me a long time to figure out a better way. He was having fun with his harmless attacks; I was miserable.

Once inside, we had a great time eating traditional Swedish delights, some delicious, some awful, mostly unacceptable to those who were not initiated in the Swedish tradition. We listened to the “old” Swedish carols and danced. The kids were constantly lobbying to get to the unwrapping of their presents. Some were pleased, some disappointed, but, in general, a good time was had by all. Always, though, I came away longing for something different, something better.

Over time, I was able to break the affect of the pattern between me and Ilmand. I ceased taking his jabs personally. I started to see him in a different light. I’m not sure how this happened, but I began to see him as a child of God. His life was not easy either. I realized that his needs were just like mine. We both wanted to be at peace with one another. Why he chose to criticize me, I’ll never know. What I do know is that the change that needed to take place was the change in me.

This is precisely why God sent his Son Jesus into the world. This child, Jesus, enters our hearts not as a powerful ruler but as a humble lover of our souls. His entry into the world went almost unnoticed, except to a few shepherds. This child became the one who shows us how to live, how to forgive and be reconciled to one another. With Jesus all things are possible. He reconciled himself to a broken and sinful world. He holds all things together. With him there is no separateness. He is the answer to our longing, our deepest desire to live a life that really matters.

May the coming days be a time to prepare room in our hearts to receive the lover of our souls, once again, and forever more.

Pastor Carl

**Prayer Chain Revised:** Our Prayer Chain is one of the important ministries in our church in which everyone can participate. The purpose is to have many voices lifting prayers to the Lord for a particular individual. Initial prayer requests should be directed to Penny Church. She will then start the communication tree to alert our prayer warriors. If you have participated in the Prayer Chain in the past, and would like to be added to the chain, contact Penny at 860-379-0716.

Penny Church 860-379-0716

Dot Lavieri 860-379-3529	Joanne Little 860-738-9942	Church Office 860-379-2157
Marie Phelps 860-489-3286	Peggy Arnold 860-738-9332	
Ruth Schultz 860-496-9214	Mary Liz 860-379-5628	
Mary Lou 860-379-3653	Ann Kramer 860-379-5908	
Dawn Renfrew 860-379-8649	Cathy Baum 860-379-9398	
Shirley Green 860-379-8679		



## November UMW News

The UMW met on November 3<sup>rd</sup> with 12 ladies in attendance. Margo welcomed us and then Mary Lou gave a wonderful devotion on anxiety. She used a book by Maxie Dunnam, and quoted passages from Philippians 4:6-7, "The Lord is near; have no anxiety, but in everything make your requests known to God in prayer and petition with thanksgiving. Then the peace of God, which is beyond our utmost understanding, will keep guard over your hearts, and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus" and Psalm 46. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." She then led us all in a relaxation exercise which not only relaxed the body, but also the mind, in order to let the comfort and peace of our Lord be in us.

Joann Little shared a Mission Moment which she found on the UMC Global Ministries website. She told us that 450 new churches have been established throughout the world since the 1990s, through Mission Together. Some of the countries are Cambodia, Central Asia, Cameroon, Honduras, Lithuania, Nepal, Senegal and many others. She said that now almost every nation in the world has heard the word of God.

Poochie brought us all together in a Getting to Know You game. She asked us 10 questions such as our full name, our current address, our hometown, our immediate families, what our favorite food was, did we like chocolate, when we first accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior, why we came to UMW, and what we would like to see our group accomplish. We got to hear everyone's personal story as well as learn something new about our friends.

We conducted our business meeting over refreshments, provided by Margo and Kristin.

The program on Bullying has been postponed for the time being. Margo is still trying to connect with someone to do a program on Hospice.

We discussed the Christmas Fair which was held on November 6<sup>th</sup>. All was in place and ready to go.

We also discussed ideas on where some of our money can be used at Christmas. It was decided that we wait and meet after church on November 21<sup>st</sup> to make our decisions. This way we would know how much money we made at our fair and how much we could spend.

Our next meeting will be held on December 1<sup>st</sup> and it will be our annual Christmas Party. We decided to start at 6:30 with a pizza party dinner. Salads will be provided by Margo and Jennie with Laurie providing soda and Joann providing iced tea.

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Gail and Pat will provide the desserts and Pat will order and pick up the pizza. Please remember to bring a towel for our donation to Susan B. Anthony and a grab bag gift, \$10 limit, if you wish to participate in that. All women in the church are welcome to attend. Poochie is going to provide entertainment and anything she does is always FUN. This is a good meeting to attend if you are a first timer. Please let Margo or Pat know in advance so we will order enough pizza for all to enjoy.

May the Peace of Christ be with you,

Pat Allen, Vice-president UMW

### Advent Bible Study

Joanne Little is conducting a five-week Bible study for the Advent season titled, Blessing of the Manger. We'll meet after worship at 11:15 starting November 28th and will end December 26th.



### Mittens for the Mitten Tree

The UMW will be selling hats and mittens for the mitten tree or for personal use after church the next few Sundays. Gail Klein will be in charge of selling them in Fellowship Hall. Everything will be \$5 each



### UMW Christmas Fair

Our wonderful fair has come and gone. The UMW Christmas Fair, held on November 6<sup>th</sup>, was a huge success. A big **THANK YOU** goes out to all who helped with crafts, baking, knitting, making various signs, advertisement, setting up, working the day of, clean up, and supporting the fair by attending and buying. We are blessed to have so many wonderful workers in our church family. You are all deeply appreciated.

May the love of Christ be with you all.,  
Ann Kramer and Pat Allen, Co-Chairs

We're looking for additional help for the Sanctuary Cleaning. The 2011 list is being made up soon and some additional names would be welcome. All it takes is an hour or so 2 or 3 times per year to dust and vacuum the Sanctuary, straighten out the hymnals, remove old bulletins, etc. Volunteers can contact Margo Fenn at 860-379-3874



## *COM Article for December 2010 Link*

The Council on Ministries met on November 9<sup>th</sup> with eight people in attendance. Pastor Carl shared his thoughts about setting short term goals for our church and evangelizing to our own people. Even though we do many activities that reach out to the community, Pastor Carl believes that we should begin right in our own church to provide opportunities to reintroduce our members to even more encounters with Christ and to commit ourselves to broaden our Christian experience. He is planning on attending the spring men's Tres Dias weekend and will encourage more participation from our congregation. Another suggestion, which he learned about in the book entitled I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church, is to gather a few people and do 'prayer walks' in various locations and pray for the community. More ideas will be discussed at subsequent meetings.

Reports from other committees included the UMW's success of their annual Christmas Fair, the Worship Committee's need for a meeting to discuss plans for Advent and Christmas services, potential opportunities for the Youth Group to participate in a conference program for youth called IGNITE!, and the Stewardship Committee's continuing progress leading toward Renewal Sunday on November 21<sup>st</sup>.

We were reminded that the annual Charge Conference will be held this year on Tuesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 PM. Our DS, Ken Kieffer, will conduct the meeting. In addition, the annual Thanksgiving Eve service will again be held at the Washington Hill church at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, November 24<sup>th</sup>.

Pastor Carl announced that Joann Little has agreed to lead the Advent Bible Study this year. Further information will be announced in church. The classes will, most likely, take place following the worship service on Sundays, beginning on November 29<sup>th</sup>, the first Sunday in Advent. The Christmas pageant will be held on Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup> during the worship service and Pastor Carl will discuss plans with Mindy Henry. We will again decorate the Mitten Tree with mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves which will be donated to the Winsted Salvation Army. In addition, we'll collect White Gifts to be given to the residents of Laurel Hill Health Care in Winsted. A list of suggested gift items will be found on the Bessie Table. Plans are also underway to go caroling on December 19<sup>th</sup> to area shut-in's. Last year the event was cancelled due to a potential snow storm so it is hoped that the weather will be clear this year. More details will be announced as plans continue to be made.

December will be a busy month here at PVUMC as we wait for and then welcome the birth of Christ. Please keep looking for updates and announcements so that you and your family can participate in these special events.

**Christmas Caroling:** "Let us make a joyful noise unto the Lord." Gather with us on Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm for caroling. We'll meet in the church parking lot and carpool to designated homes for singing and spreading joy. Afterwards we will rejoin back at the church for a chili supper. You do not have to come caroling in order to join us for the chili supper. Let Cathy Baum know if you would like to be visited in song or know of someone who would. Also, we're looking for volunteers to make chili or a dessert. Call Cathy at 860-379-9398



## December Birthdays

### Helpers This Month

#### Greeters

12/5 The Fenner Family  
12/12 Shellie Ritchie & Barney Connors  
12/19 The Green Family  
12/26 The deRoode Family

#### Sanctuary Cleaning

12/5 Volunteer  
12/12 Peck  
12/19 Kramer  
12/26 Klein

#### Coffee Hour

12/5 **Mary Liz Simons**, Dot Lavieri,  
Karen Civelli  
12/12 **Wendy Sullenberger**, Shellie  
Ritchie, Kim Connors  
12/19 **Margo Fenn**, Kate Fenn, Becky  
Bridges  
12/26 **Barbara Bailey**, Joanne Little, Ann  
Naticha

#### Counters

12/5 Mary Liz Simons & Mary Lou  
Centofanti  
12/12 Emil Klein & John Baum  
12/19 Steve Bailey & Ann Kramer  
12/26 Ted Millahn & Becky Bridges

#### Ushers

12/5 Dawn & Wayne Renfrew  
12/12 Gene deRoode & Wendy  
Sullenberger  
12/19 Barbara & Steve Bailey  
12/26 Bill & Becky Bridges

#### Acolyte

12/5 Victoria deRoode  
12/12 Nathan Benham  
12/19 Samantha Benham  
12/26 Matthew Civelli

**12/4 Kim Connors**  
**Skylar Zygmont**  
**12/7 Jamie Heuschkel**  
**12/8 Michael Derochick**  
**12/9 Shaylah deRoode**  
**12/11 Jasmine Abbott**  
**12/12 Helen Tengelsen**  
**12/13 Leanna O'Brien**  
**12/16 Judy Barone**  
**12/20 Erick Bailey**

## December Wedding Anniversaries

**12/4 Lori & Jim Rogers**  
**12/27 Betty & Charlie Vignali**  
**12/28 Laurie & Allan Fenner**

Christmas Play, December 19th

Christmas Through the Eyes of a  
**Camel**, a play written by our own Mary Lou  
Centofanti, with music composed by Mari  
Forman, will be performed by our youth,  
with a few adults, on Sunday December 19th.



#### Nursery Care

12/5 & 12/12 Pat Allen  
12/19 & 12/26 Sharon Foxx



Please have all articles for the  
January newsletter to Sharon by  
January 17, 2011. Send to  
psfoxx@att.net or leave in Secre-  
tary mailbox in library