



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

I love winter. I hate winter. What day is it?

There are times that the crisp beauty of the snow and the deep stillness are like honey on my soul. The winter sky is breathtaking in the dark night. Yet, on some days I feel like shouting, "Enough!" as though by some magic the clouds would part, and bright sunshine would appear.

We take it all or we take nothing, I guess. In all the years I have lived here, I have never seriously considered living anywhere else. I love it. Just as we love certain people, we can love the land, the landscape, the flora and fauna of a particular place. It is more than feeling like home; it is home. And when we love, we take it all.... the beautiful and the challenging.

For the most part, Christmas decorations are down and we live in the stark white and grey of January. It is difficult to feel the "warm fuzzies" of Christmas Eve, to see clearly the beauty of the coming of the Light. Yet it is there. The Promise of God never dims, never disappears. We keep the Christ Candle burning in the sanctuary on Sunday to remind us of that..... and I keep lights up until February 2nd, Candlemas Day, which is halfway between the first day of Winter and the first day of Spring. I admit that such reminders are visual helps which remind me to keep the spirit of the Christ alive in my heart.

It is easy to feel the Christ-spirit in December. In January? Not so much. In life, it is easy to give thanks when things are going well; it is in the bleak times that faith, hope and love demand more spiritual work. Yet the Presence is with us.

In the midst of devastating personal, national and global events, God's presence is with us. In the slippery slope of weather or life storms, that Presence sustains us. In our darkest times, that Light endures. That is when we need to believe what we cannot see. That is why it is called Faith, and not certainty.

On the cold, dark days, let us take comfort in the arms of God. Let us feel safe in that embrace, cry if we need to, even shout, "Enough!" It's OK... God hears us, holds us close, rocks us gently until the skies clear.

I encourage all of us to use this time of the year to re-acquaint ourselves with that nurturing, comforting image of God. To believe that we are not alone, and that our external and internal worlds will ultimately experience the next season. Thanks be to God.

Loving Blessings,

Rev. Susan



NEW COPIER

We are now the proud owners of a new copier, which is in the office in Pierce Hall. Thanks to Larry and Heather Eckhardt for facilitating this purchase, which was necessary because the old copier broke and parts are no longer available for that machine. It is a used copier in excellent condition, and the company is one which Larry and Heather have used for years; this company's service is reliable, and they stand by their sales.

They recommend that we NOT cover this copier, as all systems are sealed, so dust is not a problem. It is also a newer model, so its extra features will make copying the bulletin and newsletter much easier!

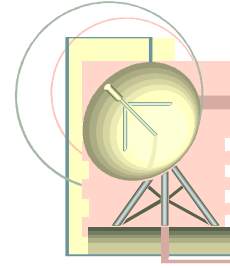
CHURCH BLOOPERS

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation
would lend him their
electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.



To God Be the Glory

It is with gratefulness that we will be using the new Methodist accompaniment for our Sunday morning hymns when Bev cannot be there and no one else is available. Choir has been practicing and getting use to using them during choir rehearsal so that during our worship should the occasion arise we could use them easier. We hope you will enjoy them from time to time as well.



Technology

We would like to thank you for your comments and suggestions for our contemporary worship. We would like to begin using contemporary worship twice a month instead of once a month. If you are interested in helping us in any way, using PowerPoint, running the machine on Sunday morning or any other part of putting that service together please speak to Rev. Susan or any of the tech staff. We will be happy to train any one that is interested. We meet every second Wednesday to prepare for the service. Come and join us, we welcome you.

Watch the webpage for news regarding ordering Easter Lilies



Sunday Childcare

We are very happy to welcome Shannon Adams of Stephentown as our new child care person. Currently we offer childcare for preschool children during the worship service. If you want to come to church but don't have a sitter you can now bring your children and Shannon will provide child care during the service.

“Souper” Sunday – February 7, 2010



We will be collecting food and money donations



for our food pantry during the service.

The Stephentown Federated Church Men's Group

Please join us for breakfast – first Sunday of every month until June. Join us for good food and great fellowship. The 2010 schedule is:

February 7, 2010.....	Breakfast at 8:00am
February 27, 2010.....	Church family and friends Turkey Dinner 6:00pm
March 7, 2010.....	Breakfast at 8:00am
April 4, 2010.....	Easter Sunday – Continental breakfast after Sunrise service
May 2, 2010.....	Breakfast at 8:00am
May 8, 2010.....	Church Cemetery and Grounds work day. Details to follow
June 6, 2010.....	All Church Breakfast – Everyone come and join us for a really big breakfast meal! This is the last breakfast meeting 'till fall - 8:00am



Don't Forget – The Big Event
The Men's Group Presents
The Annual Church Family and Friends
Turkey Dinner
Saturday, February 27, 2010 at 6:00 pm.
At the Church Hall

This dinner has no ticket sales, just a free-will offering. Break the mid-winter blues and get out and enjoy the company of family and friends of our church community and the community at large.

We will need volunteers to cook turkeys, bake pies, prepare food and help clean-up after dinner. Let Larry, Ted or Paul know in what capacity you might be able to help. *All hands on deck!!!* Mark your calendar!!!



This year, Easter Sunday falls on the first Sunday of April. (April 4th) The Men's Breakfast Group will be offering a simple continental style breakfast at the church hall after the Sunrise service held at Garfield Cemetery. Hot coffee, juice, hot cross buns, donuts and pastries will be the breakfast fare of the morning. Join us in the chill of the early morning air at the Cemetery to celebrate the reason we believe – the empty tomb – and then warm up with fellowship in the spirit at the church hall.



Members of Presbyterian USA Session

Pat Coon (2011)
Helen Wallbank (2011)
Mary Schnyer (clerk of Session) (2012)
Malcolm Beal (2012)
Marge Feathers (2013)
Larry Eckhardt (2013)



Members of United Methodist Church Council

Mary French (2013)
Kate Beach (2013)
Janet Atwater, (Chair) (2011)
Tom Foody (2011)
Georgiana Beebe (2012)
Bev Westfall (2012)



Members of the General Committee

Susan Schultz, Pastor	Janet Atwater, Chair (Council)
Joann Williams, Secretary	Don French, Treasurer
Kate Beach (SonShiners)*	Pat Coon (Session)
Larry Eckhardt (Session)	Tom Foody (Council)
Malcolm Beal (Men's Breakfast)	Nan Seeburger (SonShiners)*
Bev Westfall (Choir)	Kate Beach (SonShiners)*

*Shared Post (one vote)

Pastor- Parish Committee

Larry Eckhardt, Chair
Patricia Coon
Lillian Dette
Bev Westfall

SonShiners

Nan Seeburger/Kate Beach, Co-chairs
Pat Coon, Treasurer

Men's Breakfast Group

Larry Eckhardt, Chair
Tom Foody, Scribe
Ted Bears, Treasurer

United Methodist lose two leaders in Haiti Earthquake

Members of the United Methodist Church are mourning the loss of countless members of our church in Haiti as well as two of our most devoted leaders. Reverends Clinton Rabb and Sam Dixon had joined four colleagues for a dinner meeting at the Hotel Montana in Port-au-Prince to discuss ways to assist the impoverished island nation when the Jan. 12 earthquake struck. Both men found their legs pinned under a concrete slab. Two days later, French rescue workers found the group, but it took hours for them to free Rabb. He was airlifted to Florida but died of his injuries at a hospital there on Jan. 17. Dixon died earlier in Port-au-Prince.

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How Can You Help the Residents of Haiti?

Members of the Stephentown Federated Church are asking, “What is our church doing to help?” “What can we do to help?” Our church supports the United Methodist Church and Presbyterian Church USA relief funds through the apportionments we pay to the parent organizations. Those previously paid funds are supporting both churches’ relief efforts in Haiti at this time. It is important to continue to support those relief efforts by replenishing relief supplies and/or the funding those purchases those supplies.

Replenishment of health and hygiene kits that can be sent to earthquake-devastated Haiti is requested by both churches. **We will be collecting kits and/or parts to make kits. They should be brought to church on Sundays between 10:30 – 11:00 by Sunday, February 21, 2010.**

The kits, valued at about \$12 per kit, contain everything from towels and washcloths to sterile bandages and bar soap. They will be distributed to those who have been forced to leave their homes as a result of the recent disaster.

For individuals or groups that want to contribute basic necessities, The following NEW items should be placed in a sealed one-gallon plastic bag.

- 1 hand towel (15” x 25” up to 17” x 27”. No kitchen towels.
- 1 washcloth
- 1 comb (large and sturdy, not pocket-sized)
- 1 nail file or fingernail clippers (no emery boards or toenail clippers)
- 1 bath-size bar of soap (3 oz. and up)
- 1 toothbrush (single brushes only in original wrapper, no child-size brushes)
- 6 adhesive plastic strip sterile bandages
- \$1.00 to purchase toothpaste

(NOTE: Toothpaste is purchased in bulk to be added to health kits to ensure that the product does not expire before they are sent.)

Because the emergency kits are carefully planned to make them usable in the greatest number of situations and strict rules govern product entry into international countries, Kits should contain only the requested items – nothing more.

To give a cash donation to the United Methodist relief fund on line go to: www.umc.org

To give a cash donation to the Presbyterian USA relief effort on line go to: www.pcusa.org

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

- Feb 2 9:00 am Heavenly Quilters
6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
- Feb 7 8:00 am Men's Breakfast
9:30 am Worship Service & Communion
- Feb 9 9:00 am Heavenly Quilters
6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
- Feb 10 6:30 pm Worship/Tech Comm. Meeting
- Feb 14 9:30 am Worship Service – hymn sing
- Feb 16 9:00 am Heavenly Quilters
6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
- Feb 21 8:00 am SonShiners Breakfast
Church members invited to come
9:30 am Worship Service – healing/ *Health/Hygiene Kits Due*
- Feb 22 7:00 pm General Comm. Meeting
- Feb 23 9:00 am Heavenly Quilters
6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
- Feb 24 6:30 pm Worship/Tech Comm. meeting
- Feb 27 6:00 pm **Family and Friends Turkey Dinner**
- Feb 28 9:30 am Contemporary Worship Service

MARCH CALENDAR

- March 2 9:00 am Heavenly Quilters
6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
- March 7 8:00 am Men's Breakfast
9:30 am Worship Service - communion
- March 9 9:00 am Heavenly Quilters
6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
- March 10 6:30 pm Worship/Tech Comm. Meeting
- March 14 9:30 am Worship Service- hymn sing
- March 16 9:00 am Heavenly Quilters
6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
- March 21 8:00 am SonShiners Breakfast
9:30 am Worship Service - healing
- March 23 9:00 am Heavenly Quilters
6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
- March 24 6:30 pm Worship/Tech Comm. Meeting
- March 28 9:30 am Worship Service – contemporary - ***Palm Sunday***
- March 29 7:00 pm General Committee Meeting