

Messages from the Diaconate

Our Guest Minister: To begin the month of January, we extend a very warm welcome to the latest minister to fill our pulpit, Rev. William Kren (retired), who most recently spent 8 years as pastor at Romulus United Methodist Church and later went into the superintendency and oversaw a 4-state district. He is now affiliate pastor at St. Paul UCC in Dearborn Heights as well as chief executive of the Romulus Chamber of Commerce.

We'd also like to acknowledge the efforts and extend a profound 'thank you' to our last pulpit supply pastor, Rev. Norman Kirsch, who led us in worship during November and January and made the Christmas season extra special this year. We are deeply grateful for his work and service!

"Taking Down the Greens": On Sunday, Jan. 5, we ask anyone willing and able to please pitch in to help take down the Christmas decorations in the church sanctuary and Mayflower Room following worship service and coffee hour. The un-decorating activities shouldn't take that long with enough helpers. Many hands make light work! Thank you.



Volunteers on Sunday: We need people to help during worship service in January. If you are able and available to lend a hand as an usher, liturgist, or fellowship host, please see Sue Wilson or sign your name on the sheet in the Mayflower Room. Thank you!



Minister Search UPDATE: In our search for a permanent pastor, The Search Committee has been busy screening candidates and conducting one-on-one phone interviews and conference calls. We have received minister profiles, or resumes, from 15 applicants since September from the Michigan Conference office and narrowed our search to 3 potential candidates, all of whom have quite a bit of experience leading UCC congregations, yet each exhibiting their own style and possessing different talents. The next phase of our search will involve the Committee meeting each of the candidates in person, arranging individual visits to our church, and hearing a live sermon delivered in a neutral location.

Thank You...

...to Irene Moxon for putting the Christmas Eve service together. It was a wonderful service shared by many members and their families and friends.

... to readers Irene Moxon, John Peters, Nancy Wolter, and Brian Sampson.

... to Brian and Kirk Haas for sharing their musical gifts.

OUR CHURCH AT WORK In December



Helpers for Sunday Services

Greeters:

- January 5 – Available
- January 12 – Available
- January 29 – Available
- January 26 – Available

Ushers:

- January 5 – Available
- January 12 – Available
- January 29 – Available
- January 26 – Available

Liturgists:

- January 5 – Available
- January 12 – Available
- January 29 – Available
- January 26 – Available

PRAYER LIST



Bernice Hartling	Medical Concerns
Shirley Fedraw	Medical Concerns
Bunny Hoganson	Medical Concerns
Geri Sampson	Medical Concerns
Suzanne Van Ranst	Medical Concerns
Ellis Mangrum	Medical Concerns
Sylvia Vukmirovich	Medical Concerns
Ray Riske	Medical Concerns
Pat Stacho	Medical Concerns
Phyllis Preston	Medical Concerns
Geoff Hubbell	Medical Concerns
Duane Haworth	Medical Concerns

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Toni Boyd
- 8 Linda Haling
- 10 Patricia Mangrum
- 11 Linda Berndt
- 27 Cole Haas
- 29 Peter Nikolajevs
- 30 David MacKenzie
Marilyn Beardsley

Dedication of Flowers - December

- January 5 – Available
- January 12 – Halings
- January 29 – Dick Bolton
- January 26 – Available

Fellowship Hour - December

- January 5 – Available
- January 12 – Available
- January 29 – Available
- January 26 – Available

DATES TO REMEMBER...

January	8	Trustees Meeting	7pm
January	9	Diaconate Meeting	7pm
January	26	Annual Meeting	11:30am

I'm Just Asking...

With Pat Stacho

Relax, everyone! The madness is over...put your VISA away.

Christmas has once again come and gone, whether you were ready or not!

Soon all the gifts you searched for so diligently will be returned, most likely for less than what you paid for it! (Unless you were smart enough to include the "gift receipt.") By the way, when did that come into vogue? In years past, we at least had the courtesy to keep our gifts.....keep them in the 're-gifting' section of our closet. We just had to be very, very careful who we passed it on to. Good idea to remove all tags, too.

We all have eaten too much, too often, and too fast!

Watched all the Christmas movies... musicals, tear jerkers, funny ones, religious ones, kid's classics, even watched some twice. "Every time a bell rings, an angel"...well, you know.

Spent time with our precious family and friends, listened to the same stories we have heard, year after year! I still managed to laugh or cry at the appropriate time.

The hardest part of Christmastime is missing all the people who have passed on over the years. I love and miss everyone, just as much as the day they died. Yet, still I was able to smile, remembering the joy of each and every Christmas memory. I have lived through 70 Christmases! That is a lot of joy, love, and memories to cherish.

So, though I may kiddingly say BAH, HUMBUG!!, I don't mean it. But I am still glad it's over!

Now we start a new year...2014. Repeat, 2014. Good grief. The years are passing so quickly, and I have so much I still haven't accomplished. I still have the same dreams. I'm just beginning to realize some of those dreams are not gonna happen.

I am pretty sure that Tom Selleck is not going to call. Maybe, he has! Darn caller ID...Pete would never tell me. (I just said that to keep the dream alive. Call me, Tom.)

The size 10 dream has become a nightmare.

State Lottery...your dream too?

The other dreams I shall keep to myself. You will be the first to know if they come true.

HAPPY NEW YEAR



MINI MISSIONS



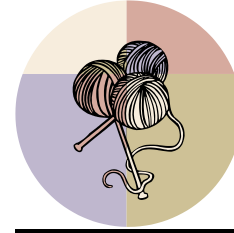
We continue to collect pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House Charities. Please bring them in whenever you collect them. A plastic bin is just inside the tower door.

Warm Clothing



New or gently used coats, scarves, hats, socks, and gloves/mittens are needed for mission projects or local families in need of some warmth this coming winter.

Yarn for Vista Maria

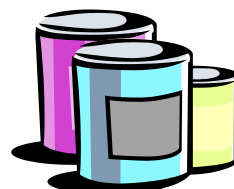
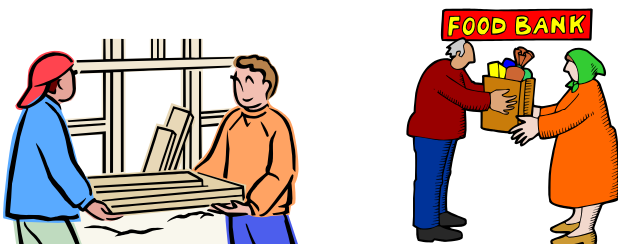


We are collecting yarn to donate to Vista Maria for girls to use to make various items as they learn to knit and crochet. Put yarn, or other items that relate to knitting and crocheting, in the basket at the back of the sanctuary.

Volunteers are needed to deliver our mini-mission collections: pop tabs, warm clothing, and food bank items, etc. We also need people to help out in various ways around the church, including decorating and organizing. If you have an hour or two a week to spare, see if you could come over and spend it with us!

Food

We continue to collect non-perishable food items to donate to Gleaner's Food Bank. Please drop these items in the basket at the back of the sanctuary.





Annual Meeting

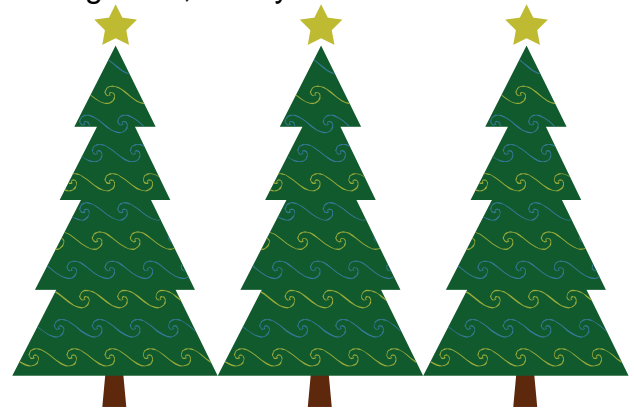
Our by-laws call for a single Annual Meeting to be held yearly in January. The Annual Meeting is scheduled for January 26th, 2014. We are asking for approval of the 2014 Budget, as well as election of board and committee members. Copies of the proposed budget are available in the Church office and at the rear of the Chapel.

A reminder to all Boards and Committees: an annual report of the past year's activities needs to be in the Church office in time to be printed before the Annual Meeting. With this in mind, please make sure your report is delivered, either through email or as a hard copy, to the office by January 20th.

Arnie Schilbe
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Men's Club

The Men's Club Annual Christmas Tree Sale was a great success this year. We sold out of trees several days before Christmas. Thanks to everyone who helped whether it was on set-up day, manning the lot and selling trees, or buy a tree!



We extend our condolences to the family of Dale Phillips, a former member, who passed away on December 5th. A memorial service is being planned soon. More information will be included in Sunday bulletin announcements.

MESSENGER NEWS ITEMS

If you have news about family or something you're doing in the community, please send it along so that it can be shared with our Messenger friends.

Send items by the 20th of the month to dcucc@gmail.com

The Epiphany's Message of Faith, Hope and Love

By The Rev. Dr. James B. Lemler

It has been one of my favorite songs of the season since I was a child. I have belted it out with family, in congregations and with 400+ schoolchildren at an Episcopal day school connected to a parish where I used to serve. Are you ready? Here goes: "We three Kings of Orient are..." And its rowdy and rambunctious chorus: "Oh... star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright..."

Generally kept in the Christmas carol section of songs of the season, it is actually an Epiphany carol. Words and music were written by an Episcopal clergyman in the 19th century for his children and a Nativity pageant.

The carol is about the Biblical story of the Epiphany as found in Matthew's Gospel. Three mysterious visitors, kings, sages, wise men (Zoroastrians), come from the East to Bethlehem to visit the newborn Christ child.

There is much mystery and intrigue. They follow a magnificent star. They present gifts of great meaning and significance.

They have to avoid Herod, the wicked king of the region, who resists the appearance of God's love.

The word "epiphany" itself means manifestation or revelation. In the Christian tradition, it is the story of the revelation of God and of God's love in the child born in Bethlehem. The revelation is meant for all people, as symbolized by the arrival of the visitors from far, far away.

The theme is clear. There is no limit or boundary to God's love. The whole world, the whole universe and the whole creation is included in that love.



Although the Epiphany has never quite caught on in Western Christianity the way it has in the Eastern (Orthodox) traditions of the church, it is a glorious celebration and possesses such abundant meaning.

How wonderful that those three royal personages appeared on the scene. How wonderful it is that God's love is revealed to everyone, everywhere, without bound or limit.

The truth is that there are epiphanies of the love of God for all of us. It doesn't matter what our journey of faith happens to be or what pathway we are following. God finds ways of revealing and manifesting His love to us.

There are stars that beckon us. There are stories that reflect the meaning and hope of God's presence for us. God is revealed in those we love, those whom we meet, and in the experiences that we have each and every day. Life itself can be an epiphany of the faith, hope and love which are the great gifts of God to us.

Perhaps during this January, Epiphany season, we might be like those kingly wise men ... searching, seeking and following... looking for the radiance and brightness of God.

God does reveal himself. God does manifest his love to us. God's epiphany occurs for us in our hearts, our souls and our lives.