

The Parish Portrait

Volume 1, Issue 18

December 2011

From the Pastor's Desk

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Sometime back, there appeared on the web a list of the "Top 10 Things to Say About a Holiday Gift You Don't Like." I thought I would share these with you. You might want to write them down; just in case you get something that falls in that category. What do you say about a gift that you really don't like? We will begin with:

Number 10: Hey! There's a gift.

Number 9: Well, well, well . . .

Number 8: Boy, if I had not recently shot up 4 sizes that would've fit.

Number 7: This is perfect for wearing in the basement.

Number 6: Gosh, I hope this never catches fire!

Number 5: If the dog buries it, I'll be furious!

Number 4: I love it, but I fear the jealousy it will inspire.

Number 3: Sadly, tomorrow I enter the federal witness protection program.

Number 2: To think I got this the year I vowed to give all my gifts to charity.

And number 1: I really don't deserve this:

Well, we really don't deserve any of our gifts, do we? Nevertheless, unworthy though we are, there is one precious gift that comes to all people. As the angels declared to the shepherds of the field as the star was shining over Bethlehem: "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who the Christ the Lord. [Luke 2:10 & 11]

Words fail to adequately express our debt of thanks for the greatest gift the world has ever received. The only appropriate response is to give ourselves unto the Lord who made us and gave His very life to save us!



In the words of the beautiful hymn "In the Bleak Midwinter" :

"What then can I give Him, empty as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a Wise Man, I would know my part;

What then can I give Him: I must give my heart!"

In Christ,

Peace - Greg Leigh, pastor

Children's Christmas Musical

On December 18th, during the 9:30 a.m. worship service, the Joyful Noises Choir will present this year's Christmas Musical, "The Grumpy Shepherd".

The musical follows the events in the lives of the Shepherds on the holy night of Jesus birth. The grumpy shepherd, named Joram (Lyvia Black), Josiah (Emma Leary) and Obed, (Emily Fegley), are visited by Gabriel (Dreema Hampton) who tells them of the Holy Child born in Bethlehem. While visiting the Holy Family, Joram discovers that through the love of the newborn King, his heart can turn from "Grumpy" to "loved". Come and join the shepherds, angels, Mary, Joseph and the sheep while they share the joy of the Christmas season. And remember, like the sheep tell us in the musical..."All we have to do is follow the Shepherd, because He is the Shepherd and we are the sheep."

United Methodist Men

The UMM will sponsor a Christmas tree benefiting three area families. The tree is located in the vestibule area of the church. If you would like to help, select a tag from the tree and purchase an item from the tag. Attach the tag to the top of the gift and return it to the vestibule. The UMM will deliver the gifts to the families during the holiday season.

United Methodist Women

Convoy United Methodist Women will meet on Wednesday December 7, 2011 at 7pm in the church social room. Program is "An Old Fashion Christmas," it will be presented by Lynn Johnson & Vicki Saylor. Greeters will be Linda Holden & Judy Bowers. All ladies of the church are invited and bring a friend. The United Methodist Women have distributed funds in the amount of \$1300. to: Heritage Board, Crestview Elementary for students book fees, Salvation Army, Helping Hands Food Pantry, and WBCL Bible Sticks.

Administrative Board

The administrative board will meet on the 4th Thursday of each month at 7:00pm through the fall and winter until May. The administrative board would like to invite all administrative board to attend. We are deciding on the direction of many important issues that face our church family. For more information contact Rick Mollenkopf.

Loaves of Love

Loaves of Love, is an outreach program designed to feed Crestview Elementary Students whose families may not have enough food for the weekends. Every Friday, participating students will receive free food items that are both nutritious and easy to prepare and eat. The church is accepting donations of food items each month. We will be assigned and item, and if you wish to make a cash donation, drop it in the offering plate and label "Loaves of Love." Thank you for your outpouring of donations last year. For more

information contact Shawna Putnam or Vicki Saylor.

December collection items requested for Loaves of Love, are Ravioli with pull tabs. January – fruit cups, February – Nutri grain bars or granola, March – spaghetti O's with meatballs with pull tops.

Food Pantry

Helping Hands Food Pantry wants to say thanks to all for your donations to the food pantry. There is much need in the Convoy area and I am sure that need will be increasing due to the winter months heating bills. Your food donations and monetary donations are greatly appreciated. Thank you to Bob & Tim Wertenberger, Anne Stewart & Jimmy Rivera for helping those in need and continually stocking the shelves with the many donations. Thanks to Julie Fegley and her church school class for collecting food items during the recent Convoy Appreciation Days.

Congratulations

We would all like to congratulate Jeanne Miller, Carolyn Hartman for earning gold and silver medals for the Special Olympics swim team. Way to go ladies!!!

Youth Group Activities

The youth will be treated to a Pizza Dinner at Pizza Hut compliments of Betty Springer. Betty reported she wanted to thank the youth for all their hard work racking leaves for her and the 6 other lucky recipients.

A Special Thank You

"I wish to give a very special thank you to all of the ushers that have helped with the services of the Convoy United Methodist Church the past 30 years that I have served as head usher. Your time and efforts were greatly appreciated. I also wish to give a special thank you to Mr. David Hummel for taking over as head user. Thanks to all of you and may the good Lord bless,"

Mr. Wilmer Bowers

Sunday School Outreach

The high school age church school class recently did a study that included visits to different houses of worship. They included, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Decatur, Delphos St. John's Catholic Church, Latty Apostolic Church, and a Jewish Synagogue in Lima. The churches and synagogue were very welcoming.

The mission of this experience was to allow the youth and myself to study about the ways people worship. Examine the similarities and differences in comparison to the United Methodist doctrines, sacraments, and traditions. (submitted by Vicki Saylor)

Below are comments submitted by the students as they reflected on the experience.

"I learned that some of the religions we observed have very similar beliefs, but they worship in different ways." -*Hannah*

"I learned about other religions, what they practice and what they believe, I don't want to practice any other religion because I have grown up in this church and religion and like it just the way it is." -*Taylor*

"I learned that even though all the religions worship differently, was are all centered around God." -*Mallory*

"I learned that they all kind of worship the same thing and I am glad to be in religion I am." -*Kenadie*

"I learned why the Catholic Church was all about visual things and what the oils are for." -*LaNae*

"I learned that every religion has different way of expressing their love for God through worship." -*Cora*

"I learned how similar our beliefs are to other churches, but we still have completely different ways of worship. I also learned that there are very different beliefs too. I enjoyed this experience." -*Olivia*

"I am glad to be a Methodist. The other Christian churches all have the same goal, believe in God and some day go to heaven."

-*Hali*

"I learned that you have to respect other religions.

They all share some of the same beliefs." - *Brady*
 "I learned that though there are different denominations, most of them still serve the same God, just in different ways." -*Nick*

Thank you to all the parents for allowing the youth to participate, to all those who volunteered to drive to the various locations, Susan & Brad Hughes, Mary Ann Hall, Pam Bowen, Shelly Holden and Brad and MaryAnn for sharing with the class on being raised in the Catholic church. Thanks to all the youth for participating and representing the Convoy United Methodist Church.

Calendar of Events

Joyful Noises	Wednesdays 3-4:30pm
Adult Choir Practice	Wednesdays 6:30pm
UMM Breakfast	December 4th
Administrative Board	Thursday December 22nd 7:00pm
Trustees	Wednesday December 21st 7:00pm
Lions Club Meetings	1 st & 3 rd Monday monthly
Church Women United Christmas Luncheon	December 2 nd 11:30am Hosted my Wesley United Methodist
UMW Meet	December 7 th at 7pm
Children's Musical Dress Rehearsal	December 17 th 10:00am
Children's Christmas Musical, "The Grumpy Shepard"	December 18 th 9:30am (combined service)
Adult Choir Cantata, "An Old Fashioned Christmas."	December 18 th 7pm
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.	December 24 th 7pm
Christmas Worship.	December 25 th 9:30 am (combined service)

Symbols & Traditions

The Christian church seasons of Advent and Christmas are rich with traditions and symbols. Many of these had their origins in pagan traditions. So Christians interpreted many of these in spiritual ways to help them as well as new believers focus on Christ. See how many you know.

Advent Calendars

Many people use an Advent calendar during the Christmas season. It counts down the first 25 days in December and often has little doors that open to reveal an object related to Christmas. Advent calendars come in both secular and religious styles.

Advent Colors

The traditional colors of Advent and of Advent wreath candles have been purple, pink, and white. But blue has begun replacing purple.

So did use of purple for Advent come from? Well, Advent was originally 40 days long, just like Lent, and the church used to stress penance during Advent.

But at the Vatican II Council, the emphasis during Advent was changed to one of hope. Blue is the church color associated hope.

Most modern Christian churches no longer stress penance during Advent. Rather, Advent is a most often seen as a time of preparation, hope, and joy... of looking forward to Christ's second coming as well as backward to his birth. Since the color blue represents hope, many congregations believe that blue candles fit modern Advent celebrations and services better than purple.

Congregations that continue to use purple during Advent now rationalize its use as a color of royalty.

Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a very popular Advent tradition. Although it's exact origins are not known, most sources trace use of a winter wreath back to pre-Christian Germany and Scandinavia, where the people gathered to celebrate the return of the sun after the winter solstice. The circular wreath made of evergreens with four candles interspersed represented the circle of the year and the life that endures through the winter. As the days grew longer, people lit candles to offer thanks to the "sun god" for the light.



Many sources attribute the use of the Advent wreath as a Christian religious custom to Lutherans in Eastern Germany. Fr. William Saunders states that by 1600, Lutherans and Catholics had adopted more formal rituals concerning use of the Advent wreath.

Prayer Concerns

Dr. John Benya, Kay Bennington, Patti Cox, Kelly Hale, Mary Smith, Troy Hammond, Madison Ringwald, Sondra Shepherd, Vickie Troyer, Genia McOmber, Dick Burden, Care Placke, Madalyn Emerick, Derek Hill, Deb Casterline, Don Bridges, Helen Anderson, Annabelle Miller, the family of Scott Brown, Unspoken Requests.

Vancrest/Convoy: Romaine Feasby

Hearth & Home: Jim Ryan

The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives, it straightens us out and helps us do what is right. It is God's way of making us well prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone

Contemporary Service

A Contemporary Service is offered every Sunday morning at 11:11 a.m. This is held at the former Hall Lumber office downtown, located along the railroad tracks east of Main Street. It's a service filled with songs and praise. It is a casual and more relaxed service than 9:30 service. We still offer all the same sacraments.

The Service is hosted by our praise band called "Crossroads". Members include:

Guitarist Pastor Leigh Lead Vocal Jeff Gleckler, Keyboard Laura Leigh, Drums Fred Fegley, Bass Guitar Jordan or Jon Leigh.

Casual dress such as jeans, T-Shirts, and ball caps are acceptable at this service. Refreshments are offered to be enjoyed throughout the service. Not on time for the beginning, not a problem. You're welcome to come in and join us whenever you get there. It's very informal. You're always welcome to come join us.

II Timothy 3:16,17 TLB

Comic Relief



Don't forget to check us out on the web at www.convoyumc.org for service streaming and more content about what's going on at Convoy United Methodist.

Enter to Worship...Depart to Serve

Convoy United Methodist Church
Sycamore and Main
P.O. Box 128
Convoy, Ohio 45832

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Mailing Address
Street Number and Name
City, State 98765-4321

November 16, 2011

Dear Convoy United Methodist Church member,

Your trustees are interested in doing several updates and repairs to the church parsonage. It has been several years since any major work has been done to the interior of the parsonage. At this time, we feel that the kitchen and bathroom need to be our main focus. On the exterior, we would like to focus on the siding and landscape of the home. In order to make this happen, we believe, along with the support of the Administrative Board, that the funding for this project must be procured "upfront". It is our desire to present basic information concerning what we would like to address at the parsonage and ask for your financial donation to make these improvements possible.

After conducting a walkthrough in the Spring of 2011, we would like to do the following:

The kitchen is in need of remodeling. We would like to make improvements by having the cabinets refaced, replacing the countertops, purchasing a new stove and microwave, painting and wallpapering as needed, and adding new ceiling lighting and under cabinet lighting.

The bathroom is also in need of attention. The ceiling is in need of being replaced. A new vanity with the possibility of double sinks should be added. A new window, new baseboard, new fixtures, and new lights will also bring the bathroom up-to-date.

The exterior of the house would benefit from being resided along with removal and replacement of landscaping.

Financially speaking, the trustees feel that the price to renovate the kitchen, bathroom, and exterior will be approximately \$35,000 through the work of the trustees and local contractors. We feel strongly that this is a project that needs to occur to update the parsonage.

Please consider donating to this project. We would like to have a clear sense of our financial standing through your commitment by check or pledge by December 10 in order to make these improvements a reality. Pledges to the project should be made to the Convoy U.M. financial secretary and all checks should be made payable to the Convoy U.M. maintenance fund.

Respectfully,

Convoy United Methodist Trustees

USHERS FOR 2012

January

1. Marie Sanfilippo
2. Ed. Feasby
3. Bruce Feasby
4. Roy Hauter

February

1. Dan Miller
2. Larry Holden
3. Charlie Baer
4. Mark Haggerty

March

1. Clark Ringwald
2. Larry Dealey
3. Doug Dealey
4. Dave Hummel

April

1. Dave Bowen
2. Mike Lichtle
3. Bob Elder
4. Jeff Leary

May

1. Ted Kiehl
2. Jim Hammond
3. Kevin Weisman
- 4.

June

1. Jeff Johnson
2. Lowell Kever

July

1. Steve King
2. Bob Wertenberger

August

1. Dave Hummel
2. Tim Dingus

September

1. Randy Bullinger
2. Dan Baksa

October

1. Tyler Holden
2. Rick Mollenkoph
3. Kevin Weisman
4. Larry Holden

November

- 1 Marie Sanfilippo
2. Roger Baksa
3. Roger Fegley
4. Denny Hoover

December

1. Jon Hall
2. Brett Hammons
3. Jeff Leary
4. Dave Hummel

If you have any questions call Dave Hummel
419-749-2057 or e-mail me at
golfdave64@yahoo.com

