

DEC. 2016

Scotia UMC

December 2016

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward all.” – Luke 2:14

Happy New Year!

No, I don't have the date wrong. This past Sunday, the last Sunday in November, we began a new church year and a new lectionary cycle when we began the Advent Season.

Advent is a season that consists of four Sundays; the four Sundays prior to Christmas Day which this year also falls on a Sunday. In the Sundays leading up to Christmas Eve we reflect on the meaning of Christ's Good News: hope, peace, joy, and love when we light a candle.

In addition, this year we will be following the UMC Advent-Christmas season series which themes are, in order, *Watch, Turn, See, Dream, Peace, Word* and *Reveal*. The following are how the themes are summarized on our global website umc.org.

Advent 1: Watch - The series begins where Advent begins, with the call of Jesus to his disciples to stay on watch for the fulfillment of all things.

Advent 2: Turn - Becoming aware of the end of the universe as we know it that Christ will bring about, we are invited to repent, to turn from our attachments to the powers of death and destruction in this age, and live out of the Spirit-led mission of the coming reign of God.

Advent 3: See - Once we have turned toward the fulfillment God intends, we begin to be able to see the world and treat others in it in a new way.

Advent 4: Dream - Even as we begin to see God's way of compassion and mercy, we also— like Joseph — come to acknowledge our reliance on God communicating with us and transforming us, not just in our waking, conscious lives, but in our sleeping, unconscious lives as well.

Christmas Eve: Peace - Whether in dreams or visions of angels, we see and hear and join the chorus of the heavenly host announcing the birth of Jesus as a sign of peace to all people of good will.

Christmas Day: Word - In a Service of the Word today, we contemplate the mystery of the Word made flesh and dwelling among us.

Epiphany Sunday: Reveal - The constellations reveal the birth of Messiah, and the powers of this world are revealed for their self-preservation and violent resistance to the saving work of God.

I look forward to sharing this Advent and Christmas season with you all again.

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Margaret Currier
518-372-9575 – church
518-688-9515 – parsonage
PastorMargaretC@outlook.com



Wesley's Wisdom

Wesley published a pamphlet about the "character of a Methodist" in 1742. One of the marks of a Methodist life: "In everything Methodists give thanks, knowing that they can trust God even in the most distressing and trying situations (I Peter 5:7). They know that God cares for them and will deliver them." (John Wesley: Holiness of Heart and Life, pg. 98)

Worship Schedule

Liturgists

12/4 David Read
12/11 Holly Russo
12/18 Sharon Sharrow
12/24 TBA
12/24 Marcia Smith
12/25 TBA

Sound

Don Smith
Mark Cieslak
Dave Read
Bob Hatt
Don Smith
Mark Cieslak

Counters

Pat Knapp, Judy Swain

Ushers

12/4 Pat & Dick Knapp
12/11 Holly Russo, Sally Dean
12/18 Holly Russo, RoyAnn Rogerson
12/24 Pat & Dick Knapp
12/24 Marcia & Don Smith
12/25 Pat Knapp, Clarence Mosher

Social

Belinda Wagner, Patty Zych
O'Sullivan family
Knapps & Longs

Greeters

12/4 Janet Daly, Lewis Prater
12/11 Nikki Jaycox, Kevin Margas
12/18 Stephen Long family
12/24 Deb & Mark Cieslak
12/24 Don & Marcia Smith
12/25 Deb & Mark Cieslak

Acolytes

Rebecca Currier, Nicole Holloway
Alec Flansburg, Aaliyah Pone
Zoey Flansburg, Daegan Connors
TBA
TBA
TBA



The Women's Group will not be meeting in December. Deadline for items for the women's shelter is **Dec. 11th**. Items may be left in the Loomis Room. If you have any questions please call Martha Hatt or Sue Sykes. Merry Christmas!

SUMC IN MISSIONS

Scotia Glenville Food Pantry 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month.

-Go through your pantry and lend a helping hand-

Keep bringing in bottles and cans, Box Tops for Education, and Labels for Education. Box Tops collected will be donated to local elementary schools. We turn them in and are able to purchase items for schools that are needed but may not be in the school budget for this year. The last group of labels were turned over to Glendaal Elementary. As we collect more Box Top Labels, they will be turned over to the other elementary schools in the Scotia-Glenville CSD.

Regional Food Bank – We will be meeting in the church parking lot at 2:00 pm on Tuesday, Dec. 20th at 2:00 pm to volunteer at the Food Bank.

-Jill Dunster-Wesley (cell) 423-3546 (home) 372-4047 jldunster@hotmail.com



November was a great month for the Sunday School classes. The PreK-3rd grade completed the Moses/Ten Commandments lessons and the 4th-7th grade really enjoyed learning some of Jesus' Parables and how they continue to apply to us in today's world. The High School class is continuing the study of Paul, the Apostle using a new and exciting curriculum.

During the "**Service Project Sunday**", the students learned all about the workings & purpose of the Food Pantry. They had the opportunity to shop for items to donate and made their donations on 11/27.



December 3rd will be the annual **Children's Christmas Decorating Party** from noon - 2:30. We will enjoy pizza, snacks & goodies while we make decorations for the Loomis Room Christmas Tree. The older youth will be making wreaths to give to people who they deem as needing some extra Christmas love this year.

We are also looking forward to the **Children's Christmas Pageant** taking place during the 5:00 pm Christmas Eve service. It will be lovely, don't miss it!



The Tuesday Bible Study will continue to meet at 9:30 am on Tuesdays in the Fireside Room.

The Wednesday Evening Bible Study will meet each Wed. **at 7:00 pm** in the Fireside Room.

DECEMBER CALENDAR

12/3	Sunday School Christmas Décor Party 12 noon
12/4	SUMC at Holiday on the Ave.
12/5	Trustees meeting 7 pm
12/10	Bake Sale & Soup Sale – 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
12/13	Christmas Staff Luncheon
12/16	Christmas Open House at the Parsonage 6:30-8:30 pm
12/18	Confirmation Class
12/18	Admin. Meeting after service
12/20	Food Bank 2 pm
12/21	Finance Meeting 7 pm
12/24	Christmas Eve Services 5 pm & 8 pm
12/25	Sunday Casual Christmas Celebration 10:00 am

Christmas Day – Since Christmas falls on a Sunday this year, we will have an informal gathering that morning at 10:00 with a celebration of singing and fellowship.

Saturday, December 10th – Bake Sale & Soup Sale from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Next Newsletter deadline is **DECEMBER 20th**.

Please email any announcements or upcoming events to scotiaumoffice@gmail.com



*to God in the highest, and
on earth peace to men on
whom his favor rests.*

Luke 2:14

Update from the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPPRC) by Deb Elliott, Chair

In response to the unexpected resignation of Carl Shepard, Assistant to the Pastor, **SPPRC** has been diligently exploring options and next steps. In consultation with Rich Weihling, District Superintendent, and in agreement with Pastor Margaret, a ministry improvement plan has been established to help us determine the best option for SUMC.

As you are aware, Pastor Margaret is a half time Pastor (20-25 hours per week), as assigned by the UMC Conference based on our church size and financial situation. SUMC decided to hire a 1/4 time (10 hours per week) Assistant to the Pastor to provide additional services such as preaching 1X a month, leading Bible Study, helping the congregation establish a vision and direction, and establishing a visitation committee. Carl Shepard served in that capacity for a little over 2 years. Transitioning to a 1/2 time Pastor at SUMC has been a challenge on many levels, especially after always having full time pastors in the past. Expectations for how much time and what duties a part time pastor should devote to SUMC is varied among many of you and unfortunately has led to disappointment and frustration at times. **SPPRC** is cognizant of the tensions that have emerged and is dedicated to finding a resolution and agreed upon mutual decision regarding what ministry is best for SUMC.

The improvement plan is the first step in helping us to assess what is needed and desired here at SUMC so we can make the best decision. The goal is to make a determination by March 1, 2017 as to whether SUMC will hire a 1/4 time assistant or transition Pastor Margaret to 3/4 time. In response to an expressed desire to have more face-to-face time with Pastor Margaret and opportunity to get to know her better, the following action items will be implemented effective immediately:

1. Pastor Margaret will resume regular weekly office hours. Margaret will be in the office on Tuesday mornings between the hours of 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. Please feel free to stop by to say hello or see her if you have a pressing need. Pastor Margaret is always available to meet with you at another time by appointment as needed.
2. Pastor Margaret will be arriving to church by 9:30 am on Sunday mornings to prepare for worship. Margaret has requested quiet spiritual time prior to worship, but she will be joining us each Sunday for fellowship and welcomes time with all of you after worship. While I realize this may be the only time some of you get to see Pastor Margaret and you may wish to chat with her about personal needs, please make an appointment to meet with her at another time if your conversation may be lengthy so she has time to mingle with others.
3. Pastor Margaret will be sending out an email 2 times a month, or as necessary, to keep church members informed of upcoming events (baptisms, weddings, funerals, etc.), updates on Confirmation, updates from the Conference, community activities and events, updates on members who are in need of our prayers or any other information that she feels may be of interest to all of us. This will be in addition to the weekly wake ups and Carillon.
4. Pastor Margaret will attend UMW, Men's Breakfast and other church events, when her schedule permits, to connect with those groups on a more regular basis.
5. **SPPRC** will be coordinating small focus group meetings with church members to elicit feedback from all of you as we monitor progress and assess the needs of SUMC. As chair, I will also provide regular updates as appropriate.

In addition to the above, the following is in place to minimize gaps due to Carl's resignation:

- Worship Committee has established an interim plan to accommodate different worship experiences for the 3rd Sunday of each month while Pastor Margaret is leading Confirmation Class (Sundays when Carl was scheduled to preach). This will be an opportunity to learn from some of your fellow SUMC family or meet new people.
- Both Bible Study groups will continue to meet as scheduled and have established plans for meaningful discussion together.

I certainly understand and appreciate your uneasiness and apprehension as we embark on yet another transition time at SUMC. I respectfully ask for your patience and support as we address areas of concern and explore the best options for ministry at SUMC. Please feel free to contact me or any of the SPPRC members at any time with questions, suggestions or concerns. Keep the faith.

SPPRC Members: Deb Elliott, chair, Judy Dudley, Sean Flansburg, Wendy Liebl, Clarence Mosher, Marcia Smith, Steve Wesley

YOUTH FOR CHRIST

Steve Prettyman, a neighbor of the Connors and Judy Swain, has dedicated 19 years to the ministry of **Youth for Christ**. He spoke recently for the Scotia Methodist Women's group and shared about his introduction to YFC as a teenager. At a young age, he finally accepted Jesus into his life. He talked about how God is always with us and how wonderful it is when you know He's really there, through good times and bad.

Steve spoke about bullying, isolation and suicide among teens. We know that this is not to be taken lightly, that it is real and it is ugly. He reiterated "Is teasing meant to be a gentle poke or a hard shove: how can you tell" issue that we, as adults need to translate and not dismiss as harmless. Or not to add to the problem by being a bully ourselves.

I kept thinking about how someone feels isolated in a room full of people and I had a flashback to high school. I felt isolated, not realizing until years later some of it came from shyness and some of the fact my interests lay in other directions from the 'popular' classmates. I just didn't know it then. Nor could I verbalize it. And therein lay one of today's biggest problems. Silence is not golden.

Steve said at the big group sessions, they do an exercise in a gym with everyone in a circle. One of the leaders has a list of 40 questions. No verbal answers are given. You answer the questions by taking two steps forward. The students look around and are amazed there are other students who feel the same way. Then they step back in the circle. After all the questions have been asked, the exercise is complete. Then the conversations begin between the students who thought they were alone with their feelings...and the healing begins. There are adults there also, to guide and help. (Note: Scotia is looking for male mentors for the middle school boys, so if you are interested, please call him and volunteer.)

I'm actually thankful I come from a different generation where there was no social media; no Facebook or Twitter and I couldn't poke anybody, except my little brother. Bullying, isolation and suicide is nothing new as we well know, but we, as fellow human beings, should be looking out for each other. – **Holly Russo**



I have been doing research into the origins of some of our music and Christmas songs in particular originated from interesting sources. A few involved inebriation and partying back in the day and others were inspired by the serenity of the moment; the exuberance of children building a snowman or as with *White Christmas* by Irving Berlin, reminiscing about an old-fashioned Christmas while he was in L.A. Carols imply more of a religious aspect to the season. ***Silent Night***, (Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht) for example, is of German origin and was written by Franz Zaver Gruber, lyrics by Joseph Mohn. Mr. Gruber was looking up at the night sky and saw a bright star in the heavens and likened it to the Star of Bethlehem on Dec. 24, 1818 and composed the music. And here's a little tidbit I'm willing to bet you didn't know (gotta' love Wikipedia) but ***White Christmas*** (still the no. 1 best-selling single for the past 50 years) was broadcast on April 30, 1975 as a secret, pre-arranged signal precipitating the U.S. Evacuation of Saigon. Think about the words to some of these songs and read the fine print at the bottom of the page in the hymnal and you can usually find the author's/composer's name and when it was either written or published. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! – ***Holly Russo***

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Christmas Heating Fund

In place of poinsettias this year we will be accepting donations towards our winter heating bills. All donations given in memory or in honor of loved ones will be included in our special bulletin on Christmas Eve. Please complete this form along with your check and leave in the Admin. Assistant mail slot by the workroom door (on the right as soon as you walk in) no later than **Sunday, Dec. 11th.**

Specify "Heating Fund" on your check. Any forms submitted after this date will not be included in the bulletin. Thank you for your donation!

Given by _____

Donation of _____

In memory of _____

OR In honor of _____



Church Treasurers Report
31-Oct-16

	2016	
	October <u>2016</u>	Total thru <u>10/31/2016</u>
Individual Contributions	\$ 11,044	\$102,854
Building Use/Rent	1,611	13,984
Fund Raising/Interest Income	214	2,052
Other Designated Giving	(56)	(478)
Total Operating Receipts	\$ 12,813	\$118,412
Wages & other employment expenses	\$ 6,764	\$65,862
Church Operations/Program	525	4,542
Parsonage Expenses	667	8,253
Church Building-Repairs/Safety	1,454	6,915
Church Building-Utilities/Water	414	6,148
Church Building-All Other	1,395	7,588
Apportionments	2,142	21,869
Benevolences	90	466
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 13,451	\$121,644
Shortage	\$ (638)	\$ (3,232)

There was a surplus of \$638 for the month of October 2016.
Year to date shortage through October 31, 2016 is (\$3,232).

If there are any questions or requests for detailed information,
please contact Mary Connors at mechardball@yahoo.com.