

December
2013



Christmas 2013

**“For there is born to you this day in the city of
David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:11**

December... the most wonderful time of the year! So why is it in church on Sunday we hear hymns in minor keys and scriptures filled with discussions of the end times rather than a focus on Baby Jesus? The four Sundays prior to Christmas Eve are called ***the Season of Advent***. Advent is a time in which we wait, in anticipation and hope for peace. Although in December we are preparing for the annual Christmas celebration of Jesus' birth so long ago in Bethlehem, we are also aware of the need for Jesus to come again, bringing peace and justice with His coming reign. During the Season of Advent, we sing hymns from the section in the hymnal entitled “Promised Coming” #186-216 in the red hymnal and #2089-2092 in the black hymnal. On Christmas Eve, we transition to the Season of Christmas which starts on Christmas Eve and continues for two weeks, ending on January 6th.

During these days, we focus on music talking about Jesus' incarnation (God made flesh and living among us) and birth. These hymns are found on pages #217-251 in the red hymnal and #2093-2100 in the black hymnal. During the December 29th service (aka 1st Sunday after Christmas), we will get an opportunity to sing your favorite Christmas hymn. I'm asking that you e-mail me your top three favorite religious Christmas hymns and we'll sing and play many of them (no “The Twelve Days of Christmas,” please). Speaking of the 12 days of Christmas, they start on December 25 and continue on until January 5. On January 6th is Epiphany, the day we historically celebrate the Magi arriving with their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.



Pastor Megan

Christmas Concert - On Monday, December 9th, at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary, the Woman's Group will host the **Scotia Glenville High School Chamber Orchestra**. **EVERYONE** is invited & encouraged to attend. (Last year we had almost more students perform than we did in the audience -but they want to return so let's give them our support.) This year the Woman's Group will not have a covered dish supper first but people are encouraged to bring a gift for the Battered Woman's Shelter, i.e., clothing, Size XL, toiletries, socks, etc. Refreshments after the concert.



Worship Schedule

Liturgists

12/1 David Buhrmaster
12/8 Sue Sykes
12/15 David Read
12/22 Martha Hatt
12/24 Steve Warfield
12/24 Marcia Smith
12/29 Jill Wesley

Sound

12/1 Mark Cieslak
12/8 Dave Read
12/15 Bob Hatt
12/22 Don Smith
12/24 Mark Cieslak
12/24 Dave Read
12/29 Bob Hatt

Greeters

12/1 Carl & Janet Fitch
12/8 Zych family
12/15 TBD
12/22 Warfield family
12/24 Holly Russo
12/24 TBD
12/29 Cieslak family

Nursery

12/1 Judy Swain
12/8 Lisa Read
12/15 Barbara Blum
12/22 Judy Matthews
12/29 TBD

Ushers

12/1 Irene & Jim Coburn
12/8 RoyAnn Rogerson, Judy Matthews
12/15 RoyAnn Rogerson, Judy Matthews
12/22 Lynn & Sean Flansburg
12/24 Deb Cieslak, Holly Russo
Amiee Warfield, Donald Wilson
12/24 Martha Hatt, Celina Hatt
12/29 Fran Brown, Martha Hatt

Social

12/1 Holly Russo, Sally Dean
12/8 Brian & Jenn Breslin
12/15 Carl & Janet Fitch
12/22 Dave Read

12/24 SUMC Congregation
12/29 TBD

Counters

12/1 Dick Knapp, Judy Swain
12/8 Pat Knapp, Clarence Mosher
12/15 Ken Handy, Michele Swain
12/22 June Pelham, Wendy Liebl
12/29 Dean Goodell, Jill Wesley
Christmas services – TBD

Advent Wreath

12/1 Coburn family
12/8 Connors family
12/15 Caterina family
12/22 Flansburg family
12/24 Smith family
12/24 Elliott family

Deadline for January newsletter – December 20th

SUMC IN MISSIONS

Labels for Education – We found out recently that Bank of America collects Labels for Education. We have a swap meet at each trip. So if you are not using your labels, please consider bringing them to church.

Regional Food Bank – On the third Tuesday of each month everyone is invited to go to the Regional Food Bank to sort and repack products. We meet at the church to carpool at 2:00 and usually return around 4:30. Our next trip is **TUESDAY, December 17th**.

Scotia-Glenville Food Pantry collections for food and cash, during service the **2nd and 4th Sundays each month**. Cash will purchase fresh items locally & from the Food Bank. Useful items: peanut butter, jellies, juices, pasta sauces, pasta, mayonnaise (in regular size containers.)

Bottles for bread – Please place your clean **returnable** bottles in the red barrels. If you have a large quantity, pick-up can be arranged. All proceeds go to Scotia Food Pantry.

Box Tops for Education - Box tops for education can be found on some cereal boxes, yogurt containers and numerous other containers. If you are not giving yours to a school, please drop them off at church and we will donate them to local schools.

If you have any questions or want to sign up for any of the above, please contact Dick Knapp (393-5737) or knappster933@gmail.com or anyone on the Mission Team.

Anyone interested in knitting, crocheting or sewing is welcome to participate in the prayer shawl group. We have a good supply of yarn. Contact Pat Knapp 393-5737 or knappptyme@covad.net



Christmas Candles Why do we light candles in the worship service during December? According to my research “there is evidence of pre-Christian Germanic peoples using wreathes with lit candles during the cold and dark December days as a sign of hope in the future warm and extended-sunlight days of Spring.” In Scandinavia during winter, lighted candles were placed around a wheel, and prayers were offered to the god of light to turn “the wheel of the earth” back toward the sun to lengthen the days and restore warmth. By the Middle Ages, the Christians adapted this tradition and used Advent wreathes as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas. After all, **Christ is “the Light that came into the world”** to dispel the darkness of sin and to radiate the truth and love of God” according to the Catholic Education Research Center online. The lighting of the Advent wreath reminds us of common themes in **Advent: Peace, Hope, Love and Joy**. Typically there are three purple, a pink and a white candle in the advent wreath (or four blue candles and a white). The first two Sundays, a purple candle is lit (hope and then peace). The third Sunday, we light the pink candle signifying joy. The last Sunday before Advent, the hope, peace and joy candles are lit and then we light the purple candle signifying love. On Christmas Eve through Epiphany, the white candle is lit, which is the Christ Candle. Join us in singing “Light the Advent Candle” as we celebrate this most wonderful time of the year- *Pastor Megan*

Prayers & Celebrations - We celebrate two baptisms on **Sunday, December 22nd**: Joselyn O’Sullivan, daughter of Alissa & Sean O’Sullivan and Maya Smith, daughter of Yumiko & Eric Smith, granddaughter of Don & Marcia Smith. Prayers for Margaret Rivenburg on the death of her grandmother, Buford Bass on 11/18.

Stewardship Update

I give thanks that so many of you have filled out your financial giving commitment cards so the finance committee at Scotia UMC has a better sense of how we can fund ministry for next year. This year we did an atypical stewardship campaign where we didn't just focus on financial giving, but more holistically focused on what does it mean to be a committed disciple of Jesus Christ. I knew that it was going to be difficult because so many of us gave just a few months ago for the Miracle Sunday Capital Improvement Campaign.

I am pleased to say we have received pledges as of Sunday totaling \$102,700. This is a wonderful thing! We still have some work to do because we received pledges totaling \$126,300 for 2013. The budget is being made and we know that some budget lines are increasing, such as a request for preventative maintenance for Trustees, salary increases for our church staff (who have not received a raise in the years I've been here), and other increases that come from the Upper New York Conference.

I know that some in our congregation are in a different financial situation than they were last year. Some always give without pledging. Some have simply not filled out pledge cards yet. I hope and pray that you consider filling out a pledge card. If you have lost your mailed pledge card, there are some in the pews or you could always e-mail Ken Handy your desired amount. **I know that God has richly blessed us in the past year and I look forward to seeing what the Holy Spirit has in store for us in 2014.** Next month, the church will send a letter confirming pledge amounts (if pledged) and highlighting the commitments that the congregation made through the six different areas of emphasis during the campaign (prayer, scripture reading, worship, witness, financial giving and service).

Blessings,
Pastor Megan



- Mon. 12/2 **Trustees** meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- Tues. 12/3 **Tues. morning Bible Study** 9:30 am
- Thurs. 12/5 **New Advent Bible Study** 7:00 p.m.
- Sat. 12/7 **Children Decorating** the Loomis Room 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- Sun. 12/8 Welcome to **New Members**
- Mon. 12/9 **Christmas Concert** sponsored by SUMC Women's Group 7:00 p.m.
- Tues. 12/10 Last Tues. **Morning Bible Study** session for 2013
- Sun. 12/15 Intergenerational **Gingerbread House** Event – after service in Community Room
- Tues. 12/17 **Food Bank** Volunteers meet at 2:00 p.m.
- Wed. 12/18 **Finance Meeting** at 6:00 p.m.
- Sun. 12/22 Baptisms, Special Music

Tues. 12/24 Christmas Eve Services 7:00 pm family service. The children will participate in a live nativity. Glow sticks available for children and candles for adults. 11:00 pm – Candlelight Service

Church Treasurer's Report

October 2013	October MTD	Budget Variance MTD-B/(W)	October YTD	Budget Variance YTD-B/(W)	To Prior Year Variance YTD-B/(W)
Operating Income	\$13,750	\$1,067	\$129,568	-\$2,771	-\$690
Operating Expenses	<u>\$11,965</u>	<u>-\$1,219</u>	<u>\$137,546</u>	<u>-\$1,434</u>	<u>-\$2,442</u>
Gain/(Loss)	\$1,785	-\$152	-\$7,978	-\$4,205	-\$3,132
Capital Campaign Donations (Net of \$2,500 consulting Fee)	\$2,151	\$2,515	\$74,708	\$74,708	
Capital Spending (Net of Insurance)	\$78,780	-\$78,780	\$92,558	-\$92,558	

Month to Date

- * October income was greater than budget primarily due to positive variances for individual contributions of \$450 and building use donations of \$750. These positive variances were partially offset by the \$167 shortfall of Equitable Grant money.
- * October expenses were worse than budget primarily due to a negative variance for parsonage and church repairs and maintenance related annual boiler maintenance.

Year to Date

- * Year to date income was worse than budget due to fund raising shortfall of \$3,201 and the Equitable Grant reduction of \$667 partially offset by individual contribution positive variance of \$1,117.
- * Year to date expenses were worse than budget due primarily to a \$5,145 negative variance for church repair and maintenance offset by a \$2,014 positive budget variance for the Church building utilities, a \$2,030 positive budget variance for church snow plowing services and a positive budget variance of \$1,192 for Pastor expense reimbursement.

YTD compared to Prior YTD

Operating income YTD was \$690 less than for the same period last year due to \$983

- * less in building use rent and the \$1,000 donation from the Women's Group occurring in November in 2013 and October in 2012. These negative variances were offset by \$683 more Grant money in 2013 than in 2012.
- * Expenses YTD were \$3,270 more than YTD last year primarily due to church utilities costing \$1,254 and liability insurance costing \$406 and church repairs and maintenance costing \$3,239 more than last year and the purchase of a new computer and software totaling \$377 for the church office.
- * Church grounds expenses were \$1,673 less than last year due to the parking lot resurfacing and sign replacement last year.
- * Sexton supplies were \$407 less than last year due to the purchase in 2012 of a new vacuum cleaner.
- * The IRS Health Care Tax Credit was \$260 less than last year and will go away in 2014.

- * There was a \$2002 decrease in conference apportionment cost in 2013.
- * These expense saving helped to partially offset the negative budget variances.

Capital Campaign and Capital Spending

- * The Capital Campaign has received \$77,208 in contributions to date. For reporting purposes, the \$2,500 fee paid to Jeff Rarich has been offset against the receipts for a net campaign amount of \$74,708.
- * As of 10/31/13, there were \$35,053 of Capital Campaign Pledges yet to be paid including \$14,883 pledged to be received by year end 2013.
- * Capital expenditures for October included \$77,101 to Moisture Barriers for the first payment on the Education Wing roof and \$1,639 to Harold Clune Inc for Heat Tape replacement.

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 our loved ones will be included in our special bulletin on Christmas Eve. Please complete this form along with your check and leave in the church office mail slot by the workroom door (on the right as soon as you walk in) no later than **Tuesday, Dec. 10th. 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 _____

