



# The Chimes

December 2011

... prepared especially for the friends and members of:

Bad Axe First United Methodist Church

## 'O Come, All Ye Faithful....

Prepare your hearts and homes for the coming of our King during this Advent season. Join us every Sunday for our regularly scheduled worship services at 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM as we come together in prayer, in praise, in music, in fellowship, and in hopeful anticipation of the birth of Jesus the Christ. You are also invited to participate in the following special activities and events.

### Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>:

✿ Missions and Outreach are collecting seat covers (new underwear for boys and girls); put your gifts under the tree in the sanctuary when you arrive at church.

### Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>:

✿ Our monthly potluck dinner will be held beginning at 6:00 PM. Bring a dish to pass and your own table service; drinks will be provided.

### Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>:

✿ United Methodist Women's Annual Christmas Party will begin at 6:00 PM in the church dining room. This is always a special evening of laughter, activity, great food, and Christmas inspiration. Call the church office (269-7671) if you haven't made your reservation yet.

### Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>:

✿ Missions and Outreach will be collecting blankets (new or clean, gently used); put your gifts under the tree in the sanctuary when you arrive at church.

✿ 8:00 AM will be the United Methodist Men's breakfast with Seth VanTifflin presenting a program about his missionary work. All (men and women) are welcome to attend.

✿ There will be a Cookie Walk after the 10:00 service in the fellowship area to raise money to support the church's Relay for Life team. Cookies will be \$8 for a small box or \$10 for a large box. Donations of cookies are needed. Please mark them "Relay for Life" and drop them off in the church dining room prior to the service.

✿ "Christmas Bells", our annual concert featuring The Handbell Choir and the Senior Chime Choir will begin at 4:30 PM in the sanctuary. The choirs, under the direction of Thomas Laity, will feature special music and accompaniment from Alan Majeska (organ) and Cherrie Mooney (harp). A free will offering will be taken to benefit Huron County Care and Share. Non-perishables will also be collected for the Bad Axe Food Pantry.

### Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>:

✿ Missions and Outreach will be collecting money for the Heifer Project. Put your gifts (in an envelope) under the tree in the sanctuary.

✿ Join us at the 10:00 AM service for *All Music Sunday* featuring the chancel choir, the handbell choir, and the chimes choir.

✿ Our children's Christmas program will begin at 11:00 AM in the sanctuary.

### Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup>:



✿ Join us on Christmas Eve for our traditional candlelight service beginning at 8:00 PM. Come early to enjoy music from the brass ensemble at 7:30 PM. Bring your family and friends to share in this meaningful service of worship, light and music.

### Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup>:

✿ We will meet to celebrate the joy of Christmas Day with **one service at 10:00 AM**. There will be **no 8:00 AM service and no Sunday school**.



Pastor's Page...

Let me begin with a confession. I can't think of anything new to say about Christmas that hasn't been said before, many times and by better writers than I. And it gets worse. I spent some time going through my computer files looking for something I might have written about Christmas before I moved to Bad Axe. I searched on more than one computer and several hard drives. And then it happened. At just about the time I was going to expand my search to include jump drives, I had a moment of clarity.

In this crazy world in which we live, those of us who were raised under the banner of modernity still believe that the new and improved must always be provided. It's as if new computers, smarter phones, faster machines, and yes, ways of sharing the Good News in more and more attractive ways, are what we need. Our hopes and dreams are often founded on life getting better, more exciting, and greatly improved over last year. Do I even need to say that this way of thinking is what the commercial end of Christmas is all about?

If this is how we think, then allowing this world to reduce the Babe in the manger into yet another marketing strategy becomes a real possibility. Even worse, when the Faith is shared with others as something less than it really is, we start looking for some new and improved version of the Gospel. The real Gospel and the real Jesus cannot be contained by pleasant crèches and worn out clichés. After all, real babies grow into adults, and so did the real Jesus. It is through the Life, Death, and Resurrection of the full grown Jesus convinced that the life will get better for those who are following Jesus. Maybe not next year, or the year after that.

## December Celebrations

### Happy Birthday to ....

- 12-1 Erin Mooney Swann  
12-2 Bev Brickel  
Wyatt Humphrey-Phillips  
Laura Laity  
12-3 Erica Myers  
12-4 Cherrie Mooney  
12-5 Holly Lerash  
12-6 Lacey Dorsch  
Susan Hass  
Alan Majeska  
12-7 Haley Krueger  
12-9 Jennifer Sroka  
12-11 Andy Sommers  
Robin Zurek  
12-12 Gertie Schenk  
12-16 Bill MacAlpine  
Nancy Walker  
12-18 Charles Green  
Mike Paul  
12-19 Lisa Ernst  
12-20 John Piotter  
12-23 Evelyn Graves  
12-24 Chad Carriveau  
12-25 Jesus Christ  
12-26 Billy MacAlpine  
Eric Schmitt  
Jean Sommers  
12-28 Mary McCracken  
12-31 Dale Cubitt  
Matthew Schmitt  
Emma Cubitt

### Happy Anniversary to ....

- 12-8 Bill & Deb Cleland  
12-10 Elwin & Joan Cubitt  
12-15 Karl & Susan Hass  
12-16 Tom & Deb Laity

*If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please let either the church office (269-7671) or Doralyn Cubitt (269-7237) know your information. Thanks!*



### Huron County Medical Care Facility 1116 S. Van Dyke Bad Axe, MI 48413

Doris Galloway  
Earl Rooney  
Sheri Vincent

Edna Weaver  
Georgina Running  
Marlene Murdock

### Meadow Lane Assisted Living 150 Meadow Lane Bad Axe, MI 48413

Bill & Gladys Hamilton Apt. #5  
Thelma Dibble Apt. #3  
Alice Gottsleben Apt. #15  
Evelyn Irwin

Alice Leonard -TCMCF  
1285 Clever Rd Rm. 17A  
Caro, MI 48723

Rev. Jean Love  
Room 404 Bed 2  
Lutheran Home - Livonia  
28910 Plymouth Rd.  
Livonia, MI 48150

### Card Ministry....

Mallory Klosowski has been busy keeping up with our First United Methodist Church Card Ministry. If you know of someone who would enjoy a card, please call Mallory at 963-0420 or leave a message at the church office. If you have any blank cards that you could donate to this ministry, please leave them in the church office.

## **TO FELLOW CHURCH MEMBERS:**

Questions have been asked of Finance Committee Members regarding the Jean Smith bequest of \$100,000.00 and its disposition and also regarding the financial status of the church.

The Trustees, with the approval of the Administrative Counsel, set aside \$20,000.00 of the bequest for church renovations (carpet and painting of sanctuary and entry ways) and established an Endowment Fund to manage the balance of \$80,000.00.

The Endowment Charter was approved at a church conference on June 12, 2011. The Endowment Committee that is to manage the activities of the Endowment Fund consists of eight members: four at large members, Chair of Trustees, Chair of Finance and Chair of Church Council and the Church Pastor. There are seven voting members – the Pastor has no vote.

The four at large members were nominated and elected at the church conference held on October 24, 2011. The Endowment Committee now has to meet, organize and manage the assets in the Endowment Fund.

The Smith money had been sitting in a bank account at Northstar Bank earning minimal interest while the Church had an approximate mortgage balance of \$57,230.30 as of May 5, 2011, owing to Northstar Bank with bi weekly payments of \$870.56 with interest rate of 5.95%.

The Finance Committee, with the concurrence of the Trustees, recommended to the Church Council that the church borrow a portion of the \$80,000.00 set aside for the Endowment Fund to pay off the Northstar mortgage and the Church agree to repay the amount borrowed from the Smith bequest to the Endowment Fund on the same terms and conditions as the Northstar mortgage debt. The church council approved the recommendation and a document was drafted memorializing the agreement and a note made payable to the Endowment Fund from the church in the amount of \$57,230.30 was signed on behalf of the Church by the Church Treasurer. The Northstar debt was paid off on May 5, 2011.

The Church now pays the Endowment Fund \$1742.00 per month to retire the church debt to the Endowment Fund. At this time approximately \$1487.00 of the payment is a payment on principal and the balance of approximately \$265.00 is interest. The debt to the Endowment Fund should be paid on or about March, 2014. The payment to the Endowment Fund is placed in a separate Endowment Fund account.

The Endowment Charter limits the use that can be made of the endowment funds and for the specific restrictions; I refer you to the Endowment Charter. In general terms, it is expected that the Endowment Fund principal will be invested and only the income earned used to “support ministries beyond normal local church activities or to provide temporary assistance in starting new ministries in the local church”.

With regard to the current financial status of the Church, we appear to be doing okay but for the past few months we have been spending more each month than we are taking in. We caught up a bit when Donna was the interim pastor because we paid no health care for her and her salary was approximately one-half of a normal minister’s salary. Now that we have a full time minister, those salary and benefits are significantly more so we are carefully keeping track of our expenses to try to stay within this year’s budget. We are now gathering information to prepare next year’s church budget. It is anticipated this year’s budget may increase by approximately \$25,000 due to increased ministerial costs and expenses in addition to other normal expense increases.

Our church has had a very busy and successful fall. Good things are happening. Spiritually, our church is alive and well!

If you have further questions or concerns about the Endowment Fund, the church mortgage, or the financial status of the church, drop a note off to Sharon at the church office and any concerns expressed will be promptly addressed.

E. Duane Cubitt  
Finance Committee Co-Chairman



## KUDOS

You are invited to submit information you wish to share to Laurie Tousley or email it to:  
mrs\_tousley@hotmail.com

We all have those days when we are so proud of someone that we feel like our buttons are going to pop off....your son made the honor roll; your grandchild made the winning goal; your wife was promoted; your husband got that 12 point buck; your daughter gave you a new grandchild; ...you know the moments. If you have a moment of pride and joy that you would like to share with your church family, please let the church office or Laurie Tousley know about it. We will share those moments on our Kudos page in each newsletter. Thank you ahead of time for your input!

✠ **Kudos** to Haley Krueger, daughter of Lance and Renee Krueger, for being named by the Ugly Parent-Teacher Organization as the Third Grade Student of the Quarter. Good job, Haley!

✠ **Kudos** to *you* for distributing food to over 150 families during our last food distribution. The volunteers involved were compassionate and loving as we served those in need in our community. For more on the food distribution, see Brinda's personal point of view!

## Missions and Outreach

(a personal point of view)

It was a dark and stormy night. (ha ha) Thankfully the rain held off during the day for our FBEM food distribution on Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> until all was finished and cleaned up. I could barely sleep that night, I was so full of joy and love and I just wanted to go around hugging people. I know that is just a little touch of what heaven must feel like. I was so full of love for all the people I came in contact with on that day that I almost burst. I enjoyed greeting the clients and making them feel at home, taking them to Maxine and Gloria to sign in, and then sending them off to Laurie for cookies and snacks while they waited to go outside and be loaded up with goodies from all the workers who withstood the cold for hours to make this great event happen. It was so wonderful to have the dining room full of people and to use God's house in such a loving way! I am so thankful and proud of my church family and even though I am fairly new here, I love them all as if I've known them all my life.

At the last minute, we brought 3 coats and 3 sweatshirts with us to give away and they were gone in just a short time. Just think what we could have done if we had held a coat drive and given coats away too! ♥ Hmm...sounds like a good thing to add to the agenda for our December meeting!!

All glory to God!

Brinda Myers

## Advent Activities

Try not to let the commercial hustle and bustle of the holiday season take over your Advent. The below collection of Advent activity ideas might spark some ideas to help you center your Advent around the coming of the baby Jesus.

- **Experience a new worship tradition** during the holidays. You may want to attend a Christmas cantata, a children's Christmas pageant, a choir concert, a "Living Christmas Tree" presentation, an outdoor Living Nativity scene, or a Bell-ringing service.
- **Plant a Narcissus bulb** in a pot inside your home at the start of Advent -- it grows and blooms in about four weeks.
- **Make this year's creche (manger scene) a "progressive" creche.** Put Joseph and Mary far from the manger to start with -- across the room, for example. As the days go on, they get closer to the manger. Next the baby Jesus is placed in the creche. After Jesus is born, the Wise men and shepherds start toward the manger from a far distance, and get closer each day until finally the entire manger scene is complete on Epiphany.
- **Go caroling** in your neighborhood.
- **Visit a shut-in or someone hospitalized.** Give them some small gift.
- **Make a food garland for wildlife** and hang it on some branches of a tree in your yard.
- **Create a joint-effort family letter** with descriptions of how God has shown his love to your family during the last year.
- **Invite someone to experience Advent and Christmas with you...at your home and in your church.**

# Books in the Library

Look on the book cart in the south entryway for these books in our library. If you borrow one, when you are finished please return it to the library cart so someone else can enjoy it. Thanks!

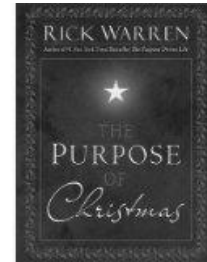


Title: *The Purpose of Christmas* by Rick Warren

Area of Library: Personal Christianity

Why is Christmas such a big deal? If you stop to think about it, it is astounding that the simple, unassuming birth of a peasant baby boy more than two thousand years ago in the Middle East can today cause traffic jams every December in New York City, Tokyo, and Rio de Janeiro.

The night Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, a small group of poor shepherds were quietly tending their flocks of sheep in a nearby field, looking up at the stars. Nothing seemed any different from a thousand other nights. But what was about to happen would transform not only their lives but billions of other lives, as well. The world would never be the same again. Regardless of your background, religion, problems or circumstances, Christmas really is the best news you could get. In his powerful yet compassionate voice, Rick Warren explains how God designed Christmas to meet your three deepest needs and how understanding and receiving God's three Christmas gifts to you will transform your life forever.



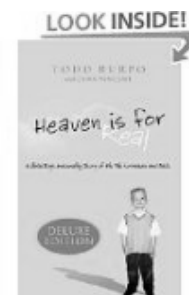
Title: *Heaven is for Real* by Todd Burpo

Area of Library: Personal Christianity

When Colton Burpo made it through an emergency appendectomy, his family was overjoyed at his miraculous survival. What they weren't expecting, though, was the story that emerged in the months that followed—a story as beautiful as it was extraordinary, detailing their little boy's trip to heaven and back.

Colton, not yet four years old, told his parents he left his body during the surgery---and authenticated that claim by describing exactly what his parents were doing in another part of the hospital while he was being operated on. He talked of visiting heaven and relayed stories told to him by people he met there whom he had never met in his life, sharing events that happened even before he was born. He also astonished his parents with descriptions and obscure details about heaven that matched the Bible exactly, though he had not yet learned to read.

With disarming innocence and the plainspoken boldness of a child, Colton tells of meeting long-departed family members. He describes Jesus, the angels, how "really, really big" God is, and how much God loves us. Retold by his father, but using Colton's uniquely simple words, *Heaven is for Real* offers a glimpse of the world that awaits us, where as Colton says, "Nobody is old and nobody wears glasses."



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What do the candles in our Advent wreath mean? Why is there one rose candle and one large white candle?

The Advent wreath, four candles on a wreath of evergreen, is shaped in a perfect circle to symbolize the eternity of God. In some churches, four purple candles, one for each week in Advent, are used with one larger white candle in the middle as the Christ candle. Other churches prefer three purple or blue candles with the fourth candle being rose or pink, to represent joy.

The lighting of the first candle symbolizes expectation, the second symbolizes hope, the third joy and the fourth purity. The Christ candle is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day reminding Christians that Jesus is the light of the world.

**Don't forget our on-going collections here at First UMC.**

- **Non perishable food for the Shared Blessing Food Pantry**
- **Yarn for our laprobe/prayer shawl ministry**
- **Used DVDs/CDs for Huron Co. Medical Care Facility**
- **Spartan labels**
- **Campbell Soup labels**
- **Used ink cartridges**
- **Returnable cans and bottles for Heifer International**
- **Coupons to be used by Missions & Outreach Committee**
- **Paper/magazines/cardboard to be recycled**

**Thank you for always giving generously to support the many different projects here at First United Methodist Church!**