



The Methodist

Burnt Hills United Methodist Church News

December 2021

Season's Greetings to all as we begin Advent and look forward to Christmas and the New Year. I hope this month finds you excited about the coming holidays. Many of us have family traditions and stories about those holidays. Many are stories that we will share year after year until they become a part of our traditions themselves. From the secular world, there are many Christmas stories that we are familiar with, like Dr. Seuss' story of the Grinch; Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer; A Charlie Brown Christmas and more. We may have first heard these stories as children, and today we see our own children and grandchildren (and great grandchildren?) learn them and begin to share in the joy that they bring.

Likewise, we are familiar with the story of the Nativity, which tells of the birth of Jesus. Often, we began to learn this story a piece at a time: the angel's visit to Mary and Joseph and then their journey to Bethlehem; no room at the Inn and the birth in the stable, with Jesus placed in the manger. Then the other pieces get added: the angels appearing to the shepherds and their visit to the stable; the magi following the star and bringing their gifts. Often that becomes the majority of the story that we tell over and over again and the basis for so many wonderful Christmas hymns that celebrate the Joy of Christ's birth. We love to tell that story even though it does not exist as a single story in Scripture, but actually is pulled together from multiple sources (Luke and Matthew). Yet we understand that we sometimes need to use multiple sources to get a full understanding.

The full story has more to it. The full story includes the threat from Herod and the flight to Egypt. It also includes the long history of God's promise of a Messiah who would bring justice and peace, and fulfill God's promises to the people; and more. The full telling of the story begins with that groundwork laid in the season of Advent and is just as important to fully understanding the impact of Christmas. Sometimes I wonder about why we do not include all of that in the story of Christ's birth. It could be that we consider it more than young children can grasp, or it could just be that we have a tendency to shorten stories to make them easier to tell. Whatever the cause, I think we do a disservice to the full story when we do not keep it in mind. The joy, hope and peace of Christmas, is so important because the rest of the story exists. In our modern world, we live a relatively free and easy life, and we tend to shift from Halloween to Thanksgiving to Christmas – and then on to New Year's — with such speed and repetition that it is easy to forget about the rest of the story. But for the people of Israel in the First Century, the reality of their life added a great depth to the story of the Messiah's birth. Imagine how much more the promised peace and joy of Christmas would mean to us if we were to live the experience of being an occupied nation. As we prepare to celebrate Christmas this year, I encourage you to remember the rest of the story and to let the full story touch your hearts and heighten your sense of the impact that Christ's birth had on the world He was born into. May you find true peace, joy and hope in the weeks to come.

Paster Doug

United Methodist Women

Tuesday Connection Circle will be meeting on Tuesday, December 14, at 9:30 AM in Knight Hall for their annual Christmas cookie exchange. We always welcome new faces. For more information, contact Holly Rogers at 399-8629.

Caregiver Support Group



The October meeting marked the beginning of our 6th year of Caregiver Support Group being held at Burnt Hills United Methodist Church. The number of caregivers attending a meeting ranged from 2-9. This group has helped 27 caregivers so far.

The next Caregiver Support Group meeting will be Saturday, December 4, at 10:30 AM. We will meet in Knight Hall wearing masks. The caregivers who attend this support group are in all stages of caregiving, from just taking care of a loved one in their own apartment or house to those dealing with hospice in nursing homes. Lynn Christie is the facilitator and can be reached at 399-8838 or hlchristie@aol.com for any questions.

Thanks for a Successful Work Day

Over 25 people showed up on Saturday morning, November 13, to assist with raking leaves and doing some deep cleaning in the church. Windows were cleaned, furniture was polished, a lot of dusting occurred and so many leaves were raked and moved to the woods and the recycling center. A special thanks to both the Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops for their participation.



Lord's Acre Fair Distribution Requests

The summary of the Lord's Acre Fair in the October Methodist said it all! Our fair was wonderful beyond all expectations and we want to continue to share the generosity of our church and our community. We have a financial abundance beyond what we had pledged to the church budget! The Lord's Acre Fair Committee is asking for your suggestions for where we can make the greatest impact by investing the additional money we raised. If you know of a specific organization or need that we could impact with our financial support, please let the LAF committee know. We are asking that these requests be made by January 10. Please put requests in the LAF mailbox, give them to Cindy in the office or send an email to adamsgreg01@gmail.com.

The Burnt Hills United Methodist Church

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Staff

Rev. Holly Nye: *Lead Pastor*

Rev. Doug Mackey: *Associate Pastor*

Cindy Peterson: *Communications Coordinator*

Kimberly Spath: *Treasurer*

Paula Miller: *Financial Secretary*

Peter Van Keuren & Jill Zygo: *Music Directors*

Charles Hartmann: *Sound and Video*

Joe Tangrady: *Maintenance*

Jodi Facticeau-St. Gelais:

Sunday School Superintendent

Stacy Herbage & Stephanie Tope:

Preschool Staff

Altar Guild News



Christmas Poinsettias As we did last year, the Altar Committee will be purchasing a small number of poinsettias. These will be used to enhance the Advent decor on Christmas Eve. After the Christmas Eve service, the visitation team will present these to our shut-ins. If you would like to help defray the cost of the Advent decorations, we will have a basket available in the church entrance during the month of December.

Help us Decorate the Sanctuary for Advent As in years past, we are asking the congregation to help us decorate the sanctuary for Advent. This year our theme is sheep and shepherds. Please consider bringing in sheep and/or shepherds from home to place on the sanctuary window sills. Advent has already begun, so we are collecting them now.



Preschool News

Looking back at November, preschool would like to thank our church friends for making our Halloween parade and trick or treating a fun experience for everyone.

We started off November with fall fun and nutrition, and then moved into giving thanks and giving back. Thank you to our families as we collected donations to give to our local veterans in-need. We appreciate your generosity to the start of a great yearly tradition. 🇺🇸

We hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving and we look forward to getting ready for Christmas!



Christmas Offering 2021

Our Christmas Offering always helps neighbors near and far. Our church keeps none of your gifts received from this offering. The money goes to help people beyond our church walls.

We will again support **Schenectady Community Ministries** (formerly SICM). This is a partnership of many faith groups that work together in ministries of social service and social justice. They serve thousands of high-need people each year. A portion of our **Conference Ministries Shares** will be paid. We will continue our long-standing tradition of giving money to **Chacocente**, a community in Nicaragua. The people who live there formerly lived in the Managua city dump. Now they have farms, homes, a school and a much better life. We will also support **RISSE**, a family-based center in Albany that helps refugees and recent immigrants. They provide classes in English and help to find jobs and housing. For the first time, our offering will help support **Skye Farm**. Like many summer camps, they have had to limit their programs, and are struggling financially. Many members of our congregation have spent time there. We also plan to help our **local food pantries**.

Thank you for your kind and generous gifts for people in need. May you all stay healthy and safe. Merry Christmas from the Outreach Commission.



Giving Tree gifts are due back by **Sunday, December 12.**

If you are planning to attend Christmas Eve worship, please make a RESERVATION
(see below).

Worship in December

The season of Advent has us watching for the coming of the Christ, to set things right in our world and our lives.

“Christ, be our Light” will be sung – and prayed – as the light is brought to the Advent wreath each week.

The four Sundays of Advent are November 28, December 5, 12, and 19, with a 9 AM and 10:30 AM service.

Online worship will also continue:
see www.NYBHUMC.com/sermons

Christmas Eve Services

In-person worship will be offered at 3:30 PM, 7 PM and 9 PM. Because seating is limited, reservations are requested. Please call the church office at 399-5144 by December 22 and specify which service you’d like to attend. If you’d like to attend online: we hope to record the 3:30 service and put it online that evening. A link to last year’s pageant service will also be posted.