



The Church Mouse

THE NEWSLETTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)
IN CLINTON

VOL. XIV...NO.11.....December 2009
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The holiday season can take on so many different shapes and sizes. It can be a season of rushing from one event to another, trying to fit as much in as possible. It can be a season of gathering with friends and family around meals and fun. It can be a season of worry, balancing numbers against wishes and trying to make both lists match up. It can be a season of joy at the celebration of God breaking into our midst through Jesus' birth. It can be a season of sorrow and loneliness, as loved ones are far away or no longer alive to join in the yearly traditions.

I'm very aware of the dual nature of joy and sorrow, fellowship and loneliness, celebration and mourning. These emotions are so wrapped up with one another, especially in this season, that often we feel everything all at once. The joy of a particular gathering is paired with sorrow for who is not present. The fellowship of shared stories and laughter can cozy right up to the sense of being alone because these aren't necessarily your stories. The celebration of lights and candles, trees and presents, also remind us of the ones who weren't on our Christmas lists this year.

For the third year in a row, we will offer a "Blue Christmas" service of worship. This service simply seeks to recognize that there may be more sorrow than joy for some of us in the rush of the holiday season, and provide an opportunity to express that sorrow and be comforted. Even if there is no other place we can express our tears amid "Joy to the World," the church is the place where our honest feelings can be honored.

It's not hard for me to imagine the joy of the first Christmas being tinged with worry, fear, sorrow, and loneliness. Giving birth to your first-born with no one present but your fiancé may not be the most joyous occasion. Uncertainty about whether or not you will be able to stay together as a family, much less raise a baby boy who has already had a huge burden placed on his shoulders, may lead to sleepless nights. Being far away from your family as momentous changes are taking place might result in a deep sense of being alone. No, it's not hard at all for me to imagine Mary and Joseph struggling with their own despondencies even as the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest!"

And yet even in our longest night and our darkest hour, God's promises are trumpeted by the heavenly host. Even when the world around us seems caught up in joy and celebration while we are struggling, God's love is shining down on us like the brightest star in the sky. Even when our tears are fresh and our pain is immediate, God's comfort is made real in the birth of a baby. The Word has become flesh, God does dwell among us, and the Hope of the world is come into our lives.

Peace, Pastor Cindy

Sermons:

12/6 Luke 1:68-79

Light in Darkness

12/13 Luke 3:7-18

Fiery Good News

12/20 Luke 1:39-45

Blessed Through Belief

12/27 Luke 2:22-40

My Eyes Have Seen

From the Editor:

Article Deadline for next Mouse – December 15th!

Recipes, poems, stories, lyrics are all welcome.

Just e-mail or call Church Office: office@presbyterianclinton.org

Phone: 978/365-6864 Home - Jenn: jdickinson17@comcast.net



DECEMBER

- 2 Marie Malcolmson
- 3 Keith Pupecki
- 6 William Arrowsmith
- 9 Abena Yankey
- 12 Pastor Cindy
- 13 Erin Coughlan
- 23 Anna Foster
- 30 David Dickinson



Volunteer Schedule for December:

Children's Church:

- 6 Devin/Lisa
- 13 Bonnie/Shelby
- 20 Communion
- 27 Closed

Coffee Host:

- Anna Foster
- Judy Malcolmson
- Nicki Brandt
- Laurie Garvey

Worship Leader:

- 6 David Leigon
- 13 Caroline Tamfu
- 20 Butch Lemere
- 27 Devin Berry

Counters:

- Dot Grady
- Glenn Garvey
- David Leigon
- Scott Dickinson

Youth Message

- 6 Jennifer Dickinson
- 13 Lisa Carlin
- 20 David Leigon
- 27 Susan Dullea

Greeters

- Anna Foster
- Judy Malcolmson
- Thelma Towne
- Louann Joyce

New Church Members:
Welcome to our new church member - what a blessing!
Joining on November 1st:
Biawah Angwafo
Lombe Epie
Jackie Mongo
Pauline Mongo
And Thierry Tamfu



On December 13th there will be a Jewelry Party featuring hand-made jewelry by Pastor Cindy at Jennifer Dickinson's house on 46 Spruce Street from 2-4 pm



On December 19th Pastor Cindy and Eric have invited us to their Annual Advent Open House, 1-5 pm.



December 20th 5:00 pm
We will be offering a "Blue Christmas" service for those whose experience of sorrow and loss is magnified during the holidays.

Ode to Howard Foster

As we reminisce of him with one accord,
We all know whom he is surely headed toward.
We can say for that Howard
Never was a shrinking coward
When it came to be a witness for his Lord.

He would often say that he was richly graced
With a faith in Christ he long embraced.
He'll be high up on our list
Of those members who are missed,
And we doubt that he can ever be replaced.

A helping hand he always would extend,
Regardless, be it strangers or a friend.
A good Samaritan was he,
And in our hearts he'll always be
Our Howard who was faithful to the end.

By Robert J. Malcolmson
For his dear friend, Howard L. Foster



It is not too late to turn in
your Pledge for the year.
Just mail it to the church
office, or drop it in the offering
plate on Sunday

PRAYER CONCERNS FOR....

Susan D as she waits to hear news on a skin biopsy
Thomas as he goes white water rafting with friends
The Carlins as they finish packing and moving, and that everything go smoothly
Tagg family as they mourn the loss of their father
Dev's brother, Chris as he is struggling
Dev's friend Scott who has contacted his wife Tiffany while at basic training for the chaplaincy
Tanya's manager, Donna, who is mourning the loss of her mother
William's girlfriend Mindi will have an easy transition to her new home and school
Café as they move to their new home
For those seeking jobs, that they may find positions and keep their spirits up – for Scott, Bob S., Peter and Nicki
The Foster family as they mourn the loss of Howard
As pastors in Nigeria, are denouncing children of witchcraft
Philippines as they suffer from storms and as they rebuild
Peggy who still has a bad cold
Doug as he struggles with his diabetes
Pastor Cindy's job interview
Thelma's niece, Terry, as she starts chemo this week
Sue as she undergoes treatment for skin cancer, but thankfully, it is very treatable
The family of those killed and wounded at Ft. Hood and for healing for those wounded
Nicki's nephew, Marshal, who has been diagnosed with H1N1,
Taylor that he may cope with 14-year old issues
Rest for Pastor Cindy
Peggy as her health continues to improve, that she may be fully recovered
Sue's mother, Kate, as she enters the hospital to seek treatment
Peggy as her health continues to improve, that she may be fully recovered – and a joy that she is back in church!

Thelma who is suffering from sciatic nerve pain
Lukuski family as they mourn the loss of their dad/husband to cancer
Tanya's friend Matt who attempted suicide 2 weeks ago is back in the hospital with hallucinations
William as he continues to struggle with life's challenges
All those impacted with the rise in COBRA rates
Darlene has 4-5 arteries blocked and needs open heart surgery; prayers that she will be able to find a surgeon who will come up with a plan for her
Travel mercies over the holidays
Our homebound members, Eileen & Connie
Our military and their families

PRAISES FOR...

Susan and Charlie visiting today
Our new members: Jackie, Thierry, Biawah, Lombe, and Pauline
Jennelle has finished her externship, and will be preparing for her test...then on to a job!
Katie turns 20!
Howard was in a good place in his life, he liked to say that he loved the 23rd Psalm, but he knew the Shepherd
Devin being dedicated Friday night for her ministry
Doug is back
All those who helped prepare the church for the funeral
Pastor Cindy's 10th Ordination Anniversary
Dev's friends Sam and Alina joined us this morning
Edet passed her boards to become an RN!
Bill's gift of time in getting the gym taken care of for the winter
The repair work around the church is coming in lower than the bids received
Thanks for the beautiful Bible given to Pastor Cindy
St. Francis parish in Boston provides an address and safe place for homeless people, and is now collecting winter clothing items for their guests
Thanksgiving for the life of Howard and his gift of Christian fellowship
Thanks for the pottery painting fundraiser
Devin turned 21!
Our many blessings!

New Address:
Eileen Stevenson
6 Beth Avenue
Leominster, MA 01453

