

POUGHKEEPSIE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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The Journey December 2024

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The Deadline for the January Journey is Wednesday December 11



“Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.”

Luke 2:10b-12

“When God wants an important thing done in this world or a wrong righted, He goes about it in a very singular way. He doesn’t release thunderbolts or stir up earthquakes. God simply has a tiny baby born, perhaps of a very humble home, perhaps of a very humble mother. And God puts the idea or purpose into the mother’s heart. And she puts it in the baby’s mind, and then – God waits. The great events of this world are not battles and elections and earthquakes and thunderbolts. The great events are babies, for each child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged with humanity, but is still expecting goodwill to become incarnate in each human life. ”

—EDMOND MCDONALD, *Presbyterian Outlook*

Unlike Zeus on Mount Olympus at a wave of whose hand other gods tremble and the very foundations of the earth shake, the God of Abraham, our God, chooses to work in the midst of humanity, in human form, that we might know the depths of impassioned love from the God who is intimately involved with creation. This is one of the great mysteries and comforts of the incarnation, for God spoke for the first time in human form in the unintelligible tones of a baby’s cry. Indeed, no thunderbolt, no shaft of lightning streaking across the sky in victorious fury. Only the gentle light of a passing star, the tender sounds of livestock settling in for the night, shepherds in their fields, and a child, newborn, softly crying to his mother in the night. What sublime images. Unlike the God of the Exodus, who visits Pharaoh with plague and heaviness. This is God on terms we can understand and relate to, vulnerable and fragile, yet God all the same.

Christmas is very much the celebration of the ordinary. This baby is not the son of a monarch. This child is not born of privilege or status, just like so many of us; his impact comes from his calling and his faith. The message he has is not co-opted by any party of his time, nor is meant to be. Jesus rises up from the dirt and dust of humanity to shake

the earth more violently than any other natural phenomenon in history. Not even great earthquakes maintain such a history, let alone a storm, but this baby, this child, opens up a new world, a new life about him, and the foundations of creation shake to their core.

This humble beginning holds profound lessons for us all as we reflect on this potential in human life. In sending a tiny baby into the world with a divine purpose, God shows that humanity does not discourage God. With each baby born, there is the possibility for transformation. God still expects the *gospel*, the Good News, which is the unique life of the baby Jesus, God incarnate, in the flesh, so we might be born again, made right with God, released of all those things that bind us from living our gifted potential. This Christmas, take time to remember the life of God incarnate in that Bethlehem baby, but in your reflection, consider that potential God has caused to come into this world in you.

May you and yours have a blessed and merry Christmas this season. And may the God and Author of human life bless your homes with the full potential of love. In Christ's name. AMEN.

Yours in Christ, Kregg.



Children's Ministries



Our Sunday School is busy practicing for the annual Christmas Pageant, which will take place on Sunday, December 15. There will be a mandatory dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 14 @ 1pm. Volunteers are always welcome. Please contact Angela (845-452-2933) for more information.

Blessings and Peace
Angela Soto- White
Children's ministry coordinator



Friendship Circle

On December 9th's Friendship Circle, Shannon Butler, library historian will speak on *Old Schools and Seminaries of Poughkeepsie*. **Please note we will be meeting at 12pm.**

Church Council Highlights

A Council meeting was held on November 6th. Highlights included:

- Plans are in place for Veterans' Day, the Longest Night and Christmas Eve worship services. Advent decorating will take place on November 30th and caroling will be on December 14th.
- The election day pie bake sale was a great success and special thanks were given to Carla and Curtis Vinson, who organized a large group of volunteers.
- Thanksgiving baskets will be delivered on November 22nd and 120 families will receive them this year. Members will be asked to buy gifts for 137 children listed on the Angel Tree.
- Things are going well with the Casa de Adoracion use of the church, and clearer lines of communication are being established.
- A simpler system for use of the technology equipment in Fellowship Hall is being devised.
- Plans are moving forward for a new contemporary worship service, which is projected to start in January. Members of the Way Forward committee continue to provide additional information.
- A preliminary 2025 budget was adopted. Additional income is being provided by the lease agreement with Casa de Adoracion and the trustees agreement to cover landscaping and snow removal expenses.
- To increase communications, the possibility of utilizing apps for text messaging is being investigated.
- If needed, the next Council meeting will be on Wednesday, December 4th.





NOTES FROM THE CHOIR ROOM

**"HAIL THE HEAVEN-BORN PRINCE OF PEACE!
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING,
GLORY TO THE NEW-BORN KING!" UMH 240**

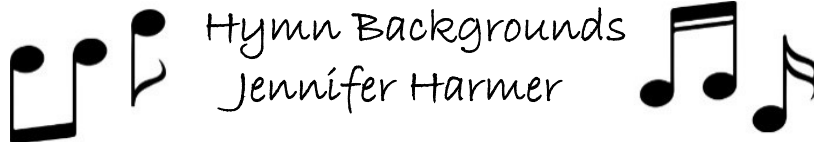
Charles Wesley, 1734

The choir room is very busy this month—even the mice are singing!
Laughing! Praying! Practicing!

In the midst of the craziness that December brings, we are ever mindful of the chaos in this world. We pray for peace! We pray for the children! We pray for the grieving! We pray for wars to cease! We pray for healing! May this season be filled with music! Sing! Rejoice! Share the good news of Christ's birth! Come, worship with us as we sing of the Good News! "Gloria in excelsis Deo"

**"ALL GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH, AND TO THE EARTH BE PEACE;
GOOD WILL HENCE-FORTH FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH
BEGIN AND NEVER CEASE!"**

*While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks, UMH 236
Nathan Tate, 1700*



When everyone reads the newsletter, we will be in Advent. And, I think one of the more common Advent hymns (and one of my favorites) is "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus".

This was a hymn written by Charles Wesley (1707-1788) in 1744. Charles was the great hymn-writer of the Wesley family, with this hymn being one of his no less than 6,500 written hymns. It was printed in his book, *Hymns for the Nativity of our Lord*. The intent of the hymn was to not only remember Christ's first coming but praying for Christ's return. Wesley wrote the hymn to bring the longing for God's advent to a personal level. Also to note, the hymn repeats the word "born" in the beginning of three consecutive lines in the second stanza.

REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS



Our members: Barbara Bates, Cheryl Cass, Will Cass, Janet Cole, Ron Cole, Dylan Coughlin, Sandra DeGuzman, Irene Feller, Veronica Gordon, Emily Griess, Betsy Grover, Gwen Higgins, Tom Halloran, Sandra Hansen, Pat Hughes, Dick James, Donna Jonnigan, Danny Jones, Betty Longobardi, Julia Miller, Kathleen Nicodemus, Michelle Olavarria, Karla Quinlan, Arnette Schmidt, Diana Silverman, Michelle Simonis, Jeff Tryon, Catherine White, Sarah-Grace White, Marilyn Zier.

Friends of our church in your prayers: Georgia Kustas-Beurket, Cris and John Burke, Jordan Fidler, Bryan Foy, Lee, Margot Madalengoitia, Edgar Martinez, Adonis Marzan, Hilary McAllister, Joe Pollen, Rob Post, Jean Slater, Wayne Surico, Jeff Theiss, Robert Thompson-Gee, Ronald Tomaso, Jackie Triguero, Clifford Zier. All the innocents affected by wars and conflicts around the world.

Members of the military, active and/or retired, in your prayers: Michael Clear, Staff Sergeant in the Army, Joshua Lord, 1-69 Infantry Medical Platoon Sergeant, NYC; Randal Middleton, Naples, Italy Naval Base, Major Jason Oliver, Texas.



A SPECIAL THANK YOU

What a blessing it is to have such a wonderful church family. My recent illness and hospitalization really rocked my boat and turned my life upside down! Big thanks for all the prayers, calls, visits, and offers of help. The outpouring of love was overwhelming.

Blessings, Priscilla Bird Wendover



Important December Dates

Sunday, December 1st – First Sunday of Advent

Monday, December 9th – Friendship Circle @ 12pm

Wednesday, December 11th – Journey Deadline

Saturday, December 14th – Christmas Pageant Rehearsal @ 1pm
Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 15th – Christmas Pageant

Saturday, December 21st – Comfort & Joy Service @ 4pm

Tuesday, December 24th – Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 25th – Christmas Day

Tuesday, December 31 – New Years Eve

Advent Pot Luck Supper

Advent Potluck Supper – Saturday, November 30 @ 5pm (join us at 3pm to help get the church ready for Christmas). There is a sign up sheet outside Fellowship Hall.



Fellowship Discovery Luncheon



The December FDL will take place on Tuesday, December 17th @ 12pm. After a delicious luncheon, we will have all sing Christmas Carols, accompanied by Debbie Carrier. Please let us know by Thursday, December 12th if you plan to attend.

PUMC Youth News

In November, the youth group wrapped up their focus on world hunger by watching the movie "Mully". Set in Kenya, this documentary-style true story really drove home the desperate need that exists in the world's most impoverished nations. The movie also delivers a strong Christian message. We enjoyed it, were challenged by it, and highly recommend it for a teenage or adult audience. Switching gears to more seasonal activities, we also put together shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child and discussed the meaning of the season of Advent. It's hard to believe that Christmas is right around the corner!



Here is what the youth will be up to in December:

- **Sunday, December 1st** - No meeting due to Thanksgiving weekend, but we invite you to attend the PUMC Advent Dinner on Saturday, November 30th. Decorating of the church will take place at 3pm. Youthful assistance is always appreciated!
- **Sunday, December 8th, 4-6pm** - Wrapping gifts for the Angel Tree.
- **Sunday, December 15th, 4-6pm** - Pews & Party! After we get our pews looking their best for Christmas, we will have a little Christmas party!
- **Sunday, December 22nd** - No meeting, but hopefully this weekend we can get together to see "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" at Roosevelt Cinema.
- **Sunday, December 29th** - No meeting, enjoy your Christmas break!

!!!! SAVE THE DATE!!!! SAVE THE DATE !!!! SAVE THE DATE !!!!

JANUARY 11th, 2025, 6:30-9pm - Hudson Valley Bridge Builders Ball at PUMC. - You won't want to miss this! This is a community-wide youth event happening in our very own PUMC Fellowship Hall. A DJ will be providing the music, and he has asked what songs you'd most like to hear, so think about it and let's give him a big list! Admission is free with the donation of a personal care item, so not only do you get to attend an awesome event at no cost, but your donation will help others in your community --

WIN-WIN!

PUMC Youth Group is open to tweens and teens in grades 6 thru 12. We meet on Sunday evenings, 4-6pm. Stop in and see what we're up to -- friends and visitors are always welcome! For questions or more information, please contact the church office.

POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

Deadline is Monday, December 2nd

Given by _____



(CHECK ONE) In loving memory of

In honor of

Telephone _____

Number of poinsettias _____ x \$13 each = \$ _____

Will you be taking your Poinsettia after the last Christmas Eve Service?

(CHECK ONE) YES NO

Return this form to the church office or call 452-2933 to order.

