POUGHKEEPSIE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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The Journey

January 2025

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The Deadline for the February Journey is Wednesday January 15

[3] Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, [4] not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Philippians 2:3-4

Most of the issues that mankind sets out to settle, it never does settle. They are not solved, because ... they are incapable of solution properly speaking, being concerned with incommensurables. —Learned Hand

"Incommensurable." Really? What on earth does that even mean? And who is Learned Hand? Why should I care?

Well, I think I can make a quick case to answer these questions. "Incommensurable," according to dictionary.com, means "having no common basis, measure, or standard of comparison." That means that some things simply cannot be measured or compared—like love, humility, and grace. The Honorable Judge Learned Hand (1872–1961), a highly respected federal judge and a prolific author and speaker, often waxed philosophical on the limits of the law. The law, though often seen as absolute, operates within broad categories. It struggles to address the deeply subjective differences that arise in human relationships. The law often addresses issues broadly, but it struggles to resolve deeply personal or value-based differences.

But we often regard law as a pure discipline. Law anthropomorphized holds a balanced scale, sword of justice, and wears a blindfold—all powerful symbols more akin to absolutes than reflections of fallible human institutions. Be ever careful of ascribing divine attributes to mortal institutions. The challenge is that law can never define all the variables the issues of a constantly evolving society demand. This same challenge exists in our faith journey. While human law struggles with subjective values, God's law of love invites us to move beyond measures and comparisons to a life of humility and service.

Incommensurable is the core of the law of love that Paul refers to in Philippians 2:3-4. As Christians, we follow Jesus' urging to care for one another, to build each other up, to be humble, to outdo each other in service, to race one another to draw closer to Jesus. Bringing back Tim Ross's idea from *Welcome to the Basement*, where he challenges us to humble ourselves in order to draw closer to Christ. It is this intangible journey of every

Christian that, in seeking to complete, fulfills all of the law and the prophets on the way as we love one another.

In this new year, let us remember the limits of human institutions and embrace the immeasurable power of humble service, empathy, and ministry. Imagine a community where disputes are resolved through love, reconciliation flows from Christ's example, and the law of love reigns supreme. Together, we can create a glimpse of heaven on earth as we love and serve one another in Christ's name.

Yours in Christ, Kregg

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Children's Ministries

I would like to thank everyone who helped make this years Christmas Pageant such a success. This includes parents, helpers, cast members, and of course out amazing Sunday School kids. Also a thank you to the congregation for all the love we felt.

Angela Soto-White, Children's Ministry Coordinator

Friendship Circle

The group enjoyed the presentation from our library about all the schools that educated youth in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Many schools were specifically for young women. And Poughkeepsie was known as "the School City"! Refreshments had a Christmas theme. Boxer shorts underwear was collected for distribution to the homeless. **Our January meeting is on the 13th of January**. Humbly Submitted, Kaye Schrock, president

Fellowship Discovery Luncheon

We will not be having a Fellowship Discovery Luncheon in January, but keep an eye out regarding the February FDL.
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NOTES FROM THE CHOIR ROOM

"When the song of the angels is stilled, When the star in the sky has withdrawn, When the kings see their prophecy rightly fulfilled, When the princes and shepherds have gone; Then the true work of Christmas begins. To find the lost, To heal the broken hearts, To feed the hungry, To free the prisoner, To rebuild the nations, To make music in the heart.

When the song of the angels is stilled,

THEN THE TRUE WORK OF CHRISTMAS BEGINS."

from a poem by Howard Thurman, 1899-1981

One of the hardest things to do...prepare music for a New Year while still singing about the Birth of Our Saviour!! So, this director pulls out "old" favorites from the files...this being one of those. You may remember reading about this in past Journeys or hearing it sung in services. The message is especially meaningful this January! At the end of choir rehearsals, we pray. Different members lead us-always ending with a plea for the healing of this world! Then, we end with "See you Sunday". If you are searching for another way to worship, come join us!!! To the best choir ever-THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS!

"THEN THE TRUE WORK IF CHRISTMAS BEGINS"

Hymn Backgrounds
Jennifer Harmer

I think by the time we receive our Journey newsletters, we will technically still be in Christmas, so I'll write about a Christmas hymn. A few people will have heard this before, but, if we sing "O Come All Ye Faithful" I very much look forward to singing the fourth verse. See, over the past couple years as my organ music obsession has grown, I have learned that many organists around the world favor the "Word chord." We sing, "**Word** of the Father, now in flesh appearing…" and the chord played when the word "Word" is sung is a great sound, usually because organists are playing not so much loud but with a lot of sound and typically bigger than the rest of the verses. But what about the hymn as a whole?

"O Come All Ye Faithful" was written by John Francis Wade (1711-1786) sometime between 1735 and 1740. It was originally written in Latin with four stanzas (verses) but others have been added by other writers. "O Come All Ye Faithful" was translated from the Latin in 1841 by Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880). Wade is also considered the composer of the tune for the hymn, "Adeste fideles." The hymn tune was originally known as "Portugues Hymn" as it was sung in the chapel of the Portugues embassy in London.

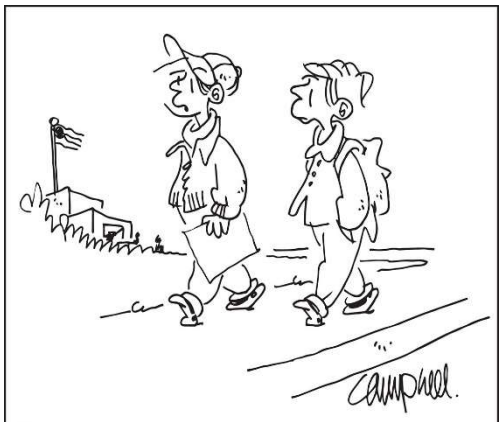
The hymn invites us, as God's people, to go to Bethlehem and adore Christ, express our faith about the incarnation, exhort the angels to sing their praise, and greet Christ on His birth. Fun fact, one of the hymn's unusual features is that it is unrhymed. (The other is that it is put in an irregular meter.)

"O Come All Ye Faithful" is usually sung on Christmas Day and is considered a must hymn for a service of lessons and carols. (References from Hymnary.org)

Worship Committee Notes

Worship had the building well decorated for Christmas and a Comfort & Joy service was held Dec. 21. A meeting is scheduled for Jan. 12 to begin preparations for Lent.

Prayerfully submitted
Kaye Schrock, chair



The Contemporary Service is Coming!

Our first Contemporary Service is being planned for **Tuesday January 14 @ 7pm**. Miriam Mauro, our Worship Leader and her team of musicians will be helping to lead our service. This will be a blessed event so please plan to attend. Please let John Marrine or anyone on the Way Forward Team know of any questions. Thank you!

Important January Dates

Wednesday, January 1st – Happy New Year
Wednesday, January 8th – Church Council @ 7pm
Saturday, January 11th - Bridge Builders Winter Ball
Sunday, January 12th – 11:30am – Worship Committee
Monday, January 13th – Friendship Circle @ 1pm
Ted Talk Watch Party @ 7pm
Wednesday, January 15th – Journey Deadline
Finance @ 7pm
Tuesday, January 21st – Social Justice @ 7pm
Wednesday, January 22nd – Trustees @ 7pm
Friday, January 24th – Collate Journey @ 8:30am