



Good News

Plymouth United Church of Christ

December 2011

Published monthly by

Plymouth UCC

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PlymouthUnitedChurchOfChrist

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*Cross illumination for
December is sponsored by
John & Sandy Moore in
honor of their 44th wedding
anniversary.*

INSIDE

Birthdays.	Page 3
Calendar.	Insert
Council Minutes.	Page 5
Memorials.	Page 3
Moderator's Letter.	Page 7
Pastor's Pen.	Page 4
Worship Notes.	Page 2

A Visit to the Stable



The Christmas Program will be presented on Sunday, December 18 during regular worship time. Sunday School students will portray the major characters of the nativity story.

Lessons and Carols

Saturday, December 24
5:00 P.M.

*A family-friendly
worship service of
praise for the birth of
our Savior with special
music, a time for
children, and a
beautiful candlelit
Silent Night.*



GETTING READY FOR CHURCH

10:30 A.M. Worship

Communion the first Sunday of the month

December Worship Notes

December 4

2nd Sunday of Advent

St. Francis Food Pantry offering

Dedication Sunday

Isaiah 40:1–11; Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13;
2 Peter 3:8–15a; Mark 1:1–8

December 11

3rd Sunday of Advent

Prayers for the People

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11; Psalm 126;
1 Thessalonians 5:16–24; John 1:6–8,
19–28

December 18

4th Sunday of Advent

Christmas Fund offering

Christmas Pageant

December 24

Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols

December 27

Christmas Day Carol Sing

Isaiah 52:7–10; Psalm 98;
Hebrews 1:1–4 (5–12); John 1: 1–14

In December, we are praying for these individuals/families: Dick Gosbin, Gladys Green, Jeff & Lesa Green, Kathryn Hamilton, Bea (John) Hancock, Harlan & Charlene Hartwich, Gordy & Audrey Heimstead, Joyce Holmen, Paul Holmen, Peter Holmen

Food for Thought

We will have a pot luck on December 4 to celebrate Stewardship Sunday. Let's get in the Christmas Spirit with your favorite holiday dish.

Don't forget we will be taking our monthly offering for St. Francis on December 4. As you travel, remember that the food pantry needs those travel size shampoos, etc that motels/hotels provide.



Advent decorating

You are invited to come on December 3 to decorate the church for Advent. We'll begin at 10:00 A.M. Volunteers will be treated to lunch featuring soup made by Pastor David along with sandwiches and dessert provided by the Worship Commission.

December Birthdays

4	Irma Shepler
5	Terri Gilbert
9	Aaron Adam Pastor David
14	Sarah Hestekin
15	Isa Small
22	Cathy Stygar
31	Lorena Berge

Larrive, Ben & Flo Hayden, Dennis & Donna Higgin, Len & Sandy Higgin, Len & Sandy Barthels, Charlie & Jayne Plumer, Darrell & Lois Wittwer, Larry Wendt & Lorraine Hagen, Clyde & Mary Jane Fenner, Gary & Patti Wathke, Jackie Dahl, Merle & Patti Nelson, Chuck & Marsha Kaiser, Jim & Linda Kaiser, Chuck Hall, Ken Weber, Roland Krause, Kathi Krause, Larry & Sandy McClean, Fred & Sandy Stroebel, Deyonne Yetter, Hope Goessling, Kris Knight, Todd & Diane Knight, Doug & Karen Knight, Roger & Nancy Bollinger, Mitch & Barb Piper, John & Donna Thompson, Darrell & Norma Brotzman

A word of thanks

The One Great Hour of Sharing Administrator, Susan Sanders, sent a letter of thanks to Plymouth congregation for our gift of \$50 to help those affected by the tornado in Joplin, Missouri. Those funds aided the United Church of Christ's immediate response in working with local partners that included providing safety equipment (Tyvek suits, respirators, goggles, and gloves) to homeowners and volunteers cleaning up damaged homes.

Memorials

- Gifts to the **General Fund**: *In memory of Bill Knight*: Larry & Barb Kleist

- Undesignated gifts to the **Memorial Fund**: *In memory of Bill Knight*: Dorothy Preson, Ramon & Shirley Knott, Terri Gilbert, Meg McCabe-Schultz, Terrence & Catherine Knight, James & Mary Karker, Anne Simpson, Gordy & Audrey Heimstead, Lyle Shepler Family, Ann Lowry, Karen Poortvliet, Mike & Kitty Sherman, Beverly Davis, Dorothy Kruschke, Joanne Lowry, Bea Hancock, George & Kay Stecher, Kay Lee, Maple Manor, Helen Jopke, Dennis & Julie Steffen, Lance & Lisa Novak, Rod & Rhonda Cooke, LaRay & Carla Hass, Buck & Connie Davis, Danielle Wik, Gini Moucha, Ben & Janet Sebranek, Dan & Kelly Olson, Roy & Diann

Plymouth church wants you!

The Nominating Committee for 2012 is starting to work on the 2012 nominations for officers and commission members. If you would like to have your name placed in nomination for one of the commissions: Worship, Stewardship or Christian Education, or even for the Executive Council, please speak up! We do have an opening for Moderator Elect. Chances are, if you do not call me, I will call you!

Barb Kleist, Moderator-Elect

Be a sponsor!

Sponsor an issue of the newsletter, a weekly bulletin, or the illumination of the cross on the front of our building in memory or in honor of someone or in honor of a special event, or even just because! Bulletin and newsletter sponsors will be recognized in the issue they sponsor. Cross sponsors will be listed in all publications for the month of sponsorship. Support a bulletin for \$15, a newsletter for \$50, or illuminate the cross for \$50. Sign-up sheets are on the table outside the sanctuary.

PASTOR'S PEN



Dear Friends and Family of Plymouth,

Advent began Nov 27. It is the final season of our calendar year as we gear up for Christmas and all the hubbub that goes with it.

During this season good things are happening at Plymouth. We have our church decorating on Dec. 3 which is always fun and meaningful (and for which I will make a variety of soups). Each Sunday we will light another candle in our Advent wreath. Lynn and I have found some new music to share with you during this season, including a beautiful hymn we will do on Dec. 4. The Sunday of Dec. 4 is our Dedication Sunday, when we will bring forward our pledges for next year and place them in the gift box before the Christmas tree, as our gift to Jesus. Plan to stay for the potluck celebration lunch after. Our children's Christmas Pageant is on Dec. 18. Christmas Eve will be a service of lessons and carols as we have come to love, with a few new musical pieces, including a gorgeous piano-and-spoken-word one for lighting the Advent Candles. Christmas is on a Sunday, so we will worship at our regular time but it will be a shorter service of prayer, scripture, and mostly singing your favorite carols with the amazing Mark Pruett accompanying us.

Many good things are happening here and likely in your home lives as well. This is a time of year it's easy to over-extend and get so busy that we miss what it is we're actually being so busy for. So please make sure to find some slow time to live in quiet expectation of

Christ's silent entry into our world. In that quiet time you might just realize that Christ has already entered and is present in more places than we ever dreamt possible. May your Advent be peaceful and filled with blessing, and may your Christmas be filled with wonder and love.

Many blessings,

Christmas Fund

For 109 years, the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a means by which we, as members of the United Church of Christ, reflect the light of God in the world, individually and in community. The Christmas Fund is a beacon of light for many who have served, and who continue to serve, our church. Your generous giving to the 2010 Offering enabled the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance program to provide, on behalf of the whole church, \$1,504,420 in assistance. Please consider supporting the Christmas Fund Offering again this year. Watch for a mailing with a special envelope to make your gift. We will receive that offering on December 18.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES

November 14, 2011

Members present: Deb Zehms, Rob Jaenke, Kay Stecher, Char Kozlowski, Jim Welk, Barb Kleist, Larry Kleist, Louise Partlow, Aurora Robison, and Pastor David Huber

Deb called the meeting to order. The October Council minutes were not available.

Financial Reports:

As of October 31, 2011

Year to Date Income	\$98,396.86
Year to Date Expenses	\$98,422.03
Ahead (Behind)	(\$25.17)
Building Fund Balance	\$10,870.00
Memorial Fund Balance	\$4,126.38

Treasurer's Report:

Income this month was \$12,781.55, expenses were \$12,788.32; leaving us with an October loss of \$6.77 and a check book balance of \$8.86. \$1,000.00 was transferred from the Women of Plymouth; \$5,000.00 from the Building Fund. Quarterly insurance and retirement payments were made, as well as OCWM and St. Francis Food Pantry.

Reserve Fund Report:

Balance of \$1169.35 at the end of October.

Memorial Fund Report:

The balance for the end of the month is \$4,126.38.

Building Fund Report:

The balance at the end of October was \$10,870.

Financial reports were reviewed and accepted.

Christian Education Commission:

The Sunday School kids made crafts and sold them at the Bazaar. Great job! The Halloween party was a big success with 25–30 attending. Thanks to all who helped plan and produce, and thanks to those who participated. There will be no Sunday School for children or adults on Nov. 27, Dec. 25, or Jan. 1 for holiday breaks. The annual Christmas program will be on December 18 during worship. Also a request was placed to the Nominating Committee to replace Aurora when she moves.

Stewardship Commission:

Larry reported our financial situation is not good, but some ideas were brought up at the congregational meeting on Nov. 13 that may help (please see notes in newsletter). The second letter that Deb mailed out seems to have helped some. The Fancy Mixed Nuts fundraiser has raised \$1,029. Another business/bulk account for the nuts would be helpful if anyone has an idea for someone who would be interested.

Worship Commission:

Barb reported that the Thanksgiving Eve worship service will be on Wednesday, Nov. 23 at First Congregational United Church of Christ, with Pastor David leading the service. Six people were honored on All Souls' Day. Advent starts the last Sunday of November. Christmas decorating will take place Dec. 3.



Minutes continued on page 6 ...

*Council Minutes
continued ...*

Worship Commission (cont'd)

Everyone is invited to help starting at 10 A.M., and there will be a soup lunch served. Christmas Eve service will be at 5 P.M., Christmas Day service will be at the usual Sunday time, 10:30 A.M.

Service Commission:

We will continue to announce the new cards for the Service Commission record keeping. This helps us keep track of which shut-ins are being visited by members of the congregation, so that we can be sure no one is missed.

Building and Grounds:

It has been decided to discontinue the lawn mowing service next summer to save money. There will be a rotation using a mower owned by the church. Thank you to Jim getting the roof heat tapes ready for winter. We are using a new snow removal company this year that is a better price than last year, but the bid does not include sidewalks. Jim said he would take care of the sidewalk clearing, with the help of a few extra people if he is not able to make it.

Women of Plymouth:

Char reported that the Annual Bazaar was a success, with \$2,418 raised, up \$300 from last year! Thank you to everyone who helped.

Other Business:

- Discussed having a “no guns” sign for front of church. We were unsure if this would create liability or not, so we decided to wait and see if it is necessary.

- Discussed ideas for fundraising from congregational meeting. Another meeting will be announced soon to review, and the ideas will be printed in the newsletter.
- Louise will be taking over the Secretary position from Aurora. The next Executive Council meeting will be moved to Dec. 5. A very nice farewell was given to Aurora.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted
Aurora Robison

**OCTOBER
FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

Income:	\$1,2781.55
Expenses:	\$1,2788.32
Loss:	\$6.77
Balance:	\$8.86

Income includes \$1,000 from Women of Plymouth and \$5,000 transferred from the Building Fund. Quarterly insurance and retirement payments were made. \$1,400 for July-Oct lawn mowing was paid, and finished for the year. \$276 for OCWM and \$231 for OCWM-Neighbors in Need were paid. \$884 was paid to St. Francis Food Pantry.

Envelope giving is down approximately \$7,400.00 YTD compared to 2010.

Dear members and friends of Plymouth UCC,

On November 13, we had a congregational meeting to generate ideas for reducing expenses and additional fundraising. I would like to thank all who attended. It was an excellent meeting with much input from many people.

Please read over the list of ideas at the end of this note. ***Do you have any information on any of the items listed that would help us in making the decision to move forward with or eliminate the suggestion? Do you have other ideas?*** Feel free to contact me, or any member of the Executive Council with your thoughts. We will discuss these ideas further at our next congregational meeting, when we approve the budget and vote on our Executive Council for 2012.

Many thanks!

Deb Zehms, moderator

- Check into the possibility of locating a cell tower or Clearwire tower here.
- Finding a Daycare that would want to locate here. Is there a central site where we could put our offer so it could be seen by potential “clients?”
- Or...an exercise group, small church without a home, 4-H, other purposes? Could we put this offer on our website?
- Work Pepsi wagon/brat stands by groceries during the summer.
- Work at other events: Country Jam, Air Show...others?
- Do the mowing ourselves on a rotation basis. Rob, George, and Keith volunteered. If we get one or two more, that would then be just once a month for each...not such a burden.
- It looks like our snowplowing bill will be reduced...except we need the sidewalks done. Who can we find?
- Bring back the auction.
- Have a thrift sale in winter, perhaps include a bake sale. Perhaps some items could be auctioned as well.
- Can we start up the e-Bay project again? How do we find a person like the one we had before? (quilt?)
- Does it make sense to go back to the silent auction idea for the bazaar, or at any of our events?
- It was noted that our nut sales make as much money, or nearly, that other much more labor intensive fund raisers do. Can we learn from that as we proceed?
- How about a beer/wine tasting event, or some sort of a more classy, ethnic, gourmet eating event?
- Caroling. We could get a group to go to shut ins, church friends, area nursing homes...whatever. This could be for camaraderie or, depending on where you go, a fundraiser. Could also just be a way to get us/our name out there depending on where we go. In any event, it would be lots of fun.
- Chicken Q. The company takes care of all the cooking. We would need servers only. Not a lot of labor.
- Signing up at area businesses for their percentage back program for Tuesdays. Culvers, Dairy Queen (I think our school does this one...I'll check.)
- Concessions at Predator games and others at Carson Park...shorter time than the brat stands.
- Do we get money if we host a blood drive?
- Would it pay to try to sell the nuts outside of stores? Maybe at the fall/winter farmer's market (or baked goods for that). Cost of having a booth, need a commercial kitchen?

Stewardship Moment

You have all heard the expression—Pay Yourself First. Maybe we should adopt that slogan for Plymouth church. We are all part of this church—it is “our” church, so let’s pay ourselves first with our pledges. Our pledges help pay for our church’s upkeep, its programs, and its mission.

I remember many years ago there was a special drive for a building fund. One of many over the years! A member of the Board of Trustees made a home call one evening and he actually suggested an amount he would like for us to pledge. I remember thinking “he’s got to be out of his mind.” But, I also remember, after thinking it over, we did make that pledge. I also remember the feeling of satisfaction when that pledge was paid. It is a good feeling to pay yourself first.

Plymouth church is in a financial slump right now. We don’t have enough money coming in to meet our expenses. Our Stewardship Commission is beginning its pledge campaign for funds for the coming year. It would be nice if you were to consider a “you’ve got to be out of your mind” kind of pledge this year. But, if you can’t do that, how about the suggestion in the recent stewardship letter that we all increase our pledge by 10%. That would smooth out our financial situation. Increase your pledge by a mere 10%. That’s what I am going to do and I hope you will help by doing the same. Let’s “Pay Ourselves First.”

Joanne Lowry

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednes	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>December 2011</h1> 						
				1	2	3 Christmas Decorating 10:00 A.M.
4 St. Francis Food Pantry offering Stewardship Sunday 9:15 A.M. Sun Sch & Adult Study 10:30 A.M. Communion Worship 11:30 A.M. Stewardship Pot Luck	5 7:00 P.M. Executive Council	6 10:00 A.M. Quilters	7	8	9	10
11 Prayers for the People 9:15 A.M. Sun Sch & Adult Study 9:30 A.M. Stewardship Commission 10:30 A.M. Worship	12	13 10:00 A.M. Quilters	14	15	16	17
18 OCWM offering Christmas Fund offering 9:15 A.M. Sun Sch & Adult Study 10:30 A.M. Christmas Program	19 7:00 P.M. Christian Education Comm.	20 10:00 A.M. Quilters	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 5:00 P.M. Lessons & Carols
25 Christmas Day 10:30 A.M. Worship	26	27 10:00 A.M. Quilters	28	29	30	31