

The Messenger December 2016



Congregational Meeting

There is a scheduled meeting of the Congregation to elect new officers for the class of 2019 following worship on December 18. The Session will also be presenting a new "Mission Statement" recommended by the Transformation Committee for congregational approval. This state will be used to guide our ministry into the future. It reads as follows:

Westwood Presbyterian Church is a fellowship of believers existing to share the good news of Jesus Christ by ministering to our members, friends, community and the world.

The Christmas Joy Offering will be received on Sunday, December 18. This offering helps support church workers in times of need and the development of the future racial ethnic leadership of our church.

50%, goes toward "grants to help retired church workers with financial and housing needs, as well as helping to aid church workers with urgent financial difficulties."

- 50%, 1) Provides assistance for students and future church leaders;
- 2) Equips racial ethnic leaders for ministry in the church; and
- 3) Supports important ministries in Presbyterian-related schools and colleges.

Please plan to give generously on December 18.



Survey Concerning Christmas Day Service

The vote to cancel Christmas Day Service was 29 for and 11 against. After reviewing the results, the Session decided to go ahead and have the service for those who are available to attend. Bob Long volunteered to lead the worship since Rev. Godfrey will be taking his last Sunday of vacation that day. The attendance will be small, but the Spirit will be great. Come if you can, it will be special for all who attend.





**FINANCE
REPORT**



Thank you
Dear Friends,

Thank you for all your support during my recent illness. Your care through cards, calls, prayers and words of encouragement have lifted and sustained me.

Norman and I are fortunate to be a part of such a caring Christian family. We love you all.

God Bless,
Carol

Westwood Financial Report - 2016

October:	Receipts	Expenses	Balance
Current Funds	8,434.25	8,159.55	274.70
Per Capita	0.00	0.00	0.00
Benevolence	155.00	95.00	250.00
Total	8,589.25	8,064.55	524.70

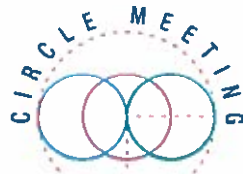
Year-To-Date:

Current Funds	73,534.96	77,232.43	-3,697.47
Per Capita	810.00	100.00	710.00
Benevolence	1,146.48	1,161.48	-15.00
Total	75,491.44	78,493.91	-3,002.47

Attendance for October:

2nd	--40
9th	--37
16th	--39
23rd	--34
30th	--32
Total	182

More detailed financial reports are available upon request from Steve Anglin or the church office.



Ruth Esther Circle meets Tuesday, December 20 at the home of Marilyn Compton at 11:00 am to assemble cookies for shut-ins.

**DEADLINE FOR
NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**

Newsletter Deadline for January is December 21st.



The Friday Bible Study will meet on Friday at 10:00 am. Everyone is invited to attend.

Deacons – December 7 – 1 pm
Administration – December 18 – after worship
Spiritual Growth/Outreach – Dec 19 – 6 pm
Session – December 19 – 7 pm



The Symbolism of the Advent Wreath



The Advent wreath is a symbol of watchfulness and increasing joy as the birth of Jesus approaches. The circular form of the wreath symbolizes eternity or life without end. The candles remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World who brought light and life to a dark world (see John 1:4-5). We light a new candle on each of the four Sundays of Advent. As the light grows, so does our anticipation and joy.

For many denominations, each of the four weekly candles is purple, the traditional color of royalty. For the third Sunday, some denominations use a pink candle to symbolize joy. The other three candles are purple and represent hope, peace and love, respectively. In the center of the wreath is a large white candle – the Christ candle – which we light on Christmas Eve. White represents the purity of Jesus.

At home, many families observe regular devotional times around the wreath. The practice builds family memories and develops Christmas customs that are likely to pass from generation to generation.

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
which is Christ the Lord.*

Luke 2:1

**Deadline for Annual Committee Reports
is December 15, 2016.
Promptness has a reward!**





“The Lord Is Near”

“Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.” Philippians 4:4-5

“Joy to the world, the Lord is come” begins one of my favorite Christmas hymns. The hymn is a reminder of the meaning of this time of year for those of us who call themselves Christians. Yet it is difficult not to lose the true focus of Advent/Christmas when we are in the middle of preparing for parties, decorating, visiting and shopping. The joy can be lost as we hustle and bustle around. The following story may give us some insight when we lose direction:

Many years ago, a little boy was given a priceless possession: his deceased grandfather's gold pocket watch. How he treasured it! But one day, while playing at his father's ice plant, he lost the watch amidst all the ice and saw dust. He frantically searched, digging in the ice and saw dust, but could not find the watch. Then suddenly he realized what he needed to do. He stopped moving around and became very still. In the silence, he heard the ticking.

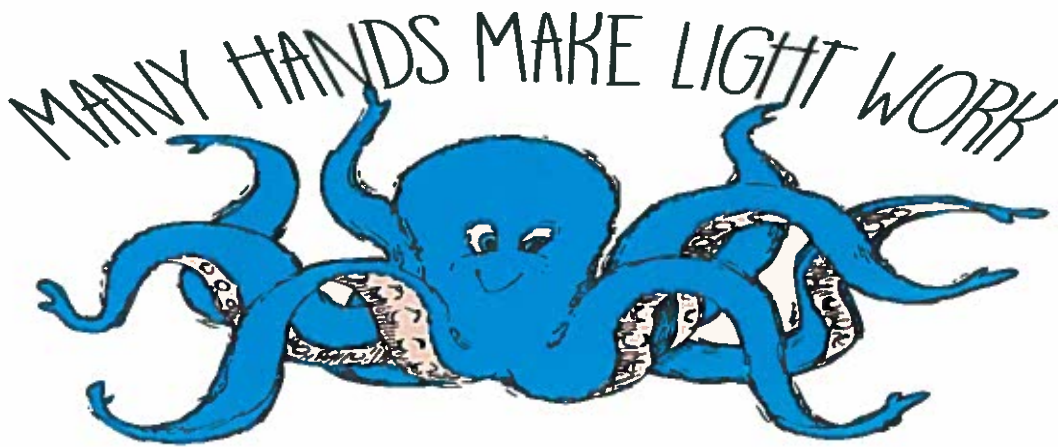
God has given each of us a priceless gift of joy in Christ. How easy it is to lose our joy in the scurrying around of life. Yet it is always possible for us to find it, if we will pause and listen to the beautiful presence of Christ in our hearts. May we schedule the time to hear the “ticking”. Then we will know the true joy of Christmas as we experience “The Lord being near”.

Prayer

O God, help me to have a wonderful Advent and Christmas season, as I spend time with family; as I connect with old and new friends; as I participate in worship and the celebrations of the season. In the fun and busyness of all these things, help me not to miss the joy, which You bring through Christ Jesus. May I be quiet long enough to hear the beating of Your heart near me. Then and only then will I experience real joy.

Amen.

In Christ,
Norman



Thank you to our Coffee Hour hosts and hostesses. Special thanks to the November volunteers:
Betty & Doug Gambrell, Jeanne & Mike Riechers, Dale Alvey

Thank you to the following who were Ushers for the month of November:
Reva Johnson, Dale Alvey

Thank you to the following Sunday School volunteers for the month of November:
Sandra Warren, Andrea Estridge, Catherine Gibson, Marlene Sloneker

Thank you to all of our Kitchen Clean-up people. Special thanks to Andrea Estridge
for the month of November.

Thank you to Reva Johnson & Doug Platt for preparing communion for November and to Bob
Estridge, Catherine Gibson and Andrea Estridge for serving communion.

Thank you to the following volunteers who worked at the Community Meal Center on Friday,
November 18th: Bob Estridge, Loretta Otto, Traci Stevison, Marlene Sloneker, Jackie Tilton.
Donations: Helen Belcher, Andrea & Bob Estridge, Barb Mainous, Loretta Otto, Tracie Stevison,
Marlene Sloneker, Jackie Tilton, Sandra Warren.

A special thank you to Mrs. Catherine Gibson for the beautiful arrangements of flowers for
worship. Thank you Catherine for sharing your special gift.



Worship Services for December

December 4, "Prepare for the Coming of the Light"

December 11, Annual Choir Christmas Concert

December 18, "How Far Is It to Bethlehem?"

December 24, Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 pm

December 25, Informal Worship Service, led by Bob Long

Prayer Concerns

Hospital:

Lindy Johnstone (Helen's niece) Cleveland
Clinic
Don Wright – pneumonia / Mercy Fairfield

Shut-Ins:

Ruth Mollett
Martha Humphrey

Cancer/Radiation Treatment:

Bob Wadleigh (Marlene's cousin)
Doug Platt
Kasey Hacker (Doug Platt) – stomach/IN
Charles (Martha H) 0 stage 4
Randy Hollenbaugh - stomach

Miscellaneous concerns:

Faith Long (Bob Long's mother) - comfort
Catherine Gibson - knee
Jack Mainous – dialysis
Don Pottenger – dialysis
Summer Estridge – pain in back
Phyllis West (Doug Platt) – brain tumor
Carol Godfrey – recovering at home
Tucker Gambrell – spina bifida
Misty Rommes (Catherine) – brain aneurysm
Maude Buschman (Carol's Aunt) – Hospice
Jean Wright – recovering knee surgery
Family of Eileen Smith
Family of Riley (age 3)
Family of Hal Sills
Family of Bill Mick on loss of wife Connie
Family of Ray Bowling (Loretta)
Deana Flynn recovering from surgery

In Nursing Home/Assisted Living:

The Woodlands: George Michaels
The Knolls: Ellen Lowery
Maple Knolls: Mae Shane (Loretta)
Berkeley Square: Betty Sloneker

National & International Concerns:

Our country, Natural disasters, violence
Unity
Our armed forces worldwide
Persecuted Christians
Missionaries across the world
Peace in our world

Local Concerns:

Our church
Cities of Hamilton & Fairfield
Serve City/One Way Farm
Haven House
Churches in community
Community Meal Center



**Women's Christmas
Dinner
Tuesday, December 13
6:30 pm**





Deacon's Corner

The Christmas project needs and One Way Farm donations will resume for the month of February. As always, Serve City needs non-perishable items. These items can be placed in the baskets in the hall under the coat rack. The Deacons thank you for your generous contributions.



Memorial Service for Carl and Eileen Smith. Carl passed away in February of this year, while Eileen died on November 12.

The family has decided to have a joint memorial service, which will be scheduled later. As soon as we know the details we will make them known. Pray for Debbie, Douglas and David as they grieve.



- 8 Judy Simensen
- 16 Carol Godfrey
- 27 Cheryl Couch
- 31 Betty Gambrell
- Lana Gay



- 12 Sara & Ted Pinkerton
- 15 Daphne & Tom Britton
- 20 Cindy & Steve Anglin
- 22 Betty & Doug Gambrell

SERVING THIS MONTH



Ushers: Marlene Sloneker, Bob Estridge, Andrea Estridge, Summer Estridge

Worship Leaders:

- 4 Bill Mountsier
- 11 Steve Anglin
- 18 Bob Estridge
- 24 Doug Gambrell
- 25 Bob Long

Sunday School:

- 4 Sandra Warren
- 11 Andrea Estridge
- 18 Catherine Gibson
- 25 Marlene Sloneker

Coffee Hour:

- 4 Marlene Sloneker
- 11 Reva Johnson
- 18 Marilyn Compton
- 25 Deacons

Kitchen Duty: Marilyn Compton

Communion Preparation:
Bob Estridge

Communion Servers: Doug Platt,
Carol Godfrey, Loretta Otto

Christmas Eve Communion Servers:
Marlene Sloneker, Andrea Estridge



Budget Planning for Next Year



**Please have
All Pledges
in the office
by December 11th.
This will help to
formulate our budget
for 2017.**

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

The Deacons would like to thank you for your generosity with the Christmas project this year, without your help it would not be possible to serve these families. We thank you for choosing a name card off the Angel Tree. If you take a card and would like help in purchasing your gift, please contact one of the Deacons and we will purchase your gift for you. The gifts need to be wrapped and under the tree by December 11th. We will begin putting mittens, gloves and hats on the tree once the cards are removed. The mittens and gloves will then be given to Riverview Elementary and distributed to the students in need of warm mittens, gloves and hats for the winter.


Thanks again for all that you do.





December 2016

WESTWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 9:15 AM Special Study 10:45 AM Worship 2nd Sunday of Advent Communion	5 Secretary on vacation Dec. 23 and 30	6	7 11:00 AM Morning Prayer Group 1:00 PM Deacons	8 7:00 PM Choir	9 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:00 PM AA Meeting	10 9:30 AM Advent Choir Practice
11 9:15 AM Special Study 10:45 AM Worship 3rd Sunday of Advent Advent Choir Concert	12	13	14 11:00 AM Morning Prayer Group	15 Annual Committee Reports Due	16 10:00 AM Bible Study 3:00 PM Community Meal Center 7:00 PM AA Meeting	17
18 6:15 AM Special Study 10:45 AM Worship 4th Sunday of Advent Administration Open other worship Christmas Joy Offering Communion and Blessing	19 6:00 PM Spiritual Growth/Outreach 7:00 PM Session	20 Ruth Esther Circle Party at Marilyn Compton's home 11 am	21 11:00 AM Morning Prayer Group First Day of Winter Newsletter Deadline	22	23 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:00 PM AA Meeting Office closed - vacation	24 7 pm 
25 10:45 AM Worship 	26	27	28 11:00 AM Morning Prayer Group	29 7:00 PM Choir	30 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:00 PM AA Meeting Office closed - vacation	31

Contact Angela Scenters at 868-6011 to make changes to calendar.

Westwood Presbyterian Church
1068 Stahlheber Road
Hamilton, OH 45013
Address Service Requested

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Reach, teach, care and share

December 2016

The title "December 2016" is written in a large, elegant, grey cursive font. The word "December" is on the top line, and "2016" is on the bottom line. To the left of the "2016" is a decorative branch of a pine tree with green needles and small red berries. To the right of the "2016" is a red cardinal perched on the end of the cursive "6".