**Good News Newsletter**

**First Presbyterian Church of Decatur**

**December 2019**

**Katie's Korner**

This year for Advent, the season before Christmas, we are looking at what can’t wait in our lives. We wait for Christmas; we wait for God come into our world once more; we wait in lines as we’re out shopping; we wait for test results; for family to arrive; we wait. But there are some things for which we cannot or should not wait. We cannot wait for hope, peace, joy, and love to arrive. There are things we must constantly work towards brining into the world. Waiting can be difficult, but during Advent we are reminded of these gifts that we have been given by God.

Our theme “What Cant’ Wait” comes from *A Sanctified Art* which is a collective of pastors and artists looking to bring Scripture alive through the arts. To guide us on our Advent journey, *A Sanctified Art* has provided and Advent Calendar and Devotional, and in Bible Study and Coffee with Katie we will be using some of their art and poems to guide our discussion. I hope you will consider joining us on our journey as we discuss What Can’t Wait.

As the urgency of holiday gift buy, wrapping, the decorations and Christmas parties busy our lives, I hope that you are able to take time for those things that are important but often seem less pressing. Spend time with your family and friends, tell them how much you love and appreciate them. Share hope and joy with those who need it, and may our generosity be shared will all through Christ.

**Rev. Katie**

***Worship Volunteers for the Month of December***

**December 1st (Communion) December 8th**

**Greeter/Usher Jon Baushke Family Matt Sikkema Family**

**Liturgist Chuck Cubbage Phyllis Graham**

**Acolyte \*Communion Jackson**

**Nursery Lisa Sikkema Missy Klimazak**

**December 15th December 22nd**

**Greeter/Usher Jack & Elaine, & Carrilou Connie & Mark Johnson & Greg Krikke**

**Liturgist Mark Johnson Joe Leary**

**Acolyte Jesse Ava Allen**

**Nursery Lauren Leighton Judy Kish**

**Christmas Eve Service. USHERS......Eleanor & Norris Smith and Roxanne Lovell**

**DECEMBER 29th Happy New Year!!!!!**

**Greeter/Usher Joel & Leonda & Amy Druskovich**

**Liturgist Chuck Cubbage**

**Acolyte Stella**

**Nursery Lori Baushke**

**Schedule for the Month of December**

**(Please put these dates on your home Calendar)**

**10 a.m. Service Every Sunday**

**9 a.m. Sunday School & Koffee with Katie**

**2nd Noon – 2 p.m. Set up nativities for Light up the Library**

**6:00 p.m. Current and newly elected Deacons and Session members will gather together for a potluck at the manse. We will eat and meet, with the Session meeting beginning at 7:00pm.**

**10th 6:00 p.m. Tuesday PW Christmas Party**

**15th 4:00 p.m. Christmas Caroling followed by dinner**

**23nd Christmas Play during service. (There will be cookies and punch after this service and there will be no fellowship the last Sunday of this month.)**

**24th 8 p.m. Christmas Eve Service**

**29th Christmas Carol Hymn Sing NO Sunday School or Koffee with Katie**

**DEACON OF THE MONTH Nancy Vliek 423-8439**

**December Birthdays and Anniversaries**

20th David & Nancy Vliek's Anniversary 26th Carolyn Reits

30th Jack & Elaine Hovenkamp's Anniversary

21st Tina Leary 31st Cole Southworth & Chelsea Kocsis

**Happy Birthday and Anniversary to all !!!!**

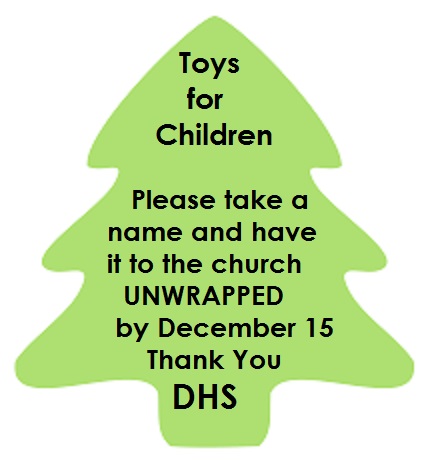
**Fellowship**

Regarding Fellowship for next year: The schedule for the committees will be very much the same. If you would like a change in the month you served, please contact Nancy Vliek at 423-8439. Thank you to all of the people so willingly participate.

**7th Annual Community Dinner**

This year the Community Dinner was postponed until the Sunday, the 12th of January. This is due to the fire at the VFW. We will ring in the New Year and combine it with 5th Sunday, which is actually December 29th this year. So please come and ring in 2020 with fellow members of various churches. Father Homic of Holy Family will be giving the message. Mari Hamilton of First Baptist is in charge of the dinner.

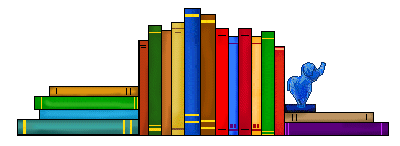
**Presbyterian Women Christmas Potluck**

**Tuesday, December 10th...**Please remember to bring a dish to pass, your own beautiful table service and a $5.00 wrapped gift for our gift exchange. Every woman in the church is invited, you are all members of Presbyterian Women. Marcia and Lisa Sikkema are the hostesses with the mostest for this night out.

We are always very generous at our church with the toys for the children on the holiday. The food and toy distribution by Decatur Human Services is scheduled for December 20tth. Please take a name off of our tree in the back of the church. If your toy needs batteries please tape some on the box, etc. And thank you!!!

**Christmas Caroling We will be caroling December 15th at 4 p.m. Afterwards will be a bowl of hot soup, bread, and dessert. Just so there is a general idea of how many are coming there is a sign-up sheet at the back of the church. All are welcome. Jan Roeder has done the dinner for many years, but is passing the torch on to a much better Chef....welcome Joel Shroyer.**

**Library News**

Member Amy Druskovich is Local History Librarian at our Webster Memorial Library. She was instrumental in our town having the Smithsonian Exhibit here to enjoy.

**Light up the Library** We will be helping to decorate the Library for the holidays with our nativity scenes. Please bring your nativity to the library Dec. 2, noon-2pm to set up our display. If you cannot make it, please contact Rev. Katie with any questions.

**Sweets by the Pound Bake Sale** Thursday December 5th from 5:30 to 7:30 Take your cookies any time during the day All donated items must come covered in clear plastic wrap with a list of ingredients (We do not need the recipe, just a list of ingredients). You do not have to bring cookies to be able to buy some. This would be a great way to have a variety of cookies on the holidays. They are being sold by the pound, and you can pick out what you want.

**Book Club** December's book "Garbology" will be discussed. You can pick up a book at the library to read, and then join the book club Monday, December 16th to discuss it.



The choir will be singing in worship December 8th and on Christmas Eve. Practice will begin December 1st at 9:30am.

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**Bible Study**

**Bible Study will meet through the month of December. We have had lively discussions on the sermons, and have had a constant class of about eight attending. Let's hope the weather stays good for further classes. Please consider attending...we meet now in the afternoon at 2 on Monday**

**Highlights of November Session Meeting Minutes**

**Report of Treasurer**

Total Monthly Revenue: $8,518.48

Total Monthly Expenditures: $9,211.05

Net Gain/Loss $(692.57)

* The church’s YTD net income is $(9,811.76) less than last year’s YTD net revenues.
* A motion was moved to approve the report. The motion was seconded and approved.

**Report of Clerk**

* The annual membership roll evaluation has been completed.

**Pastor’s Report –Reverend Katie Hartwell, Moderator**

* Directed the Blessing of the Animals Service.
* Attended the Great Lakes Association of Presbyterian Church Educators Conference
* Attended the Decatur Ministers Association, and Paw Paw’s Ministerial Alliance with Paw Paw Pres. and Paw Paw and Almena United Methodist Churches
* A motion was moved to elect David Vliek commissioner for the next Presbytery meeting, to be held at Forrest Hills. The motion was seconded and approved.

**Stewardship, Audit, Personnel Committee**

* Missy Klimczak presented the proposed 2020 budget. A motion was moved to approve the presentation of the budget to the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, November 10th. The motion was seconded and approved.
* David Vliek presented the job description for the church secretary. A few additions will be made to the description.
* The budget is placed at the conclusion of these minutes.
* The current church checking account balance is $25,148.93.
* David Vliek presented the job description for the church secretary. A few additions will be made to the description.

**Nominating Committee**

* Matt Sikkema presented the following nominations for the Class of 2022 Elders, Class of 2022 Deacons, and the members of the 2020 Nominating Committee.

Class of 2022 Elders Class of 2022 Deacons 2020 Nominating Committee

1. Karen Makay 1. Karolyn Drenth 1.
2. Joel Shroyer 2. Nancy Vliek 2.
3. 3. Shannon Allen 3.
4. 4.

The remaining Elders and Deacons will be nominated during the upcoming week.

The chair of the Nominating Committee will be selected by Session in 2020.

The 2020 Nominating Committee will be slated during the Congregational Meeting.

**Old Business**

* The church received the $20,000 bequest designated by the James K. Hirst Estate.
  + A motion was moved to use the bequest proceeds to pay off the current $10,000 loan; however, the bequest will be entered separate from the church general funds. Accordingly, a line item will be created in the church’s Chart of Accounts, listed as The James Hirst Bequest, with the original amount of $20,000 entered. The loan amount, ($10,000) will be deducted from the original $20,000 bequest in this separate line item, leaving the balance (less the total loan payoff amount from the $20,000). The motion was seconded and approved.
* The Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, November 10th.
  + The Agenda will consist of:
    - Officer and Deacon elections
    - 2020 Nominating Committee selections
    - Report of Personnel Committee
    - Report of Stewardship (Finance) Committee
      * Presentation of 2020 Budget
      * Approving 2020 Terms of Call
    - Reverend Hartwell will inform the Congregation of the Vital Congregational Initiative Program.
  + A motion was moved to approve the Congregational Meeting Agenda. The motion was seconded and approved.
* The Vital Congregational Initiative Leadership Retreat was held in Richland, Michigan.
  + The Covenant Agreement of Ministries and Churches, in association with the Vital Congregational Initiative, was presented. This will be signed by Mark Johnson, Clerk of Session, verifying that the Session and Congregation will support and commit to this program and initiative.
* Website Update
  + The website is about to be finalized.

The next Session Meeting will occur at the Manse on December 2nd, 6:00 P.M. Fellowship, 6:30 P.M. Regular Stated Meeting. A motion was moved to adjourn. The motion was supported and approved. The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 9:02 P.M.

Respectively Submitted,

Mark Johnson

Clerk of Session