

# First United Methodist Church

THANKFULL FOR ...

DECEMBER 2015

## CHURCH HAPPENINGS

### *Pastor's Notes*

**“The  
peace and  
the hope  
of Christ  
be with  
you.”**

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Cries of “Merry Christmas!”, Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas' blaring in the stores since before Halloween and non-stop red and green contrast with the feelings of many people at this time of year. For those experiencing the recent or impending death of loved ones and for those whose families are in crisis, it can be a very isolated and dreary time. Every greeting and every song reminds the grief-stricken of how sad life is at this moment. Some of us can't put our finger on exactly why we feel as we do. It may be just this year, or a feeling that comes over us every holiday season. We feel sad, withdrawn and a bit lost. Traditions that may have been years in the making may be significantly changed or no longer do-able. We are blue. I get it. I get it from years as a nurse. I get it from years as a pastor. I get it deep in my heart right now as a sister grieving the recent death of her little brother, Mark. I'm having a blue Christmas.

Joy-filled worship, special service such as community concerts, Festivals of Lessons and Carols and children's Christmas programs do not meet everyone's needs. Oddly, as the atmosphere becomes more jingle and jolly, some of us sink deeper into a sense of disconnection. To fill this gap, we will be offering Blue Christmas, a service of solace. People who are not having a particularly merry Christmas this year and friends who support them are invited to come and sit with one another in a liturgy that speaks of the healing love of God.

Sunday, December 20, 2015 at 10a will be a simple worship of a variety of music and silence interspersed with readings from Scripture and prayers of solace and hope. Candle lighting, anointing and communion will be offered.

We may be blue yet as Resurrection people, we are not defeated! As we gather on the day before this dark winter's longest night, may we gain a greater knowledge of the One who loves us in sorrow and joy. May we discover that even when our feelings seem contrary to the jingle of the season, Hope reigns, Love wins, **God is with us and WE ARE NOT ALONE.**

The holy days are supposed to be a time of joy, parties and gatherings with friends and family. But the time can be difficult for persons dealing with:

Personal grief

Loneliness

Physical, emotional or mental illness

Financial concerns

Distance from family

Relationship challenges like separation and divorce.

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**Here are some tips that might help you or someone you love in the days ahead.**

1. As much as possible, keep your regular schedule of eating and sleeping, exercise, medications, and attendance at usual support groups.
2. Excuse yourself, or go take a walk, when gatherings become too much to handle. It's alright to take some quiet time alone to regroup.
3. Helping others gets us outside of ourselves. Volunteer or find some way to be in service. Even a small batch of cookies or a pie to a neighbor can be healing to you.
4. Live in today! Let go of past regrets and upsets and be fully present in the moment.
5. Have a plan, set realistic goals and be flexible.

And despite all our good intentions and planning, sometimes things just don't go the way we had hoped. Relax! Christmas is the perfect time to remember God welcomes each of us and loves us just as we

**Communication Corner:**

**Don't forget to check the website for news and events!**  
**fumcws.org**

Are you interested in receiving the newsletter by email or mail ?

Have something to add to the newsletter?

**Please contact :**

**Helen Lubawski**

**708.822.0581 or hlubawski@hotmail.com**

**Looking Forward:**

**Sunday Service**

**Advent Continues :**

**December 12:** Advent 3 **JOY**

**December 19:** Advent 4 **LOVE**

**December 20: *Blue Christmas***

A reflective and meditative, especially for those of us who do not feel so jingle and jolly this year for whatever reason. Communion, candle lighting and special readings and poems.

**Christmas Eve 7pm:**

Worship with candle lighting, music and communion. Please bring a small hand bell to ring as we conclude worship with singing Joy to the World and ringing in Christmas!

**December 27:**

Lessons & Carols! Communion, scripture readings and singing!

**January 3: Epiphany!**

The celebration of Light as we remember the visitation of the wise men. A Christmas Hymn Sing!

**Christmas Gift Giving Opportunities**

**Hat, Scarf and Mitten Tree**

Please donate children and adult hats, scarves and mittens to adorn the giving tree at church. These will be donated to our friends at BEDs and Pillars.

**Socks and Washcloths Collection for BEDs**

Socks- Adult size for men and women, preferably ankle length or tube socks.

taking a collection to purchase gift cards for BEDs residents.

**Free Will Offering Collection**

On December 6th, 13th and 20th we will be taking a

**Sun. Dec 7, Sun. Dec 14, and Sun. Dec 21st -**

we will collect a special offering to benefit Pillars with a portion going to BEDs for McDonald gift certificates.

**Food Pantry Item:**

Canned Fruit & Vegetables



**CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS ORDER FORM - 2015**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

IN HONOR OF \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

COLOR: RED \_\_\_\_\_ WHITE \_\_\_\_\_ PINK \_\_\_\_\_ Indicate number of plants per color.

**PLANTS ARE \$14.00 EACH** NUMBER OF PLANTS \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

DELIVER TO SHUT-INS \_\_\_\_\_ **OR** PICK-UP AFTER CHRISTMAS EVE, OR SUNDAY DECEMBER 27 SERVICE \_\_\_\_\_

**THE DEADLINE TO ORDER IS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2015**

PAYMENT IS DUE WITH YOUR ORDER. PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF WESTERN SPRINGS, MARKED "POINSETTIAS".

## Happy Anniversary!

12-28 Chuck & Carolyn Sparks

## December Birthdays !

12-02 Alex Lillquist

12-23 Victoria Biery

12-05 Nancy Bailey

12-27 Chris Lubawski

12-06 Sara Bailey

12-11 Howard Graening

12-14 Janice Caliendo

12-14 Paul Caliendo

12-15 Nancy Benes

12-15 Sara Patterson

12-17 Romelle Marshal

12-19 Andrew Patterson

12-20 Cathy Gleason



## Welcome Back!

Charles Wickman has moved back to Illinois! Per Charles, "I have sold my house in Wisconsin and moved to a retirement facility in Woodstock. My son, Steven, lives here. It is a major life style adjustment. However, at age 88, this is a necessary move. Hearthstone is affiliated with the conservative Free Methodist Church....includes meals and a garage along with the apartment." Please take the time to drop Charles a note and welcome him back to the state. Although we wish he were closer to Western Springs, it's good to know he's near his son, and nearer to us than he was in Wisconsin! Welcome back, Charles!

wickman111@gmail.com

Cell 715-892-0151

Hearthstone, #109, 840 North Seminary,  
Woodstock IL 60098

# MERRY CHRISTMAS !

