

THE CHIMES

DIXBORO UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH
NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2011

THINK ABOUT THIS.....

By Rev. Tonya M. Arnesen, Lead Pastor



In his book, *On a Wild and Windy Mountain*, William Willimon tells of a work of art his family has hanging in their home. It is a print of Brueghel's masterpiece, *Numbering at Bethlehem*. The artist combines white winter snow, with warm earthly, bourgeois browns, to render a December scene in a Flemish village. What you see is an *ordinary day in the life of a little town*.

In the foreground, someone butchers and bleeds a squealing pig. A woodman struggles with a load of firewood. Children play on a frozen pond. A young man makes a pass at an obviously unwilling maid. Before a table outside the local inn, hangs a Christmas wreath. "All in all," says Bishop Willimon, "it is an ordinary, mundane winter day with nothing, save the wreath, to suggest anything extraordinary, anything beyond the expected."

"But then, if you look more carefully at the scene, down toward the bottom of the canvas we see, moving toward the census takers at the inn, an inconspicuous, thoroughly ordinary young woman on a little donkey led by a stoop-shouldered, bearded peasant who carries a saw. Here is Mary, with Joseph the carpenter, come to town to be counted."

Brueghel's point? I believe Brueghel wants to alert us to how easy it is, in the midst of the ordinariness of our lives, to miss Emmanuel – God with us. He wants to remind us that our lives can become so full of the urgent, that we fail to take notice of the important. He wants us to understand this truth: *in ways we do not expect, God comes to us – right where we live and work each day.*

This is so important to remember – especially during this Advent Season. As we move towards the busiest time of the year, we may be tempted to pack even more into our already over-booked schedules. So much so, that we could end up going through the motions – without really experiencing the wonder and joy of Christmas.

Of course, it doesn't have to be this way. Just as Brueghel pictured the Christ-child quietly breaking in upon that small Flemish village, so Advent comes each year to remind us that *each day, God breaks in upon our lives; wherever and whenever we are sensitive to the power of His presence.* Why, even NOW might be one of those moments!

See you in worship!

THREE WISE MEN AND A BABY

By Lindsey Adams and Beth Little



Children and youth of all ages will present our Christmas musical, *Three Wise Men and a Baby* on Sunday, December 4 at 6:00 pm with cookies and cocoa served afterward. Make sure this wonderful event is on your calendar!

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

There are lots more dates for Advent and Christmas that need to be on your calendars. Here they are so you can plan ahead:

Sunday, December 4 – Youth Musical, *Three Wise Men and a Baby* at 6:00 pm, followed by cookies and cocoa.

Sunday, December 11 – All Music Sunday at both worship services.

Sunday, December 18 – The annual Cookie Walk tradition begun years ago by the United Methodist Women continues, coordinated by the Women of Dixboro. Plan to buy cookies between the worship services. Your donations of home-based cookies are also appreciated.

Thurs. December 22 - Longest Night Service at 7:00 pm. Led by Rev. Cathy Freeman, this is a service for those who have lost loved ones, those who feel sad during the holidays, and those who want a quiet time away from the hustle and bustle of the season.

Saturday, December 24 –Worship at 5:00 pm, 7:00 pm and 11:00 pm

5:00 pm – Family-friendly service with participation by children and youth.

7:00 pm – Chancel Choir will be featured.

11:00 pm – Reflective, quiet service with Holy Communion served.

Sunday, December 25 - One worship service, led by Cathy Freeman and Becky Horvath at 11am with light potluck brunch to follow.

Sunday, January 1 - Wesley Covenant Service at 11am; no 9am worship service.

NEWS AND NOTES FROM NURTURE

By Robbie Colaner, Chair of Nurture Committee

We had a great kick-off to the Advent Season with our first Soup/Chili Lunch as part of “The Hanging of the Greens” event on November 27th. Over 60 people attended and enjoyed a wonderful meal.

Speaking of “Food”, be sure to sign-up to be a “Coffee Hour Host / Hostess” on the poster in the Fellowship Hall. It doesn’t have to be fancy, and will be appreciated by all between the 9:00 and 11:00 service.

Speaking of sign-up sheets ...Please sign up on the poster in the Fellowship Hall to be Greeters for one or both services (9:00 and 11:00). We want to be sure everyone feels welcome at the DUMC whether member or visitor (AKA possible new members).

Our committee continues our goal of “people helping people”. In these current hard economic times, be sure to reach out to your Church Family if we can help in any way. We continue to meet monthly and will keep you posted on our projects.

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY!

By Linda Coffey

Here is a chance to help out in the church and learn a new skill. We need some more people to learn the Sunday Plus software that we use for the visual presentations during the church service. It isn’t difficult to learn and we will set up a training session to fit your schedule. We need one or two more people to help out when Linda and Will can’t be there. Don’t just think about it, ACT on it! We need YOU! Contact the church office or Linda Coffey for more information.

WE GET APPRECIATION!

Dear Dixboro church family & Scholarship Committee,

I cannot fully express how honored and appreciative I am for being granted the Ivan and Elnor Parker achievement award this year. This scholarship made it so much easier for me to ease into my senior year at Eastern Michigan University, feeling confident and ready to plan out life after my undergraduate work. I have been so blessed throughout my college career, with help from my church family. This has made life so much easier as I have been able to focus more of my attention on academics which has paid off. Being able to save up a little here and there will mean I can move on and pursue graduate school that much sooner. I hope to apply and attend a graduate school within the next two years, where I will study Clinical Psychology.

Again I would like to thank everyone at Dixboro United Church who have helped to guide me through such an important part of my life, every bit of help has been encouraging. Thank you.

Love, Katie Wilcox

MISSIONS REPORT

By Roberta King, Missions Committee Chair

The equivalent of 5000 pounds of food has been donated to Food Gatherers in 2011. And the year isn't over yet. The need is so great. Way to go Dixboro.

We are collecting Christmas gifts for the boys at Methodist Children's Village. Sign up on the list in Fellowship Hall.

Dixboro UMC has made many donations to the House By the Side of the Road in 2011. Thank you for supporting this project for those in need.

Dixboro UMC has paid its pledge of \$2000 to Habitat for Humanity. Thanks also for the many hours of labor donated by our members.

Six children in Mali are attending school due to the generosity of the members of Dixboro UMC and others.

We hope to be able to pay our Ministry Jubilee Pledge of \$6000. Your support of the church budget will make this happen. Ministry Jubilee supports Methodist Retirement Homes, Methodist Children's Village, Cass Community Social Services, and Baldwin Center in Pontiac among other causes.

Thank you for sharing your blessings with others.

WOMEN OF DIXBORO

By Phylis Brandon, Co-Chair

Women of Dixboro will once again organize the Cookie Walk to carry on the tradition begun by United Methodist Women many years ago. It will take place on December 18 at 10 am between the worship services. We will accept any and all donations of homemade Christmas Cookies. Stay tuned for more reminders as we approach the holiday season. We will meet December 1st at 7:00pm. Come and join us as we plan events and projects for the coming year.



2012 PLEDGE CAMPAIGN

By Bob Baird, Financial Secretary

As of November 29, Dixboro people have submitted 59 pledges for a total of \$151,240. This is a significant increase for the 2011 Stewardship Campaign where 47 pledges for about \$120,000 were submitted.

There is still plenty of time to make a pledge. Forms are in envelopes in the church sanctuary. These can be completed and put in the offering plate on any Sunday. Or contact the church office if you need a form sent to you.

Thank you to all who have been so generous.

RECURRING EVENTS

Mondays	10:00 am	Northeast Seniors Exercise Class
Tuesdays	8:30 am	Exercise Class
	4:30 pm	Dance Class in Fellowship Hall
Wednesdays	10:00 am	Northeast Seniors Exercise Class
	6:00 pm	WOW (Word on Wednesdays) – not held in December
	7:30 pm	Chancel Choir Practice
Thursdays	8:30 am	Exercise Class
	9:30 am	Women's Bible Study
Fridays	10:00 am	Northeast Seniors Exercise Class
Saturdays	8:30 am	Course in Miracles
First Sunday		Holy Communion celebrated
Second Sunday		Shelter Meal Ministry
Third Sunday		Bring canned goods to worship
Third Monday	1:00 pm	United Methodist Women
First Tuesday	7:00 pm	Missions Committee
Third Tuesday	6:30 pm	Nurture Committee
First Wednesday	5:00 pm	Worship Committee
First Thursday	7:00 pm	Women of Dixboro
Second Thursday	7:00 pm	Trustees Committee
Fourth Thursday	6:00 pm	Finance Committee

COMING EVENTS

Thursday	Dec 1	6:00 pm	Finance Committee
		7:00 pm	Women of Dixboro
Sunday	Dec 4	6:00 pm	Three Wise Men and a Baby – Youth Musical Performance
Monday	Dec 5	7:30 pm	Cantata Rehearsal
Tuesday	Dec 6	7:00 pm	Missions Committee
Wednesday	Dec 7	5:00 pm	Worship Committee – canceled
		5:30 pm	Cantata Rehearsal
Thursday	Dec 8	7:00 pm	Trustees Meeting
Saturday	Dec 10	10:00 am	Cantata Dress Rehearsal
Sunday	Dec 11		All Music Sunday at both worship services
		12:00 pm	Shelter Meal Ministry
Saturday	Dec 17	9:00 am	German Class in Parlor until noon
Sunday	Dec 18	10:00 am	Cookie Walk
		6:00 pm	Caroling by Youth and anyone who wants to go
Monday	Dec 19	1:00 pm	United Methodist Women
		6:30 pm	SPRC meets with District Superintendent, Rev. Mark Spaw
		7:15 pm	Annual Church Conference with Rev. Mark Spaw
Wednesday	Dec 20	6:30 pm	Nurture Committee
Thursday	Dec 22	7:00 pm	Longest Night Worship Service led by Rev. Cathy Freeman
Saturday	Dec 24	5:00 pm	Family Worship Service
		7:00 pm	Worship Service with Chancel Choir
		11:00 pm	Reflective, quiet worship service with Holy Communion
Sunday	Dec 25	9:00 am	No worship service
		11:00 am	Christmas worship service led by Rev. Cathy Freeman with potluck brunch following
Monday	Dec 26		Tonya on Vacation through December 31
			Church Office closed through December 31
Sunday	Jan 1	9:00 am	No worship service
		11:00 am	Wesley Covenant Worship Service

FINANCIAL INFORMATION
By Ingrid Sheldon, Treasurer

At the church's October "Town Hall Meeting," Reverend Tonya shared her vision and goals for all that Dixboro Church could be in the lives of those that worship here, as well as our impact within the local and global communities. Jesus is alive and working in our lives.

Tom Freeman reminded those in attendance about how we accepted a \$500,000 challenge six years ago to remodel and update our church. With a recent \$3000 gift from the Memorials Committee, the balance of our Sanctuary Renovation Project loan is currently less than \$20,000. Along with other gifts, your use of fundraising grocery cards helps meet the monthly loan obligation. We also successfully re-roofed the Fellowship Hall, painted the old addition, bought new furnaces, and replaced parsonage windows due to your generous efforts. We have fulfilled Conference and District apportionments through 2010 and tackled other mission projects

Then it was my turn to report. As of September 30, and on an accrual basis, expenses have exceeded revenue by \$23,000 year to date. We had a similar situation in 2009 when we were down \$18,500 as of the same date. With many members making an extra pledge payment and generous end of year giving, we closed 2009 with a very small "loss" and all obligations fulfilled.

So far this year, all payroll and vendor bills have been paid – are current. What is not current is our Conference obligation – our apportionments. As of 10/31/11, Dixboro Church owes \$16,200. There is some savings that can be "dipped into" to pay this liability but prudent business practices would dictate that we not deplete these funds.

During October, 2011, general giving exceeded our expenses by \$3,200 thus reducing our loss to \$20,100. So far in November \$15,000 has been contributed which is wonderful. Thank you!!!!

Financial Secretary Bob Baird and Finance Chair Tom Freeman reported this past Sunday that the initial phase of the stewardship pledge campaign has been very successful for 2012 compared to 2011. That news is very encouraging as we plan for our future knowing that many of us realize that a regular commitment can ensure a stable and purposeful church.

But we need to finish 2011. Proceeds from the Dixboro Fair, uncommitted Mission funds, Trustee designated funds, and a generous supporter of Mission Jubilee causes will all help close the unprecedented gap. We still need you and your help! Please consider an extra gift to our church as you plan your year-end giving knowing that you will be sharing and enjoying the love of our Jesus in our lives.

As always, if you have questions or comments, feel free to contact me at aasheldon@sbcglobal.net or 665-5893.

	October, 2011	YTD 2011	YTD 2010	YTD 2009
REVENUE				
General Giving	20,121.69	153,993.14	159,107.39	152,805.01
Spec Collections, Designations, Other	1,325.27	31,418.90	44,817.64	18,466.96
TOTAL REVENUE	21,446.96	185,412.04	203,925.03	171,271.97
EXPENSE:				
Conference/District Related	3,876.70	31,013.60	30,888.00	33,192.80
Church Related				
Missions, special collections, PHP, scholarships	0.00	13,443.08	15,638.41	10,230.85
Payroll	3,081.04	31,291.15	27,426.38	31,369.54

General church operations	2,532.25	37,303.61	32,758.25	32,356.33
Committee	-11.13	3,317.25	3,728.20	3,237.55
Special Project:	1,323.28	16,645.74	30,337.78	8,296.70
Total Pastor related expense	7,152.32	68,220.55	64,638.75	63,895.40
Total Parsonage Related	223.74	4,135.48	2,243.84	3,789.90
Total Schoolhouse expense	42.25	185.50	203.90	296.42
TOTAL EXPENSE:	18,220.45	205,555.96	207,863.51	186,665.49
CHURCH RELATED INCOME (LOSS)	3,226.51	-20,143.92	-3,938.48	-15,393.52