

The Parish Herald

Newsletter of the
First United Methodist Church
Meriden, Connecticut

Ric Hanse
Pastor

December 2016



On a cold, quiet night a man escorted his wife into an animal stable and lovingly helped her off of the donkey she was riding. As she leaned against a rail, the man gathered some straw into a pile took a wool blanket out of his pack and laid it over the straw. Taking the hand of his wife he walked her over to the homemade straw bed and helped her lie down. Joseph went back to his pack, took out two more blankets, brought them back to his shivering wife and gently covered her.

As Mary lay there breathing in the smell of donkeys, cows, straw and dung, Joseph sat down by her side and held her hand. The contractions started coming and then coming more frequently. Mary's face took on an expression of pain and fear. This was her first baby, and she was afraid.

As the night wore on, Mary spoke the words that cause a husband's heart to race with a mixture of excitement and anticipation – "Joseph, it's time." Joseph prepares his wife and begins to serve as her coach and midwife. "Push, Mary. You're doing great. I love you. I see his head. Push Mary."

After what seems like forever, Joseph delivers the baby. Holding this tiny baby in his arms Joseph quietly, yet with deep love, says,

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"Welcome into the world, Jesus my Lord." Joseph cuts the umbilical cord cleans the newborn Savior up and gives the baby to his wife. Mary gathers Jesus into her arms and gazes at her boy. In the deep joy of the moment all of Mary's pain and exhaustion melt away as she gently kisses Jesus and then holds him close to her heart.

Joseph comes back to Mary's side with strips of cloth. He lays them down, takes Jesus from Mary, places him on the cloths and wraps his boy. Handing Jesus back to Mary, Joseph makes sure his bride is comfortable. And for a time the couple is lost in wonder.

"He's beautiful Joseph."
"He's so perfect."
"Joseph, I love you."
"I love you Mary. We love you Jesus."



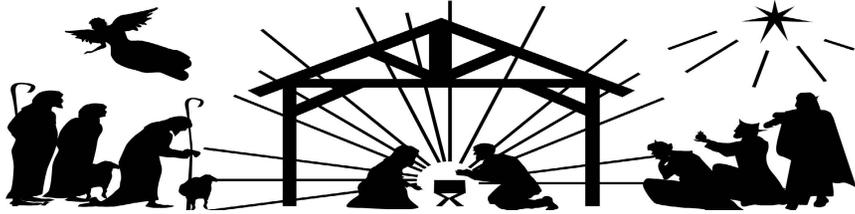
Joseph gets up, and looks for a bed for his boy. Eyeing up a feeding trough, Joseph takes hold if it, dumps the remaining feed on the ground by the donkeys, and carries it over to the place where Mary and Jesus are resting. Quietly he places the manger next to Mary, gathers some clean straw and fills the trough. He then takes a small blanket from his pack and lays it on top of the straw. Taking the baby from Mary, Joseph holds Jesus in his arms, looks at Him and with tears streaming down his eyes says, "I love you."

Placing the sleeping baby Jesus in the manger, Joseph covers Him, kisses Him on the forehead, and then lies down next to his wife. Salvation has come into the world.

Affectionately,

Pastor Ric -





CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

6:00 pm: Service of Carols, Readings and Living Nativity. Designed for Families.

9:00 pm: a Service of Lessons, Carols, and Candlelight.

Holy Communion Will Be Offered in the Chapel One-half Hour Before Each Service.

Please be with Us in Holy Worship throughout Advent, and on Christmas Eve.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Planning and prep for our **Christmas Pageant** has begun. We will be working with individual classrooms as follows: November 6th - 3 year old/Pre-K class; November 13th - Kindergarten & 1st grade; November 20th - 2nd & 3rd grade; November 27th - 4th & 5th grade / 6th - 7th grade. December 4th and 11th we will be preparing and rehearsing for the pageant. We hope that all students are able to be a part of the program. Also, we will be *decorating for the pageant on Sunday, December 4th* after fellowship and encourage parents and students to stay and help. The Pageant will be presented on Sunday, December 18th.

There will be no **Church School** on December 25th. Once again, we encourage families to worship together. The nursery will be staffed for infants and toddlers. Remember: the 6:00 pm Christmas Eve Service is designed for children.

YOUTH NEWS

The **Youth Group** is open for all youth from grades 4 through high school. We meet after worship until 3 PM. If you have any questions please contact Jim Hazlett at 860.324.2588 or email at jhzlett1222@gmail.com

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY

EBENEZER SCROOGE is a man in dire need of a second chance. Is redemption possible for such a greedy, dark and sad character? *The Redemption of Scrooge*, from Matt Rawle's The Pop in Culture Series, shows us how the teachings of Jesus can be found in Dickens' Christmas classic.

Classes will be Monday mornings at 9:30 am and Monday evenings at 7:00 pm from November 28th through December 18th.

Please sign up for the Advent Study in Rogers Memorial. Cost of our study book is \$10. Pastor Alden.



FOCUS ON WOMEN

Unit 4 will meet Monday, December 12 at 12:00 pm for a POT LUCK LUNCHEON. All women are most welcome!

UMW Christmas Luncheon: UMW will be having its Christmas Luncheon on Sunday, December 11th. We will have a wonderful meal prepared along with a music provided by the Bennett Family of Cheshire, CT as they celebrate in song the Reason for the Season. This unique family – eight brothers and sisters with parents Ray & Diane – will share favorite Christmas carols with the festive sounds of handbells, instrumentals, vocals and an accordion ensemble. This is a one-of-a-kind musical presentation you won't want to miss! Looking forward to being with you all on December 11th! Tickets will be \$10, Children under 10: \$7. This is a UMW fund raiser and tickets will be available today from Debbie Molloy or Holly Wishart. Buy early as we will not be offering tickets the day of the luncheon and may need to limit.



MEN'S NOTES

Brothers in Christ: Bible study, support & encouragement. The goal is to grow in our responsiveness to Jesus Christ in all aspects of our lives. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month, 8:00 am in the Parish House. If you have any questions or need additional information please see Hal Quigley. All men warmly welcomed.

37th Annual Living Creche

Wednesday, December 14, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Friday, December 23, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Saturday, December 24, 5:30 pm - 6:00 pm

Youth and Adults in revolving casts, enact a tableau of the traditional nativity scene. Christmas carols provided by the Wayne Roth Memorial Carillon will resound from the Church spire.

The Pageant will be presented during the 6:00 pm Worship Service on Christmas Eve, December 24th.

A Great Family Experience of the True Meaning of the Season.

We are recruiting participants:

If you would like to take part in the creche, there is a sign-up sheet in Rogers Memorial or call the Church office, 203-235-9620.

Ten people are needed (20 per-evening) for each tableau. Sue & Jim Kostuk coordinating, 203-237-9209.



Christmas Memorial Poinsettias

If you wish to order a poinsettia to be placed in the sanctuary at Christmas. Please indicate how many and circle how you want the acknowledgment listed; place order form in the offering plate, or mail to the Church Office. The cost is \$10.00 per plant. Please print.



____ In memory of – honor of _____

____ In memory of - honor of _____

Total # plants ____ at \$10.00 each = \$ _____ enclosed.

Please check:

_____ I will pick up my plant after the 9:00 PM Christmas Eve Service

_____ I will deliver poinsettias on December 26 or December 27.

Christmas Memorial Donations

Donations to the following special funds – please indicate amount and circle how you want the acknowledgment listed. Please print.

Living Memorial

\$ ____ In memory of – honor of _____

\$ ____ In memory of – honor of _____

Health Kits (Unit 4 UMW Mission)

\$ ____ In memory of - honor of _____

\$ ____ In memory of – honor of _____

Other – please designate fund: _____

\$ ____ In memory of - honor of _____

\$ ____ In memory of – honor of _____

Total donations \$ _____ enclosed.

Giver's Name/s _____

Phone _____

Total amount enclosed (poinsettia costs and donations) \$ _____

Absolute DEADLINE (to be included in the Memorial list) for receiving memorials is Friday, December 16th.

CHRISTMAS

The **Mitten Tree** is set up in the Narthex of the Church to receive your hats, gloves, scarfs or mittens for children within the community. You don't knit? Purchased items are gratefully received. The mittens will be dedicated on Sunday, December 11th. Items will be distributed to community children through several agencies that serve Meriden. This tradition was begun back in the 70's by Dot Hayes.

Caroling to shut-ins and our nursing home members will be Sunday, December 18th, 1:00 - 3:00 pm. This is an **All-Church Event**, open to all. We will have hot cocoa and donuts back at the Church. Sign-ups in Rogers Memorial.

Advent Coin Banks and Folders are now available in the Narthex, the Cloister, or stop by the Church office to pick one up. These coin banks are a great reminder of the "reason for the season" when left out on coffee tables or the kitchen counter. They also provide for a wonderful teaching aid to children about the coming of Jesus Christ at Christmas. Banks can be returned in the offering plates or the Church office. Thank you. *Your Finance Committee*

Prayer Chain continues active and strong, and would love to be praying for your needs and desires. If you have a special need for prayer, please let our prayer chain coordinator (Holly Wishart) know so she can share your burdens and needs with those who are on the chain. Please make certain you have permission from the person(s) you are praying for, and then call Holly, 203-907-5725, or the Church office, 235-9620. You can also e-mail the office, fumc@snet.net, if you prefer.

2017 ADULT FELLOWSHIP

Hebrews 10: ²⁴ *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,* ²⁵ *not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

Saturday January 28 – **Crèche's of Germany** at the Knights of Columbus Museum's annual Christmas exhibition, One State Street, New Haven, CT. We will carpool from FUMC, leaving at 9:30 am from the parking lot next

door. After touring the exhibit we will get lunch locally before returning to Meriden.

Saturday February 18 - **Annual Chili Cook-off**. 6:00 pm in Rogers.

Saturday March 25 - **Movie Night**. 7:00 pm in Rogers.

Saturday April 29 – **Yale Art Museum**, 9:00 am

Saturday May 20 – **Miniature Golf and Ice cream**..

Saturday June 24 – **Bowling**.

Sunday September 10 – **All Church Picnic**.

Saturday October 28 – **Progressive dinner**,

Saturday November 18 – **Game Night** 6:30 pm.

Saturday Dec 2 - **Hanging of the greens**

MISSIONS



Thank You to all who have selected a tag from the **Angel Tree!**

A few requests to make this mission successful:

1. Please sign out your tag on the sign out sheet with your name and contact info.
2. Please return your gift, wrapped, with the tag on it by **DECEMBER 11TH**.

There are still a few gifts left to give! Check out the Tree after worship, select a tag, sign it out, and Happy Shopping! Call Mary Lavado for any questions! (860) 349-3345

I am **collecting warm winter coats** again this year for Team M-25. Coats need to be gently used and clean (no tears, stains etc). Other clothing must be brand new– sweats, thermal undies, thermal socks. I am also collecting Dunkin Donuts and McDonald's gift cards: in \$5 increments and Stop and Shop for \$10. If you would prefer to write a tax deductible check, it can be made out to M-25. This will be the last year I will be doing this, so I would like to go out with a bang. For those that may wonder why the team is called M-25.....it is from Matthew 25....."whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters, you do to me." This goes to the lowest on the ladder of homelessness—those that no matter how cold it gets on Cape Cod, these folks will not go into the shelters but prefer to remain outdoors.

As we all know, the winter winds send a biting chill through us all, and these poor folks will not be warm again until Spring. We can help make their days a little better. Any questions, please call Kate Eglee 203-265-7192

Red Cross Bloodmobiles: Tuesday, December 20th, and Wednesday, January 25th, 1:00 – 6:00 pm in Rogers Memorial. To speed your donation use the online *Rapid Pass option!* The American Red Cross has an **urgent need for donors of all blood types**. Red Cross blood products are being distributed to hospitals as quickly as donations come in. Schedule an appointment and bring a friend - new donors are crucial to the success of a blood drive.

<http://www.redcrossblood.org/> or by calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)

“Fostering Love” Children placed in Foster Care receive from 1st UMC Church a backpack with an outfit, a toy, and toiletries. We are in great need of the following items: Pajamas: boys and girls, sizes 18-months through size 14 youth. Greatest need: Boys and girls pajamas size 4-6. Boys pajamas size 2 & 14. Thank you for your generous help!

“1st Sunday” The Meriden Soup Kitchen cupboards are always in need of supplies! As we celebrate Holy Communion on the 1st Sunday of every month we ask you to bring in non-perishable food items as an offering of thanks to God for His great love. Boxes are in the cloister for your monthly ‘love gifts.’ Can’t come on a 1st Sunday? We’ll receive them on 2nd, 3rd, or 4th Sunday too!

Unity House is a refugee house run by the South Meriden UMC. The Central District of the NY Annual conference has adopted the Unity House. We are providing three ways for you to participate. 1) Change in the collection plate. This includes coins only. 2) Unity Jar. A collection jar is available in Rogers Memorial. 3) Check. Checks made out to FUMC with “Unity House” in the Memo line will be given to Unity House.

Socks in a Stocking: Last winter FUMC donated well over a hundred pairs of socks to our local homeless shelter. Let’s see if we can double that this winter. In Rogers Memorial hall there is a quilted stocking where you can place new socks for adults and children. There is also an overflow bin available. Please see Jan Richardson or Deb Molloy if you have a question.

Six times throughout the year, United Methodist congregations celebrate **Church wide Special Sundays** with offerings. Your support is critical to the

these important ministries. Church-wide special Sundays enable United Methodists to offer *refuge in times of disaster, promote peace and justice, provide scholarships and student loans, reach out to the community, teach skills to encourage self-sufficiency and share the love of Jesus Christ* with God’s people everywhere...

Sunday December 4th we celebrate UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY This offering provides United Methodist Scholarships and administers the UM Student Loan Fund to persons preparing for the ministry and missionary service...

Sunday, January 15th we observe **Human Relations Day**. The monies collected support Church-based community programs to strengthen social justice; UM Service Programs & Youth Offender Rehabilitation programs.

FELLOWSHIP HOUR

Please join a team and help host our wonderful coffee hours!

Dec 4 – Team 4: Ray & Rosanne Knapp, Jim & Sue Kostuk, Debbie Lippold, Toni Merrill,

Dec 11 – Team 5: Nancy Coppola, Mary Alling, Kate Eglee, Bette Grasso, Mary Lavado, Tracy Wodatch

Dec 18 – Team 6: Deane Poirier, Alison Green, Maurice Poirier, MaryEllen Brechlin, Trudi Schott, Mark Fancher, Carol Porsch, Lauren Rhines, Ellen Fisk.

Dec 25 – Team 7: Myrna Spencer, Karen Caproizzo, Earl Yeomans, Linda Mizell, Jim Pearsall, Renee Pearsall, Betty Thomson, Mary Andersen

Jan 1 – Team 8: Ed & Nancy Peterson, Donna Oddie, Gerry West, Jim Hazlett, Beverly Teixeira, Ruth Petrucelli

Jan 8 - Team 1: Sue Winchell, Barbara Quigley, Evelyn Mills, Stacy Morgan, Sarah Uylaky, Cathy Bacon

Jan 15 – Team 2: Stanley & Sharon Kapustinski, Donna Timm, Brenda Daly, Nancy Tracy, Jan Richardson

Jan 22 – Team 3: Debbie Molloy, Novelyn Cosmiano, Susan Farquharson, JoAnn Myers, Cindy Lopiano, Jennifer Janus

Jan 29 – Team 4: Ray & Rosanne Knapp, Jim & Sue Kostuk, Debbie Lippold, Toni Merrill,

Feb 5 – Team 5: Nancy Coppola, Mary Alling, Kate Eglee, Bette Grasso, Mary Lavado, Tracy Wodatch

Feb 12 – Team 6: Deane Poirier, Alison Green, Maurice Poirier, MaryEllen Brechlin, Trudi Schott, Mark Fancher, Carol Porsch, Lauren Rhines, Ellen Fisk.

Briefs: Save the Date! Boy Scout Troop 52 will be holding their **2nd Annual Soup Night and Silent Auction** on Saturday, February 25, 2017!

Donations for the silent auction are welcomed. Please contact Sarah Lewoc at sarahlewoc@sbcglobal.net for donations and copies of our taxable donation letter. Details to follow in January!

We have openings for **Altar Flowers** all of January and all of February. If you wish to donate flowers in honor of or in memory of someone please call the Church office, 235-9620. Thank you.

Cold & flu season is upon us: We are giving full permission to anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms to stay home from all Church activities during these coming months. While we will miss you, we certainly understand your desire not to spread “yourself around.”

Become a fan of FUMC on Facebook. Search “First United Methodist Church of Meriden CT” (not FUMC). The official page has a black and white photo of the Church as a profile photo. You must ‘like’ us and then the page will be able to post content into your Facebook News Feed. Also, “share” FUMC on your FaceBook page so others can ‘like’ us too!

Did you know this **Newsletter** is online at our web site at <http://sites.google.com/site/fumcmeriden2/> ? If you prefer to read the Church newsletter online and forgo getting a hard copy 10 times per year (no January or July) let the office know at fumc@snet.net. Thank you.

Offering envelopes will be made available in Rogers Memorial in the middle of December. Please fill out a Commitment Card to be sure you get envelopes. A reminder from our Financial Secretary and our Offering Tellers... Please use your assigned offering envelope number on ALL GIFT GIVING to the Church, especially during the Holiday season. This will help ensure that you are given proper credit. If you do not have offering envelopes, or a number, we will be happy to assign you one. Please check “Response” or call the Church office. Thank you

Christmas Card Service. This year bring your addressed Christmas cards that you send to our Church family to Church. A box will be in Rogers Memorial marked “Christmas Cards.” Don’t put stamps on them. Instead, donate the money to the church’s “Boiler Fund” that you would have spent for stamps.

We will separate the cards and distribute them for you. No out-of-towners please. You’ll help the Church and get your cards distributed. Example: if 25 cards per family times 47¢ per card = \$11.75. If 25 families @ \$11.75 = \$293.75. Thank you - Sarah Uylaky

Coloring Page



December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Chancel Choir	2 Soup Kitchen	3 8:00 AM Brothers In Christ Outside use of Hal
4 10:00 am Worship YOUTH GROUP	5 7:00 PM Advent Bible Study	6 Boy Scout Crew 52 Boy Scouts	7 9:00 AM Bus safety meeting	8 Chancel Choir	9	10
11 10:00 am Worship Education Commission 12:00 PM INW Luncheon YOUTH GROUP	12 7:00 PM Advent Bible Study Unit 4	13 Boy Scouts	14  Living Creche recycle	15 Chancel Choir	16 Soup Kitchen Wedding	17 8:00 AM Brothers In Christ
18 10:00 am Worship  Candling YOUTH GROUP	19 7:00 PM Advent Bible Study	20  Blood Drive Boy Scout Crew 52 Boy Scouts	21	22 Chancel Choir	23  Living Creche	24 Christmas Eve 6:00 & 9:00 pm
25 10:00 am Worship  Christmas	26	27 Boy Scouts	28 recycle	29 Chancel Choir	30 Soup Kitchen	31 New Year's Eve

January 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 am Worship YOUTH GROUP  New Year's Day	2 David Paul Service @ Graveside	3 Boy Scout Crew 52 Boy Scouts	4	5 Chancel Choir	6	7 8:00 AM Brothers In Christ
8 10:00 am Worship Education Commission YOUTH GROUP	9	10 Boy Scouts	11 recycle	12 Chancel Choir	13 Soup Kitchen	14
15 10:00 am Worship Human Relations Day YOUTH GROUP	16 Martin Luther King, Jr Office closed	17 Boy Scout Crew 52 Boy Scouts	18	19 Chancel Choir	20  Deadline for Parish Herald	21 8:00 AM Brothers In Christ
22 10:00 am Worship YOUTH GROUP	23	24 Boy Scouts	25  Blood Drive recycle	26 Parish Herald Mailed Chancel Choir	27 Soup Kitchen	28 Adult Fellowship
29 10:00 am Worship YOUTH GROUP	30	31 Boy Scouts				

WITHIN OUR FAMILY

I would like to thank my FUMC family for their love and concern with the passing of my dear brother, William Raymond Thomas. *Sarah Uylaky*

Hospitalized since the last Parish Herald: Jane Ashton, Charles Rule

+ **In Memoriam** + Since our last issue of the Parish Herald, the following have passed into eternal life: 11/12 – *Ruth Backus*.

Pastors Ric and Alden officiated at the memorial service of Mike Sharp on 11/18.

Adult Bible Study, Seasonally. Pastoral & Lay Leadership

Boy Scout Troop 52 Tuesday, 7:00 pm.

Brothers in Christ 1st & 3rd Saturday, 8:00 am, Parish House

Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Thursday, 7:30 pm, Sunday, 9:00 am

Church School Children's Choir – 1st Sunday and Seasonal: 10:15 am

Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Sunday, 11:30 am.

Youth Groups, Grades 6- 12 , Sunday, 1:00 pm

United Methodist Women , 2nd Monday of each month and Special Programs

Worship Service & Church School at 10:00 am Sunday - Nursery provided.

**The Staff of First United Methodist Church
Of Meriden Wishes You All a Very
Merry Christmas and a Happy 2017**

Ric Hanse, Pastor	Alden C. Barnes, Associate Pastor
Kate Eglee, Lay Leader	Dorothy Barnhart, Director of Music
Tom Martin, Organist	Holly Wishart, Music Coordinator
Jim Hazlett, Youth Advisor	Valerie Gwara, Director of Administration
Donovan McLeod, Grounds Custodian	

Kindly tear off and return to Church office. Thank you.

Please add/drop person below to mailing list

Would like offering envelopes

Would like to join Church

Changes in Address, phone, e-mail...

The person below is in the hospital

Please pray for:

NEWS FOR THE PARISH HERALD, COMMENTS, INFORMATION.

Signed.....

Mail should be sent to our 15 Pleasant St. Church office address. Please do not use the East Main Street address. Our E-Mail address is fumc@snet.net Phone: 203-235-9620

First United Methodist Church
15 Pleasant Street
Meriden, CT 06450-5702

