



STEEPLE NEWS

Centennial United Methodist Church at Ivy

January 2021



A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR DANI:

I don't know whether to put a question mark or an exclamation point at the end of this statement that I proclaim each January. This year, should I say:

"Happy New Year!" Let's hope it gets better than this past year!

Or:

"Happy New Year?" I'm afraid to say It can't get any worse!

In the last year, we've all experienced a tremendous amount of loss. We cancelled plans, stopped hugging, saw each other less, watched loved ones die, stayed home, worked longer and more challenging hours, received the dreaded news that we ourselves or someone we love received a positive test result of COVID-19, and more.

And as we begin to read the news headlines, proclaiming the light at the end of the tunnel is getting bigger and closer with the release of vaccines worldwide, I begin to wonder if we really do have a happy new year ahead of us. Maybe it's the pessimism I've befriended more this year than ever before, but I wonder how we will make this next year a better year.

With the first distribution of vaccines in the US, are we gearing up to return to our pre-pandemic "normal"? Or are we creating a new normal-- a new culture -- where more can thrive than simply survive?

We were already fairly distant before the pandemic. Maybe we would choose the TV or Facebook more often than attending a community gathering because it's easier and more comfortable. Or maybe we would choose to keep the same routine every week, rarely stepping out of our comfort zones to help a neighbor, send an uplifting card, call a friend, or volunteer.

But what if we make this new year happier by taking each other less for granted? Before the pandemic, I took relationships for granted. How often did I hesitate to visit with a stranger, spend time getting to know someone deeper, reach out to a grieving neighbor, volunteer to serve a meal, or call someone on the phone because I knew I would eventually get around to it?

As we begin this new year, it may be up to us to make it a happy new year (with an exclamation point)! And I am sure it is up to us to create a new "normal" rather than returning to a culture of individualism encouraging us to spend less time with others in order to focus more on our own success. In his description of early Christianity, N.T. Wright reminds readers how first and second century Christians cared for one another in pandemics. He writes, "much of what we take for granted in social attitudes now was Christian innovation." Taking care of the poor, creating new medicines, and sharing educational resources were not understood as society's job until Christians, who followed the most beloved servant of all, decided that relationship and basic care for one another was essential for one's mission and witness for Jesus Christ.

In this new and hopefully happier year, may we all choose each other more for the sake of Christ.

With blessings for the new year,
Pastor Dani



Our Live Nativity from December 5, 2020



Musicians at Centennial who recorded from a distance for Christmas worship & other videos



WHO Channel 13 News Reporter Calyn Thompson at Centennial UMC at Ivy capturing video and photos of the church for an interview that aired on December 18, 2020. You can view the interview by clicking the link below:

<https://who13.com/news/local-churches-preparing-for-christmas-services-during-pandemic/?fbclid=IwAR0XEVLymXEO33wgomBHigKxKT5raWMdf-VcjubzwN-eGXdhTlyUWx8235Q>



Our beautiful nativity scene set up and ready for Advent & Christmas 2020



A BIG THANK YOU!

Below is a note that we received from Altoona Elementary where we adopted our family from –

Winston Churchill said “We make a living by what you get, but we make a life by what we give.”

This could not be a more accurate statement for what you have done for the Altoona family this holiday season.

Your generosity and willingness to take your time and resources to help is overwhelming. The confidence that students will have as they return with new, warm clothes will help them beyond measure. Knowing their bellies are full from the generous food outreach and gift cards provided will make for a worry free break. But most of all, for our families to know that someone cares and is helping them, is the most magnificent part of the holiday magic that makes the Altoona Elementary Giving Tree possible!

Thank you is so small for all that you have been a part of doing but it is all I have to offer! Merry Christmas to you!

Thank you again for all you have done!



Have you watched & enjoyed our Youth & Children's Christmas Program:

“The Zoom Call That Changed Mary's Life”?

If not, you can watch it and sing-along here:

<https://youtu.be/MPCHZlqnB6o>

A Prayer for Putting on a Face Mask

Creator God, as I prepare to go into the world, help me to see the sacramental nature of wearing this cloth. Let it be a tangible and visible way of living love for my neighbors, as I love myself.

Christ Jesus, since my lips will be covered, uncover my heart, that people would see my smile in the crinkles around my eyes. Since my voice may be muffled, help me to speak clearly, not only with my words, but with my actions.

Holy Spirit, as the elastic touches my ears, remind me to listen carefully and caringly to all those I meet. May this simple piece of cloth be shield and banner, and may each breath that it holds, be filled with Your love. In Your name and in that love, I pray. Amen.

By Rev. Richard Bott, Moderator Presbyterian Church of Canada



A LITTLE FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

Take time to **THINK**...

It is the source of power.

Take time to **PLAY**...

It is the secret of perpetual youth.

Take time to **READ**...

It is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to **PRAY**...

It is the greatest power on earth.

Take time to **LOVE** and **BE LOVED**...

It is a God-given privilege.

Take time to **BE FRIENDLY**...

It is the road to happiness.

Take time to **LAUGH**...

It is the music of the soul.

Take time to **GIVE**...

It is too short a day to be selfish.

Take time to **WORK**...

It is the price of success.

Take time to **DO CHARITY**...

It is the key to heaven.

UMW:

Centennial United Methodist Women met Dec. 3 at 1:15 pm via ZOOM with six members participating.

Due to the pandemic, it was not possible to prepare and deliver our love boxes to our shut-ins this year. The group has been scheduled to serve the Caring Hands Simple Supper in April of 2021.

The group will continue to send monetary gifts to Bidwell Riverside Center, Hawthorn Hill and Shesler Hall.

It was voted to keep the present officers from January through June and elect new officers in the fall.

FOOD PANTRY:

For more information about the food pantry, go to caringhandsiowa.org. A few of the requests that they are currently in need of are cans of soup, peanut butter, and monetary donations.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Mitch Purcell Gary & Jennifer Fischer
3 Carol Briggs	4	5 Saundra Stuart Bryan Tingley	6 Ed & Nancy Myers	7 Jerry Peck	8 David Tomlin	9
10 Jan & Rex Adair	11	12 Nancy Myers	13 Jennifer & Tim Morgan	14	15	16 Linda & Terry Howard
17 Amos Purcell	18 Anna Behanish Lois Wignall	19 Pastor Gary Forster Jen Griffiths	20 Brent Scheel	21	22 Steve Shaver Jennifer Southcott	23 Kevin Day Darrell & Gail Long
24 Verna Bowie Neal Griffiths	25 Gabe Fetters	26	27 Terry Howard Isha Martin	28 Libby Hiatt David Johnston Jo Ordway	29 Abby Glann Kim Wilson	30 Karla Heaberlin
31 Cole Heitman Bob & Phyllis Kujac						



Monday, January 4th – Council on Ministries @ 7:00 pm
 Thursday, January 7th – UMW @ 1:00 pm

WoW (Virtual) – Every Wednesday during the month of January –
 from 6:30 – 7:30 pm

**FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
2020 ACTUAL GIVING VS 2020 BUDGET GOAL**

	REQUIRED	SUNDAYS	TITHES	OTHER INC	TOTAL	INCOME ONE YEAR AGO
JANUARY	\$12,477.50	4	\$11,640.11	\$450.00	\$12,090.11	\$ 7,058.33
FEBRUARY	\$12,477.50	4	\$11,750.17		\$11,750.17	\$12,370.73
MARCH	\$12,477.50	5	\$11,605.44	(8.58)	\$11,596.86	\$19,623.40
APRIL	\$12,477.50	4	\$ 7,401.17	(11.50)	\$ 7,389.67	\$12,891.06
MAY	\$12,477.50	5	\$30,172.17	(13.34)	\$30,158.83	\$11,292.53
JUNE	\$12,477.50	4	\$ 6,566.13	(9.68)	\$ 6,556.45	\$10,422.00
JULY	\$12,477.50	4	\$ 9,976.83	(11.60)	\$ 9,965.23	\$ 7,672.17
AUGUST	\$12,477.50	5	\$ 8,426.83	(8.07)	\$ 8,418.76	\$11,830.17
SEPTEMBER	\$12,477.50	4	\$ 8,666.83	(7.90)	\$ 8,658.93	\$13,625.92
OCTOBER	\$12,477.50	4	\$ 9,923.58	(5.72)	\$ 9,917.86	\$ 7,554.17
NOVEMBER	\$12,477.50	5	\$11,837.83	(9.22)	\$11,828.61	\$ 9,141.17
DECEMBER	\$12,477.50	4				\$13,052.34
2020 BUDGET	\$149,730.00		\$127,967.09	\$364.39	\$128,331.48	85.71%
	52 Sundays in 2020				Required:	91.67%

As of December 20, our congregation has donated \$3,895.00 for the Caring Hands Food Pantry since the beginning of 2020. On the 5th of May we received **\$20,232** from the Small Business Administration as part of the Covid-19 Stimulus Package. These funds were for the "Paycheck Protection Program" which helps us keep paying our Pastor, Organist, Custodian and Secretary. In order to meet our 2020 budget, we need to average about \$12,480 per month.

Effective December 11th, the Small Business Administration has forgiven the above loan we received on May 5th.

I have submitted my resignation as Financial Secretary effective when my replacement has taken over the duties or no later than December 31, 2021. After nearly 40 years, I feel these duties should be passed to another.

Gaylen Heaberlin, Financial Secretary



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Financial Secretary (Estimates of Giving): Gaylen Heaberlin 515-967-2016