

# The Missive December 2017

## First Presbyterian Church

8047 Church Street  
Richland, MI 49083  
269~629~4944  
269~629~4945 fax  
fpcrich@firstpresrichland.org  
www.fpcrich.com

Rev. Dr. Mark W. Jennings  
revmarkj@tds.net  
269~731~2519 home

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### “Symbols”

*Advent and Christmas are a big time for symbols. They are all around us, especially at church. You just need to walk into the sanctuary and you are surrounded by symbols. As soon as you come in you see the Christmas tree standing by the organ and wreaths decorating the windows. Evergreens have been used for thousands of years by Christians and pagans alike. Some cultures used the boughs as a decoration of the winter solstice, reminding them that spring was on its way. Christians use evergreens as a sign of eternal life. Candles are put in our windows as a symbol of Christ as the light of the world. The tree itself is covered with Christmons, which is a combination of the words “Christ” and “monogram,” because they are all symbols of what Jesus means to the world. If you look closely at them you will see different types of crosses, a cross sitting on an orb representing Christ as ruler of the world, interlocking circles representing the Trinity, fish that remind us that the early church used the Greek word for fish, “ichthus,” because the letters are the first letter of Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior. There are Christmas symbols all around us.*

*But we also use symbols all year round. The most obvious one is the cross which reminds us of Christ's death on our behalf. But we use an empty cross symbolizing the resurrection of Jesus. We also will use the different colors of the church seasons on our pulpit and lectern, Purple, White, Green, and Red. Purple represents royalty and repentance and preparation, so we use it for Advent and Lent, the seasons right before Christmas and Easter. White is the color of holiness and so we use it for the seasons of Christmas and Easter. Green is the color of*

*the earth and growth and so we use it for Ordinary Time. And red represents the Holy Spirit and fire and so we use it on the Day of Pentecost.*

*You might notice that usually when I lead worship or when Murray assists me, we wear a black robe called a “Geneva gown.” This is an academic gown, not one of ordination, symbolizing that we have completed a Master of Divinity degree. I will wear a stole that matches the color of the season that is a sign of my ordination as a minister of Word and Sacrament. The stole comes from a symbol of an animal yoke, showing that the minister has been “yoked to Christ.”*

*On the table on the chancel you will see the letters “IHS,” which several people have asked about. The common interpretation of this symbol is that it is the three capital letters in Greek, Iota, Eta, and Sigma, which are the first three letters of Jesus' name. The early church often had to use symbols and code because until the fourth century it was often dangerous to be identified as Christian.*

*These symbols are all around us, especially this time of year. The purpose of all these symbols is to point us to something else, to point us to a truth about God or to point us to Christ himself. I hope you have a blessed Advent and Christmas, and as you see these symbols you might think about the truth behind them.*

*Grace and Peace,*

*Mark*



# December Volunteer Assignments

	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Coffee</u>	<u>Nursery Help</u>	<u>Teachers</u>
3	Langshaw	Langshaw Zick Youse	Zick Bryant	Slezak	Pageant Rehearsal
10	Lebiecki	Lebiecki Vantine Wieber	Williams Wieber	Stafford	<u>Pageant</u> 
17		Wittwer Wright	Webb Wittwer	Lovequist	<u>Party</u> 
a.m. 24	Beaver	S&H Gobble Stafford	Slezak Tower	Alspach	
p.m. 24	 Wright	 Stafford Coverly			
31	Trautman	Young K Urban 1 VOLUNTEER	Young Urban	Smith	

## Serving Communion

*Please remember that only ordained elders and deacons should serve communion.*

### December 3

Brent Slezak  
Sheryl Slezak  
Jean Stafford  
Tom Stegink  
Christie Sutherland  
Steve Sutherland  
Bob Tower  
Terry Vantine  
Tunis Willemstyn

### January 7

Jilisa Williams  
Mike Wright  
Nancy Wright  
Brian Young  
Teresa Young  
Phyllis Youse  
Marsha Zick  
Marilyn Alman  
Andy Alspach

### February 4

Sandy Barts  
Heidi Bryant  
Ed Calkins  
Sandy Carahaly  
Laura Carisalez  
Mary Lou Cazars  
Judy Croasdale  
Dave Deater  
Shannan Deater

*We rely on many members and friends to help Sundays run smoothly and be a good worship experience for those attending our church. **If for some reason you are not able to help on the day originally selected, please find a replacement or someone to trade with, and let the church office know.** The yearly list of volunteers can be found at [www.fpcrich.com](http://www.fpcrich.com), under "Living the Faith", then "volunteer schedule". **Or call Julie for a list of names. Thank you!***

# December



# 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
<b>3</b> 8:30 Chancel Choir 9:45 Worship - Communion 11:00 Youth Pageant Rehearsal 5:00 Youth Group Party at Kz 1st	<b>4</b> 9:00 Care Team 10:30 Office Staff 7:00 Boy Scouts	<b>5</b> 10:00 Connected Threads 6:00 Girl Scouts	<b>6</b> 1:00 PW Meeting 4:30 Girl Scouts 7:00 Cub Leaders	<b>7</b> 9:00 Bible Study 5:30 Wassailing	<b>8</b> 6:00 Cub Scout Lock-in	<b>9</b> 9:00-10:30 Christmas Pageant Rehearsal
<b>10</b> 9:45 Worship - 2 cents-a-meal <i>Christmas Pageant</i>	<b>11</b> 10:30 Office Staff 7:00 Boy Scouts	<b>12</b> 10:00 Connected Threads 6:00 Girl Scouts	<b>13</b> 1:00 Book Club at Kay Polzin's 4:30 Girl Scouts 6:00 Session	<b>14</b> 9:00 Bible Study 11:30 Older Lunch Bunch at Middle Sch 6:00 Deacon's 7:00 Cub Pack Mtg.	<b>15</b> 6:00 <i>Christmas Party</i> 	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 8:30 Chancel Choir 9:45 Worship 11:00 Sunday School Party 3:00 4-H Cookie Exchange in GPR	<b>18</b> 9:00 Care Team 10:30 Office Staff 7:00 Boy Scouts	<b>19</b> 10:00 Connected Threads 6:00 Girl Scouts	<b>20</b> 4:30 Girl Scouts Party 7:00 Boy Scout Leaders	<b>21</b> 9:00 Bible Study	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 8:30 Chancel Choir 9:45 Worship 7:00 Christmas Eve Service 11:00 Late Christmas Eve Service	<b>25</b> 	<b>26</b> 10:00 Connected Threads	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 9:45 Worship  Please be careful tonight!						



# Presbyterian Women

PW meets the first Wednesday of each month.

Our next meeting is December 6th at 1:00.

EVERY WOMAN is welcome!



## WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

The book club will meet at Kay Polzin's home, 1400 N. Drake Rd, #201, Kalamazoo (Friendship Village).

December 13th is the date, 1:00 is the time.

The book of discussion is "We'll Always Have Paris" by Jennifer Coburn.

These great gals always encourage and welcome newcomers!



## OLDER BUNCH FOR LUNCH

On December 14th, at 11:30, the Gull Lake Middle School will host Older Bunch for Lunch. Please call the school office, 548-3600, by December 8th to reserve your spot! The band will provide music and the choir will sing! There will also be valet parking, beginning at 11:00.

This is the Middle School's way of giving back a little something, for the many years of service our senior friends have given the school community!



As of this writing, we still have a few tags:

**SALVATION ARMY TREE** - By Julie's office. Take a tag, buy for the age given, return the gift (unwrapped). We all know what a terrific job SA does for our community! Please return your gifts asap!

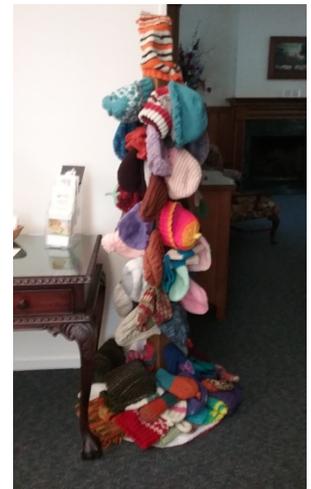
**GIVING WREATH** - In Gull Prairie Room. Take a tag, buy the gift listed, wrap it, attach the tag on the outside, return to the church. We've adopted a family from Family & Children Services again. Your gifts need to be returned by December 17th.

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## THE MITTEN TREE

Presbyterian Women would like to thank everyone who donated new or handmade goodies to our "Mitten Tree"! All the items will be taken to the Family and Children's Services, Ministry with Community, and the Gospel Mission. Several hats were also happily given to some adorable children who were our Food Pantry guests.

Thank you!



**PW PURPOSE:** Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible Study, to support the mission of the church worldwide, to work for justice and peace and to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's Kingdom.

## December 2017 Missionary Update

Dear Church Family,



Thon Jr. and his mother, my wife Mary, are doing well. I am planning to submit their applications to come here next year. I can't wait for my family to move to America some day soon.

I hope you all had a nice Thanksgiving holiday with your families. I spent my Thanksgiving with my cousin at his house in Grand Rapids. My cousin knows how to cook turkey and he cooked Thanksgiving food for us. Time is going fast and it is hard for me to believe it is almost 2018. As you all know, this is going to be my first winter in five years and I am not ready for it. I am hoping for less snow this year. It has been getting cold for the last few weeks and I am glad there is no snow in November this year.

I have a new job at Perrigo and I officially ended my employment with Walmart on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017. I issued a notification three weeks ahead of my departure and the management acknowledged my notice. It was not easy for Walmart management team to let me go but they understood that the opportunities at Perrigo are much better than Walmart. On my side, it was really hard to leave Walmart, especially the management team and my associates, but I have to move on. I attended Perrigo New Hire Orientation on November 20<sup>th</sup>. I will be training on first shift for the next 8 weeks. I commute from Grand Rapids to Allegan from Monday to Friday and this is consuming a lot of gas but I have no choice in the meantime. Hopefully my car will take me through this winter. I put 4 new tires on my car this week to help me in the winter. The heater core was damaged and I replaced it with a new one and the new core is working well.

My cousin and I have been approved for a 2 bedrooms apartment for 999.99 per month for 13 months. We will be moving in on December 29<sup>th</sup> after we pay the first month's rent and security deposit. Everything is included in the rent except electricity and cable. We are going to divide the rent, electricity and cable between the two of us and each of us will pay at least \$600 plus food. We were looking for an apartment below \$900 but the ones we found were not good. The price for apartments has gone up recently in Michigan. The place we are moving to is smoke-free and has two bathrooms. It is also close to M6 freeway where I will merge to US 131 to Kalamazoo and it will take me 35 minutes to my workplace. My roommate and I are willing to buy the furniture from any church member who has them for sale. Some of you have donated cooking utensils and I thank all of you for your assistance. In the next few weeks we will need help with dining and living room furniture. I don't have a bed and mattress and I would like to know if anyone has them and would like to make a deal. I am looking forward for my new apartment. I am tired of sleeping on the floor and I can't wait to be in my own room where I can relax after work.

Thank you for all you have been doing for my family and me. We are making big changes in our lives. I am glad to be back in Michigan and starting a new job but not to be separated from Mary and Thon, Jr.

I wish you good luck as you are preparing yourself for Christmas.

Blessings,  
Deng Alier

# *Youth Group*

2017-2018

## **THANK YOU!**

**A huge thank you to all who contributed items for the  
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance  
Gifts from the Heart Kits!**

**Our combined Youth Group collected and assembled:  
9 Clean-Up Kits  
46 Hygiene Kits  
38 School Kits**

## **WOW!**



**Kits will be distributed to places where disasters have occurred,  
people are on the move & where basic resources have grown scarce.**

# ***THE MEMBERSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE INVITES YOU TO.....***



....WASSAILING !!!



Join us for fellowship and a delicious warm cup of our world famous (at least in Richland) wassail! We'll also have donut holes from Sweetwater's! December 7th is the kick-off to the holiday season. We're pretty much set for helpers, but if you want to be part of it, please join us. We can always use folks in the kitchen for clean-up.



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## **Church Christmas Party!**

The Membership and Fellowship Committee cordially invites all families (yes, children of all ages are very welcome) to join in our annual Church Christmas Party, to be held at the church on Friday,

December 15th at 6:00.

This year we will enjoy fellowship, food, fun, and games!

We ask for appetizers and desserts to be shared.

Drinks will be supplied.

A sign-up sheet will be in the Gull Prairie Room.

This evening will be good, old-time, family fun, with parlor games and prizes!

**Get signed up SOON!!!**

# 2018 Greeter

# Usher

# Coffee

Jan	7 14 21 28	Inman Gobble P Foster Wieber	Inman, Godfrey, Greve C/P/Z/E Gobble M&D Fisher, Foster Young, Deater	Fiordalis, Lebiecki A&R Gross, Leiter Juodawlakis, Williams Helmick, Jones
Feb	4 11 18 25	J Fisher Scouts Alexander Webb	3 Carahaly's, Youse Scouts Alexander, Wittwer Bryant, Field, Carisalez	Coverly, Beaver Hoekstra, Wright Knibloe, Osborne Mack, Rothenberg
Mar	4 11 18 25	S Gobble Helmick Vantine Stopher	S&H Gobble, J&G Gibson G Gross, Helmick, Petersen Zick, Lovequist Jones, 2 Beavers	Monk, Odell Romyak, Schaadt Greve, Smith C&P Gobble, G Spengler
Apr	1 8 15 22 29	Willemstyn Clawson Belz Cramer	Fiordalis, Langshaw VanDyke, Juodawlakis, Slezak Kendall, Lebiecki, Leiter Monk, D Saddler, Simon` Osborne, Remley, Sizer, StvHart	Stafford, Wieber D&M Fisher, Inman Deater, Tower Davis, Mason Barts, Croasdale
May	8 13 20 27	Odell Wittwer Hodgson Field	Coverly, Odell, Mack Rothenberg, Schaadt G&M Lindenberg, Stafford 3 Carahaly's, Field	Alexander, Bryant Carisalez, Meitz Foster, Sutherland Lovequist, Vantine
June	3 10 17 24	Wright Young Martin Thorne	Brundage, Barton, Irely Dishon, Langshaw Alman, Hutchinson, Hart Calkins, Yoder, Kubiak	Petersen, Webb Zick, Simon Hills, Lynch Luscombe, Ruser
July	1 8 15 22 29	Hart Spengler Hills Hutchinson Vantine	Hart, Sutherland Spengler, Mason, Remley M Hills, Luscombe, Steele Hutchinson, Lynch, Stafford Ruser, Ryan, D Saddler	Hutchinson, Kubiak, Yoder Lynch, Sizer, Urban Thorne, Kendall Alman, Calkins Lebiecki, Rothenberg
Aug	5 12 19 26	Webb Osborne Martin Steele	Kubiak, Yoder, Schaadt Osborne, Thorne, Slezak Lovequist, Petersen Langshaw, Luscombe, Stegink	Hart, Youse Leiter, M&G Lindenberg A&R Gross, Hutchinson S&H Gobble, Ruser
Sep	2 9 16 23 30	Willemstyn Stopher Tower Wieber Cramer	Alexander, Wright Barts, Coverly Tower, 3 Carahaly's Inman, Croasdale, Davis Deater, Fiordalis	Brundage, Barton, Beaver Dishon, Godfrey Hoekstra, Mack Irey, Knibloe Monk, Simon

**continued...**

Remember to keep this list of names throughout the year so that **if you are not able to fulfill your assigned responsibility, you can call someone from the list to trade with, and then just let Julie know.** Thanks!  
**ALSO, THIS LIST WILL BE POSTED ON THE WEBSITE ~ [www.fperich.com](http://www.fperich.com)**  
 and on the bulletin board above the water fountains.



# Greeter

# Usher

# Coffee

Oct	7	J Fisher	M&D Fisher, G&J Gibson	Romyak, Saddler
	14	Clawson	Foster, Young	Sizer, Stafford
	21	Hodgson	C&P Gobble, Williams	Slezak, G Spengler
	28	Mason	Mason, Helmick, Odell, Juodawlakis	Petersen, Wieber
Nov	4	Field	Field, Brundage, Barton, Godfrey	Osborne, Schaadt
	11	Lindenberg	G&M Lindenberg, Dishon	Gauthier, Urban
	18	G Gross	G Gross, 3 Beavers	Fiordalis, Vantine
	25	Irey	Irey, A&R Gross	Carisalez, Inman
Dec	2	Jones	Jones, Kendall	Wittwer, Croasdale
	9	Stopher	Alman, Lebiecki, Langshaw	Barts, Webb
	16	Leiter	Leiter, Mack, Monk	Coverly, Tower
	23	Remley	S&H Gobble, Remley, D Saddler	Davis, Willemstyn
	30	Romyak	Romyak, Rothenberg, Simon	Deater, Greve
	24	<b>VOLUNTEERS</b>	<b>VOLUNTEERS</b>	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

**Please note that most of you are down three or four times.**

Look over the names carefully to find yours! Thank you so much.



**Remember to keep this list of names throughout the year so that if you are not able to fulfill your assigned responsibility, you can call someone from the list to trade with, and then just let Julie know. Thanks!**

**ALSO, THIS LIST WILL BE POSTED ON THE WEBSITE ~ [www.fperich.com](http://www.fperich.com) and on the bulletin board above the water fountains.**

# Christmas Joy Offering



At Christmas we celebrate the joy of belonging to Christ, of being part of the family of God. For decades Presbyterians have chosen Christmas as a time to affirm that indeed we care for one another as members of one family.

Every year at Christmas, Presbyterian churches receive the **Christmas Joy Offering**. Through this offering we share our joy with members of our extended church family.

About two-thirds of the **Joy Offering** goes to supplement the benefits of retired church workers, workers who have taken risks in the faith in the belief that God will provide for them as they give their lives to God's work. The **Joy Offering** helps a former missionary whose salary was too low to provide a sufficient pension. It helps the family of a pastor whose early death leaves them emotionally and financially drained. It is one way for us to reach out to members of our church family as God reaches out to us.

The other third of the **Joy Offering** supports seven racially ethnic colleges across the country. The **Christmas Joy Offering** helps schools to create a family environment that nurtures each student's gifts.

At Christmas we celebrate God's gift of Christ to us, his confirmation that he will indeed take care of us. In Christ we are one family. And, as in any family, we sometimes receive comfort and at other times have the opportunity to offer comfort to others.

This year, December 24th is the Sunday designated for the annual support of this most valuable program. Prayerfully consider your stewardship offerings and include the **Christmas Joy Offering** as a part of your contributions this year. An envelope is enclosed, and one will be provided on the 24th. Thank you!

*Thanks be to God for this indescribable gift!*

*2 Corinthians 9:15*

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## Congregational Care Coordinator

We are pleased to announce that Murray Cooper is now going to be the Congregational Care Coordinator at the church. It has always been our hope that our church is one where everyone feels cared about and is responsive to those in need. Murray is going to help us achieve that goal. Most of you know that Murray has completed his work at Western Theological Seminary and also has done Clinical Pastoral Education at Bronson Hospital. CPE is an intensive course that teaches a person about hospital calling, chaplaincy, and being with those in crisis. Murray will be volunteering, working closely with Mark, with our Pastoral Care Team, and with the Deacons, to make sure that our efforts to be a caring family of faith are always foremost in our goals. We want this to be a church in which we all care for each other. If you have ways that you want to suggest for us to do that, or if you know of a person who could use care from the church, Mark is always available, and Murray is always there to assist.

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## TO ALL COMMITTEE CHAIRPEOPLE

Just a friendly reminder that ANNUAL REPORTS are due in Julie's office by January 15.

Please call if you have any questions or need help! 629-4944



**2018 Stewardship**  
**First Presbyterian Church of Richland**  
For the Glory of God  
**Giving Period --- January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018**

I/we have reflected upon the Church's influence upon the community, the world and myself – and submit this pledge with faith and gratitude.

General Fund \_\_\_\_\_  
Building Fund \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total Pledge** \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional One-Time Gift (enclosed) \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional pledge of \_\_\_\_\_ for the designated purpose of \_\_\_\_\_

Please be sure to use your pledge envelopes to aid in the administrative task of tracking offerings. For 2019 envelopes, please circle if you would prefer 12 monthly offering envelopes or 52 weekly offering envelopes.

12 monthly envelopes

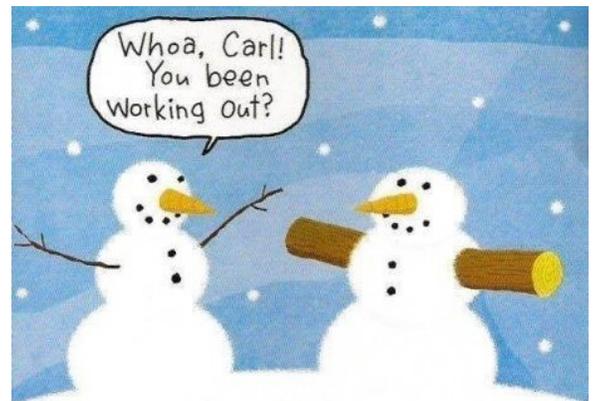
52 weekly offering envelopes

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, St, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please turn this card in as soon as possible**

2018 OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE IN THE GULL PRAIRIE ROOM. IF YOU CAN'T FIND YOURS, SIGN THE SHEET AND FIATH WILL GET YOU ONE! OR, IF YOU NEED YOUR OFFERING BOX MAILED TO YOU, PLEASE LET JULIE KNOW.

It's not too late to get in your 2017 per capita fee! \$26.75 per member!  
Thank you. This helps the church in a HUGE way.





# PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

**OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE**

## TO DONATE:

Call - 800-872-3283

Online - [pda.pcusa.org](http://pda.pcusa.org) Look for "Donate Now" at top  
Check - Presbyterian Church (USA)

PO Box 643700 Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

On memo line, designate where you want your donation to go.

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.  
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.  
The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Amen*



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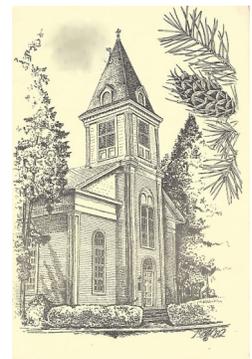
**FOOD  
PANTRY  
CORNER**



**FOOD PANTRY**  
**Giving Suggestions**  
**SUGAR, FLOUR,**  
**ANY CONDIMENT**

## *Carillon Hymns and Honoree's for December*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Selection</i>	<i>Honoree</i>
12/13	Jesus Loves Me	Zackery James Anderson
12/14	Amazing Grace	Olga E. Boyer
12/15	The Old Rugged Cross	Emma Hubbard
12/16	Joyful, Joyful	Ellie Lynch
12/29	Wedding March	John and Kay



# December Birthdays



1 Andrew Fiordalis  
1 Joseph Juodawlakis  
1 Jana Turpin  
2 Brian Schaadt  
2 Casey Sunden  
3 Brandon Delf  
3 Katie Venner  
4 George Lovequist  
4 Grant Slezak  
6 Georgie Lovequist  
7 Josh Weigel  
8 Kevin King  
8 Jean Kubiak  
8 Carson Miller  
9 Nancy Hess  
9 Matt Reinhardt  
9 Alanna Wyckoff  
10 Kendall Jennings  
10 Kathleen Rothenberg  
11 Gordon Mahieu  
11 Jane Morrow  
11 Lindsey Scribner  
11 Holly Scribner  
14 Mara Cazars  
14 Ron Martens  
14 Evan Odar  
14 David Snyder  
15 Sarah Myland  
15 Lars Ruser

16 Marty Rench  
16 Harry Stolt  
18 Jarred Barts  
18 Pam Moseley  
19 Nathan Brundage  
19 Hoyt Fonger  
20 Cathy Layson  
20 Michael Wright  
21 Ashleigh Webb  
22 Mike Juodawlakis  
22 Laura Monk  
22 Julie Pixley  
23 David MacQuarrie  
24 Jake Larson  
24 Jeni Steele  
25 Jan Petersen  
26 Jennifer Stupica  
27 Amy Juodawlakis  
29 Laurie Alexander  
29 Karen Urban  
29 Nancy Woods  
30 Ashlee Connell  
30 Maggie MacRitchie  
30 Chad Storer  
31 Eric Bryer  
31 Jan Fisher  
31 Kay Polzin  
31 Arlene Kuizema



# and Anniversaries



1 Ed and Marilyn Davis ~ 28 years  
6 Holly and Brian Scribner ~ 26  
12 Jim Collier and Stuart Verseman ~ 4  
16 Larry and Kay Irej ~ 50  
18 Lib and Jerry Wittwer ~ 52

21 Liz and Allen Matthews ~15  
27 Kay Gross and Gary Mittelbach ~ 42  
27 Julie and Matt Pausch ~ 31  
29 Chuck and Joyce Farho ~ 13

# Suppose There Were No Christmas?

Christmas comes around each year  
We've all come to expect it.  
If we could choose the year's best day,  
I'm sure we'd all elect it!

But I was wondering the other day  
Just how on earth it would be,  
If there were no Christmas anymore  
No Gifts—no Christmas tree.

There was a time like that you know,  
About two thousand years ago.

So let's pretend for a little while  
Let's imagine for just a minute—  
that we are living in a world  
That has no Christmas in it.

I think I know what you'd miss most  
If you're like most girls and boys—  
You'd miss the holiday from school—  
The presents and the toys.

There'd be no Christmas bells to ring,  
No Hark, the Herald Angels Sing!

But more—far more would disappear  
No colored lights—no holly  
No Christmas cards—no mistletoe,  
No Santa Clause so jolly.

No Merry Christmas! in the air  
No Rudolph's bright red nose  
No Bethlehem or 3 wise men  
Or the Star above that glows.

But we would miss much more I fear  
If there were no Christmas in our year.

For if there were no Bethlehem  
There'd be no Christmas story  
No journey and no crowded Inn  
Whose manager was sorry.

There'd be no stable and no straw  
No baby Jesus sleeping.  
No sheep out on the starlit hills  
Safe in their shepherds' keeping.

Just think of all that would be gone  
If Christmas had never come along!

And then I thought—I suppose we could—  
By thinking hard—invent one  
Bring back the gifts and send a card  
to everyone who sent one!

Make up a winter festival—  
Around another reason  
Hang up all kinds of other things,  
Make up a happy season!

Couldn't we be just as happy and gay?  
If Christmas were suddenly taken away!

And then I heard the sound of bells,  
And remembered the story that Christmas tells,  
And I knew that nothing could take its place  
Nothing could say to the whole human race—

“Behold I bring news—glad tidings of joy,  
A gift beyond price to each girl and each boy.  
The gift of God's Son—his peace and his love  
The gift of a Christmas that comes from above.”

And then in the quiet that filled the room  
I thought I heard a voice.  
'Twas the sound of a thousand Christmases  
Shouting rejoice and again rejoice!

Sing Hark, the Herald Angels Sing  
And shepherds all awake,  
The joy of Christmas is a thing  
That only God could make!

And I knew again that Christmas is true  
And that we could never invent it.  
For the only reason we have Christmas at all  
Is because God's love has sent it.

Philip J. Lyon  
First Presbyterian Church  
Richland, Michigan  
December 20, 1987



### Just Fun Stuff

Accept that some days you're the pigeon, and some days you're the statue.

Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.

Always read stuff that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.

Drive carefully. It's not only cars that can be recalled by their maker.

If you can't be kind, at least be vague.

To the world you may be one person, but to one person you may be the world.

If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.

If you think nobody cares if you're alive, try missing a couple of car payments.

It may be that your sole purpose in life is simply to be kind to others.

Never put both feet in your mouth at the same time, because then you don't have a leg to stand on.

### The 4 Stages of Life

1. You believe in Santa Claus.
2. You don't believe in Santa Claus.
3. You are Santa Claus.
4. You look like Santa Claus.

Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance.

The early worm gets eaten by the bird, so sleep late.

When everything's coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.

The second mouse gets the cheese.

Be nice to the nerds and geeks in high school -- you'll be working for them one day.

A happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.

## EMERGENCY NUMBERS

When in sorrow....

When you are lonely or fearful...

When you want to be fruitful...

When you want rest and peace...

When you have sinned...

When you have grown bitter and critical...

When you worry...

When you feel down and out...

When your prayers grow selfish...

When you are in danger...

When your faith needs stirring...

When God seems far away...

When others fail you...

When you leave home to labor or travel...

When you want assurance...

For Paul's secret of happiness...

For Paul's idea of Christianity...

When the world seems bigger than God...

call John 14

call Psalm 23

call John 15

call Matthew 11:25-30

call Psalm 51

call 1 Corinthians 13

call Matthew 6:19-34

call Romans 8:31-39

call Psalm 67

call Psalm 91

call Hebrews 11

call Psalm 139

call Psalm 27

call Psalm 121

call Romans 8:1-30

call Colossians 3:12-17

call 2 Corinthians 5:15-19

call Psalm 70

(From the Kalamazoo Deacon's Conference)

First Presbyterian Church  
8047 Church Street  
Richland, MI 49083

*ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED*

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