

**Christmas Eve Service (Sat., Dec. 24)**

**7p (music), 7:30p (service)**

**Christmas Day Service (Sun., Dec. 25)**

**Service begins at 10:30am**



## UCC MISSION GIVING

During the month of December, our church will be participating in the last 5 for 5 UCC Mission giving of the year – The Christmas Fund (formerly known as Veterans of the Cross). You have the opportunity to be a part of this ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through your participation in the annual Christmas Fund Offering. Your gift to the Christmas Fund will not only assist pastors, but also provide for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums and provide Emergency Grants to active and retired clergy and lay employees. This Christmas Season, send a Christmas card to your entire church family and donate the cost of what you would have spent on postage to the Christmas Fund Offering! Hang your holiday greeting card on the Christmas tree in the church lounge and place your donation in the envelope designated for the Christmas Fund. Let's see if we can't cover the tree with many cards! More from the Mission Board on page 8...



### Inside this Issue

<b>Moderator</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Elizabethans</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Feed My Sheep</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Mission Board</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Pastor</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Diaconate</b>	<b>14</b>

### Weekly Schedule:

#### SUNDAY

**9:15am Church School**

**10:30am Worship Service**

**11:30am Coffee Hour**

#### Wednesday

**12:00N Bible Study**

#### Thursday

**8:00PM AA & Al-Anon**

The winds of winter solstice  
 Blow brisk about our ears  
 And bring with them the mem'ries  
 Of happy childhood years.  
 They long awaited Christmas morn,-  
 What joy, what jubilation!

And yet, what was the real gift,  
 The reason for this love?  
 'Twas the Word made flesh Incarnate,  
 As promised from above.  
 This wondrous Child of prophecy  
 Was given to mankind  
 To mark the Path of mercy  
 For all of us to find.

His simple message: love and peace,  
 It seems has been distorted.  
 Blatant custom without surcease  
 True meaning all but thwarted.  
 Tinsel, lights and presents, -  
 With parties to excess,  
 Have blocked our vision of the Word  
 And caused us much distress.

The priceless Gift's full worth, my friends,  
 Can still be realized  
 By turning from commercial ends  
 Whose hollow worth disguised  
 The love of God expressed to man,  
 And each for one another.  
 Embrace your family while you can, -  
 And all mankind as brother



## MOMENT WITH THE MODERATOR

Don't you just love babies? I love everything there is about babies; their smiles, their smell even their crying because, of course, I can give them back. In case you can't tell I'm in that Grandma wannabe mode, much to my children's chagrin.

Maybe that's why Christmas is my favorite holiday. It is, or should be, completely surrounding a baby.

Can't you just imagine how Mary must have felt? So proud of her new born son, such a precious first child. And there she was in a stable of all places, surrounded by strangers and their sheep. Of course, she must have known, like we all do, that this child was special but King of Kings, Lord of Lords? What kind of faith did Mary have to believe in the Angels and know that this precious Babe would save us all?

And to think our lives are what they are all because one Mom loved her son enough to turn him over to God.



I wish you all the most blessed Christmas  
( and kiss a baby for me).

*Leslie Geletzke*

## THE MEANING OF "ADVENT"

The word **Advent** means "coming" or "arrival." The focus of the entire season is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ in his First Advent, and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his Second Advent. Thus, Advent is far more than simply marking a 2,000 year old event in history. It is celebrating a truth about God, the revelation of God in Christ whereby all of creation might be reconciled to God. That is a process in which we now participate, and the consummation of which we anticipate...

In this double focus on past and future, Advent also symbolizes the spiritual journey of individuals and a congregation, as they affirm that Christ has come, that He is present in the world today, and that He will come again in power. That acknowledgment provides a basis for Kingdom ethics, for holy living arising from a profound sense that we live "between the times" and are called to be faithful stewards of what is entrusted to us as God's people. So, as the church celebrates God's inbreaking into history in the Incarnation, and anticipates a future consummation to that history for which "all creation is groaning awaiting its redemption," it also confesses its own responsibility as a people commissioned to "love the Lord your God with all your heart" and to "love your neighbor as yourself."



[www.crivoice.org/cyadvent.html](http://www.crivoice.org/cyadvent.html)

# ELIZABETHANS



The meeting of November 7th began with our hostesses Jackie Shaw and Carol Faylor serving delicious apple cake and all the usual trimmings. Following this, Jackie then did Devotions reading a funny article "Looking Good" about panty hose from the book "God Uses Cracked Pots" by Patsy Clairmont. The prayer she chose was adapted from one in the booklet "A Prayer for Every Need" by Norman Vincent Peale.

A thank you card from Betty and Dick Bellair was relayed to Cindy and Cliff Trudeau for their caring arrangement and serving of the funeral luncheon for Rosemary Lytle.

Bonny Beebe gave the Treasury report next. Our total balance is \$461.11. The breakdown is \$188.29 in the General Fund and \$272.82 in the Penny Fund. There may have to be some adjustments or additions made to our treasury if we want to continue our usual giving at holiday time.

Jim Armstrong discovered a coffeepot in a cupboard with Elizabethan's name on it. He consulted Ruby Usher regarding future use and she told him that the church can use it.

Ruby's husband Rex, at this writing, is still in ICU at Toledo Hospital. Please keep them and their family in your prayers.

Our next meeting is December 5th. Everyone will bring a snack to share. Ruby will donate Christmas cards to send to our church shut-ins which we will sign at the December meeting. We have lost contact with Doris Jourdain and ask if anyone knows her current address to please let Ruby know.

*The Elizabethans will not meet in January or February as these are "bad weather months." We will meet again on March 5th, 2012.*

# Feed My Sheep Prepares for the Holiday Season



As we move into the holiday season Feed My Sheep continues to serve the community thanks to your generosity! In October 122 scrumptious full turkey meals were served. Our clients are arriving earlier than ever for a welcoming meal and the distribution of the take away bags, bread and pastries and baby items.

November's chili dinner meal preparation is underway for the 29<sup>th</sup> and we look forward to the December 27<sup>th</sup> meal of ham, au gratin potatoes, corn, bread and butter, peaches and assorted desserts. **Servers and volunteers are always needed** - stop on down from 5-7 pm to help out or let us know if you are available to make a delivery to one of our home-bound members! Food donations should be left at the church by Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup>!

You can be a part of this program by –

Volunteering—to help....

- set up for the dinner
- cook the food
- serve during dinner
- clean up
- deliver a meal to a church member's home

Donating—

- food and supplies
- cash to purchase perishables



we need donations of....

- boxes of Au gratin potatoes
- pre-sweetened drink mix
- Cash for the purchase of hams



## Merry Christmas to Ewe!

Sign-up sheets are available in Paterson Hall if you are interested in volunteering or donating, or you may call Tina Mockbee 419 276 0637 or Lori Winne 734 848 4120 for more information.



The “take away bag” focus for December is laundry products – bags will include.....

- 1 laundry detergent**  
– any kind/size
- 1 box of dryer sheets**

Please consider leaving a pre-made bag or items for a bag on the table in Paterson Hall.



The Little Lamb table – where families can receive baby essentials for their “Little Lamb” on a first-come first-served basis as supply allows is wiped out each and every month! Available are baby related products:

- Diapers  
( in various sizes)
- Wipes
- Baby shampoo
- Baby Lotion

# MISSION BOARD

(continued from front page)

## Mission 1 Final Count:



Over 11 days, the United Church of Christ had a goal to collect more than 1 MILLION ITEMS OF HEALTHY FOOD and other household items for local food banks and outreach services. The total count for the UCC Church was well over \$1 Million, and we contributed 681 items to that goal – great job!

## Volunteer Opportunity!

Saturday December 17<sup>th</sup>

We will be serving lunch at St. Paul’s downtown, Toledo. Our popular lunch of tacos and rice will be on the menu – with a holiday twist! We need volunteers to help prep all the food, along with those willing to serve the lunch. We will be meeting at 8am in the kitchen on Saturday the 17<sup>th</sup>. We realize this is a busy time for all, but please consider taking time out of your schedule to serve others and share Christ’s love with someone who may need it most at this time. If you are not able to help serve or prep the food, please talk to Ericka as to how you can help in other ways.



## The Giving Tree



We continue to collect Christmas gift items during the month of December to be given to area families through Mustard Seed. While gifts for children of any age are always welcome, there is usually a shortage of gifts for the teens (ages 13-18). This year, Mustard Seed has decided to give the teenagers stockings. Think stocking stuffers!

Gift ideas may include: lotions, hair accessories, nail polish, \$5 gift cards, card games, board games. Last day for donations will be December 18. Visit the Giving Tree table in Paterson Hall for more gift ideas.

## Feed Your Neighbor



Donations this month will focus on baking supplies: Flour, sugar, baking soda, icing, sprinkles, cake mix, etc. You may leave your donations in the food cart at the back of the sanctuary. These donations will be delivered weekly to Mustard Seed to help stock their shelves.

## Word from Our Pastor

“Jesus is the reason for the season.” This seasonal favorite is just one on a long list of Christian clichés. A cliché, by one definition, is “a trite or overused expression or idea.” For that reason, I’m not a very big fan of clichés—even Christian ones. And yet, I deeply believe that Jesus IS the reason for the season, and I yearn for people to encounter Jesus during the Christmas season (as during any season). I also lament how, for most of us, the holiday season is as much or more about shopping, snow, food, and even family than about God loving us so much that he came to be with us.

“Jesus is the reason for the season” is, for a Christian, a true and important statement. But as a cliché, I’m afraid that even if we post this phrase on bumper stickers and billboards, engrave it on ornaments and greetings cards, or tattoo it on our foreheads, the message isn’t really going to make it to people’s hearts. Saying “Merry Christmas” instead of “Happy Holidays” isn’t going to do it either. That’s the problem with clichés: they don’t have any power. They’re just catchy phrases and inside jokes. As such, clichés are the opposite of what Christmas is about.

“Jesus is the reason for the season” *because* God is not just a God of empty words, but a God whose love compelled him to forego comfort and ease and become a man, to be a part of a broken and often painful world, and to *show* people what God is all about rather than just *tell* them. Christmas is about God’s love lived out.

“Jesus is the reason for the season” is a truth that the Christmas message demands we live out, not just speak out. I confess that while I might say these words, my life during the Christmas season often says something else. I can get caught up in decorating, stressing out over gifts and the money (or lack thereof) to buy them, flying from one party to another, stuffing myself with food and cookies, and just wait-

ing for the Christmas season to be over so I can relax. At best (since I manage to make it to church), this kind of lifestyle communicates that Jesus is just one among many reasons for the season.

“Jesus is the reason for the season.” If you believe this to be true, then ask God to help you live it out this Christmas season. Make actively worshipping a priority. Open up the Scriptures and listen for God’s love. Cut back on obligatory present-buying and look for opportunities to be generous to those in need. Grab lunch with someone who has really been struggling and needs to feel the real presence of someone who cares for them. Learn for yourself and then teach your kids the Christian symbolism behind traditions like Christmas trees and gift-giving. As much as these are God’s love lived out types of things, they have the power to reach people’s hearts with the Christmas message in ways clichés cannot.

“Jesus is the reason for the season.” As you read through these pages, you’ll notice a number of ways we’re trying to live out this message as a Christian community. Make this season about encountering Jesus, Immanuel, and helping others to do the same.



You can find Pastor Jon’s blog at : [www.pointplaceucc.com/blog](http://www.pointplaceucc.com/blog)

Here are some of November’s highlights. Please take a moment to share your own thoughts either online or with Pastor Jon:

Nov. 11, *Getting Our Stories Straight* **“We can easily design our lives so that the journalists, newscasters, preachers, and friends we interact with are all telling us what we want to hear, reinforcing our beliefs, telling us the side of the story that will confirm our preconceived notions. The problem is this: rarely do stories have one side.”**

## Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, December 18, 7pm

For many of us, instead of “the most wonderful time of the year,” the holidays are merely the time of year with the longest nights and the most difficult memories. It can be even more difficult if we feel the pressure to be “merry” all the time.



In the midst of the darkness, we’re offering a “Blue Christmas” service. It is a quiet, meditative worship service that makes time for remembering, sharing our struggles with God, and searching for hope. If you have lost a loved one, have painful holiday memories, or are struggling to feel merry for any reason, consider joining us for this service. Or take this opportunity to invite and accompany someone you know who might need it.

## General Fund

2011	<i>OCTOBER</i>	Year-to-Date
Income	\$13,335.69	\$99,703.68
Expenses	\$ 9,194.82	\$111,520.50
Net	\$4,140.87	(\$11,816.82)

# PPUCC BULLETIN BOARD



Christmas is coming up sooner than we think. The Mustard Seed elves are already busy getting ready. We could use donations of gift tags and tape. Our wrapping day will be December 17th at 10am at the Riverpoint Methodist Church. Coffee and donuts will be available. Please bring your own scissors. There are families and or adults to be adopted if anyone would like to.

If you have any questions, please call us.

Have a blessed day.

Lori Jarrell



THANK YOU TO THE WAHL FAMILY FOR THE GENEROUS DONATION OF OFFICE SUPPLIES.



# COFFEE HOUR SERVERS NEEDED



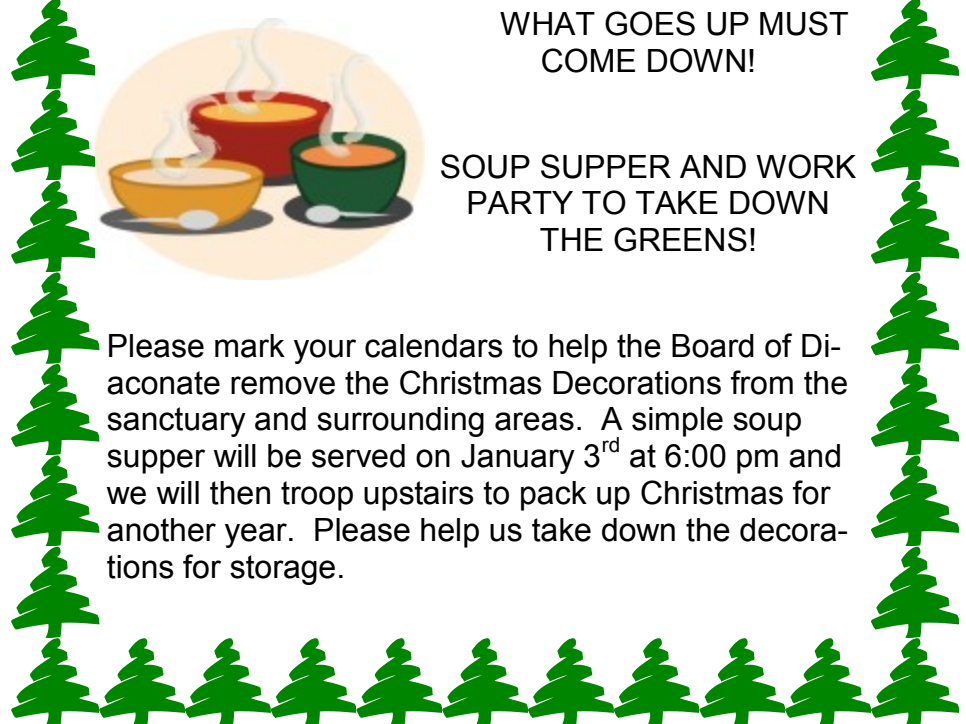
Open dates remain on the coffee hour schedule in Paterson Hall - please take a moment to sign up for a date to sponsor the coffee, tea and optional cookies/baked goods. Make it a family event or join with friends and sponsor together. Many hands make light the work – why not sign up for a date today and fill the calendar in Paterson Hall. Questions – see Tina Mockbee or call 419 276 0637.



WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN!



SOUP SUPPER AND WORK PARTY TO TAKE DOWN THE GREENS!



Please mark your calendars to help the Board of Diaconate remove the Christmas Decorations from the sanctuary and surrounding areas. A simple soup supper will be served on January 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 pm and we will then troop upstairs to pack up Christmas for another year. Please help us take down the decorations for storage.

ORDER FORM

Poinsettias may be purchased for \$8.00 to help decorate The Sanctuary during the advent/Christmas season. Funds received after 12 plants have been purchased will be donated to the PPUCC General Fund.

If you would like to take a plant home following Christmas Eve service please indicate below:

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES - I would like a plant to take home.**

Donation amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Plants purchased in Memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Plants purchased in Honor of:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Purchased by: \_\_\_\_\_

Address service requested

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*To care for one another  
as God cares for us.*