

The Sampler

Happy New Year!

January 2012

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Special Points:

New Year's Blessing

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May you have all your calendars changed to the year 2012 by now. But where did 2011 go?

Before bidding an official farewell to Christmas 2011, since Epiphany does not occur until Friday, January 6, I want to remind you of the significance of the words of a particular Christmas carol. While we don't sing it in church, the carol I want you to consider as Epiphany arrives is the Twelve Days of Christmas. These are the festive days beginning Christmas, December 25 through Twelfth Night is followed by the Feast of the Epiphany on 6 January. This carol was written as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden connotation known only to members of their church.

-The partridge in a pear tree was Jesus Christ.

-Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments.

-Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love.

-The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John.

-The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament.

-The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.

-Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit-- Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy.

-The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.

-Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit--Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control.

-The ten lords a-leaping were the ten commandments.

-The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.

-The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

Talk about words having meaning.

An additional reason, besides education, for sharing this dual meaning carol in the beginning of this year is to offer a concrete example about how important our words really are. We have felt how words can hurt or uplift, encourage or dishearten, strengthen or weaken.

During 2012, may all our words reflect the love of God given in his gift of Jesus Christ. Let Jesus be not just the reason for the season but the reason for our lives!

"Walk slowly through the year, for every day is holy." Lois Rock

Pastor Barb

Welcome Elder Beth Herriott who joins the Class of 2013 as the first person to serve two years instead of three. Please hold the Session in prayer as the new formation – eight instead of twelve, a new meeting day and time – becomes familiar rather than new.

Romney Presbyterian Church Celebrates the Birth of the Christ Child

At our church during December 2011, many meetings and activities that go on through the year did not take place. That includes the later than usual newsletter. However, what did happen was a month of joyous celebrations honoring the glorious birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

December 11, 2011 - Children's Christmas Program - **"MARY REMEMBERS"**

There is nothing that says **"Celebrating"** more than a happy, excited, eye twinkling child in a Christmas Program. Romney Presbyterian had many of those during the program. They were on stage singing songs and acting out the story of Jesus birth. All this while grandmother read and rocked in her rocker. (Katie Allen was completely convincing). The older youth directed music and did readings as the little ones sang and acted as characters in the stories. Britt and Bryson Dolly played a piano duet to add to the celebration. Church members, grandparents, parents, and friends enjoyed the entire program.

Following the Sunday School Program the youth choir sang during the Worship Service, under the direction of Sheri Coleman with Barbara Stein as pianist.

To cap this "Celebration packed" morning Scott Staley, and his mother Sue Staley, presented the **"HAPPY BIRTHDAY BABY JESUS CAKE"**. Mr. Staley explained the meaning of all the special designs of the cake. Everyone joined in singing **"Happy Birthday Baby Jesus"** and the day concluded with food and fellowship.

December 18, 2011 - **ADULT CHOIR CANTATA**

The celebration continued redundant as the Adult Choir presented the cantata, **"Follow the Star"**. Many thanks to readers: Chip Herriott and Sue Voit. Directors: Bonnie Long and Linda Shriver. Pianist: Nancy Allen. A special thanks to Tim Allen (home from college) who sang a solo part. He and Bailey Coleman boosted the choir for the season.

December 24, 2011 - **YOUTH CHRISTMAS EVE PROGRAM**

The Candlelight service led by the youth was very soul touching. Scriptures about the events surrounding the birth of the Christ Child were read, followed by readings from the possible perspectives of the people involved in these same events: Joseph, Mary, the Innkeeper, on the Kings, and a Shepherd. Christmas carols were included throughout. Bailey Coleman's solo, "Mary Did You Know" was so moving. The service concluded with the candle lighting while singing "Silent Night" and "Joy to the World". Cookies were served in the fellowship hall. Another awesome program. Thanks to youth director, David Allen, the readers, Tim, Jonathan and Katie Allen, Jonathan and Bailey Coleman, Trevor Shaffer, Evan Staley, Mercedes Arambulo, and assistance from Gayle Allen.

Throughout the season the Advent readings, music, and candle lighting were a part of every service.

MANY, MANY THANKS!

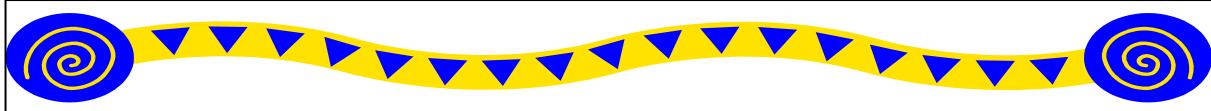
Thank you to everyone who helped with the 2011 Hampshire County Christmas Food Box Program. Without your help and financial support this activity would not be the successful program that it is. This year Claudia Nelson, the long-time caller of the recipients, passed away. A special thanks to Paula Cookman; who took up the challenge of calling, giving the program continuity. As we get older the program becomes harder and harder to do. If the Lord lays on your heart to take the reins of this activity, we will happily turn it over to you. We continue to be thankful for the opportunity to show God's love to all, as we wish you a peaceful and joyful New Year.

John & Maggie Mason

LOOKING AHEAD

The youth are planning a **LOCK-IN** at the school for the Deaf and Blind the weekend of January 14, 15 and 16th, exact night will be announced.

The youth **SUPER BOWL** food drive will go through January 15th till Souper Bowl Sunday, February 5, 2012.



The Faith Community Nurse Corner

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a great Christmas Season.

Since we are starting fresh with a new year, I wanted to let you know some of my plans for the coming year as your Faith Community Nurse.

Continue monthly topics. Each month I choose a topic and provide information for you. I post the information on the bulletin board in the back of the Fellowship Hall and in the vestibule. Often there are sheets with the information. Please feel free to take one of the information sheets with you if it is something that interests you. They are there for you. If there is something you would like to know more about, just let me know.

Continue blood pressure checks. Each month during the coffee hour, I will be set up in the Mary Belle Foote room to do blood pressure checks. I can also answer questions for you at that time on medications or other health questions/concerns you may have. If I am unable to present on a Coffee Hour Sunday, I will try to find someone else to do the blood pressure checks in my absence.

Send cards. My goal is to send cards to the members of our congregation. I love card, so I have cards for every imaginable occasion even some for no special occasion at all.

Have a page on the church website. On this page I would like to put the information on the monthly topic, upcoming health related events in our area and to just let people know that I am here and available should they have a question or concern I may be able to help with.

Have a speaker at one or two of the Fellowship Dinners. Informational or educational or just for a fun time, let me know if there is someone or something that interests you and I will see about getting that scheduled.

Have a Walk to Jerusalem or Walk to Bethlehem Event. Both are great ways to get everyone involved and moving.

My great dream for 2012 is to have a Health Fair for our congregation and hopefully the community as a whole. This is still in the "bud stage" of development but I will keep you updated as things progress.

God has given us a brand new year. Let's go out and do something great with it.

Beth

— Author unknown

A New Year's Blessing
May God make your year a happy one!
Not by shielding you from all sorrow and pain,
But by strengthening you to bear it as it comes;
Not by making your path easy,
But by making your sturdy to travel any path;
Not by taking hardships from you,
But by taking fear from your heart;
Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,
But by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows;
Not by making your life always pleasant,
But by showing you when people and their causes need you most,
and by making you anxious to be there to help.
God's love, peace, hope and joy to you for the year ahead.

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