

*So. Montrose Community Church
December, 2012 Newsletter*

Message From Our Pastor . .

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And every one went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David because he belonged to house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her first born, a son. She wrapped him cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

We know the story, but there are times when we need to refresh our minds. In these days, when life is lived at a fast pace and our days are spent clock-watching and schedule-keeping, seldom is life a quiet pond, still and patient. Many years we don't have time to think or ponder. May times we reserve Christmas Eve to slow our pace a bit in order to be receptive to this familiar story.

The Christmas story is one of God's love coming down to save, to restore, and to forgive. Maybe we feel as surprised as those shepherds who kept watch over their flock that first Christmas Eve. They weren't use to having angels pop in on them and they certainly had other things on their minds that night. The angel said to those preoccupied shepherds, "Do not be afraid." The angel came to announce good news. Down in Bethlehem, the

Savior was born, the One they had waited for for many generations. Jesus had arrived. God's salvation had come. The angel told the shepherds to leave their busyness and go visit the baby. These shepherds did not bring gifts, they didn't go home to change their clothes, they came as they were.

Every Christmas season we have the opportunity to let God come and minister to us, as we are. We come to worship during Advent and Christmas with our minds filled with other thoughts, preoccupied with schedules, not always thinking about "God things." And the angel comes to us and says, "Do not be afraid." Come to the manger with renewed hope this year. Know that in the midst of the busyness, God welcomes you and loves you.

It was God's grace that surrounded the world that first Christmas. Think for a moment about the kind of welcome the world gave to Christ. From the very beginning it seemed like the world just wasn't ready to welcome Jesus. Mary and Joseph were poor folks living in Nazareth. Nobody paid much attention to this couple. Nobody realized whose child she was carrying. If Caesar Augustus had not declared a census be taken of the entire Roman world, Mary would not have had to travel by donkey some 200 miles.

There was no hospitality to be found that first Christmas Eve until they came upon an inn keeper who was willing to offer them his stable. As Mary held the infant, Jesus, in her arms, maybe she wished she could have laid him in a better cradle. Maybe there was one yet unfinished back in Joseph's workshop. In the stable there was no place to lay the baby except in a manger--a feeding trough. In that manger, we behold the bread of life, who will take upon himself

the sins of the world. The King of Kings in a feeding trough! The redeemer of our souls in a stable. The shepherds came wondering and hoping, half believing and praying that this child would be the answer to their prayers.

Jesus comes to us once again this Christmas season. May we recognize anew the love of God being poured out for the salvation of the world. Each one of us whether we are rich or poor, are welcome to come into the presence of God this year and know Jesus' love and forgiveness.

Let us not miss the opportunity to visit the Christ Child in the midst of all that there is to do this Advent/Christmas. Come as you are and know that you are loved.

Have a blessed and joyous Christmas season.

Pastor Jane

A Christmas Prayer

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen!



Ten Commandments for the Christmas Season

written by Rev. Barry Minnick

1. Thou shalt remember to keep CHRIST first in all you do this Christmas season.
 2. Thou shalt pause in thy busy-ness to consider the magnitude of God's gift to all people
 3. Remember that Mary and Joseph found no room at the inn--thou shalt give Christ the chief room in your heart and life.
 4. Thou shalt participate regularly in services and the Christmas activities of the church and community
 5. Thou shalt be extra generous in thy gifts to missions and those in-need.
 6. Thou shalt take time to plan happiness for those outside thine own family circle and friends.
 7. Thou shalt enjoy, in unhurried calm, the music of Christmas, which exalts the Savior, Jesus Christ.
 8. Thou shalt give gifts of thyself, giving not for duty or to receive gifts in return, but for the simple joy of giving to others.
 9. Thou shalt remember all those who serve thee: the tired salesclerk, the post person, the delivery person and all who work hard during the holiday season.
 10. Thou shalt teach thy children the true meaning of Christmas, of the Prince of Peace, who came to give people a way to righteousness and eternal life!
-

Community Workers

The annual meeting of the community workers will be December 13th @ noon at our church. Everyone is invited.

We will have a light lunch of soup and sandwiches. Immediately following lunch, there will be a short meeting. Christmas boxes will be packed for our friends and shut-ins.

Christmas boxes will contain cookies, fresh fruit and many containers of goodies picked up by Bev Way. We welcome donations toward the cost of the fruit.

We thank each and every one of you for your continued support and wish you a happy, healthy holiday!

GiGi Salsman



Soup Night

Wow!! What a great way to start the week of Thanksgiving!! Prior to November's soup night, our record attendance was 111 people. This soup night we had 118 people!! I'm not sure of the number that came to hear Pastor Jane's casual worship service at 4pm, but that was the biggest group I'd seen so far. She was telling them jokes and riddles and the room was filled with the sound of laughter. From the kitchen, I could hear them all sing and pray and see nothing but smiles and heard the praise. . . what a wonderful feeling!!

The donations came to \$232.00; I saved \$150 for December's soup night and donated \$82.00 to the food bank. For the 1st time since soup night began, there was no leftover soup! We also had 4 pies, 3 pans of brownies, 1 cake, 1 tray of cupcakes, 4 plates of cookies, cake pops, Marsha's magic bars and M & M

brownies. We only had 6 brownies left. That was such a generous donation of desserts and they were obviously quite yummy!

I want to thank Janet Small, Mary Jane Long, Annette & Cassy Salsman, Paula Remington, Dylan Maxey, Ben and Mary Hinds for helping me serve, wash dishes & clean up the dining room afterwards. I need to give you guys some big praise. I worked in 2 different diners a total of 14 years. A busy day in the diner would be about 75-80 people served in an 7 hour shift. You all served 118 people in less than 2 hours!! You're the best!!!

Next month's soup night is December 17th. The soup choices will be BBQ bean stew and bacon cheddar. Our plan is to fill the whole town of South Montrose with the Christmas spirit that night. We will start off at 4pm with Pastor Jane leading us in a joyous casual worship. We will eat and fellowship with each other from 4:30 – 6:30. Immediately afterwards, we will be heading to Gracious Living and then to Shady Lane Trailer Park for Christmas caroling. Popcorn and candy canes will be passed out at both places. Sue Pratt has made beautiful labels to go on our popcorn too. We want as many as possible to join us. We can car pool or drive separately. Please bring a flashlight for walking through the trailer park.

I hope this becomes a tradition and that this is the 1st year of many!

Chris Smith

Finding Joy in Unexpected Places

written by the Gen Board of Discipleship, 2004

When Mary's baby was born

Calendars were renumbered
the heavens applauded

and a new star appeared in the sky.
The angels sang,
and shepherds came running into town.

Inquiring wise men brought gifts and
unwittingly
frightened King Herod when Mary's
baby was born.

When Mary's baby walked this earth
People came from miles around to sit at
his feet

And hear the wisdom that could only
come from God.

They brought the sick, the lame,
and those who were troubled
in their minds.

The winds and the seas had to obey him
Because he was Emmanuel, God with
us.

Formidable demons trembled
And ran away screaming
When Mary's baby walked upon this
earth.

When Mary's baby died,

Even the earth was grieved,
The sun hid its face and refused to shine,
and the ground staggered and lost its
footing

(Some called it an earthquake.)

Graves opened up and the saints walked
around

While Roman soldiers
Confessed that Mary's baby, Jesus, was
the Son of God.

But now,

Mary's baby lives again

And is seated in heaven.

Mary's baby lives again

And is praying for you.

Mary's baby lives again

And makes it possible for you to have
joy!

What You Can Give For Christmas

written by Rev. Barry Minnick

A listening ear to a friend who needs

someone to talk to.

A hearty "Thank You" to a tired sales
clerk who serves you.

A smile to someone who frowns or who
looks Christmas weary.

A kiss or hug to an elderly or
handicapped person.

Time to read to someone who is blind or
losing sight.

A warm handshake to a visitor at our
church.

An act of kindness to a homebound or
shut-in person

Spend some time with someone who is
ill.

Write a letter to a lonely person you
know.

Call your doctor and ask how she/he is
feeling.

Pick out and give a gift to a child who
you think Santa might "miss" this year.
Offer to pray or say "grace" at meal
times during advent and Christmas.
Sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus, and
give him a gift this year.

How simple our Christmas shopping
could be this year if we learn to give
from the heart.

Mark Your Calendars

12/2 @ 3pm First Sunday of Advent

Ecumenical Advent Worship at St.

Mark's in New Milford. All are
welcome

12/5: 4:30-6:30 pm Loaves and Fishes
Cafe at Montrose UMC. This free and
open to the public. The Northern Cluster
of Churches is sponsoring it this month.
Ham and Scalloped Potatoes is on the menu.

12/6: 6:30 pm Choir Practice

7:30 pm Saving Graces practice

12/9: Second Sunday of Advent

12/9 @ 4pm: Advent Concert by

Saving Graces. Soup supper
immediately following.

12/12 @ 10 am Advent Bible Study in Social Hall

12/13: 6:30 pm Choir Practice

7:30 pm Saving Graces

12/16: Third Sunday of Advent

9:15 am Sunday School Christmas Program

3 pm Christmas Cantata Presented at Gracious Living

12/17 @ 4 pm Casual Worship in the Social hall before Soup Night.

4:30 till 6:30 pm Soup Night.

Immediately following soup night, there'll be Christmas Caroling in the Trailer Court and Gracious Living,

12/18 @ 2 pm Bible Study at the Square led by Pastor Sara Kolenda ,

12/19 @ 10 am Advent Bible Study in our Social Hall,

12/20 @ 6:30 pm Choir Practice

7:30 pm Saving Graces

12/23: Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:15 am Christmas Cantata

presented to the Congregation.

12/24 @ 6:30 pm Christmas Eve

Candlelight and Communion at South Montrose

8 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion at New Milford

11 pm Christmas Eve Music and Candlelight

12/25: Merry Christmas to Everyone!

12/30: 1st Sunday after Christmas

1/1/13: Happy New Year to Everyone!

1/6: Epiphany. At 9:15 a.m. Worship and Communion. Charge Conference following worship in our social hall.

United Fire Company Dinner

There will be a fundraising dinner held at the United Fire Hall in Montrose on December 15th, from 5 until 7. The menu will be ham, scalloped potatoes, vegetable, roll and dessert. Price is \$8.00 for 13 and up, \$4.00 for 6-12, and

5 and under eat free. Take out is available. Come support our local firemen. You never know how valuable they are until you need them!!



Saving Graces Concert

Our own Saving Graces will be having hosting an Advent Concert on December 9th. The music will start at 4:00 and a light soup supper will follow downstairs. We are asking members of the congregation to help us out with some Christmas cookies if you have some extra. Food bank items will be accepted at the door, and as always, it is a FREE concert! We have been working on some new songs, and one is really fun. You will be glad you came!!

SMCC Choir

Will be presenting their Christmas Cantata on December 23rd during the morning worship service. Charmarie and the choir have been working on it for weeks and hope to see you at the service. They'll also be singing it at Gracious Living on December 16th @ 3pm at Gracious Living. It's another beautiful version of the Christmas story. welcome to both. We hope to see you there!

Christmas Children's Service

The children have been practicing for their program which will be presented during worship on December 16th. The teachers are so proud of Cassy Salsman, Tanner Frystak, Korena Kraynak, Kayleen Kraynak, Clay Frystak, Elizabeth Stone, Matthew Hinds, Kohen Kraynak, Cole Frystak, Levi Smith and Chloe Smith!! Come support our

children in their faith journey! All children are reminded that they need to be at practices during Sunday School time on December 2nd and 9th, and be at the church ready to go at 8:45 on Sunday December 16th!! We will have a Christmas party following the church service that day.



Birthdays

Dec. 6th: Charmarie and Tommy Bisel

Dec. 9th: Barb Moriarity

December 25th – **Jesus**

Happenings at Montrose Bible Conference....

Ladies Christmas Tea

Tuesday, Dec. 4th from 11 am till 1 p.m.

Speaker: Kate Ring: A Missionary with
Wycliffe Bible Translators

Includes a light lunch with seasonal goodies

Cost: \$12 per person

Held in Dreyer Lodge

For Reservations: Call 570-278-1001

email: mbc@MontroseBible.org

Christmas Dinner Concert

December 7th at 6:30 p.m.

Featuring: Damaris Carbaugh

Lake Ave. Dining Room

Cost: \$21 per adult, \$5 per child 12 & under

Reservations Required: 800-598-5030

email: mbc@MontroseBible.org

Add on Bed and Breakfast for \$50 per adult

A Quiet Christmas

Saturday, December 8th

11 a.m. till 3 p.m.

Dreyer Lodge (218 Locust St.)

The Quiet Corner: Indoor, live nativity with soft music

The Family Room: Enjoy cookies and hot chocolate, make a Christmas card and listen or sing carols.

Free Event: Come and go as you wish. Take time to rest and ponder the true meaning of Christmas.

Our Prayers

In the church: Ben Owen, Mandi, Harriet Snell, Theresa Owen, Sue VanDermark, June Allen, Craig Estelle, Merle Tyler, June Bishop, Marion Nye, Alice Porter, Belma Herrala, Doris Sebring, Doris Larnerd, Bob Dalrymple, Gladys Barber, Peggy Wood.

In our community: Anna Moomey & her family, Julie Fair, Noah & Naomi, Liz Oliver, Reva Cline, Michelle, Randy Ward, Mary Helen Booth, Janice, Tom & Carolyn Reese, Gerald Colver, Dewey Hunsinger, Keith Pratt, John Paul Jones, Patty Lasher, Helen Crotta, Charlotte Maxey Ellis, Raymond, Lisa Steele, Connie Williams, Aaron Olah, Brooke Arnold, Dee Pierson, Dick Millard, Stephanie, Duane Snell, Helen Petersen, Debbie Brewer, Sharon Rosenkrans, Terry Franks, Butch Rosenkrans, Jonathan & Daniel Snell, Katherine, David & Mary Ann Pierce, Sarah Manzer, Sterling Barefoot, Les Hawley, Josh Capwell, teachers & students, those in the military, the unemployed, flood victims and flood relief workers, those in nursing homes, people in prison, our country, our world, our church and each other.



Rev. Jane M. Pykus, Pastor

P O Box 577

New Milford PA 18834

(570)465-2318

Email: jpykus65@gmail.com

Church's website:

<http://www.gb-gm-umc.org/southmontrose/>

Poinsettias will be available for church service on 12/16/12. Cost is \$9.00. Please let Paula know color you'd like.