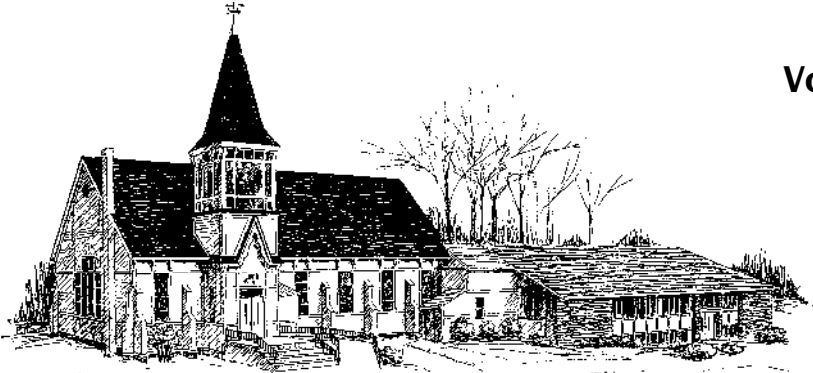


Good News

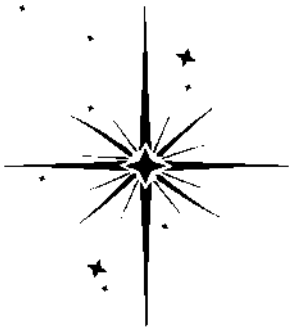
**The Monthly Newsletter of the People of
HAMILTON UNION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GUILDERLAND, NEW YORK**

Volume 31 No 12



December 2021

Sunday Worship Services are held at 10:00 a.m.



From "The Stable of Bethlehem"

'Twas not a palace proud and fair
he chose for his first home;
No dazzling pile of grandeur rare,
with pillar'd hall and dome;
Oh no! a stable, rude and poor,
received him at his birth;
And thus was born, unknown, obscure,
the Lord of heaven and earth.

Come to your Savior's lowly bed,
ye vain and proud of heart!
And learn with bowed and humbled head
the lesson 'twill impart;
'Twill teach you not to prize too high
the riches vain of earth —
But to lay up in God's bright sky
treasures of truer worth.

—Rosanna Leprohon (1829-1879)



“In my Father’s house are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?” ~John 14:2

Congregation in Christ,

Advent is swiftly approaching, and it is hard to believe that we will, once again, be lighting candles, singing familiar hymns, and hearing the story of the Incarnation. As we begin this new liturgical year, we will be focusing in on the theme of *Close to Home*, using resources designed by A Sanctified Art LLC.

A Sanctified Art LLC is a collective of artists in ministry who create resources for worshiping communities. The Sanctified Art team works collaboratively to bring scripture and theological themes to life through film, visual art, curriculum, coloring pages, liturgy, graphic designs, and more. Their mission is to empower churches with resources to inspire creativity in worship and beyond. Driven by the connective and prophetic power of art, they believe that art helps us connect our hearts with our hands, our faith with our lives, and our mess with our God.

When something hits close to home, it affects us deeply. During the Advent and Christmas season, we journey through scriptures and rituals that are tender, heavy with emotion, and vulnerable. We carry the memories and truths of this season close to our hearts. *Close to Home* acknowledges the “already but not yet” tension of our faith: Emmanuel is with us, and yet, God’s promised day - our everlasting home - is not fully realized. It names our deep longing for God to come close to us.

The Advent and Christmas scriptures are rich with home metaphors and imagery. John the Baptist prophesies about the One who is to come, but reminds us that we are still wandering far from God’s promised day; his message hits close to home, especially for those experiencing inequity and

oppression. After receiving the angel's news, Mary retreats to Elizabeth's home, seeking refuge and safety. Christ is born in the midst of a journey home, in a crowded dwelling space amidst livestock and shepherds alike. The Magi travel far from home to pay homage to Christ, and, having been warned in a dream, they avoid Herod by traveling home another way. In these scriptures, home is both physical and metaphorical, something we seek and something we are called to build. Ultimately, God is our home and resting place. God draws near and makes a home on earth - sacred ground is all around us.

Close to Home also names the pain many of us will carry into this season. The holidays can poke at our grief. Many will be missing loved ones lost to sickness and tragedy. The traumas of the pandemic will still be with us. Many will have lost homes - due to natural disasters, economic hardship, and unjust policies. Many do not feel safe in their own homes due to poor living conditions or harmful family dynamics. Many feel alone and isolated at home.

This Advent, may we be comforted by the One who dwells intimately with us. May we expand safety and sanctuary for everyone wandering far from home. May we come home - wherever home is found - to live fully with joy, hope, and courage.

In the peace and light of this season,
~Pastor Kyle



CLOSE to
HOME

LITURGISTS

- Dec. 5 **Debbi Waggener**
- Dec. 12 **Charlotte Hasselbarth**
- Dec. 19 **Karen Unser**
- Dec. 26 **Steve Smith**

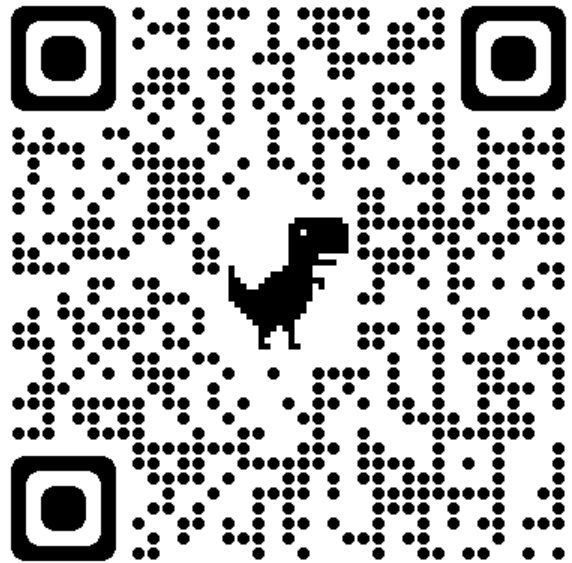


TECH TEAM

- Dec. 5 **Fred Sirois and
Mark Hutchinson**
- Dec. 12 **Kyle and Audrey Hall**
- Dec. 19 **Diane Irwin and
Hugh Stevens**
10am
- Dec. 19 **Mark Hutchinson and
Karen Williamson**
4pm
- Dec. 24 **George Hannett and
Karen Williamson**
- Dec. 26 **Diane Irwin and
Hugh Stevens**

A note from Hiram Eberlein:

This is a 'Thank You' to all of the folks who sent me a card or otherwise acknowledged my 80th birthday. I was very surprised to hear from you because I don't know how the word got around; as a general rule I don't advertise. Nevertheless, I guess that 80 is still considered a significant accomplishment so it was very nice to receive so many cards. And a happy birthday to you, Betty Deitz!



Christmas Poinsettias

I/We wish to donate \$ _____ to a flower fund for Poinsettias to decorate the Sanctuary for December 18th, and to remain for Christmas Eve services on December 24th.

Payment of \$11.00 for each plant must accompany your order. Please fill out this form and return to the Church Office as soon as possible. **Your order must be received by Sunday, December 5th, 2020.**

No. of Poinsettias _____ = Total \$ _____.

AND / OR

_____ I/We wish to make a donation for flowers to be purchased as needed throughout the year.

Donation \$ _____.

Name of Donor(s): _____ Envelope # _____

In Memory of:

In Honor of

Checks should be made payable to:
Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church
2291 Western Avenue
Guilderland, NY 12084



Please specify below whether you would like to retain your plant(s) after the Christmas Eve service or have the Deacons distribute to an appropriate person:

_____ I/We will take my plant(s) after the Christmas Eve Worship Service.

AND/OR

_____ I/We wish to have the Deacons share of my plant(s) with an appropriate person.

Visio Divina
Tuesday, November 23, and Wednesdays, December 1, 8, 15, and 22
7:00 pm on Zoom

Visio Divina is Latin for “divine seeing.” This is a method of meditation, reflection, and prayer through a process of intentional seeing. Visio Divina extends the 6th century Benedictine practice of Lectio Divina by the use of visual imagery. Traditionally, Visio Divina was accompanied by Benedictine iconography and illuminations, however, different faith traditions have adapted the process over time, utilizing both secular and non secular images.

While we will meet most Wednesdays in Advent, please note the *first* gathering will be on Tuesday, November 23, since the first Sunday of Advent in Thanksgiving weekend, and most of us will be busy preparing for family gatherings that Wednesday evening!

We will gather for an hour to consider an image that accompanies the coming Sunday’s lectionary passage. This is an opportunity to dive a little deeper into the gospel lessons Pastor Kyle will be preaching on, as well as a chance to explore these texts in a new and creative way.

No need to sign up or RSVP! Come as you are, as often as you like!
No preparation necessary!

Zoom meeting information:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87972733765?pwd=RG9xSzdKcjZVNHZzblhaU1A1S0dEUT09>
Meeting ID: 879 7273 3765
Passcode: 577392

Image: “Awake to Wonder,”
by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity
© a sanctified art | sanctifiedart.org



**A Service for the Longest Night
Sunday, December 19, 4 pm
In-person and on Zoom**

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” ~Matt. 5:4

“I need Christ, not something that resembles Him.” ~C.S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed*

We know that Advent can be a season of immense joy. Advent can be a season of laughter, hope, and loved ones gathered together. Advent can be a season of light, fireplaces, and candles in windows.

However, for many of us, we know that Advent can also be a season of pain, a month-long walk down memory lane that leaves us aching, a series of traditions that just don't fit the way they used to.

So on Sunday, December 19th, we will gather to carve out sacred space - space for grief, space for memories to run free, and space to remember loved ones lost. We will gather together to testify to the darkness of the tomb and the darkness of the womb, believing that God is with us, not only in the light, but also through the longest nights.

You are invited to bring all that you are - your anger, your doubts, your sorrow, your hope, your prayers, and your memories. Bring them all and simply let them be, just as they are, in the presence of God. All are welcome into this space for calm, quiet, and healing.



Close to Home Advent Devotional and Advent Calendar

This year, we are pleased to offer resources to help aid your connection with the Advent season and the liturgy and stories we will be using in worship.

For individuals, couples, and families, we have an Advent Devotional that is designed for daily use, and an Advent Calendar with fun and engaging ideas for each day of the season.

If you would like one or both of these resources, please let Kim Matthews or Pastor Kyle know so we can print the appropriate number.

Please note that the devotional will be printed in black and white, but if you are interested in a digital color copy, we can share that with you via email. Just let us know!



**YOU MAY NOT ALWAYS SEE THE RESULTS OF YOUR KINDNESS,
BUT EVERY BIT OF POSITIVE ENERGY
YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THE WORLD
MAKES IT A BETTER PLACE FOR US ALL.**

Lisa Currie



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



ANDREAS KRETSCHMER

THE PERFECT GIFT

One of the most powerful things that Christians claim is that God saw the great needs of the world and offered a perfect gift in response, a gift that brought God and humanity closer together. God's perfect gift, Jesus Christ — a gift who opens a door. Jesus is the *perfect* gift, not only opening a door but coming through it. In Jesus, God joined with humanity, and in his life, death and resurrection, so our story of God goes, Jesus is the door, now standing open. The giving continues because God is with us, still — and always.

Even though many of us haven't been able to be together in person, we have been together in spirit and in faith. We missed seeing faces we love — up close and personal, but the physical distance also revealed, for us, the importance of those things which bring us together, even when we are physically far apart.

We offer our gifts during this Advent Season to the Christmas Joy Offering because God shows us the power and importance of being together, of "being with." We might not be able to meet face to face with those who need the support that our gifts provide, but we are very much still together. We see the potential of students of color who will become our leaders and we seek to come alongside them, to encourage them, to be together with them. And we see church workers who have critical financial needs and we come alongside them, to assist them — we are with them. And we see the witness of the whole Church, either gathered in buildings or connected home to home, member to member, sharing what we have, together. We thank God for being "with us" through the gift of Jesus, for opening doors that may not have been accessible to us, and for joining us together as the Church and, through our gifts, with those who have need.

Thank you to Hamilton Union Web Site Web Evaluator Team

The Communications Team established a small tasks force to evaluate the Hamilton Union web site. The time and effort Shelby Deere, Rev. Kyle Delhagen, Abbey Ferris, George Hannett, Charlotte Hasselbarth and Maryanne Masley-Hannett is very much appreciated. They worked together from the beginning of August to the end of October. An evaluation tool was developed to assist the group in carefully going over the entire web site. The results were tabulated and passed on to Karen Williamson and Mark Hutchinson, who will begin updating the website in mid November. They will make many of the needed changes and our Website Developer, *Grace at Work*, will work on other improvements.

Going forward we hope to create a team of “Web Watchers” who will look over the web site on a monthly basis, so that it will be continually updated.

From the Communications Team



Session Update

The Session takes its responsibility of being spiritual leaders for the church seriously. To that end, we held a retreat November 7 to focus on who we are as Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church (and is our Mission Statement still reflective of that?), our calling to service, our commitment to becoming a Matthew 25 church, our committees as currently structured and finally to do calendaring of events for Advent into the next six months. The Session will meet on December 7 to finalize the committee structures. More information to follow in the January newsletter and at the Annual Congregational/Corporation meeting.



Volunteer Opportunity

The Mission Team announces the next volunteer opportunities at the Regional Food Bank to sort donated food:

Thu Dec 16

5 to 6:30 PM

We will have up to 9 slots available, first come, first served. NO sandals or open toe shoes! We are working in a warehouse.



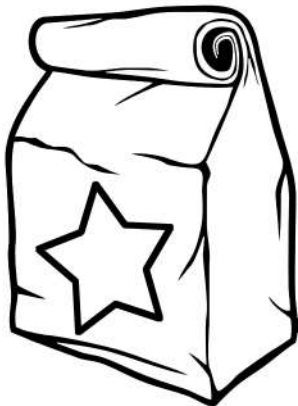
**Regional
Food Bank**
OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK

A good opportunity to serve the community, and the work is not difficult. If you are interested, please contact Wayne Gannett to sign up at jgannett@nycap.rr.com.

Now that the school year is well underway, did you know that.... the Food Bank works with 250 partner schools to make sure the 5,700+ students the Program serves can count on a bag full of kid-friendly foods each Friday throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

Last year, the Program distributed over 170,000 bags, containing over 2 million meals. The bags included cereal, oatmeal, macaroni and cheese, PB & J, soup, a loaf of bread, fresh apples, a gift card good for a dozen eggs and gallon of milk, and a sweet treat. An average Backpack contains 14 pounds of food to help feed each student and their family over the weekend.

We are retiring — possibly temporarily, probably permanently: time will tell — from the Tea for the Soul to Go program that we have shared with Albany Med personnel since March 2020.



PW and MSW thank you for the 173 beautifully decorated bags with notes of encouragement inside and the several hundreds of dollars for snacks that went to those working the “front lines.” As always, you stepped up!!! ♥♥♥ We want to especially thank Marlene and Kathleen Eberlein for all their work on bags.

DECEMBER***Happy Birthday to***

Melinda Rielly (Dec 8)
 Elena Delhagen (Dec 10)
 Margaret Anatriello (Dec 11)
 Debbi Waggener (Dec 22)
 Louise Gade (Dec 28)
 Joan Ruf (Dec 28)

Happy Anniversary to

Marlene & Hiram Eberlein (Dec 11)
 Trudy & Mark Hutchinson (Dec 19)
 Linda & Michael Hall (Dec 29)

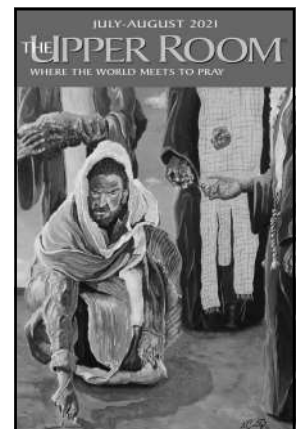
If you would like your birthday, anniversary, or some other special occasion printed in the "Good News", please notify Ann McKinney at (518) 488-7195 or email me at: ANNANDPETERMCKINNEY@GMAIL.COM

If you see that an incorrect date is in the "Good News", please let me know. Thanks!
Ann McKinney

Upper Room

Would like easy access to the "Upper Room" devotional guide? There are three ways for this to happen:

1. You may take a hard copy of the "Upper Room" from the church office.
2. You may use the following link to receive the "Upper Room" online:
<https://www.upperroom.org/standingorderchurches>
3. You may call **1-615-212-2013** to hear the daily Bible reading, the message (written by people around the world), the Daily Prayer, and the Thought for the Day at no charge from "Upper Room."



Presbyterian Women - News – All Women are Welcome

All women are invited to participate in any *Presbyterian Women's* activity at any time. There is no need to make a commitment to join the organization. For questions about *Presbyterian Women*, contact Charlotte Hasselbarth at chasselbarth@hotmail.com or 518-356-0637. Although, we usually meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month in the lounge, our December plans are different

*On Tues, Dec 14 from 10:30 am – 1:30 pm we will hold our Christmas Potluck Luncheon.

* Until Sun. Dec.12 is our Mitten Tree collection.

*More information is else where in the newsletter.



All Women Invited

Presbyterian Women's Christmas Potluck Luncheon and Program

Tues, Dec 14- 10:30-am -1:30 pm

Please consider coming to our Christmas Potluck Luncheon. We will be signing Christmas cards for people who need to be remembered and young adults in our church family. We will wrap Christmas gifts for a mother and two children the New Faith Program for Women at the Capital City Rescue Mission and for Brian Nitsky and his housemates, plus we making Christmons, which are white and

gold Christmas decorations with Christian symbols on them
There is a sign-up sheet in the back of the Sanctuary or contact Betty Deitz at bettydeitz2@icloud.com or 518-456-4193
If you plan to join us. If you decide to come at the last minute, please do. We will meet in the Multi-Purpose room and the Lounge.



Christmas Cards for Young Adults Away From Home

If there is a young person your family who is away from home for college, military service or a job that you think would appreciate receiving a Christmas Card from Presbyterian Women, contact Charlotte contact Charlotte Hasselbarth at 518-356-0637 or chasselbarth@hotmail.com.



Mitten Tree Sun., Nov. 21 to Sun., Dec. 12

From Sun, Nov 21 - Sun, Dec 12 we will be collecting new (handmade or purchased) gloves, mittens, scarves and hats for the New Faith Program for Women at the Capital City Rescue Mission, the Family Life Center at the Schenectady City Mission the Guilderland Food Pantry and Brian Nitsky's Living Resources Group Home, where there are 5 adult men. Donations can be placed on the "Mitten Tree" in the back of the Sanctuary, in the Food Pantry Collection box outside of the Christian Education Building and in the box at the top of the stairs in the Christian Education Building.



Thank You in Advance from Presbyterian Women

Thank You to Those Who Participated in the October 26 th Food and Faith Program for our Campus Ministry Mission.

On Tues Oct 26, several members of Hamilton Union helped to provide a warm experience for the Campus Ministry students during the *Food and Faith Dinner* we provided. It was our first time back to the Campus Ministry since Covid hit. We were the last church to provide a dinner before the shut down and some students remembered that.

Delicious food was provided by Bill Hasselbarth, Ann and Peter McKinney, Nancy Messersmith, Cindy Schultz, and Laura Smith.

Rev. Kyle Delhagen, Laura and Steve Smith and I came to visit with the students and Rev. Kyle led a discussion on taking time to play.

In deep appreciation
Charlotte Hasselbarth – Hamilton Union Liaison for the Campus Ministry



FOCUS

CHURCHES OF ALBANY

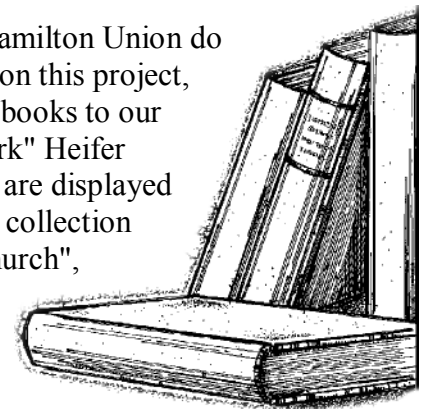


FOCUS Breakfast Coordinator James Blount (second from left) with outreach workers who serve our Breakfast guests.

FOCUS Churches of Albany offers a nutritious hot breakfast three mornings a week in the Fellowship Hall of Westminster Presbyterian Church. In addition to feeding people, we also provide assistance with housing, healthcare, job training and advocacy. Might you like to join us in this special ministry, as we serve our neighbors who are food insecure? We are seeking volunteers who might be available between 7am and 8:30am Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Two perks of volunteering are spending time with terrific people and enjoying a hot breakfast. Please join us! For more information, please contact Belinda Quaye, FOCUS Volunteer Coordinator: belindaq@focuschurches.net or (518) 443-0460 ext. 2.

Jack Haefeli's Books on Faith, Religion and Spiritual Development

Jack donated his books on faith, religion and spiritual development to Hamilton Union do with as we see fit. The Mission and Social Witness Ministry Team took on this project, being Jack had been the Chairman of the Team. We decided to offer his books to our congregation and request a freewill donation be made to our "Fill the Ark" Heifer International project in honor of Betty Deitz's 80 th birthday. The books are displayed on a table in the back of the Sanctuary until Sun, Dec. 5. There will be a collection plate on the table. Make out checks to "Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church", with "Fill the Ark" in the memo line.



Capital Area Council of Churches Emergency Shelter Collections

Presbyterian Women of HUPC thanks the congregation for their many contributions to this year's yearly drive for the shelter, which has opened for the winter season. Many socks and detergent were delivered from January thru April. Early November I delivered 53 pair of flip flops, 12 pair of tube socks and one 92oz. container of detergent. Throughout the winter months we will continue to collect socks and detergent. Thank you again.

Betty Deitz for the PW.

Appeal for Chituka Village Project

Before the pandemic children at Malenga Mzoma Primary School in Chituka Village had the opportunity to attend the After-School mentoring tutoring program sponsored by Banda Bola Sports Foundation. The program was suspended due to pandemic. The program used to provide snack meals for the children in order to attend the program. Sometimes it was the only meal of the day for children experiencing hunger at home.

The program will be starting again next year for children who are able to attend.

Banda Bola Sports Foundation needs support to provide snacks and tutorials for the children attending Malenga Mzoma Primary School in Chituka Village.

Following is the breakdown of the budget:

The snacks for the school year total \$6600.00

Tutoring services for the school year total \$2500.00

For grand total of \$9100.00

Thank you for your support.
www.bandabolaspportsfoundation.org



The example of Mary

“We must look to Mary’s example to know how to deal with the glorious impossibilities of God,” writes Calvin Miller in *The Christ of Christmas*. “Look how she turned the world upside down by making one simple statement.”

Jesus surely could have come to earth without Mary’s aid. But God seems to prefer partnering with people to accomplish miracles such as salvation and healing. So God chooses Mary to carry the Savior. Later, Jesus often declares people’s own faith crucial to their healing. And today, God works justice through us, not apart from us.

God doesn’t force us into collaboration. Yet, notes Miller, “God needs only a little of our agreement in order to work mighty wonders.” Like Mary’s humble assent: “I am the Lord’s servant. ... May your word to me be fulfilled” (Luke 1:38, NIV). And like yours — for whatever partnership God invites you into. God will do the heavy lifting, for certain, but he hopes you’ll say yes.

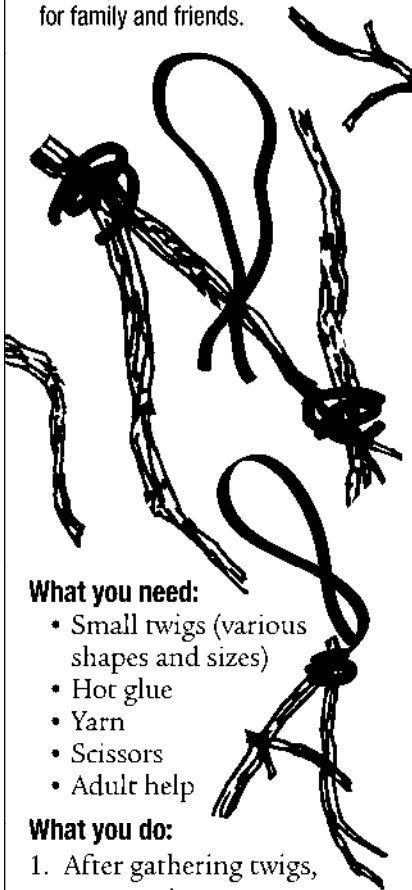
A song with a message?

According to folklore, the song “The 12 Days of Christmas” was written to help young believers learn about their faith. Although no evidence proves that claim, some say the popular carol contains these codes:

- The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ.
- Two turtle doves are the Old and New Testaments.
- Three French hens stand for faith, hope and love.
- The four calling birds are the four gospels.
- The five golden rings are the Law: the first five books of the Old Testament.
- The six geese a-laying represent the six days of creation.
- Seven swans a-swimming represent the gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophecy, serving, teaching, exhortation, contribution, leadership and mercy.
- The eight maids a-milking are Jesus’ eight Beatitudes.
- Nine ladies dancing are the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
- The 10 lords a-leaping are the Ten Commandments.
- The 11 pipers piping stand for the 11 faithful disciples.
- The 12 drummers drumming symbolize the 12 statements of belief in the Apostles’ Creed.

SIMPLE SYMBOLS

Create personalized initial ornaments for family and friends.



What you need:

- Small twigs (various shapes and sizes)
- Hot glue
- Yarn
- Scissors
- Adult help

What you do:

1. After gathering twigs, arrange them to create uppercase letter shapes. Cross, bend and break twigs, as needed.
2. Glue "letters" together at the intersections.
3. Cut an arm-length of yarn and wind it around twigs to add color to each letter.
4. Create a loop of yarn and tie it to the top of the ornament for hanging.

PUZZLE



F M K N L A D E G S C E J A T S
H M V S R B O L Y Q O X A V H R T
U E L W B A R V H P Q E F L S R Z M

What's in a name?

An angel told Joseph what to name Mary's baby. Solve the puzzle to discover the name's meaning.

Directions: Begin at the circled H below and follow the arrows. Circle every other letter, and then place them in order to complete Matthew 1:21.

"S_e w_ll __ve b ir__
to __ s_n, and __u a_e to
gi_e _i_ the __me J__us,
b_c_u__ he _ill s__e his
__ op_e f_o_ t__ir s_n_."

MATTHEW 1:21, NIV

A I N G F I P **H** S C I B E J H A

Answer: "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21, NIV

HAMILTON UNION
HAPPENINGS



December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Visio Divina 7:00 Finance Meeting 7:00	2	3	4
5 Sunday Service 10:00 ~Poinsettia Orders Due ~Church Decorating ~Coat Drive Collection 11:30	6 Making Connections Bible Study 3:00-4:30	7	8 Visio Divina 7:00	9 Good News Deadline	10	11
12 Sunday Service 10:00 Mitten Tree Collection Ends	13 Making Connections Bible Study 3:00-4:30	14 Presbyterian Women Christmas Luncheon 10:30-1:30	15 Visio Divina 7:00	16 Deacon's Meeting 10:00-11:30 Mission Team Food Bank 5-6:30	17	18 Poinsettia Delivery
19 Sunday Service 10:00 "The Longest Night" Worship Service 4:00	20 Making Connections Bible Study 3:00-4:30	21	22 Visio Divina 7:00	23	24 Christmas Service 4:00	25 CHRISTMAS
26 Sunday Service 10:00	27 Making Connections Bible Study 3:00-4:30	28	29	30	31	

HAMILTON UNION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2291 Western Avenue

Guilderland, New York 12084-9747

Change Service Requested

Dated Material – Please Deliver Promptly.

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Pastor:

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Website: HamiltonUnionPresbyterianChurch.org
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Ministers: The People of Hamilton Union

Our Staff:

Rev. Kyle Delhagen, Pastor

Kim Matthews, Administrative Assistant

Rae Rau, Director of Handbell Choir

Newsletter deadline for the
January issue is
Thursday, December 9

GOOD NEWS



Published monthly by the Session, and is available electronically on our website. Copies are also mailed to select church family households, students away from home, and others.

Mark Hutchinson, Editor

Email Address: goodnewshupc@gmail.com

