

DECEMBER
2011

The Fonda Reformed Church Newsletter



SUGGESTIONS NEEDED

Schedule:

Sunday School 10am
Worship 11am
Coffee Hour 12pm

We need your discerning prayers and suggestions for 2 new elders and 1 new deacon who will serve on the next consistory! Please write down the names of those you feel would provide spiritual and servant leadership for our congregation and put your slip in the wooden suggestion box found on the sign-up table in the back of the sanctuary.

The list of guidelines for elder and deacon, as well as the names of those who are ineligible to serve this year is attached to the packet that also includes the budget "rough draft". We will be collecting your suggestions through Monday, December 5th, at which time the current consistory will begin their discernment process for nomination. We will elect the new consistory members at a separate congregational meeting on Sunday, January 8th.

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**We will be having a Christmas Eve
Worship service on Saturday,
December 24th at 7:00pm. Invite
your family and friends!**





The Journey To Bethlehem
by Josh Baron

One of my favorite images of Advent is that of Mary, great with child, *journeying* to Bethlehem with Joseph, who was pledged to be her husband. I think I like it so much because of my fondness for journeys. I love to go to new places and try new things. God must be fond of journeys too, because Scripture is chock full of them. Abraham and Sarah left Ur to go to the place God would show them. Naomi and Ruth journeyed from Moab to Bethlehem when they heard the famine was over. Moses and all of Israel journeyed through the wilderness for 40 years. God's people journeyed to the temple annually from all 4 corners of the earth to celebrate the great feasts of Pentecost, Passover, and Booths. God journeyed from heaven to earth in the incarnation. Jesus was always on the move – even in infancy – as he was forced to journey to Egypt to escape Herod's wrath, and then back to Galilee where he grew up until beginning his journey to the cross in Jerusalem. And the disciples were sent on a journey to baptize and teach people of all nations.

The journey that Mary and Joseph took to Bethlehem before that very first Christmas morning must have been difficult. Mary was pregnant and due to deliver the baby any day. Perhaps she was still suffering through the whispers and leery-eyed stares of people who disapproved of her pregnancy (they must have assumed that Joseph was the father – little did they know!). The distance traveled would have been around 80 miles, which if you consider that they traveled by foot (or donkey) must have taken a severely pregnant Mary at least a week. Furthermore, just to add salt to the wound, we should remember that the reason they had to make the difficult journey to begin with was because of the ego-maniac Caesar who issued a decree that a census be taken of the entire Roman world. So, Mary and Joseph had to go through all of this trouble just so Caesar could get an accurate count of how many people he had under his thumb!

Advent calls us to not just think about the journey that Mary and Joseph made in the weeks before that first Christmas, but to actually *journey with* them! Here is a fun little exercise to do by yourself or with your family. Ask each other: What if you had to return to the place of your birth in order to be counted? Where is that place? How far would you have to travel? Where would you stay? Talk about one of your most memorable journeys. What made it so memorable? Chances are that you remember it not just because it was so perfect, but because it was so challenging! I love how at the end of the Christmas story the Bible tells us, "but Mary treasured up all these things in her heart." The good journey is the journey in which we find the love of God (shown to us in Jesus) in the midst of the chaos and difficulty. Just like Mary and Joseph did.

We are a people on a journey. This Advent season I invite you to journey to Bethlehem with all of the pilgrims at Fonda Reformed Church. Walk with Mary and Joseph. Put your hand on her belly and feel the new life in her womb, just waiting to be born. Notice the dust in your eyes, the rock in your sandal, and the cracked callouses on your feet. And remember. Emmanuel. God is with us. Born to us in the midst of our difficult journey. Born to show us the pathway to God.

CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S LUNCHEON

SUITE LIFE

Monday, December 12, 2011 11:30-1:00pm
 Holiday Inn, Route 30A, N. Comrie Ave. Johnstown
 \$13.00 Raspberry Grilled Chicken, Rice, Vegetables,
 Rolls, Dessert and Coffee, or Tea

SPECIAL FEATURE AND SPEAKER
ELAINE MILLER-WRITER AND AUTHOR OF
“FROM THE BASEMENT OF DESPAIR TO
THE PENTHOUSE OF PEACE”

SPECIAL MUSIC BY CLAUDIA MURDOCK
 Complimentary Child Care available upon request
 For info call Gloria (853-3126)
 Reservations Necessary and Cancellations Essential
Sponsored by Johnstown Christian Women's Club

OUTREACH MINISTRY

The Outreach Ministry has been very busy all year. Thank you for all your generosity and assistance to help us reach out to others. I know it is greatly appreciated.

The Fall Festival was a huge success. Hundreds of children and adults came through our doors and enjoyed a fun filled evening. This event was sponsored collaboratively with the youth groups and individuals who wanted to help.

Our Food Pantry appears to be close to the heart of many people. We have received food from many of you, as well as people and groups throughout the area. It enabled us to prepare and give away over thirty Thanksgiving Holiday Food Baskets to families in need. What a good feeling, to know that we have “reached out” during these holidays and throughout the year.

We will also be preparing Holiday Baskets for families over the Christmas break. If you would like to help, please see a member of Outreach.

Around Nov. 20th, Louise will provide names and information for our “Adopt an Angel” program. It will be announced in church, but you need to be quick, as names are chosen very quickly. For those of you who don't know about this program, it is where you can select a child's name from a list that we provide. The child's first name, age, sizes, and wish list is provided for you. You then shop for gifts for that child. Please note that you do not have to provide everything on that is list; it is meant to be only a guide. Sometimes, people share the cost with another person. Discuss this possibility ahead of time with a friend. The gifts are then labeled and brought to the church to be distributed. It is a wonderful way to end the year and put a smile on the faces of many children and parents too.

We have decided to change the time and format of our last meeting of the year. We will meet at 6:00 p.m. on December 13, 2011 in Fellowship Hall. Please bring a covered dish to share and your beverage. We will enjoy this meal together as we discuss 2012. Everyone is invited.

The Outreach Ministry would like to wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year!





CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

We will be having our annual congregational meeting immediately following worship on Sunday, December 11th. Please plan on staying.

At this meeting, we will be approving the budget for 2012. There will be a separate congregational meeting on Sunday, January 8 to elect the new consistory members that the congregation has nominated to serve. January. Your presence at these meetings is very important.



PRAYER LIST

The prayer list below is a long term prayer list that we have been running in the monthly newsletter. Please let Sherry in the office know if you would like someone to be placed on it. The prayer list in the weekly bulletin is mostly for short term, such as accidents, surgeries, loss, etc.

If you have put someone on the prayer list and they should be removed, please let Sherry know. We would like to keep these lists as updated as possible. Thank you!

- Richard Nare-health concerns
- Bob VanAntwerp-health concerns
- Those impacted by Hurricane Irene and the recent flooding
- Thomasine (Tammy) Flanders-receiving treatment for cancer
- Tom Cannizzo-hearing issues
- Rosemary Pierce-health issues
- Stacy Kimball-debilitating health issues
- Roaine Lyons-health concerns
- Jeanne Streeter-health needs
- Lois Davis-health concerns
- Helen Stanton-health needs
- Service men and women and their families
- Community members separated from Jesus Christ
- The homebound & grieving
- Missionary families, Otterness and Ford



NOTE CARDS AND CALENDAR SALE

The Youth Group will again be selling the note cards and calendars. The cost is \$6 each and they can be purchased during coffee hour throughout the month of December. Please see Sherrie Gray with any questions.



ADOPT AN ANGEL

The Outreach Ministry will be sponsoring its annual "Adopt an Angel" program, which provides Christmas gifts and food baskets to needy children and their families in our area. During the past 14 yrs, our gracious church has helped brighten the Christmas season for over 400 children in the tri-county region. The Outreach Ministry is once again asking for volunteers to open their hearts and sponsor a child this Christmas.

A list of names and gift ideas, sizes, etc. is located at the back of the Sanctuary. Please see Louise Huth (Home: 853-8583, or Cell: 774-0427) or Joyce Smith (853-3163) for more information. Thank you for your continued support, especially in these difficult financial times.





CLEAN-UP HELP NEEDED

We are looking for people to help clean up following our monthly covered dish luncheons, beginning in January as we will not be having one in December. There will be a sign up sheet in the back of the Sanctuary. Clean up consists of wiping down tables, sweeping floors, cleaning dishes and kitchen, etc. Please contact Carolyn Whipple if you have any questions.



ADVENT CELEBRATIONS IN THE COMMUNITY

“Messiah”, G.F. Handel
 St. Ann’s Episcopal Church
 Sunday, December 11th
 3:00pm

The church is located at 37 Division St. in Amsterdam. There will be soloists, a String Orchestra, Choir & Brass. There is no charge, however a free will offering will be accepted. Please call 842-2363 for more information.

“Lessons and Carols”
 St. John’s Church
 Sunday, December 11th
 5:00pm

The church is located at 1 N. Market St. in Johnstown. A Wine and Cheese Reception will follow. A free will offering will be accepted. Please call 762-9210 for more information.



“STAR OF WONDER”

This year the children of the church will be presenting a Christmas program, “Star of Wonder”. It will be performed during worship on Sunday, December 18th.

Practices for the music portion of the play will be every Sunday morning from 9:30am-10:00am. Children with speaking parts should remain in the sanctuary each Sunday following worship to rehearse.

Please see Karen Patterson or JoLynn Douglas if you have any questions.



WILKINSON CENTER WORSHIP

On the third Wednesday of each month, our church leads a worship service at Wilkinson Center nursing home at 10 am. We have been doing this for quite awhile. Sometimes we get over 30 in the congregation. Please feel free to join us. Anyone is welcome. Just being there brightens up their day and yours.

For more information, please contact Marion Stephenson, Joan Stanton or Pastor Josh. We carpool from the church at 9:30 am. Our next service will be Wednesday, December 21st. Please prayerfully consider joining us and help spread some Christmas cheer!





DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1- Kim Baron
- 2- Rebecca Wilmot
Larry Hayes
- 8- Lucy Bellinger
Steve Cook
Emory Luck
- 12- Andrew Patterson
- 13- Bill Boshart
- 15- Jason Webber
- 16- Nancy Langdon
- 18- Margaret Peck
Tom Flander
- 20- Laura Hayes Bowles
- 21- John Coons
Eleanor Getman
- 22- Alan Hinkle
Elizabeth Valade
- 23- Marilyn Kimball
- 24- James Boshart
Hope Akey
- 25- Jesus Christ
- 27- Jan Woodcock
Ronald Hinkle
- 29- Curt Woodcock
- 31- Jay Hine

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 9- Michael and Heather Hanson
- 12- Pete and Violet Fallone
- 21- Judd and Sherri Kirschman

We apologize if we missed anyone. Please let Sherry in the office know if your name was left out or if any of the information is incorrect.



COFFEE HOUR SERVERS

- December 4 Art & Betsy Marshall
- December 11 No Coffee Hour
- December 18 The Subik Family
- December 25 No Coffee Hour



NURSERY VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are needed for every Sunday in December. Please sign up on the back table if you are able to take a turn.



Merry Christmas!





YOUTH GROUP HAPPENINGS

The Youth Group will be meeting on Sunday, December 4th and 18th from 6:00pm-7:30pm. They are also participating in “Adopt an Angel” so they will be shopping for and wrapping gifts for children in need.

Thanks to the members and leaders in the youth group for raking leaves for families in our community last month!



FROTHINGHAM FREE LIBRARY

Please join us at The Frothingham Free Library for a free children's concert with Gary VanSlyke on Tuesday December 27th at 1pm. This event will include music for the whole family and refreshments.

For more information, please call 853-3016.



THANK YOU NOTES RECEIVED

The following two notes were received:

Dear Fonda Reformed Church,
 We want to thank you for your generous donation to help us rebuild our home. Your thoughts and prayers are very much appreciated. God is good all the time. All the time God is good.

Cindy & Hector Rivera

Dear Fonda Reformed Church,
 Thank you for sponsoring the Taste of Chocolate. Your support of the library is greatly appreciated!

Sherri Kirschman



FOLLOWING JESUS PROGRAM

Our Following Jesus program has been temporarily suspended due to lack of leadership. We regret that we are unable to continue at this time, however there just aren't enough leaders to keep the program running.

If we get people to come forward and volunteer to be trained for the leadership role, we may be able to start it up again. If we get enough leaders, each one would only have to take a turn once a month or even every other month. Please see Maureen White if you would be willing to help out with this program.



Yes, the song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" has everything to do with the Christian and the way Christians celebrate not only Christmas, but their faith. Each gift in the 12 days of Christmas has been associated with a symbol of the Christian religion.

- 1 Partridge in a pear tree = Jesus
- 2 Turtle Doves = The Old and New Testaments
- 3 French Hens = Faith, Hope and Charity, the Theological Virtues
- 4 Calling Birds = the Four Gospels and/or the Four Evangelists
- 5 Golden Rings = The first Five Books of the Old Testament
- 6 Geese A-laying = the six days of creation
- 7 Swans A-swimming = the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (the seven sacraments)
- 8 Maids A-milking = the eight beatitudes
- 9 Ladies Dancing = the nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- 10 Lords A-leaping = the ten commandments
- 11 Pipers Piping = the eleven faithful apostles
- 12 Drummers Drumming = the twelve tribes of Israel



1) Partridge in the pear tree is a symbol of Jesus. The pear tree symbolizes the salvation of man, just as the fruit tree in the Garden of Eden symbolized the downfall of man.

2) Two Turtle Doves stand for both the Old and the New Testaments of the Bible. This indicates that the entire Bible is still the foundation of the Christian religion.

3) Three French hens are the symbols for faith, hope and love.

4) The four calling birds are symbolic of the four Gospel testaments; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and their inspired authors.

5) Five Golden Rings are the first five books of the Old Testament; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

6) Six geese a laying represent the 6 days of creation.

7) Seven swans a swimming - the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit. The first four, Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge and Counsel perfect the intellectual virtues. Wisdom perfects charity, in order to judge divine things. Understanding gives an intuitive penetration into truth. Knowledge perfects the virtue of hope and the gift of Counsel perfects prudence. The next three, Piety, Fortitude and Fear of the Lord, each perfect virtues of the will and appetites. The gift of Piety perfects justice in giving to others, that which is their due. This is especially true of giving God what is His due. Fortitude perfects the virtue of Fortitude, in facing dangers. Fear of the Lord perfects temperance in controlling disordered appetites.

8) Eight maids a milking stand for the 8 beatitudes

9) Nine represents the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. The most famous Bible passage about the fruit of the Spirit is in Galatians 5:22, where Paul lists the following nine fruit of the Spirit: 1) Love, 2) Joy, 3) Peace, 4) Patience, 5) Kindness, 6) Goodness, 7) Faithfulness, 8) Gentleness, and 9) Self-control.

10) Ten lords a leaping is, of course, the 10 commandments.

11) Eleven stands for the 11 Faithful Apostles: 1) Simon Peter, 2) Andrew, 3) James, 4) John, 5) Philip, 6) Bartholomew, 7) Matthew, 8) Thomas, 9) James son of Alphaeus, 10) Simon the Zealot, 11) Judas son of James, (Thaddaeus). Judas Iscariot was the twelfth disciple but since he betrayed Jesus he is not considered as one of the 11 faithful. Paul may have been considered as being the replacement apostle for Judas Iscariot.

12) Twelve drummers stand for the 12 tribes of Israel or the 12 Apostles. The number 12 also represents completion and fullness.



December 2011

Thursday	1	9:00am 3:00pm 5:00pm 6:00pm	Men's Ecumenical Breakfast-McDonalds in Fultonville Brooks Barbecue until 6pm-Fellowship Hall Finance Ministry Meeting-Cussler Center Stephen Ministry Meeting-Cussler Center
Friday	2	6:30am 9:00am 12:00pm	Men's Prayer Group-Cussler Center Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall
Saturday	3		
Sunday	4	9:30am 10:00am 11:00am 12:15pm 12:15pm 6:00pm	Music Practice for Play Sunday School Worship Service Coffee Hour Play Rehearsal Youth Group Meeting
Monday	5	9:00am 9:30am 12:00pm 6:00pm 7:00pm	Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Christian Women's Prayer Coffee-Cussler Center Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Elders Meeting-Cussler Center Consistory Meeting-Cussler Center
Tuesday	6	12:00pm 5:30pm 7:00pm 7:00pm	Food Pantry open until 2pm (10 W. Main St. Fonda) Cub Scout "Save the Pack" Meeting until 8pm Worship Ministry Meeting-Cussler Center Bible Study-Cindy Mitchell's house
Wednesday	7	9:00am 9:30am 12:00pm 7:00pm 7:00pm 7:00pm	Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Literacy Volunteers-upstairs classroom Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Music Practice Ladies' Bible Study-church library Bible Study at Montgomery County Jail
Thursday	8	6:00pm	Stephen Ministry Meeting-Cussler Center
Friday	9	6:30am 9:00am 12:00pm 6:30pm	Men's Prayer Group-Cussler Center Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall 4-H Meeting-Fellowship Hall
Saturday	10		
Sunday	11	9:30am 10:00am 11:00am 12:15pm	Music Practice for Play Sunday School Worship Service-Sanctuary Congregational Meeting-no coffee hour/covered dish
Monday	12	9:00am 12:00pm 6:30pm	Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Building & Property Ministry Meeting-Cussler Center
Tuesday	13	10:30am 12:00pm 6:00pm 6:30pm 7:00pm	Glen-Mohawk Seniors-Fellowship Hall Food Pantry open until 2pm (10 W. Main St. Fonda) Outreach Ministry Meeting Girl Scouts Meeting Bible Study-Cindy Mitchell's house

Wednesday	14	9:00am 9:30am 12:00pm 7:00pm 7:00pm 7:00pm	Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Literacy Volunteers-upstairs classroom Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Music Practice-Sanctuary Ladies' Bible Study-church library Bible Study at Montgomery County Jail
Thursday	15	9:00am 6:00pm	Men's Ecumenical Breakfast-McDonalds in Fultonville Stephen Ministry Meeting-Cussler Center
Friday	16	6:30am 9:00am 12:00pm	Men's Prayer Group-Cussler Center Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall
Saturday	17		
Sunday	18	9:30am 10:00am 11:00am 12:15pm 6:00pm	Final Rehearsal for Play Sunday School Worship Service with Christmas Program Coffee Hour-Fellowship Hall Youth Group Meeting until 7:30pm
Monday	19	9:00am 12:00pm	Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall
Tuesday	20	10:00am 12:00pm 7:00pm	Communion at Pineview Commons Food Pantry open until 2pm (10 W. Main St. Fonda) Bible Study-Cindy Mitchell's house
Wednesday	21	9:00am 9:30am 10:00am 12:00pm 7:00pm 7:00pm 7:00pm	Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Literacy Volunteers-upstairs classroom Worship at Wilkinson Center Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Music Practice-Sanctuary Ladies' Bible Study-church library Bible Study at Montgomery County Jail
Thursday	22		
Friday	23	6:30am 9:00am 12:00pm	Men's Prayer Group-Cussler Center Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall Mom's Morning Out-Fellowship Hall
Saturday	24	7:00pm	Christmas Eve Worship service
Sunday	25	11:00am	Worship Service
Monday	26		
Tuesday	27	12:00pm 6:30pm	Food Pantry open until 2pm (10 W. Main St. Fonda) Girl Scouts Meeting-Fellowship Hall
Wednesday	28	7:00pm 7:00pm 7:00pm	Music Practice Ladies' Bible Study-Library Bible Study at Montgomery County Jail
Thursday	29	9:00am 6:00pm	Men's Ecumenical Breakfast-McDonalds in Fultonville Stephen Ministry Meeting
Friday	30	6:30am	Men's Prayer Group-Cussler Center
Saturday	31	1:00pm	Hall reserved for party until 4pm