

D e c e m b e r 2 0 1 8

The

# Connection

## Morton Baptist Church

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Sunday Service: 10:30 AM

Bible Study: Wednesday at 12:00

[www.facebook.com/273938523674](https://www.facebook.com/273938523674)

*Joy to the world! The world! The Lord has come; Let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him room, And heav'n and nature sing...*

We have already sent one Christmas gift this year; we sent our son the 2018 Hess Truck. I started sending them when he was in flight school, and that first one actually brought him to tears. Now I send them each year. He and his wife Alexa use them as part of their Christmas decorations each year, so it is a tradition as well.

How we prepare for Christmas is as individual as we are. You may have purchased your Christmas Cards or had photos taken to make one. Maybe you've started the annual letter or are thinking about it or not. You may have shopped all year long or if you find something you know will be appreciated, purchase it. Gifts, gift cards for children or grandchildren are in hand or will be soon. Are you into Black Friday sales or would you rather sleep in the day after Thanksgiving? Some folks spend way too much, some are careful because they need to be. Some folks give a bit more to charity at Christmas, like Cameron Community Ministries, Bread for the World or the Veterans Outreach Center. Whatever we do we're already preparing.

Preparing in our faith is important. Many years ago, the church understood the need to prepare to celebrate anew the birth of Jesus Christ and created the season of Advent. What began in Catholic tradition is now a reality for churches of all denominations and views. In song, scripture lessons, and lighting a candle each week, we prepare to celebrate that God came to us in the person of his Son and that God's story is not done yet for there is another Advent we await when the Kingdom comes in all its fullness.

We will hear the great passages from the Prophet Isaiah; we will read of John the Baptist preparing the way for The Messiah and hear again Jesus' own words of watchfulness. We will sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" and "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" and add in a few Christmas Carols along the way. This is all with the clear word that when we are expectant of God in our lives God will meet that expectation.

Celebrating Advent puts things in perspective and is an antidote to the commercialism that can overwhelm us as well as the unreal expectations we put on others and ourselves for a perfect Christmas. Instead of the emotional tugging at the heartstrings, there is something even more significant in the world: the incarnation of God Himself into the world and our humanity, as we read in Matthew's gospel, "they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us."

Whatever the Advent and Christmas season is for you, I wish you the best, I pray for travel mercies, and for pleasant and meaningful times with family and friends. For those for whom the holidays are difficult, remembering loved ones gone or who struggle emotionally and physically, my prayer is for healing and for the peace of Christ. Most of all let us truly know that, in Christ, God is truly with us.

Pastor Walter

## Trustee Meeting 11-14-18

In attendance: Gary House, Ralph Olney, Sandy Strassenburgh, Tony Callari, Rev. Walter Steenson, Marilynn Kundraata

The meeting was opened with prayer at 7:00pm.

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. Sandy made a motion to accept, Tony seconded.

The Treasurer's Report was reviewed. Some money was mistakenly withdrawn from the Endowment fund and put into the checking account. The error was corrected on November 1, 2018. All items are on budget. Frank Hoffman will supervise the carpet installation on Friday. The remaining balance of \$2,600 will be paid then. The building insurance has been paid for the year. Don's Trucking increased plowing to \$60 per plowing. Salting the parking lot will be an additional \$60 if needed. Sandy volunteered to check the parking lot on Sunday mornings and call if salt is needed. Gary will ask Diane Grimm to call if salt is needed during the week. Tony made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, Sandy seconded.

New tablecloths were purchased and paid for with Memorial Fund money.

Gary and Carolyn House will donate new blinds for MacQueen Hall windows.

A heater was installed in the office.

Tony will purchase a Christmas tree for the sanctuary. Rev. Walter will talk with Brad Miller about having the Youth Group decorate the tree.

Sandy will put an ad in the Westside News about the Christmas Eve Service.

If church needs to be cancelled because of weather the Trustees and Rev. Walter will make the decision and notify Kaitlyn Curtis so she can send out an email.

We will need nominations for Deacons, Trustees, Pulpit Committee and Pastoral Relations Committee members for 2019.

Rev. Walter would like to hold a meeting January 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss the current make up of the church and the community and what is important to us as a congregation.

Missions to be paid this year:

Fairport Home - \$300  
World Missions - \$125

America for Christ - \$40  
United Missions - \$300

One Great Hour of  
Sharing - \$50

Ralph has Safety and Security videos of what to do in case of an armed intruder if anyone in the congregation is interested in viewing them.

Next meeting will be December 12, 2018 at 7:00pm.

Meeting was closed with prayer at 8:15pm.

## December Birthdays:

2<sup>nd</sup> Austin Wakefield  
3<sup>rd</sup> Angela Cater  
4<sup>th</sup> Andrea Villalobos  
10<sup>th</sup> Katarina Wlosinski  
17<sup>th</sup> Todd Young  
19<sup>th</sup> Lank Dobbins



24<sup>th</sup> Frank Hoffman  
25<sup>th</sup> Alice Richardson  
28<sup>th</sup> Ann Bartel  
29<sup>th</sup> Novalee Johncox  
Olivia Johncox



### Kitchen Item:

The kitchen item for December is:  
9 oz. paper cups for juice and water

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### Masonic Lodge Dinner

The Kendall Masonic Lodge will be having their annual Pork Loin Dinner at the Morton Baptist Church on Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup> from 4:30 – 7:00 PM.

### Life Solutions

Life Solutions of Hamlin, Inc. will be having its 8<sup>th</sup> annual Community Children's Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup> from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM at St. John Lutheran Church. Shopping will be available (most items until \$5) and free giftwrapping! There will be crafts, face painting, and a visit from Santa & Mrs. Claus! All proceeds to benefit Life Solutions Food Pantry.



### Church & Tree Decorating

We will be decorating the church and Christmas tree on **Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>** immediately following the church service. Everyone is welcome to bring a potluck item for a luncheon after. The Deacons will provide pizza and wings.

### Kendall Tree Lighting

On Wednesday, **December 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM** there will be a sing-a-long at the Kendall Community Park gazebo. Refreshments are to follow at the Kendall Elementary School with entertainment provided by the Kendall Community Band.



### Kendall Schools Holiday Concerts

The junior/senior high school bands and choruses will have their annual holiday concert on Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup> and the elementary bands and choruses will have their concert on Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>. Both concerts begin at 7:00 PM at the high school.

### Hilton-Parma Gazebo Band

The Hilton-Parma Gazebo Band will be having a band concert on Friday, **December 7<sup>th</sup>** at the First Presbyterian Church in Brockport at 7:30 PM. They will also be performing on Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at the Park Ridge Free Methodist Church (corner of Long Pond Rd. and Straub Rd.) at 7:00 PM. Please bring a non-perishable food item for entry.





### New Horizons

The New Horizons combined concert and symphonic band will be having their annual holiday concert at the Alumni and Advancement Center (300 East River Road, Rochester 14627) on Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM. The program will feature music by composer Larry Neeck, who joins Bruce Burritt as the new co-conductor of New Horizons Bands. Free admission! ([www.rocnewhorizons.org](http://www.rocnewhorizons.org))

### Life Ladies

The Life Ladies will meet at Cindy Curtis' house right after church on **December 9<sup>th</sup>** for their annual Christmas party (please consider carpooling!). Please bring a snack to share (drinks will be provided). An invitation is extended to all who would like to join us!



### Christmas Eve Service

The Christmas Eve service will be held at the church on **December 24<sup>th</sup>** at 7:00 PM. Come listen and enjoy the Christmas story told by Pastor Walter and the choir in a musical cantata.

## ATTENTION!

### Volunteer's Needed!

Many of our committees are in need of volunteers. Get involved, and you will be glad you did! Duties are often difficult, humbling, surprising, enjoyable, but ALWAYS REWARDING! **You will make a difference.** We need people to sign up to make coffee and snacks for **coffee hour** after church, to be **greeters**, and **lay readers**. For more information, please see one of the Trustees, Deacons, or other church officers.



### Salvation Army Bell Ringing

Tom Ingraham is organizing the Salvation Army Bell Ringing schedule for the Hamlin Tops. If you are interested in bell ringing, please see Tom.

### Piano Lessons

If you or if you know of anyone looking to take piano lessons, Andrew Cook is willing to take on more students. Please contact him if you're interested.



### 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Meeting

Our December meeting to assess ourselves and the community has been moved to January 20<sup>th</sup>. With family gatherings, traveling, and enjoying time together over the Christmas and New Year holidays, wiser heads feel that more people will be able to attend on January 20<sup>th</sup>. So, we will have our next 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of January. Be on the lookout for a church questionnaire that will be coming out next month.

### Kendall Food Cupboard

It's time again for the Fall Food Challenge for the Kendall Food Cupboard. If everyone could bring just one item, imagine the multiples we'll receive! Please bring the following items: **December 2<sup>nd</sup> – Frosting & December 9<sup>th</sup> – cans of Chef Boyardee**





### *In and Around the Community*

We received a certificate of appreciation from Fairport Baptist Homes for our contributions to their cause.

Our annual Harvest Dinner brought in a profit of \$1,440!

Congratulations to Ann Bartel for returning to school in the spring through SUNY Empire!

Brad Miller would like to thank everyone for their generous donations and prayers for the youth group.

Please keep Pat, a family member of Natalie Cook, in your prayers. Pat fell and broke her wrist and hip.

Lizzie Pearson's grandfather, Leon, is moving into Hilton East. Please pray for a smooth and easy transition.

Congratulations to the Kendall Varsity Girls soccer team for winning the Class D State championship! This is a first in school history. Team members include youth group member Abigail Jenks, Lizzie Pearson's sister Katie Pearson, and John and Cindy Curtis' granddaughter Brianna Wakefield.

Brad Miller had an unfortunate accident that turned into an inspirational encounter in early November. When picking up youth group kids, their van ended up in a ditch to avoid a stopped vehicle. While waiting for AAA to arrive, a sheriff stopped and waited with Brad resulting in an inspiring conversation regarding faith and being a believer. Both men were in the right place at the right time for an uplifting meeting.

Mary Callari is donating \$300 of her PartyLite profits to MBC. Thank you, Mary!

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Kendall Food Cupboard. They were able to provide food boxes for 72 families!

We're thrilled to hear that Pam Dutton received good news at her chemotherapy treatment in late November. Her numbers are continuing to go down in a big way! Please continue to keep her in your prayers.

Please keep the Woodbury Union Presbyterian Church in Rhode Island in your prayers. The church, where Ralph and Bev Olney were married, burned down on Thanksgiving Day.

John and Tammy Cook rushed to the hospital early one morning because Tammy was suffering from a racing heart. The episode ended up being caused by dehydration. We're glad to hear you're okay!

Andrew and Natalie Cook, along with Natalie's aunt and uncle are driving down to Florida in early December. Please pray for safe travels!

Marilynn Kundrata's uncle, Ray, was hospitalizing with a heart issue in late November. He had a heart valve replaced 22 years ago, and this is the first issue he's had since.

Pastor Walter's half-brother, Alan, passed away peacefully in his sleep in November. Please keep the family in your thoughts and prayers.

Kate Ingraham is going to have gall bladder surgery on December 4<sup>th</sup>. We pray for a quick recovery!



*We continue to remember in prayer: the Ashberry family, Fred Conratt, Chap & Jan Fabry, Kevin & Joyce Foley, Helen Mattern, RoseMary Mintz, Ralph & Bev Olney, Joan Purvee, Eleanor Reynolds, Pastor Jim & Alice, and the youth group. Cards, notes, and visits are always welcome.*



# The Innkeeper's Tale

## by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson

They think I'm some kind of cruel, heartless landlord. Someone must have told them that. But they're wrong, just plain wrong, and it's time to set the record straight, once and for all.

People say I'm an innkeeper. I suppose you'd call it an inn. To us it's just a big house. My grandfather, Joshua ben-Yahoudi, built it back when his trading business was at a peak. And he built it big enough to fit all fourteen kids.

Well, a few years ago, the missus and I were just rattling around in that big house--kids grown up and all--and we were thinking, maybe we could take in a few travelers. Rachel has always been mighty good in the kitchen, so we just let out word that we'd take people in, and they started to come. Every night we'd have a person or two, sometimes more. People would always come back when they came to town again, intent on another bowl of Rachel's lamb stew.

Then came that census the governor thought up. Taxation, pure and simple! People from all over the province flooded into town that week. Filled us clean up. Rachel and I slept in the main room where we always do, and we started putting guests in the other three rooms. They kept coming. Then we doubled up two or three families to a room. They kept coming. Finally, when we had filled the main room with four families plus Rachel and me, we started turning people away.

I must have gotten in and out of bed ten times that night, stumbling over bodies to get to the door. "No more room, sorry folks. No more room. Come back in the morning. We have a couple of families leaving then." They'd mutter something and head back to their party, and sleep somewhere next to a house under the shelter of a blanket. I just couldn't make any more room. That's the honest truth.

But I did make room for one more couple. Joseph was a burly man with big arms and strong hands, down from Nazareth, I think he said. He wouldn't take "no" for an answer. I would say, "No, I'm sorry," and he'd tell me about his "little Mary." Well, when I saw "little Mary" she wasn't very little. She was just about as pregnant as a woman can get, and awfully pale. While Joseph was pleading, I saw her grab her tummy in pain, and I knew I couldn't let her have that baby outside in the wind and sleet.

The barn. That would just have to do, I told myself, and led them and their donkey out back. Now it was pretty crowded, so I shooed several animals into the pen outside to make room in one dry corner. Joseph said, "We sure are grateful, sir." Then with a serious look, he asked me, "Do you know where I can find a midwife in these parts? We might need her tomorrow or the next day."

That man didn't know much about having babies, it was plain enough to see. I ran to Aunt Sarah's house and pounded on the door until her husband came. "One of the travelers is having a baby," I told him. "I'll wait while Aunt Sarah gets dressed." I stopped a moment to catch my breath. "And tell her to hurry."

By the time we got back to the barn, Joseph had "little Mary" settled on some soft, clean hay, wrapped up in a blanket, wiping the perspiration off her brow, and was speaking softly to her as she fought the waves of pain. Aunt Sarah sent me to get my Rachel, and then pushed Joseph and me out of the barn. "This ain't no place for men," she said.

We waited just outside in the shelter of the barn for hours, it seemed like. Well, all of a sudden, we hear a little cry. "You've got a baby boy," Aunt Sarah was saying as we peeped around the corner. She hands the young-un to Rachel, and she wraps it up in those swaddling bands she had saved. Cute little thing, I tell you.

Well, Joseph goes over to Mary and gives her a big hug, and a kiss on the cheek, and Rachel hands Mary the baby, and then comes over to me and takes my hand. "Remember when our Joshua was born?" she whispers.

The lantern was blowing almost out, the cattle were lowing softly, and baby Jesus was asleep in his mother's arms. That's how I left them as I walked Aunt Sarah home. Chilly wind, though the sleet had stopped.

By the time I got back, Rachel was in bed, and I was about ready to put out the light, step over sleeping bodies, and get under the warm covers, when I heard some murmuring out by the barn.

I'd better check, I told myself. When I peeped in, I saw shepherds. Raggedy, smelly old shepherds were kneeling down on the filthy barn floor as if they were praying. The oldest one was saying something to Joseph about angels and the Messiah. And the rest of them just knelt there with their heads bowed, some with tears running down their faces.

I coughed out loud, and Joseph looked up. I was almost ready to run those thieving shepherds off, when Joseph motioned to me with his hand. "It's okay," he whispered. "They've come to see the Christ-baby."

The Christ-baby? The Messiah? That was when I knelt, too. And watched, and prayed, and listened to the old shepherd recount his story of angels and heavenly glory, and the sign of a holy baby, wrapped in swaddling bands, to be found in a stable-manger.

My Lord, it was my stable where the Christ-baby was born. My manger he rested in. My straw, my lamp, my wife Rachel assisting at his birth.

The shepherds left after a while. Some of them leaned over and kissed the sleeping Christ-child before they departed. I know I did.

I'll always be glad I made room in the barn for that family-- that holy family. You see, I'm not some mean inn-keeper. I was there. I saw him. And, you know, years later that boy came back to Bethlehem, this time telling about the Kingdom of God. Oh, I believe in him, I tell you. I was there. And, mark my words, if you'd seen what I've seen, you'd be a believer, too.

# December

2018

"I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in darkness." - John 12:46

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Community Children's Holiday Bazaar  Mason Lodge Pork Dinner
2 <b>Advent Begins</b> Communion Sunday  Church/Tree decorating & luncheon	3	4	5 Bible Study @ 12:00 Choir Rehearsal @ 6:00 Kendall Tree Lighting @ 7:00	6 JSBS Holiday Concert @ 7:00	7 Hilton Gazebo Band @ 7:30	8
9 Life Ladies at Cindy Curtis' after church  New Horizon's Concert @ 2:00	10 Hilton Gazebo Band @ 7:00	11	12 Bible Study @ 12:00 Choir Rehearsal @ 6:00 Trustee Meeting @ 7:00	13 ES Holiday Concert @ 7:00	14	15
16	17	18	19 Newsletter items due Bible Study @ 12:00 Choir Rehearsal @ 6:00	20	21 <b>Winter Solstice</b>	22
23	24 <b>Christmas Eve</b> Christmas Eve Service @ 7:00	25 <b>Christmas Day</b>	26 Bible Study @ 12:00  Choir Rehearsal @ 6:00	27	28	29
30	31 <b>New Year's Eve</b>					

Morton Baptist Church  
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December 2018

