

From the Heart of the Pastor

Were you surprised when some radio stations began to play Christmas music on November 1st? During the Christmas Season the Christmas music seems ubiquitous, to the point some people are glad for relief from the music on December 26. However, this year it has become a reminder of a great truth and reason of Christmas.

As I mentioned in the sermon last Sunday, our decision determines our vision. Joseph decided to take Mary home as his wife, and it was a decision to love her regardless of the gossip, and his fears. The decision to love then became his vision. He would love her through all circumstances, which was especially tested on their eighty-mile journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Walking and riding alongside the Jordan River, it is likely Mary needed Joseph's help to wash her feet and tend to other needs. Joseph already made the decision to love Mary, yet he needed to renew it every day with a servant's heart. It is not easy on the dusty road to Bethlehem. I would guess they had the share of discouragements and distractions along the rocky road. The encouragement for us is their perseverance. If Joseph was like people I know, he needed to remember the voice of the angel telling him, "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. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."

The birth of new life will come, and it will save us from being victims of our unhealthy emotions and grudges. Jesus will save us from our sin. His birth is a fulfillment of God's love for you, and all people. It is a welcoming you home into His loving kindness and trust. It is the affirmation of Immanuel—which means "God with us". May the words of the Christmas carols be reminders of the voices of angels who continue to lift our eyes beyond our dusty roads. Listen as they remind us of Jesus, the one who is the fulfillment, saves us from our sins, and is with us in all circumstances.

Gratefully serving our Lord with you,

Pastor Wayne



*Christmas Eve Services:
7:00 p.m. Family Service
11:00 p.m. Communion/Candlelight Service*

Community Christmas Dinner

On Sunday, December 20 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., the 5th annual community Christmas dinner for persons in need will be held at two locations in Kalamazoo, one of which is Stockbridge Ave. UMC. Coats and other winter wear, blankets, toys, etc. will also be available for guests to choose from. Over 200 volunteers are needed to help set up, serve guests, and clean up that day. If you would like to volunteer, please call Stockbridge Ave. UMC between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at 385-8919.

All Church Game Day On Jan. 3

Spend the Sunday School hour playing around! Kingdom Kids is inviting adults, youth, and kids to join in board games of all kinds. We'll have a selection on hand or you can bring your favorite game or puzzle. We'll gather in Simpson Hall from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. See you there!

Special Christmas Offering

A special Christmas offering to support Paul Webster, our missionary and agricultural specialist in Zambia, will be received on December 20. Westwood is in covenant relationship with Paul regarding his salary support. Our annual commitment is \$1,880 which is based on \$5 per member which is set by the General Board of Global Ministries. Paul works on our behalf, ministering to the Zambian people and teaching farming methods that work in Africa. Please help Paul continue to do this valuable, life-sustaining work with your donation. A special offering envelope is in your giving envelope packet.



Christmas Greetings from Voronezh, Russia

To everybody at Westwood UMC,

Thank you for your support and commitment! We are very grateful for your partnership and friendship!

The Fall was very warm and we don't have snow yet. This morning (December 11) just a very few snowflakes fell on the grey ground. It is so strange for us not to have snow in December. And because of this we don't feel the coming of Christmas and the New Year, though we have started preparations for it.

We send you our warmest wishes for this Advent season and for Christmas.

Yours in Christ,
Irina Mitina,
Pastor, Resurrection UMC

Library News

Be sure to look in the Library for Christmas and Advent books and movies.

Get Mugged!

The Westwood United Methodist Church Communication Team is selling the "Love Mug" for \$5. This would what a wonderful Christmas gift. We love because He first loved us! Please contact Roxanne Frey to make a purchase.

Disciple II

Jim Jameson will be teaching Disciple II beginning Wednesday, January 13th from 6:00-8:00 pm. Please call Jim at 271-0839 if you are planning to take Disciple II so books can be ordered.

Hole Lotta Love

The tradition continues of the Westwood United Methodist Church family delivering donut holes to those in the Westwood area who must work on Christmas Eve - our police officers, firefighters, hospital staff, nursing home staff, gas station workers, fast-food workers, etc.

Sign-up sheets for the number of boxes and place(s) you would like to visit will be in the narthex on December 13 and December 20 for anyone willing to make the deliveries on Christmas Eve.

The donut holes will be packed on Christmas Eve morning and will be ready for pick-up in the narthex any time after 11:00 am and can be delivered during the day or evening of Christmas Eve.

If you cannot help deliver, but would be willing to contribute to the cost of this ministry, there is a Sweetwater Box next to the sign-up sheet board.

We are grateful this meaningful tradition of caring for our Westwood neighbors continues through the faithful service of those who have helped in the past and those who are willing to try it for the first time.

Kingdom Kids Advent Activities

We're getting ready for Christ's coming and you won't want to miss out! Come every Sunday to the Marketplace (Room 10) at 9:30 a.m. as we learn about the birth of God's promised Savior. Kingdom Kids Sunday School is for children 4 years old through fifth Grade.

Dec. 20: Las Posadas—Come along as we recreate a popular Mexican tradition. Mary and Joseph are traveling from inn to inn looking for somewhere to stay. Who will make a place for them? Our journey will take us all over the church.

Dec. 27: A King is Born! We'll see a movie that tells us the story of that special night Jesus came into our world.

Jan. 3: All Church Game Day – Adults and kids will join in games from Candyland to Yahtzee. All ages are invited to Simpson Hall for the fun!



Operating Fund Financial Picture

	<u>November</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Total Income	\$32,485	\$273,423
Total Expense	\$24,724	\$282,350
Net Income/(Loss)	\$ 7,761	\$(8,927)

Operating Fund Balance as of 11/30/09: (\$6,834)

Because of strong giving in November, we were able to cut our deficit by more half! Thank you for catching up on your pledges and for your extra gifts. With a strong December, we hope to wipe out the deficit completely!

Getting to Know You

Cheryl Leigh Eriksen
Born in Rochester MI, November 8, 1976
Graduated Kalamazoo Christian HS 1994
Black Hawk College, Kewanee Illinois 1978
Earned Associates Degrees in Equestrian Studies and
Horse Science Technology
Attends Western Michigan University, majoring in Social
Work
Family at Westwood: Mother Louise Sepanik, Sister
Andrea Daniels and her family Derick, Lydia and
Rachael Quick.



Farletta, Cheryl and Diefenbaker

Cheryl arrived in Kalamazoo with her mother and sister in 1979 and began attending WUMC the following year when they moved to the Westwood neighborhood. She has loved animals, especially horses, for as long as anyone can recall. During her youth she was very active in Kalamazoo County 4H horse project.

After completing her degrees at Blackhawk College, she remained in Illinois for five years, working at a breeding farm for Paint Horses where she planned the parentage for her current horse, Follow Me Friend, called Farletta for short. She returned to Kalamazoo in 2002, working as barn manager for the Pretty Lake Camp Horse Program until it closed in 2004. She lived briefly in Tennessee, attending Middle Tennessee State U, but her love of horses drew her to Kentucky where she worked two years at Claiborne Farms near Lexington.

Injured in 2007 in what she describes as an “unplanned dismount” she was unable to continue the physical work involved with horses and decided to return to Kalamazoo to study social work. She plans to combine her love of horses and caring about people into a new career in equine assisted therapy, focusing on mental and emotional health in at-risk children and battered women.. She currently is working part-time at the Cheff Center.

Spare time is spent first with her horse or dog, then with her second love which is horse art and photography. She enjoys repainting model horses to duplicate specific real horses, as well as drawing portraits of favorite or famous horses and uses this talent to supplement her income. She also likes to read horse magazines and books about the natural care and training of horses, and does her own farrier work.

Cheryl’s favorite hymn is “Up from the Grave He Arose“. She enjoys music from the 50s to 80s, especially the Monkees. Favorite TV shows include “MacGyver,” “Due South” and “X-files.” “Holiday Inn” rates top of the list for movies.

Italian/Mexican/Oriental/Mediterranean is her favorite cuisine whether at home or eating out, as long as there are plenty of veggies.

A Note From Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Dear Members and Friends of Westwood,

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) of Westwood United Methodist Church would like to provide you with an opportunity to participate in Christmas gifts for the pastor and regularly employed staff of the church. Christmas offers an opportunity for us to model God's gift-giving to us by sharing gifts with those we care about. We cannot equal God's gift of His Son, but we can demonstrate our love and appreciation for the church staff's hard work throughout the year.

The church staff includes our full-time staff (Pastor, Administrative Assistant, and Director of Fine Arts Ministry) as well as our equally dedicated part-time employees who serve as accompanist, organist, custodians, and child care (nursery) workers. The Christmas gift that is provided by the church family is divided proportionally among these regularly employed staff of the church.

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee encourages you to make a generous gift to show our appreciation for the hard work of the staff.

Please make your check payable to **Westwood United Methodist Church** and label it "Christmas Gifts." Please note that since this is a non-taxable gift to the members of our staff, it will not be shown on your charitable giving statement from the church.

Please do not mail your contribution to the church address!

In addition, in order to keep the gifts separate from your regular giving, please use one of these options for getting your gift to SPRC:

- Mail it to:
Irv Cumming
6433 Old Log Trail
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
- Give it to one of the Staff-Parish members at either the 8:30 or 10:55 service. Our 2009 members include: Phil Bowman, Irv Cumming, Doug Heystek, Jim Jameson, Kevin Secord, Bob Strobel, Emily Strong, Jo Turner, Jean Whitcomb, and Sue White.
- Place your gift (in an envelope, if possible) in the SPRC mailbox.

We will appreciate receiving your gifts by Sunday, December 20, 2009.

Advent Mission Projects for 2009

Each Sunday in Advent, the Missions team invites you to support a local project in need of items to help their clientele and make a difference right here in Kalamazoo County. Your donations may be dropped off in the collection area in the elevator annex at the top of the stairs.

December 20, Ministry with Community: Personal care items needed are soap, shampoo, disposable razors, toothbrushes, toothpaste, feminine hygiene products, deodorant, combs and brushes.

Ongoing Prayers for Westwood Members

Prayers for comfort, healing and strength

Homebound

Dorothy Morse, Life Care Center of Plainwell, 320 Brigham, Plainwell, 49080

Comfort, Healing and Strength

Beth Arbogast, 2639 Hazelnut Lane, Kalamazoo, 49004

Gary Babbitt, 47040 24th St., Mattawan, MI 49071

Don Bertch, Rose Arbor Hospice Residence, #9, 5473 Croydon Avenue, Kalamazoo, 49009

Susan Clapp, 1974 Dunlin Court NE, Grand Rapids, 49505

Gary Cumming, 4867 Sweet Cherry Lane, Kalamazoo, 49004

Judy DeHaan, 612 Jenks Blvd., Kalamazoo, 49006

Irene Dutton, 918 Nichols Road, Kalamazoo, 49006

Shirley Greene

Betty Georgeau, Tendercare Kalamazoo, 1701 S. 11th, Kalamazoo, 49009

Dale Griffith, 6118 Ormada, Kalamazoo, 49048

Dale had open heart surgery at Borgess on Tue., Nov. 24, and is in the Cardiac Surgery Unit.

Vicki Hale

Mabel Hillis, 3014 Winter Wheat, Kalamazoo, MI, 49004

Erica Jenkins, 28047 Wellington Rd., Kalamazoo, 49008

Jack Lancaster, 1629 Turwill Lane, Kalamazoo, 49006

Bud Mahieu, 1433 Barney Rd., Kalamazoo, 49004

Jim Parker, 5939 N. Westnedge, Kalamazoo, 49004

Mary Penn, 550 Chadd's Ford Way, Oshtemo, 49009

Jean Marie Peters (*Pastor Wayne's sister*)

Betty Pick, Bickford Cottage, Merry Bee, 4704 W. Milham Ave., Portage, 49024

John Reid, 1205 Bunkerhill, Kalamazoo, 49009

Mike Roush, 522 Cherokee #212, Kalamazoo, 49006

Patricia Smith

Emily Strong, 3504 Iroquois Trail, Kalamazoo, 49006

Betty Thompson, 1400 N. Drake Rd., Apt. 189, Kalamzoo, 49006

Nancy Wallus, 717 Kendall, Kalamazoo, 49006

Our Community Partner

King Westwood Elementary School Staff

Protection from Harm in Iraq and Afghanistan

Toby Brown

Anthony Earl

Carl Williams

Year of the Neighbor

Pray for our Westwood Neighborhood



Calendar of Events




Sunday, December 20, 2009	
	<i>Cantata Sunday</i>
8:30 AM	Worship Celebration
9:30 AM	Sunday School
10:55 AM	Worship Celebration
4:45 PM	Westwood Ringers
	No Youth Groups
Monday, December 21, 2009	
12:00 PM	Red Cross Blood Drive
7:00 PM	Courters
7:00 PM	Staff Parish
7:15 PM	Board of Trustees
	Boy Scouts of America (TBD)
Tuesday, December 22, 2009	
9:00 AM	Worship Planning
10:30 AM	Staff Meeting
Wednesday, December 23, 2009	
10:00 AM	Adult Bible Study
6:00 PM	Disciple IV
6:00 PM	Westwood Singers
6:00 PM	High School Choir
6:15 PM	4th Day Women
6:15 PM	The "Q"
7:00 PM	WHBE
8:00 PM	Praise Team Rehearsal
Thursday, December 24, 2009	
	Christmas Eve
	Services:
7:00 PM	Family Service
11:00 PM	Communion/Candlelight Service
	<i>Church Office closed at noon.</i>
Friday, December 25, 2009	
	Christmas Day
Saturday, December 26, 2009	
	No events scheduled.
Sunday, December 27, 2009	
8:30 AM	Worship Celebration
9:30 AM	Sunday School
10:55 AM	Worship Celebration
	No Youth Groups



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There really is more to life!

At Westwood United Methodist Church, we seek to connect:

-  with God, seeking a spiritual center for our lives
-  with each other, creating friendships that last
-  with our community, serving the needs of our neighbors

Come and see!

**Worship Celebrations at
8:30 a.m. and 10:55 a.m.
Nursery care is provided
during both celebrations.**

Visit us on the web at:

<http://www.westwood-umc.org/>

Messenger Deadlines:

The Westwood Messenger is published weekly (bi-weekly from June through September). Deadlines are the Thursday prior to publication.

Upcoming Publications:

Dec. 21

Jan. 4

***Note: The deadline for the Dec. 21 publication will be Dec. 17th at noon.**

There will not be a Dec. 28th edition.



**Westwood
United Methodist
Church**

538 Nichols Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49006-2946
(269) 344-7165

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Westwood Messenger articles relate to the activities of Westwood United Methodist Church. Any member or constituent may submit articles for publication. Place articles, with your name and phone, in the *Messenger* mailbox outside the church office or send an e-mail to betharbogast@charter.net by Wednesday of the week before it should appear. Your name may be used in the article. The *Messenger* is mailed Tuesday. Subscribers do not receive it before Wednesday. Articles must be submitted two weeks before events. All articles are edited to correct errors and conform with postal regulations. Due to space constraints, some articles are abbreviated or postponed at the discretion of the editor. If you have any questions or comments, address them to the editor: Beth Arbogast at 343-3937.

Westwood United Methodist Church Staff and Volunteers

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

- Pastor, The Reverend Dr. Wayne A. Price 762-4787
E-mail: pastorwayne@westwood-umc.org
- Director of Worship and Fine Art Ministry, Jane Wright 544-2390
E-mail: jwright-wumc@sbcglobal.net
- Organist,
Church/Staff Admin. Assistant, Lois Moeller
E-mail: lmoeller@sbcglobal.net
- Child Care Staff
- Custodial Staff: Dan Malseed, Nicole Malseed, Ash Norton, Bill Urfer, Stephanie Knewtson, David Knewtson
- Lay Leader, Bob Strobel 342-8816
- Lay Minister of Spiritual Formation, Louise Jameson 382-3463
- Lay Minister of Worship, Matthew Knewtson 349-5603
- Staff-Parish Chairperson, Irv Cumming
- Wesley Foundation Director, Lisa Batten 344-4076
Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College (Office)
- Westwood Messenger* Editor, Beth Arbogast 343-3937
E-mail: betharbogast@charter.net

Subscribing to the *Messenger*

The *Westwood Messenger* is a newsletter published weekly by the members and friends of Westwood United Methodist Church. There is no subscription fee. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe, call the church office at 344-7165.

Westwood UMC supports **United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)**

For general information or if you are unsure where to direct your question, please email info@westwood-umc.org and your inquiry will be forwarded appropriately.

Note to Subscribers: If you will be out of town and chose not receive your 3rd class mail, please contact the church at 344-7165 to have your *Messenger* temporarily stopped. If it is not stopped, the church pays for the original postage, plus a fee when it is returned. Please help us save costs and contact us as soon as possible.