

THE PROSPECT TOWER

Prospect United Methodist Church

A Growing Christian Community of Faith in Action

December 2018

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Pastor's Page

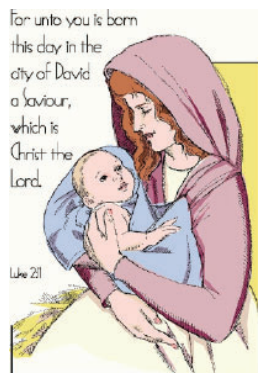
What Is Christmas All About?

Do you ever feel like Charlie Brown? In the midst of the Christmas decorations that have been up since Halloween, the Christmas songs stuck in your head, the lights and shopping and cookies and parties — do you ever want to just stand up and shout in exasperation like Charlie Brown, “Isn’t there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?!”



I’m sure you’ve seen the classic TV special “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” which has been airing since 1965. That’s a pretty good run! Especially for a cartoon that was produced on a low budget and what was basically a last-minute production schedule for animation. It all came about when Coca-Cola came looking for a Christmas special to sponsor for holiday marketing. The cartoon *Peanuts* was wildly popular, so they asked for a meeting and ideas.

Peanuts creator Charles Schulz and the producers threw together an outline in a day, and the Coke execs went for it. Schulz had some unorthodox ideas which was a staple of TV shows in that era. Most of all, he was adamant that the true Christmas story be presented, complete with a scene read straight from the Bible. The TV producers worried that it would be too controversial to read the Bible on national television, but Schulz insisted. Controversial or not, you could say the show has done pretty well.



And you’ve probably seen it a time or two. If so, you know that Charlie Brown is surrounded by all the trappings of Christmas, but they all come up empty. When he wonders aloud what Christmas is really about, his best friend Linus sets him straight with a clear answer straight from

(Cont. to Page 2)

Prospect United Methodist Church

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*We want to hear from you. Please
email, or phone with any concerns
or suggestions.*

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(Cont. from page 1)

Luke 2:8–14. Linus recites the passage in one of the most poignant scenes in television history. In those words, Charlie Brown finds hope.

It's where the whole Christmas experience turns for him as he realizes the true meaning of Christmas. He goes from depressed by the season to inspired by it. He goes from an inward focus of questioning to an outward focus of sharing the season with others.

What is Christmas all about? I believe I do not have to answer the question here because you already know the answer. However, knowing is one thing and experiencing, being inspired, and sharing is another. So I pray during this Christmas season you can experience the Love of God, be inspired by the hope of Christ, and share the joy and the peace of the Spirit with others. Enjoy the gifts of Christmas: Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace.

With the gifts of Christmas,

Pastor Kim



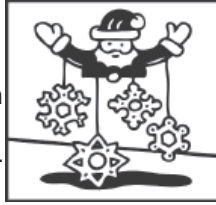
**Christmas Eve services will be
held at 5 and 10 p.m.**

Middle Ages Activities

By Luisa Gladu, Middle Ages Co-Chair

■ Breakfast with Santa

Tickets are now on sale for the Breakfast with Santa that will be held on Saturday, December 15th, from 8:30



a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Please note this is a Reserved Event and tickets sell out quickly!

Doors will open at 8:30 a.m. for seating. At 9 a.m. a delicious hot breakfast will be served buffet style. Following breakfast groups will go through rotating stations, Story Time, Magic Show, Arts and Crafts, Meet and Greet with Queen Elsa and Princess Anna and of course, the children will be able to talk to Santa one on one and have their photo taken with him. Elf Mart will be open throughout the morning for the children to do their Christmas Shopping.

Ticket prices are Adults, \$15; Children 3-12 years old, \$10; and Children under 2 years, \$5 to cover the cost of the photo. To purchase and reserve tickets please call Luisa Gladu @ (860) 582-8383 or the church office at (860) 582-3443. Tickets need to be paid in full when ordered or within one week of the reservation date. This will allow us to be fair to everyone as we usually have a wait list.

Checks can be made payable to PUMC and in the memo section

please put Breakfast w/Santa. If you would like to help or donate towards the Breakfast that would be great! We are also looking for donations for Elf Mart. Please contact Luisa at TheGladus@comcast.net if you would like to help or donate.

■ Annual Renaissance Dinners

We are in the process of writing the script for the 2019 dinners. Let us know if you would like to participate in the dinner as a server, volunteer, or perhaps part of the show. We will announce updates in the upcoming Towers. Tickets will go on sale in March. If you have any questions, just ask Luisa or Gary Gladu.

Thank you to each and everyone of you who has helped to make our events a success. Thank you for volunteering to help, donating items needed, purchasing tickets ,etc. We can't do what we do without your support, help and kindness.

To our members of the Middle Ages Group and "extended" members, thank you for all your hard work. Your commitment and dedication shows in every production and event we put on.

We try to raise money for PUMC and in the process, we enjoy the fellowship. May the Christmas season bring you much love and happiness and that the feeling stays with you all year round. We also wish you all a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

History Corner

■ “The Story of the Other Wise Man” by Kathy Dube

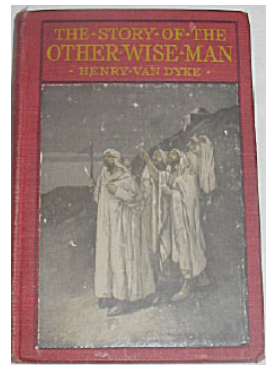
We commonly assume there were three Wise Men, or Magi, following the star and searching out the Christ Child when he was born. Plus, the hymn spells out the three gifts of the magi. But the Bible really doesn't specify how many there were. A Christmas novel first published in 1895 by Henry van Dyke explores the legend of a fictional Fourth Wise Man, who searches for the Christ for much of his adult life.

During his search, he performs numerous acts of charity and gives away the treasures he was going to offer to the infant Jesus. After 33 years, the fourth Wise Man, a Persian named Artaban, is still a pilgrim and arrives in Jerusalem just in time for the crucifixion of Christ.

As the on-line encyclopedia Wikipedia relates: “He is then struck in the head by a falling roof tile and is about to die, having failed in his quest to find Jesus, but having done much good through charitable works. A voice tells him ‘Verily I say unto thee, Inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, thou hast done it unto me.’ (Matthew 25:40)[4] He dies in a calm radiance of wonder and joy. His treasures were accepted, and the Other Wise Man found his King.”

The power of the story led to many theatrical, movie and TV [4]

dramatizations over the years. Even today the novel has resonance and is worth reading. As the author related prior to his death in 1933: “I do not know where this little story came from — out of the air, perhaps. One thing is certain, it is not written in any other book, nor is it to be found among the ancient lore of the East. And yet I have never felt as if it were my own. It was a gift, and it seemed to me as if I knew the Giver.”



December Book Review

Mary Rogers, Worship Chair

“Don’t Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart” by Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D., published by Stephen Ministries, 2004, 150 pages. Do you feel awkward comforting someone who is suffering a loss, a broken heart, or some other human trouble? I often do. I never know quite what to say and sometimes I think what I am saying is as welcome as a lead balloon. This book will help you in such a situation. Haugk not only provides a biblical understanding of sorrow, but guides you through what to do after you say first say hello, how to follow the sufferer’s lead, how to respond. He also provides a chapter entitled “Words That Hurt, Not Heal” which gives you guidance on what not to say. I recommend this book for everyone as we all must deal with this situation at some time or another.

Mission Corner

■ Mission Project Walk-A-Thon

Each year our CT District of the New York Annual Conference has a Mission Project. The 2019 Mission Focus will be Rebuilding Puerto Rico. There are 60,000 roofs that need repair following Hurricane Maria in 2017. Teams are developing and the first team from our District is headed to Puerto Rico in January. Seven teams from our New York Annual Conference have already been in Puerto Rico. Prospect's Jill Wilson went on a mission trip in June and will be leading the January team.



One way for churches to participate in this Mission Project is to raise funds. Consequently, Prospect will be holding a "One Yard Walk A Thon" on January 6th during Fellowship Hour. Join the fun and be a walker! If you are interested in being a walker (one yard, only!), see Jill Wilson for your Sponsor form or pick one up in the Church office. If you raise \$50, you will earn a T shirt! T-shirts will also be available for sale. These funds will help defray the costs for the participants on the January team.

Order Your Poinsettias

Orders are currently being taken for poinsettias. These flowers will adorn our altar on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning. The cost is \$10 each. For those wishing to take the plants home, they will be available after the worship service on Christmas Day.

This form must accompany payment. Please submit orders during worship service or to the office no later than December 18. Thank you.



In Honor of	
In Memory of	
Number Requested	
Given by	

Education Activities

■ Pageant Planned

All are invited to the Sunday School's Annual Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 16th, at the 10 a.m. worship service. In this year's production, "Little Lambs of Bethlehem," the story of the night of Jesus' birth will be told in music filled with creative simplicity and meaningful joy. The melodies are delightful and memorable. We hope to see you there!



■ Ring In The New Year

All are invited to come ring in the 2019 New Year at PUMC! The family celebration in Sessions Hall will run from 4 to 6 p.m. on Monday, December 31st. There is no charge but please bring an appetizer or hors d'oeuvres to share.

The party will include food, drinks, make your own ice cream sundae, crafts, games, and more! Activities are geared for children from Pre-K to 5th graders. However, all are welcome. The special "Ball Drop" will take place at 6 p.m.

If you have any questions or to RSVP, by 12/28, please contact Christa Zaldivar cjw02@hotmail.com or (917) 386-8599.

■ Thanksgiving Food Drive

Thank you to our church family for donating so many nonperishable food items to our collection to help our hungry neighbors.



■ Bible Presentation to our 3rd graders

The tradition of United Methodist churches presenting Bibles to new third graders continues.



We rejoice in this step in your journey with God. We pray God will guide you, your family, and us as you use this Holy Bible in your home, in your church school classes, and in our worship.



PUZZLE

The greatest gift

Gift-giving is a fun Christmas tradition.
What very special gift has God given to you?

Directions: Write the words from each puzzle piece on the matching blank piece of the gift-shaped puzzle.

life
in

but the

our
Lord.

Romans
6:23, NIV

gift
of God

For the

of sin is

Christ
Jesus

death,

is
eternal

wages

Answer: For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23, NIV

**PROSPECT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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BRISTOL, CT 06010**

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