

THE PROSPECT TOWER

Prospect United Methodist Church
A Growing Christian Community of Faith in Action

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Pastor's Page

"The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building"

~ 1 Corinthians 3:8-9



Welcome to the year of our Lord, 2016! We have come to the beginning of another year. Time does fly by, doesn't it? As we begin our journey through the upcoming year, I would just like to remind you of something which is very important: we are part of God's realm and God journeys with us.



I know that that seems very obvious, but please indulge me for a few moments. Human beings have a nasty habit of getting very wrapped up in themselves. We become so focused on what we do that we forget about our relationship with others and with God. It is, as if, we've become the center of the universe. You might even be amazed to learn that even Pastors struggle with this human dilemma! Shocking, isn't it?

The Scriptures are very clear about what we need to do with our lives. We are called to work together to build up the "Realm of God." We are to struggle, side by side, and share the Good News with the people in our community. We are to cooperate in acts of love and mercy for the world which God loves. When we do this, we can counteract the effects of the human predisposition for self-aggrandizement.

This sounds very difficult on the surface, but it isn't really. Working together, we can support each other. By cooperating with each other in ministry, we can draw our strength from our sisters and brothers. And,

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even though we may no longer be the “center of the universe,” working together to build up God’s realm can actually be fun!

Basically, all I’m suggesting is that we need to look for opportunities to touch people’s lives in our community. There are shut-ins that need to be visited; nursing home residents who could use a little company; there are children who would love a story to be read to them. If you are really interested, there are many ways you can make a difference in someone’s life.

And do you know the really good news about all this? We don’t have to do it alone. In fact, if I read the Scriptures properly, God isn’t expecting us to do it all by ourselves. Instead, we are asked to work together. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God can take all our talents and abilities and use them for God’s realm.

So welcome to 2016. We have another whole year to be in ministry. May God bless all our intentions and efforts!

Grace and peace,
Bob Sorozan

■ Thanks To Advent Contributors

Heidi Flower, director of music, thanks everyone who enhanced the Advent season at PUMC. The Senior Choir always provides meaningful music during our worship time and our dedicated Handbell group works hard to brighten our services when they play.

Throughout this Advent season, the Senior Choir featured carols by Alfred Burt (1920 – 1954), an American jazz musician who is best known for composing 15 Christmas carols between 1942 and 1954. Alfred was the son of an Episcopal pastor, Reverend Bates G. Burt, who started the Burt family tradition of sending an original carol as a Christmas card to friends and parishioners. Alfred joined his father and later, Wihla Hutson in creating the series of carols.

In addition, I wish to thank the families that participated in the Advent candle lighting: the Chris Kingsbury family, the Bill Baker family, the Tim Krauss family, the Stuart Brown family, the Christa Zaldivar family and the Lang Ashworth family. We were also blessed to have guest musicians during the Children's Christmas Pageant and on Christmas Eve: Zachary and Zola Cudjoe, Angelina, Anthony, and Michael Fasci and Eleanor Riker.

History Corner

■ Christmas Traditions Over The Ages ~ Kathy Dube

This Christmas postcard, commonly sent to family members and friends in the pre-W.W. I era, is a tradition that morphed into Christmas cards of today, which has morphed, in part, to e-cards in this digital age.

While some church traditions have changed, many no doubt have been part of church life in decades past. Nativity pageants, Christmas caroling to shut-ins, have long been part of the church fabric. Children used to put their dimes in red cardboard stockings destined for a Brooklyn children's hospital. There may also have been Christmas parties at our church for various ages and groups.

Whatever your traditions are, a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday Season to all!



Small Groups Corner

BUSY MONTH FOR MIDDLE AGES GROUP

~ Luisa Gladu, Middle Ages Chair

The Middle Ages Group has had a busy December! On Saturday, December 5th, we held our 6th Annual Victorian Tea. We are pleased to report it was a sold-out event. All three parlors were filled very quickly and Sessions Hall followed suit. The guests were treated to a wonderful array of scones, finger sandwiches and delectable and decadent dessert buffets.

It was wonderful to see families who have come for the past six years and we welcomed some new guests. Event chairs, Scott and Cheryl McNeal, thank all of those who helped make the event possible.

On Sunday, December 6th, we participated in the Children's Christmas Parade on Federal Hill. We have been doing this parade for the past four years. An interesting twist is that we stand stationary and pass out goodies as the children and families march by. This year the good Lord was watching out for us, as it was a beautiful 68 degrees! We decided to go in our Victorian dress and were located in front of Dupont Funeral Home.



Our personas were Lady Sessions and her household staff, Mr. Stokes, Head of Household, Mrs. Hudson, Cook and Bertram, Head Butler. We found out that the funeral home was once the home of a Sessions family so it worked out nicely. We also handed out 3,200 Candy Canes and Tootsie Rolls, and we were able to talk about PUMC.

On Saturday, December 19th, we had several special guests at the 2nd Annual Breakfast With Santa. Along with Santa and Mrs. Claus, Queen Elsa and Princess Anna were on hand to welcome children to this sold-out event. The Middle Ages “Elves” busily prepared for this wonderful event where children and their families enjoy a buffet breakfast. When breakfast was concluded, children could participate in a fun adventure. They were treated to a Magic Show, Story-Time and Music, Crafts and they could talk to Elsa and Anna and then they have a one-on-one with Santa and Mrs. Claus and get a picture taken with them. The children also had the opportunity to shop in Elf Mart for special gifts for their families.



After that you would think the group takes a break, but oh no, we start planning for the Annual Renaissance Dinners scheduled for May 7th and 14th.



The Middle Ages Group hopes you had a Merry and Blessed Christmas and wishes you a very a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Youth Page

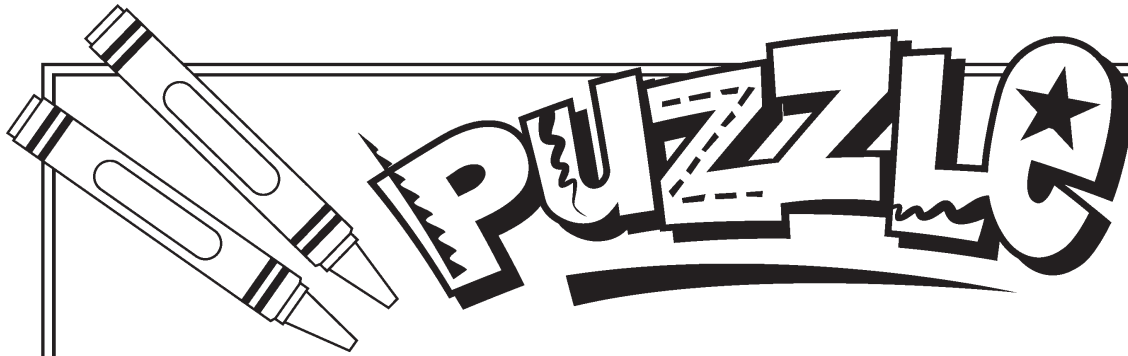
■ Scenes From Nativity Pageant On December 13th

Our Christmas Pageant, was a wonderful production performed by 23 Sunday School children, including animals, angels, shepherds, wise men, Joseph, Mary, and even baby Jesus! Our fabulous narrators were William Griffin, Kayla Griffin, and Rebecca Robbins. Thanks to all children, families, Sunday School teachers, and Heidi Flower for giving their time and talent to this year's performance! ~ Christa Zalvadar



■ Covenant to Care

Due to the generosity of the people of PUMC who donated gifts to the Covenant to Care Program, many children who would not have had anything special to mark the holidays were able to have a gift under the tree. Thank you.



Born king of the Jews

Matthew 2:1-2 says that after Jesus was born, wise men came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?"

Complete the puzzle to discover what they found in Bethlehem.

Directions: In the grid below, draw lines by starting at the first number in each list and stopping at the last.



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|-------------|----------|--------------|----------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 16-17 | 28-17-6 | 61-50-39 | 8-7-18 | 106-96-85-97-107-106 | 42-41-52-63-64-53 |
| 3-14-25 | 36-47-58 | 104-105-106 | 38-49-60 | 89-100-111-123 | 107-108-109-120-130 |
| 2-3-4 | 5-16-27 | 19-18-29-30 | 69-79-89 | 80-92-103-104 | 125-135-134-124-123-133-134 |
| 40-51-62-39 | 37-47-59 | 105-95-84-96 | | 124-125-126-127-128 | 69-80-91-102-103 |
| | | | | 129-130-142-141-129 | 141-140-128-129 |

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