

REFLECTIONS FROM THE CHURCH BY JOE'S POND



Open heart. Open minds. Open Doors. The people of the West Danville United Methodist Church.

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DECEMBER 2011

Volume I, Issue XI

MEANDERINGS OF THE PASTOR *by Rev. Carol Borland*

A while back I was on my way home, following behind a red pickup truck with a New Hampshire license plate going north on Route 16. The truck was going pretty slow and there was no safe place to pass, and I was getting a bit impatient. I was tired and I wanted to get home and take care of supper and perhaps get to bed early. I still had lots of things to do. This guy - whoever he was - was wasting my time. How dare he drive so slowly - and on bare and dry roads! What was his problem anyway?

Just then his brake lights came on bright and long, then he let off the brakes, and then back on again. He did that several times. He must be warning me to back off, I decided. Then he started to honk his horn. "Man," I thought out loud, "this guy is something else!" Sure I'd been following a little close, but that was really overdoing it! Then I noticed something in the road ahead of him - a huge moose, trotting back and forth in the road and then moving ahead a ways, then stopping again, then moving on. He followed it, and I followed them, for about a mile, barely moving - until the moose finally stepped over the guardrails and lumbered down the embankment and into the woods.

It occurred to me then that I could have hit that moose had my New Hampshire friend in the red truck not totally believed the sign that says "MOOSE" and gone slowly enough to see it in time to stop. Patience, I told myself. I really needed that lesson in patience. And a second lesson that went with it - that what may seem like a nuisance or something that slows us down or gets in our way can be a blessing. And I wondered how many others I had missed recognizing that day. And having been thus awakened, I resolved to practice patience and look for blessings instead of roadblocks to progress.

Once home and with supper in the oven, I decided to check my email. Among several messages there was one from a dear friend. It was an email card. I clicked on the link, and even though I am no longer on a slow dial-up internet connection, it took quite a while to download to my computer. Finally a blue screen appeared with a message that started out small and grew larger, appearing to come at me from a distance. It said, "Your e-card is on the way." OK, I thought. Then it said it again - and then a third time. Slow, much! Then it said, "Here is your e-card." And when the print disappeared from the screen, pretty white

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(Continued from page 1)

snowflakes began to slowly float down across the blue background. This went on for what seemed like hours, but was probably less than a minute until at the bottom of the screen the tops of trees appeared, then tops of some buildings. Then slowly more and more landscape appeared until it was evident that this was the evening scene of a lighted village with a church in the center. All the while snowflakes were gently falling down. It seemed to take a long time for the scene to completely fill the screen.

I have to admit that the whole time this was going on, I fought the urge to just click the button that would end the whole thing and take me back to my other messages. "She (my friend) will never know," I reasoned. But I waited it out - not in the most patient frame of mind, even given my not-so-long-past resolve to practice patience and look for blessings. "So where's the message?" I kept saying to myself as I watched the five zillion snowflakes fall and the village scene slowly rise on the screen.

Well, the message finally appeared in print across the scene. It said: "May God's blessings float down like soft snowflakes."

Oops!

And here we are in Advent, the season of expectant waiting. Not "impatient waiting" but "expectant waiting." Anticipatory waiting - not anticipating the worst - but anticipating the absolute best - the coming of God's greatest of gifts to all creation - the gift of God's own self coming to live among us as a human being - one who experiences for us and with us all that life holds - all the joys and sorrows, all the successes and failures, all the hatred and all the love, the violence and the gentle kindness, all things petty and all things important - all of life - even death.








When we talk about Advent "waiting," I wonder if we really fully grasp what it means to truly "wait" for God with absolute confidence and trust in God. So often we fill our waiting with "doing" - we want to be in charge, we want to fix things, we want to make things right.

The Old Testament book of Genesis tells us that God spoke once, and all creation sprang to life - quasars, oceans, whales, giraffes, orchids, and beetles. Then God spoke again, John the Gospel-writer tells us, and this time the Word - with a capital W - the Word took the form of a human being, Jesus Christ. And that Word was "life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." [John 1:2-3 NRSV]. And God sends an angel named Gabriel to tell a young maiden betrothed to Joseph of the lineage of David that she has found favor with God and will bear a son who will inherit the throne of his ancestor David - and who will be the long-awaited Son of the

(Continued on page 5)

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The Seven Baby Steps of *Financial Peace University*

	<p>BABY STEP 1 <u>\$1,000 to start an Emergency Fund</u> An emergency fund is for those unexpected events in life that you can't plan for: the loss of a job, an unexpected pregnancy, a faulty car transmission, and the list goes on and on. It's not a matter of <i>if</i> these events will happen; it's simply a matter of <i>when</i> they will happen. http://www.daveramsey.com/new/baby-step-1/</p>
	<p>BABY STEP 2 <u>Pay off all debt using the Debt Snowball</u> List your debts, excluding the house, in order. The smallest balance should be your number one priority. Don't worry about interest rates unless two debts have similar payoffs. If that's the case, then list the higher interest rate debt first. http://www.daveramsey.com/new/baby-step-2/</p>
	<p>BABY STEP 3 <u>3 to 6 months of expenses in savings</u> Once you complete the first two baby steps, you will have built serious momentum. But don't start throwing all your "extra" money into investments quite yet. It's time to build your full emergency fund. http://www.daveramsey.com/new/baby-step-3/</p>
	<p>BABY STEP 4 <u>Invest 15% of household income into Roth IRAs and pre-tax retirement</u> When you reach this step, you'll have no payments—except the house—and a fully funded emergency fund. Now it's time to get serious about building wealth. http://www.daveramsey.com/new/baby-step-4/</p>
	<p>BABY STEP 5 <u>College funding for children</u> By this point, you should have already started Baby Step 4—investing 15% of your income—<i>before</i> saving for college. Whether you are saving for you or your child to go to college, you need to start <i>now</i>. http://www.daveramsey.com/new/baby-step-5/</p>
	<p>BABY STEP 6 <u>Pay off home early</u> Now it's time to begin chunking all of your extra money toward the mortgage. You are getting closer to realizing the dream of a life with no house payments. http://www.daveramsey.com/new/baby-step-6/</p>
	<p>BABY STEP 7 <u>Build wealth and give!</u> It's time to build wealth and give like never before. Leave an inheritance for future generations, and bless others now with your excess. It's really the only way to live! http://www.daveramsey.com/new/baby-step-7/</p>



DAVE RAMSEY is a personal money management expert, an extremely popular national TV and radio personality and best-selling author of *The Total Money Makeover*.



What is Financial Peace University?
 Financial Peace University classes meet for two hours each week for 13 weeks, during which time the average family pays off \$5300 in debt and saves \$2700.

Dave Ramsey's

Financial Peace
 UNIVERSITY





UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

WEST DANVILLE, VERMONT



On Saturday, November 19, the UMW held an Indoor Yard Sale and Holiday Bazaar. It was a howling success because we were the fortunate beneficiaries of many decorations, children's toys, books, and other household goods donated by some folks who had sold their houses and were moving. There was so much stuff that it took the UMW ladies 7 days to set up, sell as much of it as possible, and clean up afterwards.



When it seems hopeless – DANCE!

The United Methodist Women is the largest denominational faith organization for women with approximately 800,000 members whose mission is fostering spiritual growth, developing leaders and advocating for justice.

Everyone enjoyed the comfort and beauty of the newly refinished downstairs. It was a lot of hard work, but it resulted in earning more than enough to buy a full set of dishes for 100, with quite a bit left for our mission work. Thank-you, Everyone, who donated, worked, bought, or attended our special event!

For more on our missions & ministries, visit: WestDanvilleUMC.org/Ministries/umw.html



We have a continuing sale of our Syracuse China dishes that we are replacing. They are in beautiful condition – we just don't have enough of them anymore. They can be purchased in sets of any size. The cost is \$1.00 per piece for plates, dessert/salad plates, saucers & cups, and \$2.00 for matching accessories: meat platters, serving bowls, and creamers. **To purchase, please call Jane Larrabee at Hastings Store (803) 684-3398.**

Donuts, various breads and coffee plus place to sit and visit a bit made the day just perfect!



Setting up for the sale: "Where do we begin?"



Some of the many Christmas decorations



Owl collection



Some of the children's collection



Pat, with Abby, a furry visitor!



United Methodist Women
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

<http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umw/>

ABOUT JOIN CONNECT LEARN PROGRAMS RESOURCES

(Continued from page 2)

Most High - the Messiah. And Mary's fears evaporated as she accepted God's claim upon her life. [Luke 1:26-38]

How many times a day, I wonder, does the darkness - the fears, the anxieties, the doubts, the despair - within us try to overcome the Word - the God-life or light that is also within us? And how many times a day, when that happens, does God speak to us yet one more time in yet one more way, small or large, to tell us what we need to hear about how to remain in the light?

I'd like to suggest that we spend our time of "Advent waiting" following Paul's admonition to the Christians at Thessalonica: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances." [1 Thessalonians 5:16a NRSV] That's not an easy task. I wonder what would happen if we made a conscious effort, this Advent season, to follow Paul's advice: to pray for whatever we feel called to pray about; to pray for others and for ourselves; to be thankful and joyful; to be faithful even as God is faithful to us? Who knows? We might find ourselves becoming more mindful of God's blessings as we experience God's peace in our life as we "wait patiently" for the fulfillment of God's promise of light in the midst of darkness.

May the Advent blessings of hope, peace, joy and love be an integral part of our preparations to receive once again the birth of Jesus - Emmanuel - God-With-Us!

Merry Christmas!

Carol F. Borland



WestDanvilleUMC.org/churchlife.html

**FROM THE DIARY OF
JENNIE M. HASTINGS**

Sunday, December 7, 1941

Blustery & cloudy

Shocking news came over the radio this mid afternoon. Japan has attacked Pearl Harbor and the Philippines, with heavy losses to the U.S.

Later in the day Japan declared war on the U.S.

DECEMBER 2011

CELEBRATIONS & REMEMBRANCES

-  **05 - Bryce & Esther Montgomery**
-  **07 - Carol Borland**
-  **15 - John Larrabee**
-  **19 - Morris & Dot Burrington**

BIBLE QUIZ

When Jesus was healing people, what prophet did he claim to be fulfilling?

Answer on page 9

Coming Events for the Month of December



Each Sunday in Advent, the Sunday School students will be present at the beginning of the service to assist in the lighting of the Advent candles.

Friday, December 2nd - 7:00-9:00PM

HeBrews Coffeehouse—Lynne & Larry Beaudry will be our headliners with their Hon & Deary Show

Sunday, December 4th – 10:45am

Church Council/Trustees/PPR meets after worship.

Saturday, December 10th – 1:00pm

West Danville UMC's Charge Conference

Sunday, December 18th – 9:30am

Sunday School Christmas play performed during church.

Saturday December 24th – 7:00pm

West Danville UMC's Christmas Eve service



THE OPEN DOOR NEEDS:

peanut butter, toilet paper, jellies, soups, canned beans, etc.

Please keep their needs in mind as you shop, and bring a contribution with you on Sundays.

29 Hill Street, Danville, VT 05828

(802) 684-2515



Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Psalm 19:14 - NRSV

The General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church, Center for Worship Resourcing, PO Box 340003-0003,
Toll Free Tel. 877.899.2780, ext. 7070; Worship-Presching-Music Web Site www.gbod.org/worship; Email: worshipcenter@gbod.org

December

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
				1 World AIDS Day	2	3
4th Sun of Advent (Blue or Purple) Isa 40:1-11; Ps 85:1-2, 8-13 (UMH 806); 2 Pet 3:8-15; Mk 1:1-8	5	6	7	8	9	10
11th 3 rd Sun of Advent (Blue, Purple or Pink) Isa 61:1-4, 8-11; Ps 126 (UMH 847); 1 Thess 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28	12	13	14	15	16	17
18th Sun of Advent (Blue or Purple); Charles Wesley b. 1707; 2 Sam 7:1-11, 16; Lk 1:47-55 (UMH 199); Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26- 38	19	20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve (White) Isa 9:2-7; Ps 96 (UMH 815); Titus 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-20
25 Christmas Day (White) Isa 52:7-10; Ps 98 (UMH 818); Heb 1:1-4 (5-12); Jn 1:1-14	26 Kwanzaa begins	27	28	29	30	31 Watch Night/New Years Eve Ecc 3:1-13; Ps 8 (UMH 743); Rev 21:1- 6a; Mt 25:31-46
Kwanzaa Dec 26-Jan 1						

2011



HeBrews Coffeehouse

HeBrews Coffeehouse Report *by Curtis Larrabee*

November brought us yet another wonderful month with HeBrews Coffeehouse. Folks gathered, both young and old, for a couple of hours of music, fun and fellowship, entertained by the music of members of Grace UMC's band, Flames of Grace, and friends. Again, it was an enormous success.

Opening with a prayer, and with the Flames of Grace and friends headlining the primary event, we had tremendous audience participation. Guests offered up their talents of guitar and fiddle music and story telling.

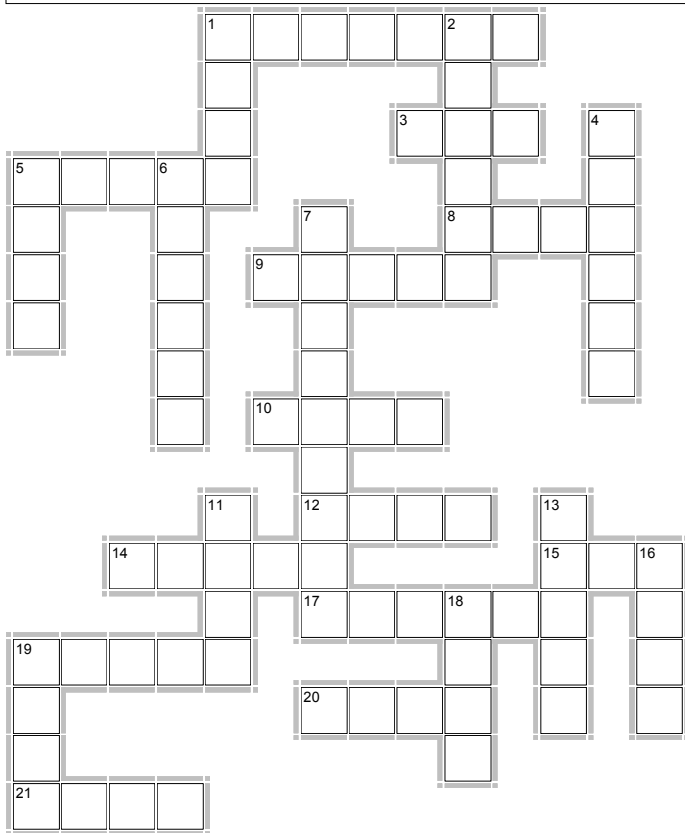
As always, coffee, punch and other drinks were provided by the church, and folks brought cookies, chips, crackers and cheese.

We are constantly trying to improve our format to make it as enjoyable as possible for everyone. Our dream and goal is to get more youth involved and perhaps encourage some "unchurched" or "less-churched" folks to find the path to Jesus.

If anyone would like to help organize this or has ideas that would help us, PLEASE don't hesitate to get in touch. For more information call (802) 535-4769, or email coffeehouse@westdanvilleumc.org.

MUSIC ~ FUN ~ FELLOWSHIP

CROSSWORD by Allan Michaud



EclipseCrossword.com

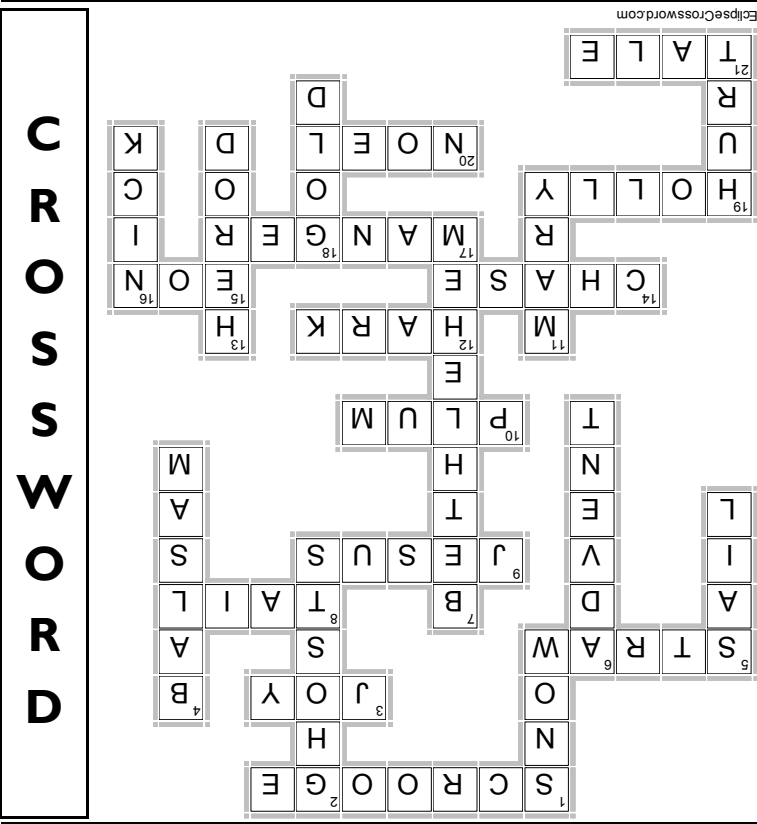
ACROSS

1. Dicken character fond of bah...humbug
3. one of the candles of traditional wreaths stands for this.
5. common bedding for a manger
8. a wagging appendage
9. he whose birth was heralded by angels and whose witness is seen as a light to the world.
10. a pudding often associated with the holidays in the West.
12. listen
14. chez.... the place where folks can often go to share after the memorable Christmas Candlelight Service.
15. a long time
17. a stand in for the Inn
19. red berried evergreen associated with the celebration of Christmas
20. Christmas in Paris perhaps?
21. story

DOWN

1. what most Vermonters want to see on the ground by Christmas eve...but just enough for atmosphere.
2. Christmas past, present and future in Dicken's tale.
4. a preferred flavor of evergreen used for the traditional Christmas tree
5. a needed part to certain early wind power generators often used to move on water.
6. the Church season leading to Christmas
7. the star stopped by here
11. and Joseph took her as his wife.
13. played nice with the Wise men to learn of the whereabouts of the birth that they came to witness.
16. a Saint who was remember for giving.
18. one of the three gifts offered on Jesus birth.
19. a vision of no_____ in all God's Holy Mountain...was seen as one ultimate end in God's design.

A N S W E R S



BIBLE QUIZ - Isaiah (Matthew 8:27-31)

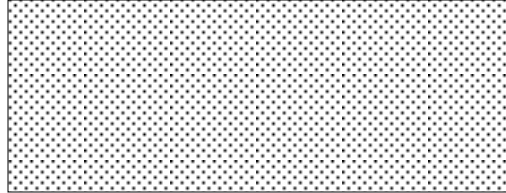
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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

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He Brews COFFEEHOUSE

of the

**WEST DANVILLE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

MUSIC, FUN & FELLOWSHIP



**84 VT-15, WEST DANVILLE
FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH 7-9PM**

West Danville **UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

There's a song in the air in West Danville. It is a song of friendship, love, loyalty, and a spirit of welcome and inclusiveness. It is because of this song that our church has continued to be a strong and active Christian witness since 1893.

Whether you are a visitor from near or far away, we welcome the chance to connect with you.

Open hearts. Open minds. Open Doors. We are the people of the West Danville United Methodist Church.



www.WestDanvilleUMC.org