
The Tower *Chimes*

Union Church of Pocantico Hills
555 Bedford Road
Pocantico Hills, New York 10591

The Rev. Dr. F. Paul DeHoff, Pastor

Janet Graham, Editor

January 2011

.....from the Pastor's desk

What is the meaning of Christmas? It is simple and straightforward; we sing it in the carol "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" – it is: "God and sinners reconciled". I'll say no more in the hope that you will be able to recall this simple, yet profound, truth if and when asked what does Christmas mean to you.

The morning after the "blizzard of 2010" I was removing some of the Christmas décor from the Sanctuary. As I was doing this I was reminiscing about our celebration of Jesus' birth. The Sunday School Christmas Program was tender and moving as the children presented the story from Scripture and we joined them in carols. Thanks are due to: Beth Coffman, Debra Stewart and Thomas Zachaz! The Christmas Fellowship Hour, hosted by the Board of Deacons, was very abundant and well presented! Thank you Gina Alexis and fellow Deacons! Thanks to members of the Choir and to Thomas Zachacz for their music at our Christmas Eve Services! Every event I have mentioned requires a lot of talent, time, and dedication.

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held January 23. Following the 11 a.m. Service a luncheon will be presented, hosted by the members of the Board of Deacons. The Entrees for the luncheon will be provided by the Dinner Club. A signup sheet is in the Parish Hall for Salads and Desserts. The Annual Meeting will be called to order following lunch, which will be approximately 12:45 p.m.

Installation of persons elected to the Boards of Deacons and Trustees, as Clerk of the Congregation and Chairperson of the Nominating Committee will take place at the 11:00 a.m. Lord's Day Service on January 30th.

The Annual Planning Retreat/Conference for members of the Boards of Deacons and Trustees will be held February 5th, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Rockefeller Brothers Conference Center, Pocantico Hills. At this meeting the Boards organize and plan for implementation for the year 2011's programs and ministries.

Vivian R. Jacobson, author of *SHARING CHAGALL*, will be at Union Church on March 27th, 3 p.m., to present an illustrated lecture entitled: "Chagall and The Bible". You may remember Vivian from last year's "Chagall Suite" piano recital by Seth Weinstein. If so, you will recall her joy and

enthusiasm, which will transform what you may otherwise perceive to be not all that interesting. More information will be forthcoming – please reserve the date!

Bruce Levingston, a well-known concert pianist, who is a close friend of David Rockefeller, has agreed to give a recital to benefit our Pastoral Endowment Fund, on April 3rd, at 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Bruce Levingston has given performances all over the country, including at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. More information will be forthcoming – please reserve the date!

Please note that the new tax law, recently passed, has extended the right of IRA owners over the age of 70.5 to make tax-free charitable transfers of up to \$100,000 from a traditional or Roth IRA directly to charity. The extension is effective for 2010 and 2011. Recognizing that there was little time left to take advantage of this extension in 2010, the new law allows donors to elect to treat IRA rollovers made in January 2011 as if they were made on Dec. 31, 2010. If you are interested in taking advantage of this opportunity you are encouraged to consult with your financial advisor.

LAMPSTAND

“...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

This space is reserved for anyone who would like to share stories or experiences with us.

PREACHING SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

- Jan. 5 – “*Three Men and A Baby*”- Matthew 2:1-12 (11)
 Jan. 9 – “*You Have Been Baptized—Now What?*” – I Corinthians 12:12-27
 Jan. 16 – “*Those Debts and Trespasses*”
 Romans 3:21-28 (23-24)
 Jan. 23 – “*Of Pearls and Pigs*” – Matthew 7:1-11 (6)
 Jan. 30 – “*The God of Love and Wars of Religion*”- II Chronicles 28:8-15 (9)

COMMITMENT CARDS – 2011

We want to thank our members and friends for their timely response to the December deadline for the 2011 Commitment Cards. If you have not yet sent your card in, we ask that you please do so at your earliest convenience. If you have misplaced your card, please call the church office and a new one will be provided.

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

Contribution envelopes are ready for pick-up in the Parish Hall. If you are currently not receiving envelopes and would like us to provide them, please call the church office at 631.2069 or place your name on the list provided next to the envelopes.

CHRISTMAS PRESENT

As always, Union Church was a very special place to be as we moved through the Christmas holidays. Wreaths, garland, poinsettias and candles cast a wonderful, warm glow throughout our Sanctuary, and the Parish Hall tree was spectacular. Our Sunday school children presented their Christmas program on the 19th followed by our holiday fellowship hour hosted by the Board of Deacons. That afternoon people came to our Carol Sing, and spent an hour immersed in this beautiful inspirational music. Yes, a merry old time was had by all!

We would like to thank the Dinner Club for the wreaths; our members and friends for the poinsettias; Pastor DeHoff for his Christmas message; Tom Zachacz and our choir members for the wonderful music provided during our

three services; Beth Coffman, Debra Stewart, Tom Zachacz and our Sunday school students for their presentation; and to everyone who helped to pull all this together. May you all enjoy a happy, healthy New Year.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR KIDS

Thank you to everyone who participated in the gifts for children program this year. All the gifts were picked up the week before Christmas with many expressions of appreciation to our members and friends for their generosity.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT STUDY GROUP

Our Wednesday Night Study Group will resume on **January 5**.

This group consists of about 12-15 people, with topics that invite lively and interesting discussions. The meetings begin at 7 p.m. in the church library, and anyone who would like to join us is welcome to do so.

FLOWER CALENDAR

The 2011 Flower Calendar is filling up fast with a number of dates already claimed. If there is a specific date(s) that you would like to reserve, please sign up soon to insure that your date is saved.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place on **Sunday, January 23**. Those who have been asked to submit reports are asked to do so **no later than January 16**. This will allow us an appropriate amount of time to prepare the annual report booklet

DINNER CLUB NEWS

The Fellowship Hall was decked out in all its Christmas splendor, greeting those who attended the December 11 dinner party with a warm and inviting room. The dinner committee, led by co-president, Melissa Share, did a wonderful job, not to mention the

delicious appetizers and desserts brought by each participant. The main meal was catered with a mouth watering selection to choose from.

As has been the tradition for many, many years, each person brought a small gift for someone of the same sex as themselves, with a little poem attached to hint at what lay inside the wrapping. Of course, many of the poems were quite good and we didn't get one "roses are red, violets are blue..." this year!

Co-president Tricia Fuller announced that she was having to step down from her position after one year due to personal commitments and so a search for someone to replace her has been accomplished and the announcement will be made at our next meeting.

There will be no meeting in January (a snowmen's holiday!), but we look forward to our first dinner of the new year on **February 12**. Once again, we invite any member or friend of the church who would like to join us for an evening of friendship, laughs and good food to please let us know—you are warmly welcome.

FELLOWSHIP TIME

At the present time, we have two Sundays in January (1/9 & 1/16) that are open, presenting a great opportunity for service to our church. Please check your calendar to see if you would be available to host a fellowship hour this month or in the months to come.

The time that we spend together following our 11 a.m. Lord's Day service is important, as it gives us an opportunity to get to better know the members and friends of our church community..

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

Your prayers are requested for:

- John Garibaldi who was hospitalized again recently and is now at home recuperating.

IN MEMORIAM

- For John Thaler, who had lung Surgery in December and is now at home recuperating.
- For Bill Paddock, who returned to the hospital recently and, hopefully, will be home again soon.
- We ask continued prayers for Mary Johnson's sister, Beatrice, who has had lung surgery, but is facing further testing and possible surgery as she moves forward in her recovery.

As requested by the family, the following people have gifted the Pastoral Ministry Endowment Fund in loving memory of Anne Klami:

John & Bertha Yurczak
Joe & Kathleen Imperato

We gratefully acknowledge and accept these gifts in Anne's name.

FOR THE CHURCH RECORD**Weddings**

Nils Giddi, Jr. & Elaine Remling 12/5/10

Articles for the FEBRUARY Tower Chimes are due by JANUARY 23.
