

DECEMBER 2016



Worshiping God With Joy.

Serving Others.

Embracing All.



Pastor's Ponderings

“It’s the most wonderful time of the year!” Really now, is it? That’s the Tuesday morning (29th) me talking (to myself – and I’m blaming that little devil that sits on my left shoulder). The weather was miserable and it’s always much harder commuting up the Parkway in rainy weather. I was in a considerable amount of pain (I believe from a kidney stone). I was already running late and had to stop for gas – why hadn’t I gotten gas the day before! And I was already prioritizing at least five (actually six or seven) things that needed to be handled instantly when I got to the office. Did I mention I was hungry – no time for breakfast!! I already had a conversation with June in mind. It went something like: “I’m going to tell June to hold all my calls. I’m going to close my door. Something I’ve never done in my 7+ years as Pastor. No pleasantries, no distractions, no visitors or stray conversations. FOCUS! FOCUS! FOCUS! So much to do – so little time – how am I ever going to get it all done.” And then as I pulled out of the gas station feeling very sorry for myself this Christmas song by Andy Williams comes on the radio:

“It’s the most wonderful time of the year
With the kids jingle belling
And everyone telling you "Be of good cheer"
It’s the most wonderful time of the year
It’s the hap-happiest season of all
With those holiday greetings and gay happy meetings
When friends come to call
It’s the hap- happiest season of all ...

Well you get the picture – bah humbug and all that jazz! Ebenezer Scrooge had nothing on me. I couldn’t listen another minute – and I quickly dialed (or pressed the button actually) to another station. Oh no ... more cheerful Christmas music – worse yet – the same Andy Williams song! “It’s the most wonderful time of the year...”

I thought about dialing (I mean pressing) another button ... but it seems I’ve gotten better over the years at recognizing when God has a message for me. A few years ago, I may have had to turn to four or five stations playing the same song before I heard what God was saying. It *is* the most wonderful time of the year if I would just let it happen. If I would just focus on what was really important. And that wasn’t the million and one things that needed to be done. It was the one thing that needed to be done – to remember the reason for the season. Just as importantly, the Bible verse that has gotten me through just about every difficult thing in my adult life popped into my mind: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13) It’s not the most Christmasy of verses, but it was the one I needed. Maybe you do too?

Christ will give me strength. What could be more wonderful than that? At any time of year! And believe it or not I began to feel better. I recalled all the times that I relied on that promise – and God came through. It may be just a little sad to need such strength to get through the holidays, but for many people they are difficult times for a whole variety of reasons. But we’re not doing it on our own. God can provide strength, and cheer (happy may be pushing it just a little!).

So please, please don't get so caught up in the chaos of Christmas planning that you forget to enjoy just at least a little "wonderful." There'll be a lot of wonderful things happening here at church. You owe it to yourself to remember that the most wonderful thing of all happened at Christmas. Those aren't just words to repeat – those are words to believe in and count on. And to do a little wondering about.

Oh yeah – the little angel on my right shoulder showed up in the nick of time. When I arrived at church, I sat in June's office for a good half hour and had a nice chat and relaxed. I deserved it – and I still managed to get the things done that needed to be done. Thank God – really! Thanks so much!! Have a wonderful – and wonder-full – Merry Christmas!!!

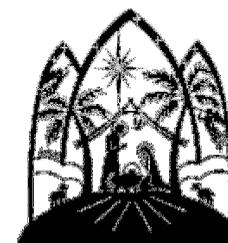
Pastor Kathi



***“...star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright;
Westward leading still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect
light!”***

Call of Special Meeting

A special meeting of the Congregation and the Corporation of Ogden Memorial Presbyterian Church will take place on Sunday, December 11, 2016, immediately following the worship service to receive the 2015 report of the Auditors, and to elect a Deacon.



Worship at Ogden – December

Sunday, December 4 – Second Sunday in Advent

9:00 a.m.	Chancel Choir
9:20 a.m.	Chimes Ensemble
10:00 a.m.	Worship - Communion
10:15 a.m.	Sunday School
11:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship
11:15 a.m.	Deacons
11:15 a.m.	Youth Music
11:30 a.m.	Worship & Music Committee

Sunday, December 11 – Third Sunday in Advent

10:00 a.m.	Worship – Loretta Suttles, guest organist
10:15 a.m.	Sunday School
11:00 a.m.	Special Congregational Meeting

Sunday, December 18 – Fourth Sunday in Advent

- 9:00 a.m. Chancel Choir
- 9:30 a.m. Pageant participants arrive
- 10:00 a.m. Worship – Christmas Pageant
- 11:00 a.m. Christmas Brunch
- 12:00 p.m. Christmas Caroling



Saturday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

- 4:20 p.m. Chancel Choir
- 4:50 p.m. Chimes Ensemble
- 5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 25 – Nativity of Jesus Christ

- 9:30 a.m. Chancel Choir
- 10:00 a.m. Worship
- 11:00 a.m. Coffee Fellowship



From the Worship and Music Committee

The Worship & Music Committee wants to remind the congregation that Sunday, December 11, is the deadline to order poinsettias. Order forms will be available in the Sunday bulletins or call June (973-635-5567) to place an order by phone. The cost is \$12/plant (choice of red or white) - cash or check (payable to OMPC). The Committee appreciates your participation in purchasing these flowers as a means of making the sanctuary more festive and beautiful and invites you to take your flowers home with you following the Christmas Eve Candlelight service.

Our heartfelt wishes to you all for a joyous and blessed Christmas!!



Emergency Weather Closings

We have a procedure in place for emergency closings of this type. The decision to close will be made by Balcom Parcels and Pastor Kathi sometime mid Saturday afternoon. Kathi will then contact the Clerk, Marcia Casais, Casey Molino Dunn and Sandy Roos. Sandy will contact the heads of the Deacon groups who will make calls to each person/family. In addition, the information will be posted on our Facebook page and Casey will send a blast email to everyone. Whenever possible, a message will be left on our phone. And finally, if in doubt, don't hesitate to contact Pastor Kathi on her cell (732-740-2224). This should cover every base. Hopefully we will have no reason to implement our emergency procedure this winter due to bad weather!



News From Session

At its November meeting, the Session:

- Heard plans for Advent and Christmas, including the sanctuary decorating, the Christmas Pageant, and caroling;
- Learned that an engineer is being consulted regarding work to be done on the Coleman lot;
- Planned to consult with Crown Oil to have a more effective heating timer for the sanctuary level;
- Planned to consult Verizon about changes to our telephone system;
- Learned that a budget for 2017 is in preparation;
- Approved holding a special meeting of the Congregation and Corporation on December 11;
- Were pleased by the recent spaghetti supper and the Concert on Main, and were happy to be able to host the residents of the Morris ARC house on Fairmount Avenue.

IT'S BUDGET TIME!

Reminder: If you have not yet submitted your 2017 Pledge Card, and want to do so, please do so as soon as possible. Place your card in an envelope and hand it to Lizza or put it in the offering plate. Having a general idea of what we can expect to receive during the year greatly helps the Session when creating Ogden's budget and making program or maintenance plans.



Per Capita Apportionment

The Presbytery's Per Capita charge for 2017 is \$35 per member. The total amount for our church owed to Presbytery by January is **\$4,095**. We are asking once again that you help lessen the impact on our budget by donating your per capita payment. Last year, due to your generosity we were able to collect about \$1,800 towards this expense. We appreciate your willingness to help ease the financial burden on our church.

And of course, if you have already paid your per capita *thank you very much!*



“Sing choirs of angels, Sing in exultation...”

Our journey from Advent to Christmas (and then to Epiphany) brings many opportunities for joyous music:

- **Chancel Choir** continues to add to worship most Sundays.
- **Chimers** add to the first Sunday of the month, December 4, as well as Christmas Eve.
- **Youth Musicians** share their talents during our Pageant.

Please make sure you have two important **December dates** on your calendar:

- **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18:** Christmas Pageant, 10:00 a.m., followed by our Holiday Brunch & Caroling, 11:00 a.m.
- **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24:** Christmas Eve Family Candlelight Worship, 5:30 p.m. featuring an array of special music.

As usual, the monthly calendar highlights call times and other important reminders.

With best wishes for a wonderful Christmas season,

Casey



Ogden's music series continues in 2017.
www.ConcertsOnMain.org

Our beautiful sanctuary will again be filled with special music for Concerts on Main. Based on helpful feedback from many Ogdenites we'll again present different musical genres of music in the new year.

Full details are coming soon, but mark your calendar for these upcoming performances:

- **Sunday, January 22, 1:00 p.m. (following Church Potluck)**
- **Friday, March 24, 7:30 p.m.**

Thank you to all who attended and helped out with our November Concert and Community Dinner.



Youth Group

Youth Group had a fun gathering after worship on Sunday, November 27. Ogdenites in middle, high school and college had lunch, helped decorate the sanctuary then delivered our contributions to the Interfaith Food Pantry before our annual hike.

This year our pre-caroling tradition of cookie decorating will happen on December 18 following our Pageant and Brunch.

December Mission of the Month

“Tis the season to be jolly” as the Christmas song *Deck the Halls* goes... but better yet to help make jolly the season for those in need. With this in mind, the Mission & Outreach Committee is asking for your support of the Jersey Battered Women’s Shelter* for their December ‘Mission-of-the-Month’. The JBWS has many needs, but we would like to focus on the following donation items: Gift cards of any denomination (e.g. Target, WalMart, Costco or food stores) are always greatly appreciated along with kid-friendly *non perishable* food items such as juice boxes, mac & cheese, snacks and cereals. A box will be placed in the Narthex ready for your donations. If you have any questions, please contact Sophia Hannay (soffmh@gmail.com/973-635-0456)

*Jersey Battered Women’s Shelter, Inc. in Morris County, NJ is a full-service domestic violence and domestic abuse prevention agency with volunteer opportunities. The services include a 24-hour hotline; counseling; safe house; transitional living; children's services; life skills education; vocational counseling; batterers' intervention; legal assistance; teen dating violence services; and professional training, education and youth prevention programs

JERSEY BATTERED WOMEN'S SERVICE (JBWS)

P.O. Box 1437

Morristown, NJ 07962

Administrative: 973-267-7520

24-Hour Helpline: 973-267-4763

Email:

info@jbws.org

Thank You!

Thank you to all of you who took the time out of your busy schedules to come and enjoy a fantastic spaghetti dinner on November 17, followed by another excellent Concert on Main. Thanks so much to the many people who helped make these events happen – especially Casey Molino Dunn, Gary Smith and Carl Andreassen. Besides enjoying a very pleasant evening, we collected \$174 which was donated to the Interfaith Food Pantry.

Thank you to all of you who so generously contributed food donations for our November ‘Mission-of-the-Month: Interfaith Food Pantry. The Youth Group delivered the food before heading out on their annual hike.

Thank you to everyone who stayed to enjoy a tasty chili lunch after the service on the 27th and who helped decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. Thanks especially to David Molino Dunn who made such a delicious chili.

Thank you to Eric Jones who has volunteered his time now for several months by helping Alfonso keep our building in ‘tip top’ shape.

It’s so nice to be able to have so many people to thank. And it’s next to impossible to get everyone who deserves thanks in one newsletter. So please let June know who you would like to thank in our next newsletter.



Please take time out from your busy schedules to remember the December birthdays listed below. Send a card or make a phone call. Your greetings will be appreciated by all! If you have not seen your name on the lists, please call the church office so that we can update our files with your birth date. We promise not to print the year in the "Birthday Corner."

Ethan Conklin	4
Barbara Snyder	6
Carol Bender	13
Paul Bender	13
Kathi Heath	15
Doug Kent	28
Karina Wildauer	31



Let Us Pray...

Let us pray for our members...Marcia Casais, Becky Jarvis, Martha Kiff, Alice Loeser, Barbara Molitor

Let us pray for...

Kevin Boettger	nephew of Pat Hammeke
Gina Cocchiaro-Hoang family	friends of Cindy Parlavecchio
Kathy Dixon	sister-in-law of Marcia Casais
Ed Dunn	great-uncle of Casey Molino Dunn
Josh Fernandez	12 year old neighbor of the Roos family
Auriel Gonzales	mother of Sandy Roos
James Guishard	friend of Janice and Balcom Parcels
Paul Horgan	friend of the Crescas family
Marie LaPena	friend of Mariclaire Miller
Patricia Maher	friend of Marcia Casais
Denny Mayer	friend of Marcia Casais
Ron McBride	uncle of Cheryl Conklin
The Mears family	our missionaries in Haiti
Charles Molino	uncle of Casey Molino Dunn
Clark and Jean Paradise	parents of Allan Paradise
Dennis Paradise	brother of Allan Paradise
Steve Raas	friend of Bob and Colette Crescas
The Roche family	neighbors of Marcia Casais
Gloria Rodgers	cousin of Ginnie Trowbridge
Charlie Roussel	son-in-law of June Jeannette
Kathy Scotton and family	friends of the Knolls
Mindy Shaw	friend of Janice Parcels
Laurie Sheppard	friend of Cindy Parlavecchio
Frank Squindo	son of Janice Parcels
Mark Squindo	son of Janice Parcels

Let us pray for those serving our Country...Scott Armstrong, James Glendening, Morgan Glendening, Robert Traver, Doug Verblaauw.