

Ilion Presbyterian News

December 2018

Pastor Rick Riggle

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In the letters of Paul, which are the earliest New Testament writings we have, there is no suggestion that the birth of Jesus was accompanied by any miracle, and in the Gospel of Mark, which is probably the earliest of the four, the birth story plays no part at all. So a great many biblical scholars would agree with the skeptics that the great nativity stories of Luke and Matthew are simply the legends which have grown around the event, the poetry of a later generation, and that were we to have been present, we would have seen a birth no more or less marvelous than any other birth.

But if that is the case, what do we do with these favorite stories of the wise men and the star, the shepherds and the angels and the great hymn of joy that the angels sang? Do we dismiss them as fairy tales, the subject for pageants to giggle and point at the kids once a year come Christmas, the lovely dream that is really only a dream? Only if we are fools do we do that, although there are many in our age who have done it and there are moments of darkness when each one of us is tempted to do it. A lovely dream. That is all.

Who knows what the facts of Jesus' birth actually were? As for myself, the longer I live, the more inclined I am to believe in miracles, the more I suspect that if we had been there at the birth, we might well have seen and heard things that would be hard to reconcile with modern science. But of course that is not the point, because the Gospel writers are not really interested primarily in the facts of the birth but in the significance, the meaning for them of that birth just as the people who love us are not really interested primarily in the facts of our births, but in what it meant to them when we were born and how for them the world was never the same again, how their whole lives were charged with new significance.

Whether there were ten million angels there or just the woman herself and her husband, when that child was born the whole course of history was changed. That is a fact as hard and blunt as any fact. Art, music, literature, our culture itself, our political institutions, our whole understanding of ourselves and our world-it is impossible to conceive of how differently world history would have developed if that child had not been born. And in terms of faith, much more must be said because for faith, the birth of the child into the darkness of the world made possible not just a new way of understanding life but a new way of living life.

Pastor Rick



**Season's Greetings from your church staff**

Pastor Rick    Susan    Lesa    Warren    Kris    Shaun

RENOVATION NEWS  
HO! HO! HO! MERRY CHRISTMAS! 2018.

To me, it seems like this project just started and here we are nearing the end of it. The flood came in 2013. Preliminary demolition and mold remediation work in 2014. Opinion questionnaire sent out in 2015 followed by a vision, a plan and a start. And now, here we are!

The kitchen is currently being rewired to today's standards and codes at a contracted cost of \$12,750.00 by Les Hazzard and Son, Inc. from Fort Plain. I expect the "rough in" wiring to be completed by 12/4/18. Then it's scheduling R. B. Const. to install the drywall. It's also time to schedule the cabinets, cupboards, counter tops, etc. to be delivered here so R. B. can install them. A lot of detail has to be taken care of at the same time. "Finish" wiring, some stainless steel counter tops, range hood and exhaust system, appliances and other "stuff".

SCHEDULING, SCHEDULING, SCHEDULING!

On top of this kitchen rebuild we will also begin the installation of the Vertical Platform Lift (VPL). Lawrence Mazza, Contracting will meet with us sometime between 11/27 and 12/2 to finalize the logistics of the pre installation work he will be doing at the contracted cost of \$17,500.00 and give us a START date. Sounds great! but wait a minute, the secretary office has to be relocated to...? OH MY GOSH! How will we...? Where will we...? Who will...?

HELP ! HELP ! HELP!

Annnnd. The doors in the dining room need cleaning and painting. The bathroom needs some more base board installed. Then the toilets can be installed. The existing dividers can be painted. R. B. is working on purchasing the rest of the dividers and door system for the Handicap stall. Then it can be installed and painted. Does anybody want to paint? We also need to install rails in the Handicap stall to meet ADA requirements.

Annnnd. The hallway to the basement at the Morgan St. entrance needs more demolition work then put back together to make a more presentable and brighter egress. I'm expecting the stairs to the dining room at the parking lot entrance to be refinished and painted in December with the help of "community service" personnel.

After Lawrence Mazza completes his work, Syracuse Elevator Co. will install the actual VPL at a contracted cost of \$25,240.00. Now, as it has been said, "the light at the end of the tunnel is not a train, it's the end of the tunnel".

Next year will be a very, HAPPY NEW YEAR !



## DEACONS' NEWS

- A reminder that there will be a special NOISY COLLECTION on every 5th Sunday in a month. This **month's 5th Sunday is December 30th**. Remember to bring your loose coins!! We have an empty but large soup pot to collect any and all pocket change you can bring in for offering time. This will be used for a special project, not yet selected.

### Save the Date!

Invite your friends and family. The Board of Deacons will be hosting a lasagna dinner.

When: Friday, December 7th.

Time: doors will open at 6:00, dinner served at 6:30

Where: FPC fellowship hall

Menu: Lasagna (meat/cheese, gluten-free/vegetarian and White lasagna)

Salad, Italian bread, dessert, Coffee, tea, water

Cost: your donation

Basket raffle that evening also. Please come early to get your chances.

Info: Betty Helmer , Deacon. 315-894-8716

## Liturgical Ministers for December

### December 2 Communion/Hanging of the Greens

Reader: Joan Matteson

Greeter: Jean Smith

Usher: Christine Lawrence & Betty Helmer

Coffee Hour: Class Act

Servers: Sue Thomas & Jean Smith

Communion set-up: Christine Lawrence

### December 9

Reader: George Gullis

Greeter: WT Lennox

Ushers: Kim Bigelow

Coffee Hour: Betty Helmer

### December 16

Reader: Jean Smith

Greeter: George Gullis

Usher: Christine Lawrence & Kim Bigelow

Coffee Hour: The Choir

### December 23

Reader: Steve Getman

Greeter: WT Lennox

Usher: Kim Bigelow

Coffee Hour: Kim Bigelow

### December 24 Family Service at 7:30

No offering or Coffee Hour

### December 30—NOISY SUNDAY

Lessons & Carols

Greeter: Sandra Eldredge

Usher:

Coffee Hour: Denise Goodale

## Prayer List:

- ◆ **Men and women who protect us and our freedoms.**
- ◆ Cody Adams, Dorothy Allison (Rick's M-I-L), Bob Bailey, John Burdick, Linda Cate, Mel Darling, the Devereese Family, Clifford Dibble, Beverly Doolen, David Flanagan, Mary Franklin, Marilyn Hext, Dave & Jane Jacquays, Norma Kelly, Dr. Aimee, Christine Lawrence, Bill Lennox, Barbara Maley, Kim Maley, Steven Maley, Marty March, Joan Matteson, Pat & Marge Moylan, Patrick O'Connor, Peg Olson, Gary & Jan Orendorf, Mike Orendorf & family, Leah Passalacqua, Josh Petty, Steve Price, Bea Raux, Millie Ritter, Henry Rocker, Dale Rohrer, Jane & Bob Smithson, Aiden Townsend, Angela Traglia, Diane (Selwood) Williams, Ricky Wilson & mom, Gretchen

The First Presbyterian Church  
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Ilion, New York 13357-2260  
Address Service Requested

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Christmas Poinsettias will be available for memorials or in honor of loved ones again this year. Orders should be in the office by **Dec. 10** at the latest. The cost this year will be \$7.50. Plants are available in Red, White, Pink or Marble and are in a 6.5" pot.

Donations may also be made, in any amount, to the various funds of the church: Music Fund, Organ Fund, Renovation Fund, Memorial Fund or Deacons' Fund.

You may use this form to order:

YOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

HOW MANY \_\_\_\_\_ WHAT COLOR(S) \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY/HONOR OF (Please specify which)

\_\_\_\_\_

OR A DONATION TO WHICH FUND – IN MEMORY/HONOR OF

\_\_\_\_\_