
The Waltham Courier

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A Family Journal

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From The Pastor's Desk . . .

Getting Ready for 2006

It always surprises me how fast time passes. This last year is now a blur of activity, events, feelings and memories. The news organizations have labeled this last year as the year of Nature. They've done so because the three great disasters, beginning with the Tsunami of Christmas 2004, were natural ones. The other two were the hurricanes in the gulf and the massive earthquake in Pakistan and Cashmere. Thousands of people were killed, millions were injured, and even more millions were left homeless. Citizens of Utica know what a tornado can do, and this is the kind of sorrow which many church members and folk related to the church have experienced. These disasters are part of our earthly, human makeup, and we need them from time to time to remind us that we are not in control of everything. In these massive disasters, we find that individually and even collectively we're not that big and cannot even in control of our own lives.

We take for granted the light which goes on when we flick the switch, and we forget the amount of labor, foresight and skill that went into creating each and every component of that system. It's good for us to be reminded from time to time that electricity which controls everything from cooking, heating,

refrigeration, hot water, the water pump, phone service, alarm clocks, etc., are all very fragile. No one person controls it. No one person can maintain it.

The same with gasoline. We're slowly but surely being brought into the reality of the rest of the world when it comes to gasoline prices.

The life of a church is not beyond the events which surround it either. Churches are systems too, and no one person controls or maintains the spiritual system and welfare of a church. It takes each and every one of us relating to the Lord to keep things balanced and sometimes to do the difficult work needed to overcome situations beyond our control.

Some things in Waltham church have changed and others seem the same. This last year we lost some of our dearest members. We are reminded of their absence often. We have lost friends, parents, brothers, sisters, and even children. All these passages remind us of our vulnerability. At the same time, some of us fight with chronic diseases which take their toll physically, mentally and emotionally. It's tough when you feel below par all the time. It's rough on the family and life in general. But somehow in spite of or because of our losses we continue.

At the same time, we've added new folk to the mix of people in this church family. We've had baptisms, made new contacts with lapsed families, included newly weds, and are beginning to reach beyond the Waltham Township. Our mission area is growing, and our community is expanding. It's a

natural, although often threatening, experience to see beyond our past borders.

What has stayed the same is a great gift which we must continually nurture and encourage. That "sameness" is the Christ centeredness and welcoming heart of this church. We believe that the Lord God actually has a mission for us, that there is a reason for our existence as a church. We are here to be the family of God for many people. For a church to keep its center and its heart is a wonderful and encouraging gift.

What's going to happen in 2006? Well, we'll still have many of the same taxing issues and transitional events which marked 2005, and we'll be challenged to remain Christ centered in our ministry and focus. Can we do it? Of course we can. Will it be easy? Not all the time. Will the Lord, who is in charge, be present with us. Most assuredly!

May the Lord bless you in this New Year.
He surely has blessed us all in 2005.

In Christ,
Pastor Roy C. Backus

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Presbyterian Women will continue to meet thru the winter months and will continue with the Horizon's Bible Study. We will meet Jan. 26th at 9 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Our study is titled "CHRISTMAS - A Time to be Born, and a Time to Die." In case of inclement weather the meetings will be canceled.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN *cont.*

We continue to praise God for your participation in our special offerings. The "Memory Angels" have enabled us to send \$200.00 for hurricane relief thru the Presbyterian Church. Thank you so much for adding the angels to our Narthex tree. You are welcome to take yours before removal of the Christmas decorations.

We also **THANK YOU** for whatever part you took in our "Come to Christmas Tea" - kitchen duty, baking, participation in the program, child care, shoveling or plowing snow, parking cars - inviting a friend and attending. It as a special day for all!

Wishing you His Blessings, Presbyterian Women

Decorating Committee

We will remove all Advent decorations on **Sunday, Jan. 8th following worship**. We appreciate all of your time and help to complete this job!

Do plan to give us a hand!!!

YOU'RE INVITED...

Waltham Curling Club - Jan. 8

Hi Everybody,

2006 is almost here! The Kiner family would like to invite the youth of the Church (6th grade thru 12th) to join us on **Sunday, January 8th** for an afternoon of curling, food, fellowship, and some Bible study.

We will start the activities around **11:30 or whenever Church gets over. We will be curling at the Waltham Curling Club in Triumph.** If you need a ride from

Church, let me know. We will be done around 4.

If you can only stay for part of the afternoon that is okay.

We will order pizza for lunch.

*Bring a pair of clean, soft sole tennis shoes, hat and gloves to curl in. Don't know how to curl? don't worry, we will teach you.

*Bring your Bible for Bible study, who knows what Pastor Roy will have planned!

Your cost for this fun afternoon is \$15.00.

Bring your Bible deduct \$5.00.

Bring a friend deduct \$5.00.

You get to determine how much you pay!
(Minimum of \$5.00 per person.)

Reservations are not necessary but if you know ahead of time you are coming, please sign up at Church or give us a call 815 539-7094.

Questions? Call.

MEETING REPORTS

December Session Report

The Session had a special Session meeting before worship on Dec. 4th. Five session members and the pastor met with and voted to accept into membership the following: Steve and Leslie Ellinger, Brock and Jackie Gerling, and Katie Videgar. The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Regular Dec. session meeting was held in the lower lounge on Dec. 13th at 7:30 with 5 elders and the two new elders present. The minutes of the November Session meeting and the Special Session meeting of Dec. 4th were approved. It was voted to put the \$250.00 that the Presbytery sent the Church to help offset traveling expenses into the general fund of the church.

It was voted to instruct the benevolence treasurer to send \$1000.00 to Blackhawk Presbytery to finish our benevolence pledge of \$10,000.00 for 2005 to the church wide mission.

It was voted to advertise in the local papers the Christmas eve service.

It was voted to place on the inactive roll 15 members. It was voted to elect Albert Hagenbuch clerk for 2006 and appoint him to sign the 2005 annual reports to Presbytery.

It was voted to have the next Session meeting on Jan. 17th at 7:30.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 9:30 p.m.

Albert Hagenbuch, Clerk of Session

Trustees

We thank Dave Hagenbuch and Ross Wilson for serving on the board of trustees these past 3 years and welcome Jeff Ficek and Mark Small as they begin to serve with us.

Trustees cont.

We met on all committee night Dec. 13th with 4 members present.

The bell has been painted, the upstairs washrooms including the nursery have been painted and new baseboard has been applied to the south stairwell area. Repair and service has been done to the boiler system. New phones have been installed at the church after losing all of them due to the power surges last month.

We discussed maintenance on the snow blower and covering the air conditioners.

A new Trustee of the month Schedule has been posted for the year 2006.

We thank all who have helped with the snow removal, especially for the day of the "Come to Christmas Tea."

Next meeting is Jan. 10th at 7 p.m.

Trustee for the month of Jan. is Jeff Ficek.

Deacons

December Meeting -

There were six (6) members present.

History sheet of past 5 years for preparing communion was presented. It will be posted on the door in the secretary's office.

Marilyn Laatz and Glenn Stevenson will be responsible for January's Deacon of the Month. The others will be selected when they meet in January 2006.

Kyle Videgar has accepted the chairmanship of this group for 2006.

Christian Education

Please come and join us for an *inter-generational Sunday School gathering on January 1, 2006.*

There will be refreshments and games for the whole family. We will meet from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. Please mark your calendars today.

Our Sunday School children have sent a donation off to Heifer Project International for \$100 in honor of Megan Jo Ann Shears being baptized in our Church.

Stewardship & Finance

No report received for this publication.

Mission Committee

November & December

The Mission committee met in November and planned the giving tree. We have names of needy families from Waltham School and items needed by PADS. We will order Bibles for PADS again this year so that they can hand them out to any of their visitors. They made a request for 4 Spanish Bibles and those will be ordered along with a case (25) of English outreach Bibles.

We discussed the Work Trip to take place from July 30th to August 5th. One family has told us of their intention to go on this trip. We are seeking any families that are interested in this great mission opportunity.

In December we checked the tree to make sure that all the families' gifts had arrived. As always, the response of our generous congregation is awesome. We have quite a load to go to PADS and each needy school family has gifts of clothes and toys for each of their children. The generous hearts of our Waltham folks is truly amazing. Thanks for your help with these projects.

Sunset Gap Work Camp

The Work Camp for Sunset Gap will be held from July 30 thru August 6, 2006. The plans include a VBS for the local children and a work project that will be assigned after the first of the year. If your family might be interested in this trip, please contact a member of the Mission Committee. We realize it is early to be making plans for next year. Please speak up if you have any interest so that we can get an idea of the number of folks that might be going. Also, any family that would be willing to act as leaders for the camp and co-ordinate the food along with worship times, please talk to Jean Jones. We hope that this will be a labor of love in reaching out to others and ministering to our group.

Benevolence Fund

Balance as of 11/30/05 \$ 5,437.75

Linda Chalus, Treasurer

Memorial Fund

Memorials have been received for Henry Munson.

Joyce Anderson, Treasurer

Treasurer's Report

Account Balances as of 11/30/05:

General Account: \$ 4,595.80
Special Building Account: \$ 6,890.11
Youth Work Trip Account: \$ 441.60
Sunday School Savings: \$ 1,127.53

Year to Date Comparison as of 10/31/05

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Incr/Decr</u>
Income:	\$ 72,436	\$ 78,340	\$ 5,904 (8% increase)
Expenses:	\$ 70,589	\$ 100,211	\$ 29,622 (30% increase)

***** Year to date income has increased slightly, but expenses have increased by 30%.***

We had a fairly high balance in the General Account at the beginning of the year (approx. \$26,500) which we have depleted over the year.

Church expenses average \$10,000 per month and offering income averages \$8,000 per month.

I have received 15 estimate cards.

Diana Deutsch, Treasurer

Deacon of the Month

Marilyn Laatz & Glenn Stevenson

The Sermon: "Keeping the First Impressions"

Trustee of the Month

Jeff Ficek

Texts and Sermons

January 1, 2005 First Sunday after Christmas
Call to Worship: Ps. 148
The First Lesson: Isa. 61:10-62:3
The Second Lesson: Galatians 4:1-7
Sermon: "The Hidden Gift of Freedom"

8 Baptism of the Lord
Call to Worship: Genesis 1:1-5
The First Lesson: Acts 19:1-7
The Second Lesson: Mark 1:4-11
The Sermon: "Thanksgiving for the Waters of Creation"

15 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Call to Worship: Ps. 139:1-6, 13-18
The First Lesson: 1 Samuel 3:1-10(11-20)
The Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20
The Sermon: "The Inconvenience of Faith"

22 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Call to Worship: Psalm 62:5-12
The First Lesson: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31
The Second Lesson: Jonah 3:1-5, 10
The Sermon: "I'd Rather Be Fishing"

29 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Call to Worship: Psalm 111
The First Lesson: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
The Second Lesson: Mark 1:21-28

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

31 Mr. & Mrs. Pat Hughes

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 David Christopher
Yvonne Geil
Ross Wilson
- 2 Norma Jann
- 4 Phyllis Mertes
- 5 Tiara Bedenko
- 7 Sue Hughes
- 8 Anthony Brown
- 11 Monica Blue
Kerstie Lukas
- 12 Wendy Deutsch
Dave Wilson
- 13 Dawn Hess
- 14 Melvin Hagenbuch*
- 15 Emily Lukas
- 18 Bruce Brown
Benjamin Kiner
- 19 Carol Hallead
- 20 Robin Leonard
Irene Munson
- 22 Phillip McConville
- 25 Jeffrey English
- 27 Annabelle Skoog
Jenny Wilson
- 28 Tanner Chapman
- 29 Daniel Baker
Ardelle Hagenbuch
Serah Lukas
- 31 Robert Geil

Nursery Workers

January 1

Albert Hagenbuch
Joshua Brown

January 8

Dena Ficek
Nick Moshage

January 15

Amy Ploch
Alexis Ferracuti

January 22

Beth Hahne
Paige Hahne

January 29

Dave Deutsch
Diana Deutsch

Scout Master Bob's Corner

January 3 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
January 4 – TLC Meeting 7:00 PM
January 10 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
January 17 - Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
January 20-22 – Klondike Campout
January 24 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
January 31 – Troop Meeting, Family Potluck &
Court of Honor 6:00 PM

Everyone is to bring two dishes to pass.

February 1 – TLC Meeting 7:00 PM
February 5 – Scout Sunday
February 7 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
February 10-12 – Troop Campout – Mission to Mars
Camp Drake near Champaign
February 14 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
February 21 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
February 25 – Chili Supper
February 28 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM

Troop 97 meets every Tuesday night at the Waltham
Presbyterian Church.

Contact Ralph Moshage at 667-4511 or
Ross Wilson at 434-1469 for information about the
troop.

***A special Welcome to our
newest members and those baptized
with us this past year!***