

# A Newsletter of Polo Faith United Methodist Church

## Words of Faith

Loving, Growing, Serving in Faith

DECEMBER 2017



### Reflections from Bishop Sally Dyck on Reclaiming Christmas

A woman named Miranda July who is a filmmaker, artist and writer tells about the crèche of her childhood. As soon as the crèche was brought out, unwrapped and set up, she and her sisters would rob it of the baby Jesus and put him unceremoniously in their dollhouse. Throughout the Christmas season the manger was empty, she said, “But we got by without him.” Her phrase, “we got by without him,” haunts me. Sometimes I wonder if in our lives, hearts, and especially our celebration of Christmas, the manger is empty. We try to “get by without him,” without Jesus in the center of our lives and celebration of Christmas. Getting by without Him doesn’t produce a Christmas season designed to bring hope, joy, peace and love into our lives.

Instead of a season where we can reflect and enjoy the meaning of God becoming human and dwelling with us and providing for us the salvation that allows us to live fully and joyfully, the season becomes arduous, exhausting and something to endure. Our celebration of Christmas has become laden with expectations of food, gatherings, shopping, getting the right gifts, extra parties, activities and events—even at church where the focus isn’t always about Jesus—so as to leave us exhausted, indebted and often unhealthier as a result of all the food and drink. The United Methodist Church calls us to reclaim Christmas as we put Jesus back into the center of the crèche of our lives and the world.

The complication of Christmas didn’t happen overnight and it hasn’t been something easily addressed, experiencing ebbs and flows of attempts to simplify and re-focus the central holiday of the Christian faith and also that of many people who no longer consider themselves to be Christian. The greatest gift we could give many of those who no longer find the church to be relevant and who define regular attendance at church by the fact that they regularly attend on Christmas Eve (only) is to practice Christmas different in our lives and in our church.

People are longing for a simpler life but it’s hard to live a simpler life without a community that supports and encourages it. Are we as members of the church who regard ourselves as the faithful, practicing Christmas any different than anyone else? If people came to our church would they find a group of people who are struggling to put Jesus back into the center—the manger, if you will—of Christmas and as a result bring true hope, joy, peace and love? That would be a strong evangelistic message and act of love and mercy. As we rethink Christmas and our practices, it’s important to think about how to bring comfort to our local communities in outreach—not just at Christmastime because people are hungry and cold and homeless other times of the year, too, but also in our nation and world.

Instead of going to the mall, take a walk through the park and share with others the beauty of creation. Instead of going out to eat, cook good food with each other and make memories together at home. Give memories, not just tangible gifts. Nothing can take away memories. Don’t let the manger be empty in your life, faith and church this year. Put Jesus back in the manger because we can’t get along without him.

Reclaim Christmas! ~Bishop Sally Dyck (Condensed from the Reporter Newsletter)

# Growing in Faith

We are committed to growing as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Some of the ways we live this out are through our personal devotion, small groups, and worship.

## ADVENT SERMON TOPICS



December 3	Hope
December 10	Peace
December 17	Joy
December 24	A Savior

## ADVENT SEASON SCHEDULE

December 3	Worship - 10 am Cantata Practice - 3:30 - 5 pm
December 9	Cantata Practice - 9-10:30 am
December 10	Worship - 10 am Polo Community Cantata - 2 pm
December 16	Staff Christmas Dinner Party - 6 pm at the parsonage
December 17	Worship - 10 am
December 21	United Methodist Women Soup & Salad Luncheon -2 pm
December 24	Worship - 10 am Christmas Eve Service - 8 pm

## CHRISTMAS STAR GIVING TREE PROJECT



Pine Creek Christian Church is chairing the Christmas Star Project this year. The project originated to help low income families in the Polo Community School District to confidentially be able to provide their children (ages infant – 18) with gifts during the holiday season. There are over 100 participants each year. Last year it was around 130.

A Christmas tree has always been placed in the lobby of the First State Bank Shannon-Polo. A tree will also be placed in the First State Bank Shannon-Polo as usual.. But this year we are hoping for as much participation as possible from our fellow churches. We are placing a small tree in our church with 15 Christmas Stars for you to choose from. The stars will have a child's information on them which will make it easy to participate in purchasing a gift or two to make a Special Christmas for them. We suggest a \$40.00 limit per child. Their "Wish List" (which will be on the star) will be clothing, toys, books, or non-electronic games. Instruction sheets and a sign-up sheet will accompany the stars. The gifts should be purchased, wrapped and returned to our church (or the bank if the Star was picked up there) on or before December 10.

Thank you and God Bless,  
Christmas Star Project

## POLO FAITH UMC FINANCIAL INFORMATION

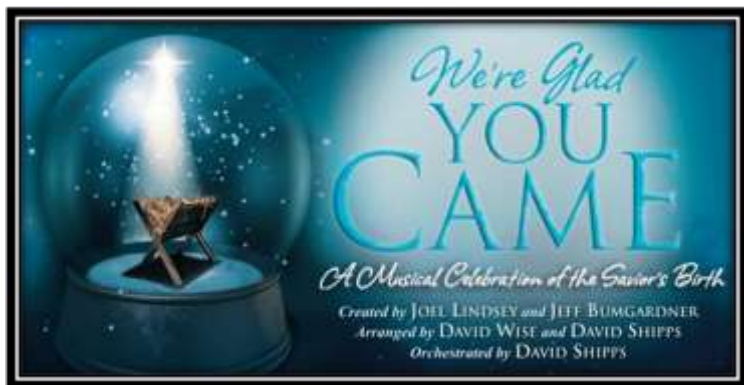
October 2017 Polo Faith UMC Financial Information

Monthly Income (General Fund)	\$	10,055
Monthly Expenses Paid	\$	11,727
Balance Current Fund	\$	(658)



Expense amount does not include elevator or our outreach projects.

Thank you for your generosity throughout the year. If you are able to give a little extra now to support the basic costs of running the church, it will be greatly appreciated.



## CHRISTMAS CANTATA DECEMBER 10, 2017

The Polo Community Choir will be presenting “We're Glad You Came, a Musical Celebration of the Savior's Birth,” Sunday afternoon, December 10 in the sanctuary at Faith UMC. The program will begin at 2:00 p.m. with preludes by Marla Buskohl, Cheryl Goeking, and Julie McGuire. The Bell Choir will ring after the preludes, and then the 2017 cantata will be presented.

The joy-filled, heartfelt telling of the story of the Christ written into this musical will stir your hearts to praise and thanksgiving for the exceptional events surrounding one very special Birth of a Baby, Who came as the Son of God “that we might know Him as our Savior and Lord, and experience the joy of His Presence in our lives.”

The narrative and lyrics are superb, and I hope YOU will be in the audience as the music begins at 2:00 pm.

Refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall.

*Jean Frey, Director*

### FAITH UMC SCHOLARS

In the November 9, 2017 issue of the *Tri-County Press*, Aplington Middle School had a listing of Honor Roll students. Faith UMC also wants to say “Congratulations!” to these 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders for their achievements--

6<sup>th</sup> Grade “A” Honor Roll: Courtney Grobe

6<sup>th</sup> Grade “B” Honor Roll: Madison Glawe and Piper Martin-Pressley

7<sup>th</sup> Grade “B” Honor Roll: Avery Grenoble

8<sup>th</sup> Grade “B” Honor Roll: Wyatt Queckboerner, Spencer Scott

Straight “A” Honor Roll: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, Karlea Frey

Straight “A” Honor Roll: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade, Cody Buskohl

“High 5's” to these students and their families! Keep up the good work!!



# Serving in Faith

We are committed to serving the people of Polo and the world.

Some of the ways we live this out are through our giving of time, talents, and financial gifts.

## DECEMBER MISSION FOCUS HEIFER PROJECT

### Heifer Project

2017

This year the Serving Team will focus on two Heifer Project gifts: Water Buffalo and biogas stoves. “For most families in the places where Heifer International works, cooking usually means gathering firewood by hand, which often depletes the soil and robs the environment of its trees. In addition, smoke inhalation in poorly ventilated homes often leads to chronic lung and eye diseases.



A biogas stove is a better option. It runs off methane gas captured from animal waste, and burns cleanly, reliably and efficiently. This is not only better for the environment, but it is more sustainable and healthier for families feeding their children.

Water buffalo are used for plowing and transportation by families in Asia. These gentle giants allow farmers to plant four times as many crops as by hand.

Not only are water buffalo sturdy work animals, but they also provide rich milk to make cheese and nourish hungry children, while producing manure for fertilizer and fuel.”

From *The Most Important Christmas Catalog in the World* and [www.HEIFER.ORG](http://www.HEIFER.ORG)



Gift of Water Buffalo \$250

Share of Water Buffalo \$25

Gift of one Biogas Stove \$50

Our goal is 4 stoves @\$50 and 2 Water Buffalo @\$250.

Your donation of any amount may be made in honor of someone on your Christmas list. A card describing your gift may be picked up in the narthex.

## PILLOWS AND BLANKETS DONATED

37 pillows, pillow cases, and blankets were delivered to the Dixon PADS homeless shelter.

Thanks to all who donated. The staff was very excited to get them.



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## WHEELS OF FAITH



**DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE  
WHO NEEDS A RIDE?  
CALL 815.677.8194**

*Our  
Wheels  
of Faith  
bus is*

*making 3-5 trips a week taking people shopping and to the doctor. If you know of anyone who could use this wonderful service, please share the new flyer with them or the new number. The newest bus has a wheel chair lift and is air conditioned and will be comfortable for everyone.*

## PCCC CHRISTMAS BASKETS

Help Feed Polo Families



Faith UMC's contribution will be 200 cans of peaches.

We are also in charge of the collecting, packing and delivering of the baskets.

Please call Marla Buskohl (815.622.6162) if you are able to help on Dec.14, 15, 16 and work with other members of the Polo community at Faith Discovery Church at 801 West Oregon Street, Polo.

## COMBAT HUNGER



December needs for the Polo Lifeline are these:

Coffee	<b>Cream of Chicken Soup</b>
Tea bags	<b>Cream of Mushroom Soup</b>
Cereal	Cheese
Spaghetti & sauce	Canned fruits
Canned tomato products	Canned chicken
Bread	Canned carrots
Ketchup	Cake mix
Any boxed potatoes	Pancake mix
Pork & Beans	Deodrant, pain reliever
French Style Green Beans	Toilet Paper, wipes
Cheeseburger helper	Child lg. diapers

Monetary donations are always welcome. Thank you for supporting our local food pantry!



## LOVING COMMITTEE

### Loving Committee Packing Cookie Boxes

We had fun packing the cookie boxes for our Faith UMC college students and those who are already working. Karen Scholl, Marla Buskohl, Jan Bates, Jean Deuth, Barb Sims, Donna Gillingham, and Jean Frey absolutely did not taste any of the cookies they packed!! The boxes were sent or hand-delivered to Kennedy Palmer, Aspen Grenoble, Peyton Glawe, Allie Stover, Brinley Peterson, Caleb Aguilar, Kellen Kyker, Morgan Lawler, Zack Henson, Emily Ditzler, Keeley Meyer, Matthew Handel, Justine Gorzny, Madison Merdian, Jared Frey, and Jenna Handel.

Besides cookies and candy, the students received a prayer square from our Prayer Shawl Ministry ladies, a letter from Pastor Brian and a photo of our chancel decorated for Harvest and Thanksgiving. If anyone knows of a student whom we should include in our next mailing, please let one of the committee members know.

We appreciate the support of our congregation as so many cookies were donated for these students! We also were blessed that the cost of the postage was underwritten by three of our members~God bless you, and Thank You!



Karen Scholl & Marla  
packing the boxes



Donna signing the Thanksgiving photo of  
our chancel for the students



Jan, Barb, and Jean putting cookies and  
sweet treats in the bags for mailing



We are so very grateful for all of the prayers and support of Terry and our family throughout his illness. The donations of food, memorial contributions and everyone who helped in any way with the funeral and luncheon are appreciated.

May you continue to be richly blessed for your thoughtfulness.

The Family of Terry Naylor

## SECOND HAND ROSE



### ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

December 19-23, 2017

Faith UMC provides workers for the Tuesday-Saturday weekly schedule every 5 weeks.

The schedule is:

Tuesday & Wednesday	11 am-2 pm & 2-5pm
Thursday & Friday	1 -5 pm, (or you can work 1-3 or 3-5 if 4 hours is too much)
Saturday	9-12 noon

If you are willing to learn this fairly easy but important job, we will have you work with someone who has more experience.

If you would like to join our team, please call Ginny Snodgrass at 779.770.6393 or the church office.



# Loving in Faith

We are committed to loving God and all people.

Some of the ways we live this out are through our praise, prayers, and fellowship.

## WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER

<u>Ongoing Prayers:</u>	Nancy Mackey	Growing tensions and divisions in our country
Verla Attig	Wallace Mackey	Our need for thoughtful political discourse
Lenora Bakener	Annabelle Muench	
Kay Dillard	Tabitha Naylor	
Bill Ehmen	Eldon Ports	
Jean Frey	Arvilla Siddens	
Faith Glaman	National and World Leaders	
Betty Good	Our struggles to love our neighbors	
Harlan Long		
Marlene Mackey		



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

01 Andrea Young	13 Ashia Maginnis	29 Amy Maginnis Piatek
02 Verla Attig	14 Angela Goeking Brown	29 Rosemary Troxel
02 Tim Stauffer	14 Dennis Merdian	31 Beverly Merdian
02 Pat Saunders	16 Brett Faber	31 Keegan Terry
03 Lenora Bakener	16 Betty Swanson	
04 Jayne Arreola	17 Cole Chesnut	
04 Rachel Kness	17 Gary Parke	
04 Wallace Mackey	18 Jeannie Kyker	
05 Scott Miller	19 Julie Merdian	
05 Leith Hammond	20 Kurt Keefer	
06 Shawn Willis	21 Jennifer Chittum	04 David & Renee Livingston
08 Carolyn Sterenberg	21 Becca Wagner	08 Denny & Karla Merdian
08 Bill Warren	22 David Livingston, Jr.	10 Mark & Diana Maginnis
11 Laura Keefer	22 Annabelle Muench	28 John & Jean Deuth
11 Tami (Cross) Hornbogen	22 Jerry Velez	
11 Kate Terry Messer	22 David Wagner	
12 Ed Collins	23 Barbara Sims	
12 Britani Velez	26 Lynae Merdian	
12 Tristan Stickler	26 Renee Deuth	
13 Abby Gorzny	27 Ron Bartelt	



## DECEMBER WORSHIP SERVANTS

## DECEMBER UMW MEETING

### Greeters:

12-03-17	Mike & Karen Scholl
	Dorothy Kjolsing, Rebecca Jacobs
12-10-17	Megan & Tristen Strickler
	Dan & Ashley Deuth
12-17-17	Drew & Tena Terry
	Marilyn Sura
12-24-17	Jim & Robin Jefford
	Julie Bowers & Linda Colcord
8 pm	Beverly & Paul Wiemken
	Tom & Marla Buskohl
12-31-17	Judy Norris, Nancy Ocken
	Dan & Laura McKean



December 21  
Soup & Salad Luncheon  
12:00 PM  
Scout Room

Bring a salad or dessert to share & own table service. Soup provided.

Hostess: Officers  
Program: Share a short story or poem

## Ad Council Minutes November 13, 2017

Attendees: Randy Hayes, Ron Rackow, Judy Norris, Laura McKean, Ron Hammer, Phil Frey, Margie Cox, Mark Maginnis, Nancy Ocken, Marla Buskohl, Pastor Brian & Marilyn Sura.

Phil Frey called meeting to order. Devotions: Phil Frey

Minutes of October 16, 2017 were approved.

Finance: Balance current fund is (\$658.10). The larger outstanding bills are for property insurance and parsonage repair.

Serving: Nancy Ocken reported we collected 37 pillows for the Dixon PADS homeless shelter and they were delighted to receive them. Our November Mission goal is to fund 40 Thanksgiving baskets and the December Mission focus is the Heifer Project. Another very worthwhile 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday luncheon was held at the Prairie State Apartments in October and the next one will be sometime in December.

Loving: Marla Buskohl reported 18 cookie boxes were sent or delivered to students last week. Faith UMC and the Church of the Brethren are in charge of the November Our Table meal. We need to collect 200 cans of peaches for the PCCC Christmas boxes by Dec. 12.

Staff/Parish: Randy Hayes confirmed Josh Gorzny will shovel snow and Jim Ports will plow for us. Church Conference will be held Sunday Nov. 26 with the District Superintendent. A 2% COLA is suggested for the salary adjustment for Pastor Brian LeBaron.

Trustees: Mark Maginnis is finishing putting up new lights outside at the west entrances.

It was announced in church November 12th we have 2 long pews that will be removed and we would like to give them away. This was pursuant to last month's Ad Council decision. Ron Rackow spoke for a select group of people from the church who are concerned about pew removal and re-arrangement. Following discussion, Randy Hayes moved that we table the decision to replace the pews for further evaluation by the trustees in light of the additional information on refinishing the pews and the trustees should report back to Ad Council by June 2018. Ron Hammer seconded it. Motion carried unanimously.

New computer screens are hard to view. Backgrounds need to be changed.

Poor lighting in the balcony was brought up. Mark explained the current dimmer system is not adequate. The replacement system cannot handle the electrical current for all lights so two were taken out of the circuit to avert circuit overload.

Wheels of Faith: The bus is presently being used by one couple for shopping weekly and another individual once a month.

UMW: They will meet on November 16. Margie will talk to them about putting up a Christmas Tree at the senior center.

No report from Worship and Growing as they have not met, Nominations is still pending completion of recruitment. An appeal for Trustee Board volunteers made by Pastor Brian.

PCCC: It was agreed Polo Faith UMC take 15 stars from the Polo Council of Churches Christmas Star program.

Pastor Brian thanked Randy Hayes for filling in for him at last month's Ad Council meeting. He asked for prayers for the two Forreston area youth that died in the last week.

Next meeting will be January 15, 2018. Pastor Brian closed the meeting with a prayer.

*Watch calendar, website  
and bulletins for upcoming  
committee meetings*

*January Newsletter Deadline is December 14*

### STAY IN TOUCH

Faith United Methodist Church  
Pastor Brian LeBaron  
Cell: 815.541.4207

**COME SEE US**

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