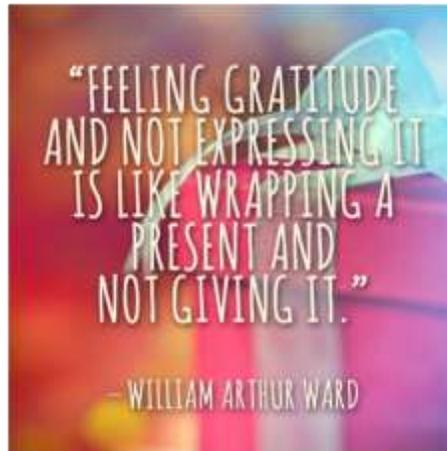


A Newsletter of Polo Faith United Methodist Church

# Words of Faith

Loving, Growing, Serving in Faith

December 2016



This is one of my all-time favorite quotes. And I think it is the perfect bridge from Thanksgiving into the Christmas season. It allows us to leave behind the USA's holiday called "Hallowgivingmas" and just do good old Christmas.

But actually I think we need a good new Christmas this year. One that actually challenges and calls us to finally be more Christ-like: loving, not hating; including those who we think we have good reason to exclude; lifting up those who others tear down; stand with those who are vulnerable; listen to what is being said rather than what we think is being said; forgiving, and receiving forgiveness; living with love and grace; being a gift to those who come into our lives each day.

If we could be people of hope, rather than people who have it all sewed up – neat, orderly, arranged, right, with no time or space for listening to the rustle of angels' wings – perhaps Christ could be born anew – a light in the darkness.

*"Hope opens something in the human heart. Like shutters slowly parting to admit a winter dawn, hope permits strands of light to make their way to us, even when we still stand in cold darkness; but hope also reveals a landscape beyond us into which we can live and move and have our being. With hope, closely held interior thoughts are gently turned outward; deep desires, perhaps long hidden in secret corners of our heart, might be lifted up to the light. At times, hope peels back the edges of our imagination to free what waits underneath – a changed life, a new resolve, a yes pregnant with possibility; In other moments hope dares us to unfold a layer of desire – for relationship, for clarity, for courage."* Pamela Hawkins

The Christ child – hope incarnate – is the center of the hope we can carry together, that this year we can be transformed by hope in ways we so need as a world. Hope opens closed hearts to new possibilities for re-defined love and forgiveness. Hope opens stagnant institutions to new possibilities for justice and restoration. Hope opens the barred doors of hatred and violence and allows new possibilities for growth.

*God, open our hearts and the heart of the world to your transforming hope. Peel back the layers of our stubborn opinions, our fearful assumptions, and let the light of your life-giving spirit enter in. Amen.*

See you Sunday! Pastor Karen

# 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 & CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE



We have some wonderful and inspiring opportunities this Advent and Christmas.

Opportunities to give,

to worship joyfully,

to hear the Word and especially the Christmas story in new ways,

and to contemplate what it all means for us.

Starting with Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup> – we will be invited to Prepare the Way for the birth of Christ once again in our hearts, and we will celebrate the baptism of Dorien Deets.

Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Rich Rubietta, our Conference Evangelist, will lead our worship time with music, drums, guitar, using participants from our congregation, culminating in the celebration of communion. His theme will be centered around how and who we invite to the table.

Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, we will look at the angel's words to "Be strong, don't fear." Very important words for us these days.

After worship there will be a soup and sandwich lunch offered in Fellowship Hall for a donation.

And at 2 pm is our Cantata – with music from the Choir (together with some folks from the community) and from the Bell Choir. *(see article about this event)*

Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> will come with an opportunity to once again be inspired by Mary's courage. We will be treated to an intergenerational skit, special music and some thoughts about "Promises."

Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve:

4 pm service – informal, geared toward families and children

7 pm service – traditional candle-lighting service

Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day – regular 10 am worship service (no Sunday School). Our service will be simple – a few carols, a story, and a time of prayer. You are invited to join Pastor Karen for a brief time to honor the day if you choose to.

During the four Sundays of Advent we will also be collecting money to purchase animals through Heifer – as we traditionally do this time of year. But this year our youth will be in the Narthex before and after worship each Sunday to share information with you about the animals we wish to purchase and how those animals will help families around the world. They will also have displays with information and gift cards available to you.

(And just to remind those of you who have already signed up for the Advent study with Pastor Karen, you can attend each Thursday during Advent at either 10 am or 6:30 pm. Chapters 1 & 2 the first week, Chapter 3 the 2<sup>nd</sup> week, Chapter 4 the 3<sup>rd</sup> week and Chapter 5 the 4<sup>th</sup> week in our study books, which Marilyn has ordered for you.)

## CHRISTMAS CANTATA DECEMBER 11, 2016

2016 Christmas Cantata  
Sunday, Dec. 11, 2:00 p.m.  
Faith UMC Sanctuary

**“O Night Divine; Dawn of Love’s Pure Light”** will be presented by the Community Choir in our sanctuary, Sunday afternoon as an afternoon of Christmas music begins with the preludes at 1:45 p.m. Marla Buskohl, Cheryl Goeking and Julie McGuire will be our musicians who begin our program. The Bell Choir will ring after the preludes, and the cantata will be sung immediately following.

**“For those who longed for His coming, the events surrounding His holy birth were cause for exuberant expressions of great joy and thankfulness to God for the gift of His Son, our long-awaited Savior. More than 2000 years later, we still find cause for celebration! For those who waited for the Messiah to be born, that divine night in Bethlehem was confirmation that the time had come for God’s promise to come to fruition. Today we ring the bells of Christmas in celebration of that night divine, and in celebration of the profound impact it has on our lives still today. *He is born...the divine Christ Child!*” (Steve W. Mauldin.)**

You are invited to enjoy soup and sandwiches right after worship in Fellowship Hall and spend the afternoon with us. A free will offering will be received for the lunch.

I hope you plan to invite a guest or two as our Faith UMC Choir and others in the community host this afternoon of music and fellowship. Refreshments prepared by the choir members will be served after the cantata by members of United Methodist Women in Fellowship Hall.

*Jean Frey, Choir Director*

## DECEMBER MISSION FOCUS: HEIFER PROJECT

Heifer International’s mission is to end hunger and poverty while caring for the earth. Since 1944, we have provided livestock and environmentally sound agricultural training to improve the lives of those who struggle daily for reliable sources of food and income.

Heifer’s holistic approach is designed to help communities become the drivers of their own change by cultivating the following:

- Income and Nutrition
- Improving the Environment
- Women’s Empowerment
- Social Capital
- Passing of the Gift



Every year we raise money to give to the Passing on the Gift program. This year we will be raising money to purchase a heifer, a pig, a flock of chicks and a hive with bees. Stop at the tables in the Narthex during Advent to receive more information.

# 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

## POLO FAITH UMC FINANCIAL INFORMATION

October 2016 Polo Faith UMC Financial Information



	October 2016	Year to Date
Monthly Income (General Fund)	11,298.00	127,993.11
Monthly Expenses Paid	11,540.14	129,844.03
Outstanding bills waiting to be paid	(5,293.77)	

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.

## COMBAT HUNGER



December needs for the Polo Lifeline are these:

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Coffee               | Canned fruit            |
| Mac and cheese       | Canned baked beans      |
| Canned carrots       | Canned chicken          |
| Pasta any kind       | Hot dogs                |
| Spaghetti sauce      | Cake mixes              |
| Soup any kind        | Body wash               |
| Toilet Paper         | Paper towels            |
| Diapers larger sizes | Paper plates            |
| Toothpaste           | Pain reliever, Tylenol, |
| Kleenex              | Aspirin, Advil etc      |
| Deodrant             |                         |

## STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY



Our Table  
Community  
Meal

5:30—7pm

What: Free home-cooked meal

When: The last Monday of the Month

November 28, December 26.

Where: Faith UMC, 702 E. Dixon, Polo, IL

We hope you will join us for this opportunity to get to know our neighbors better. Bring your friends.

## ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT



Ribbon Cutting Day with the Polo Chamber of Commerce

On October 23<sup>rd</sup> we celebrated the completion of the first phase of our Accessibility Project. Several Polo Chamber of Commerce members and several of our own members gathered outside the new entrance for a ribbon cutting. Randy Ocken, Chair of the Accessibility Project Committee shared these thoughts at that occasion:

*This project reminds us that by working together we can accomplish great things. None of us could have completed this project alone. But by working together in a spirit of compromise and commitment, we have begun the process of making our church a more welcoming place: a place where everyone can enter with safety and dignity.*

Thank you, Randy, for beautiful words. Let's keep the spirit as we prepare to complete Phase 2 of this project.

## CROP WALK 2016



Polo Faith United Methodist Church raised approximately \$1,500.00 for the Crop/Walk.

Eighteen people enjoyed walking in the beautiful countryside for our church.

## WHEELS OF FAITH NEW IMPROVED BUS



Help spread the word!!!  
We have a wonderful new bus.  
It has a wheel chair lift  
and is air conditioned and will be comfortable  
for everyone.

Call 815 677-8194  
to make an appointment



WE CELEBRATE WITH

December Birthdays

December Anniversaries

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



FIFTH SUNDAY LUNCHEON AT PRAIRIE STATE APARTMENTS

The Serving Team revived its tradition of sharing a 5th Sunday meal at Prairie State Apartments Nov. 6. Twenty five residents and members enjoyed a meatloaf and baked potato dinner after church. Thanks to Marge Shore for cooking and organizing donations. Thanks to all who provided salads and desserts. I'm sure we will do this again as those fifth Sundays roll around.



SECOND HAND ROSE



ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for Nov. 29 - Dec. 3

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

This is an urgent plea because we lost 6 workers in 2015. 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.

THANK YOU!!!

# 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

### Ongoing Prayers:

Verla Attig  
Lenora Bakener  
Kay Dillard  
Marian Ditzler  
Totsie Dykema  
Bill Ehmen  
Faith Glaman  
Betty Good  
Gladys Haring  
Harland Long

Nancy Mackey  
Wallace Mackey  
Kenneth Miller  
Annabelle Muench  
Viola Myers  
Eldon Ports  
Arvilla Siddens  
Lois Voss  
Situation in Israel/Palestine  
National and World Leaders

Military and Law  
Enforcement Personnel  
Immigration Crisis  
Our struggles to love our neighbors.



## DECEMBER 2016 WORSHIP SERVANTS

### Child Care Assistants December 2016

12-4-16 Bev Wiemken  
12-11-16 Melissa Frey

### Greeters:

12-4-16 Mark & Diana Maginnis  
Rebecca Jacobs, Karla Merdian  
12-11-16 Matt & Margie Shore  
Toby & Becky Handel  
12-18-16 Roger & Jane Palmer  
Dorothy Kjolsing & Shirley Gentry  
12-24-16 Tristan & Megan Strickler  
4 pm Melissa & Karlea Frey  
12-24-16 John & Jean Deuth  
7 pm Mike & Karen Scholl  
12-25-16 Harold & Lucille Woodin  
Marilyn Sura

## UMW MEETING



December 15  
12 Noon Potluck  
Scramble Dinner  
Scout Room

Bring a dish to share, your own table service and a short item for the program.

Program: Scramble Program  
Hostesses: Officers



## YOUTH ROOM & STORAGE SPACE CLEAN OUT

Cleaning Out the Youth Room in the New Year

A group of volunteers in cooperation with the Trustees will be cleaning out the upstairs area of the church in January. It has become an accumulation of old furniture and miscellaneous "stuff". We want this to be an appealing, functional space. If you have things stored in this area whether it be in the storage spaces or in the classroom, please evaluate whether it should stay or go! Let Mark Maginnis know if there are important things that must be kept.



## THANK YOU

Thank you to our Faith Family for the tremendous amount of support you have given our family! The food which you supplied, hugs and prayers are certainly being felt by each of us.



Terry continues to have treatments and he is feeling much better and stronger than previously.

We are richly blessed.

Judy Norris and Family

## PCCC CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALE

PCCC Christmas Cookie Sale to benefit Honduras is set for Saturday, December 3rd at the Shannon Polo Bank. We will be taking orders starting November 1st. You can contact Karen at [815-994-7939](tel:815-994-7939) or at [karenmerlak@gmail.com](mailto:karenmerlak@gmail.com) or on Facebook to place your order. Prices are the same as last year:

1 Dozen \$5	3 Dozen \$15
2 Dozen \$10	4 Dozen \$20



We will need lots of donations of cookies. We are tentatively packing at my house on Friday, December 2 at 7:00pm. We hope to surpass the many dozens we sold last year.



## EARN DONATIONS WHILE SHOPPING

A very simple way to start earning donations for Faith United Methodist Church, Polo, IL

Step 1. Register at [www.umcmarket.org](http://www.umcmarket.org) (all you need is your email address and a password of your choosing.)

Step 2. Select our church to receive a donation (it's a simple step by step process to selection)

Step 3. Shop online and a percentage of your total spending gets donated to us.

You can shop for goods and gift cards too!

Do your Christmas shopping this way and support the mission and ministry of our church!!!

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

Copies of the Ad Council minutes and financial reports are available in the green folder on the table outside the office.

This newsletter is created by human hands directing Technology. If you notice any errors, kindly let us know. We will be happy to make any corrections. We reserve the right to change the wording of any articles submitted to reflect kindness, consideration, and the best intentions of all.

*January Newsletter Deadline is December 15*

## STAY IN TOUCH

Faith United Methodist Church  
Pastor Karen Hundrieser

**COME SEE US**

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