Pastor’s Column
Candles are lit on the wreath, scripture read, a prayer spoken, and a family activity chosen – when Seth was growing up (pre-Samuel), this is how we closed each day during Advent. This evening ritual was a highlight of the Advent season for me. It was a time when I paused amid the day’s activity, to reflect on my longing for the One-who-is-to-come as light into our darkness.

This year I intend to take up this tradition once again. The Advent wreath focuses my attention, centers my thoughts and settles me down.

The tradition and use of a wreath as part of a community’s winter ritual pre-dates the Christian celebration of Christmas. A type of Advent wreath was first used by the sun worshiping tribes of Northern Europe.

As the days grew shorter and colder, and the sun threatened to abandon the earth, these pre-Christian peoples prayed to the hidden god to turn back the wheels of the sun wagon and return to earth once more. They came away from their fields and put away their tools. They removed the wheels from their carts and wagons, adorned them with greens and candles and brought them in to hang in their halls. These wheels were seen as a sign of a different time, a time to stop and turn inward (Gertrude Mueller Nelson, To Dance with God).

Imagine what would happen if we were to interpret that ancient ritual literally and remove – just one – perhaps just the front tire from our car or bike, and use this for our Advent wreath!

Things would stop. Our daily routines would come to a halt, and we would have the time to tend to the inward rhythms of our life.

I invite you – encourage you – in the midst of a very busy season, to pause awhile … around the table, around the Advent wreath, or at bedtime … O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel.

God’s grace and peace be with you and with this world,

Elsie
Seasonal Events

Advent Workshop
We invite you to attend the Intergenerational Advent Workshop on Sunday, Dec. 4. After worship and shopping at the Alternative Market, please join us in the Chapel for a light lunch. We will then help decorate the sanctuary and chapel for Christmas. We offer wreath making for the sanctuary and church doors, crafts for home or our church tree, origami, soap decorating and cookie baking/decorating. We also ask that you bring a new preschool children's book which will help decorate the chapel tree and then the books will be given to the Headstart classroom. Hope to see you at this wonderful event.
(Growth and Nurture Team and Worship Team)

Calling Instrumentalists for Christmas Music
The seasonal Jubilee Band will reconstitute for the Advent/Christmas season after worship on Sunday, November 27. Players of string, wind, brass, reed, keyboard or percussion instruments from Middle School age to 98 1/2 are invited. We will play a prelude for Sunday, December 18 worship. In addition to the November rehearsal, we’ll practice in the Sanctuary on December 4 from 1:30 to 2:00 PM (to accommodate lunch and Advent Workshop), December 11 at 12:15 PM and December 18 at 10 AM. Contact Katie Boardman to sign up (607)547-9300, Katie@cherryvalley.com.

Come All Ye Singers
The Choir Loft has room for folks who would like to sing with Chancel Choir during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Rehearse with us on Thursdays at 8pm and Sundays at 10:20 am in the Church House Music Room. Contact Katie Boardman or, just show up at rehearsal. Those who will be returning to town for the holidays, send Katie an e-mail at Katie@cherryvalley.com. You are always welcome.

Head Start Holiday Adoption
We have 8 families to help out this year. This is a time they truly need our support. You could provide one or all of the following for one family: TOYS – CLOTHING – FOOD.

See the sign up poster in the church or Kathy Allen – 547-8030. Head start has provided us information outlining specific needs. — SAM Team
Mission and Outreach

Living Waters
The Living Waters for the World Mission Team has expanded to four with the addition of Diane Kenworthy and Brent Loenard to the team started by Susan and C. R. Jones. Diane and Brent are planning to take the training at Camp Hopewell in the spring.

The Lord’s Table
Twelve times a year, we Cooperstown Presbyterians take our turn to serve at the Lord’s Table on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Organized and run by St. James Episcopal Church in Oneonta, this service is supported by many churches and organizations in the area. The meals are served in a light, attractive building that houses the dining area and the kitchen. The commercial automatic dishwasher is a challenge to all who tackle it. Ask Karen Dunlap, Richard Blahy, Kathery Allen, Erik Dreyer, or others to learn the inside scoop on this mechanical monster.

Window Repair
The repaired windows will be returned before Christmas. A plaque will be dedicated at that time to read: “The two adjacent windows have been repaired through the endeavors and gifts of members of this congregation from 2000 – 2011. Memorial gifts have been given in honor of Rev. Lin Grace Rohr and in memory of Albert and Margaret Beard, Ethel Smith, Mary Mahlum, Ronald Erens, Lenore Robinson, Gerald and Bernice Bushnell, Marion and George Starr, Ramona Goddard, James Brayden, Lorane Jex and Edward Walsh.”

Women’s Fellowship Stained Glass Window Memorial Fund
The Women’s Fellowship’s Stained Glass memorial fund in memory of loved ones or to honor special people or events “in this place” is ongoing. At the present time we are looking ahead to the repair of two more windows. At any time a gift made be made to this fund. The Women’s Fellowship is grateful for any gifts that are received.

Thank you for your kind and generous thoughts. Make checks payable to Women’s Fellowship and give them to Betty Griffin or Joyce Jones.

Coming Events

Sunday Morning Adult Class
Keeping the Faith in a Multi-cultural Age

Beginning January 8th, the Adult Sunday School Class will have a Bible study on what it means to stay true to our faith in a time and place where many cultures exist side by side.

Throughout biblical times—from the exile of the Hebrew people in Egypt to the early years of the Christian Church—people of faith coexisted within a larger setting where their commitment was not shared. Sometimes they kept the faith; sometimes they failed. What can we learn from their experience? How do those times compare to our own? The study will draw on biblical sources from Genesis through Paul’s letters. Please join us.

Sunday School For Young People
The Growth and Nurture Team has planned a full menu of opportunities for children in pre-school through 5th grade. The group meets weekly during the 10:45 AM Sunday worship. Music, movies, songs, fun & games and Bible study are on the menu. Thom Rhodes will be teaching a series on the biblical prophets in November. Beginning Sunday, November 27 Brittany Marcalus and Emily Craig will teach an Advent series. Contact Thom Rhodes, George Hovis, Nancy Morris or Ginger Heitz for more information.

Calendar Tea Towel Contest
What is the date of the oldest tea towel still in use in our kitchen? 1978? 1986? 1965?

After Coffee hour, the final act is to take the dish towels home and wash them. Most of these towels have been donated. Many are calendar towels from past years – really ages ago.

Here is your chance to be a happy owner of a new Irish linen tea towel from the National Land Trust of England. (See towel on display in Chapel)

Produce the oldest calendar towel for the church kitchen and you win this new tea towel. Contest ends in January. Kathy Allen 547-8030.
Horizontal Hydrofracking: An Issue of Church Concern

As Presbyterians and Christians, we believe that God blessed the earth with abundant resources for supporting our social and economic well-being. This being said:

*Good stewardship* requires that these resources be managed productively, efficiently and sustainably. Furthermore, proper management practices should not despoil or destroy other resources.

*Justice* requires that resources be managed for the benefit of all. Furthermore, our management of a particular resource should not deprive others of the benefits which they might enjoy from the use of other resources, now and in the future.

*Natural gas* is an abundant energy resource. It can be used to replace coal for generating electric power, and thus reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Furthermore, increased production of natural gas reduces our nation’s dependence on imported fossil fuels, which often come from countries that abuse human rights and ignore environmental damage caused by energy extraction.

*Gas drilling could be of financial benefit to local landowners.* Many of our neighbors have already signed leases to permit gas drilling on their property. This is their right. Through years of economic decline, rural life has been hard, and it is understandable why farmers and other residents would seize upon an opportunity to sign a lease. We are distressed, however, when we hear that some may have been misled into signing leases offering minimal compensation.

*Horizontal hydrofracking,* a relatively new technology, appears to be the most efficient way to produce natural gas from shale deposits in New York State. However, independent experts believe that it poses a serious risk to our water resources. First, the explosive pressure used to fracture the gas-bearing shale might force the toxic chemicals used in the process through fissures and faults in the rock layers above into aquifers that supply drinking water. Secondly, accidents happen. Surface spills and faulty well bores provide opportunities for contaminating surface streams and lakes, as well as the water table below, with toxic fracking fluids and brine recovered from the wells. The Department of Environmental Conservation’s Generic Environmental Impact Statement governing horizontal hydrofracking does not address these issues adequately.

*In conclusion:* Horizontal hydrofracking is dividing our community between those who support and those who oppose gas drilling. As Christians, we do not wish to incite further division. However, we are compelled to speak out when the good stewardship of God’s creation is at stake and injustice is at hand. Horizontal hydrofracking is not good stewardship; it presents a clear and present danger to the sustainability of our clean water resources. No reliable and economical technology exists to clean up mistakes thousands of feet underground. Secondly, the permanent contamination of the water wells of homes near drilling sites would be a major injustice.

Therefore, we object to the use of the DEC’s Generic Environmental Impact Statement and support a temporary moratorium on gas drilling using horizontal hydrofracking until such time as the State of New York has rewritten and implemented rigorous regulations sufficient to ensure the future protection of our region’s water resources. We believe that everyone in this community, both supporters of gas drilling and its opponents, should be able to join us in supporting this position.

**Resolution:** The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Cooperstown opposes implementation of the Generic Environmental Impact Statement governing horizontal hydrofracking and supports a temporary moratorium on gas drilling using this technology until such time as the State of New York has rewritten and implemented rigorous regulations sufficient to ensure the future protection of our region’s water resources. Furthermore, the Session urges the members of the congregation to support this resolution with concrete actions, including urging other faith communities to join with us in supporting this resolution. (Adopted November 15, 2010)
Per Capita Giving: Our way of connecting.

You may have noticed that our annual church budget contains income and expense lines for an item called “Per Capita.” You may have wondered what this is. Essentially, per capita is a set amount of money per member that congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church.

Presbyterians have used per capita apportionment for over 150 years to mutually share the costs of coming together to discern where God is leading us. The earliest mention of something like a per capita apportionment dates back to the 1700s. In the mid-1800s, a plan of mileage was adopted by the General Assembly to defray the expenses of commissioners attending General Assembly meetings so that everyone could be present to participate regardless of distance or financial resources. Over time, per capita has been used to fund “ecclesiastical and administrative” functions that are shared by the whole church. The underlying principle of per capita, therefore, is this; because every Presbyterian shares in the benefit of the PCUSA’s system of government, every Presbyterian is asked to share the expenses associated with coordinating and performing the functions of that system.

Congregations pay an annual amount of money per church member – per capita apportionment – to their presbyteries. The amount is a combined request from a congregation’s presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly based on their respective budgets for the coming year. Our per capita apportionment for 2011 was $32.45 per member, of which the General Assembly received $6.50.

The General Assembly per capita rate is set every two years at the General Assembly meeting. It is set by dividing the total GA-approved budget by the total PCUSA church membership after adjusting for such things as investment income. Examples of what per capita dollars fund include: (a) expenses for bringing commissioners and advisory delegates to a General Assembly, as well as holding the meeting, (b) the cost of bringing together presbytery and synod church leaders for training events, as well as those who serve on permanent GA committees, (c) tools to develop and administer ordination exams, (d) the call system and other work that helps all Presbyterians discern their vocation, (e) the production and distribution of the Book of Order, the Book of Confessions and other GA publications, and (f) a Presbyterian presence at ecumenical groups and gatherings in the U.S. and worldwide.

In conclusion, per capita giving is part of the glue that holds Presbyterians together. It exists to allow the whole church to share equitably in those things that make us Presbyterian: our theological identity, our connectedness, our system of governing bodies that allow elders and ministers together to discern the mind of Christ, our ecumenical connections that make us part of the church universal, our core structures that keep us together as a church, and our call to work for full participation in decision-making. Per capita allows us to work with other churches to further the mission of Jesus Christ around the world. If you have not yet made a special per capita contribution this year, please consider doing so. Thank you.

Budget and Finance Team
Around and About—
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<th>Tuesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact Church Office with corrections/changes or additions by Wednesday. Congregational Lounge will be set up and used for the Alternative Market during December.</td>
<td>Nov. 28 Alternative Market Workshop Worship Team 7 PM</td>
<td>Nov. 29</td>
<td>Nov. 30 Inreach/Outreach 7 PM</td>
<td>1 Choir Rehearsal 8 PM</td>
<td>2 Parkinson’s Support Group 12:00 N Contra Dancers 7:00 PM AA Big Book Step Study Group (Open) 7 – 8 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 2nd Sunday of Advent Adult Ed 9:15 AM Worship 10:45 AM Sunday School Jubilee Band 1:30 – 2 PM Alternative Market Advent Workshop</td>
<td>5 Trustees 7:00 PM</td>
<td>6 Food Pantry Delivery</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8 Food Pantry Board 6:30 PM Choir 8 PM</td>
<td>9 AA Big Book Step Study Group (Open) 7 – 8 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 4th Sunday of Advent Adult Ed 9:15 AM Worship 10:45 AM Sunday School Alternative Market Jubilee Band 10 AM</td>
<td>19 Session Meeting 7 PM</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22 Wedding 4 PM Choir 8 PM</td>
<td>23 AA Big Book Step Study Group (Open) 7 – 8 PM</td>
<td>24 Christmas Eve 4 PM Christmas Pageant 8 PM Candlelight Service 11 PM Candlelight Service &amp; Communion</td>
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<td>25 Merry Christmas! Worship 10:45 AM January 1 – Happy New Year! Worship 10:45 AM</td>
<td>26 Worship Team 7 PM</td>
<td>27 Quilt Club 7 – 9 pm</td>
<td>28 Lord’s Table 4 PM</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30 Parkinson’s Support Group 12:00 N AA Big Book Step Study Group (Open) 7 – 8</td>
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God with grateful thanksgiving, forgiveness and pardon, for Jesus' sake. 

Happy to be Thy children, and may Christmas morning bring us to one teach us to be merry with sober hearts. May Christmas morning make an 
greeting. Deliver us from evil by the bleeding heart. Christ's name, and 
the world. Let kindness come with every gift, and good wishes with every 
of the Proprium. Close the door to hate and open the door of love all over 
in the song of the angels, the Glad tidings of the shepherds, and the word of 
Lord. Help us Agility to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share 

First Christmas Prayer

First Presbyterian Church
25 Church Street
Cooperstown, New York 13326
Return Postage Guaranteed

Christmas Bells are Ringing! Join us Christmas Eve at one of our three services: 4, 8, and 11 p.m.

Please Deliver This Newsletter To: