

# *The Messenger*

## **Upper Ridgewood Community Church**

Fairmount & Hillcrest Road, Ridgewood, NJ 07450

Phone: 201 445-4082 / Fax: 201 445-9352 / Web: www.ccur.org

## **JANUARY 2012**

*Worship Services are at 10:00 a.m. each Sunday*

*Nursery care is provided for infants to children three years of age*

*Parents are encouraged to make use of the Nursery*

*Church School meets from approximately 10:20 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.  
with children participating in the early part of worship*

### **COMMUNITY CHURCH AT WORSHIP**

The Reverend Nolan D. Palsma, Liturgist and Preacher

**January 1-New Year's Day**

**First Sunday after Christmas**

**Scriptures: Psalm 148; Luke 2:22-40**

**January 15**

**Second Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Scriptures: Psalm 139; John 1:43-51**

**January 8**

**HOLY COMMUNION**

**First Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Scriptures: Psalm 29; Mark 1:4-11**

**January 22**

**Third Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Scriptures: Psalm 62; Mark 1:14-20**

**January 29**

**Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Scriptures: Psalm 111; Mark 1:21-28**

## MINISTER'S COLUMN

Dear Friends:

As I write this, it is mid-December. I am thinking about some of the traditions that must be repeated in our house or else it is not Christmas. For example, the Christmas breakfast in our home must include homemade blueberry pancakes, bacon and grapefruit which is sliced in half, coated with brown sugar, topped with a maraschino cherry and broiled in the oven for one minute. I also am thinking of repeated patterns of the season like putting up the Dickens' Village or decorating the Christmas tree with its ornaments. The ornaments all have stories to them. As they are pulled out of the box, there is Ryan's first Christmas ornament, ornaments made by our kids in elementary school, ornaments of vacations taken, and ornaments with special significance because of who gave them to us. It is nostalgic and we long for these past memories.

Christmas though is never the same no matter how many times we try to replicate it. Christmas is different every year. Each year, someone is missing from the table; or the players around the table are the same but the relationships are different. We all yearn for or try to achieve the perfect Christmas but it never seems complete. I think that which we really long for is God even though we may not know it. It has been said that time moves forward; it is never an endless repetition. Time offers us something we have yet to experience. The prophet Isaiah in his peaceable kingdom narrative (Isaiah 11) points very clearly to a Christmas we all yearn for and repetition is not going to get us there. God beckons us not to the past but to God's future.

Where have you been tugged this past Christmas? Have you been tugged toward memories that lean toward the past or tugged toward a future which God so graciously gives? Isaiah also said in chapter 43: "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"

People of Community Church, I pray you all had a Merry Christmas, a Christmas which points us ever forward to that Peaceable Kingdom. As we forge into a New Year, let us look ahead and see what God has in store for us.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Nolan

### THANK YOU

Special thanks to all who made this Advent-Christmas season a special celebration by your worship leadership, event coordination, church decoration, hospitality and the behind the scenes activities. I think that includes all of you. Thanks also to all who remembered my family and me with goodies and cards. You are a special group of people.

Pastor Nolan

## **CALENDAR OF UPCOMING DATES**

*Tuesday-January 3*

8:00 am Ridgewood Clergy meet at St. Elizabeth's Church

*Thursday-January 5*

7:30 pm Boy Scout Troop #7 meets in Hess Hall

8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal in the music room

*Friday-January 6*

7:00 pm Consistory Retreat Dinner-at the home of Rich and Lindsey Barclay

*Saturday-January 7*

8:00 am Consistory Retreat at URCC

*Sunday-January 8*

HOLY COMMUNION at worship

After Worship-- Un-decorating of the Church

5:30 pm Senior High Fellowship w/ Parents meet in Easton Great Room

*Monday-January 9*

8:45 am Tarvin Realtors Brokers Class-meets in the Easton Great Room

7:30 pm Boy Scout Troop #7-Board of Review-in room #5

*Wednesday-January 11*

8:45 am Tarvin Realtors Brokers Class-meets in the Easton Great Room

*Thursday-January 12*

7:30 pm Boy Scout Troop #7 meets in Hess Hall

8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal in the music room

*Monday-January 16*

10:00 am Martin Luther King, Jr. Service at United Methodist Church, 100 Dayton St

*Tuesday-January 17*

8:45 am Tarvin Realtors Brokers Class-meets in the Easton Great Room,

*Wednesday-January 18*

8:45 am Tarvin Realtors Brokers Class-meets in the Easton Great Room

7:00 pm Finance Committee Meeting in the Easton Great Room

*Thursday-January 19*

7:30 pm Boy Scout Troop #7 meets in Hess Hall

8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal in the music room

*Saturday-January 21*

Noon – 2:00 pm Senior High "Friends to Friends" Luncheon

*Monday-January 23*

8:45 am Tarvin Realtors Brokers Class-meets in the Easton Great Room

7:00 pm Deacons Meeting-in the Easton Great Room

*Wednesday-January 25*

8:45 am Tarvin Realtors Brokers Class-meets in the Easton Great Room

*Thursday-January 26*

7:30 pm Boy Scout Troop #7 meets in Hess Hall

8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal in the music room

*Saturday-January 28*

8:00 am URCC Workday

*Monday, January 30*

8:45 am Tarvin Realtors Brokers Class-meets in the Easton Great Room

\*The AA Group meets Mon-Friday at 10:00 am in Room #5

**ON THE WEB:** [www.ccur.org](http://www.ccur.org) We are linked to the Ridgewood Village website under religious institutions. So...check the WEB for CCUR...the more "hits" we receive the faster the system works.

**EMAILS REQUESTED:** If you would like to receive the *Messenger* electronically, and haven't done so already, kindly contact the church office at 201-445-4082 or email Liz directly at [ccur2@verizon.net](mailto:ccur2@verizon.net). For those of you who live out of state, an updated address/phone number and email address would be greatly appreciated here in the church office.

### **COMMUNION CHANGE**

The celebration of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated on January 8 rather than January 1. Please note on your calendars.

### **CHURCH SCHOOL:**

The following is the Church School Schedule for the month of January:

*Children & Worship* Jan 1: No Class

8: All Church Program with Dawn

15: Class Held

22: Class Held

29: Class Held

*Grades 4-7:* Jan 1: No Class

8: All-Church Program with Dawn

15: Class Held

22: Class Held

29: Class Held

**CHURCH SCHOOL NOTES:** A bright new year awaits our children in 2012. We are kicking off traditional church school on January 15th and teachers will be joining me as we train up your child in Christ.

New Year resolutions are always the buzz, but one might consider that in order to change something about yourself...you must let something go. Maybe you don't need to add to your life right now. No gym membership. No joining the PTO. No joining the board this year. Maybe you just need to gift yourself a release from a binding habit that is draining you of time, energy and family time: stop saying "yes".

Perhaps a resolution that is fitting to today's day and age is to resolve to take something away from your routine and in return...reclaim the relaxed you that would linger over a cup of coffee to talk to God for a moment. The old you who used to prepare the lunch for your spouse with a love note tucked away to be discovered under the polished apple. The intuitive you who loved to watch strangers pass by your bench at the mall and take a moment to send up a prayer to ease the worried strain you see on their lined face. It only takes a moment, but that you is still there. It has been lost to a sea of "yeses" when what really needed to be said was "No, I am needed somewhere else right now." Say "no" today, and take that moment to savor the release. God works in those little moments, but we need to give Him our ear so that we can hear His whispers of love. If you make Him shout over the discordant noise of our lives, it will be too late. Listen. Watch. Linger. Pray.

I look forward to discovering God's awesomeness with your children this year.

Blessings to you and yours in this New Year!

Dawn Heerema

**SENIOR HIGH FELLOWSHIP:** The Senior Highs had a busy month in December! On Sunday, December 11, the Sr. Highs went caroling to three homes and Christian Health Center where they visited URCC members Marge Thompson, Emme Eidenschenk, Marge Roukema, Walter and Marion Edwards. Thanks to all who participated in this very special event. On December 18, the Sr. Highs rehearsed for the Tableau of the Nativity which they offered at the Christmas Eve Service.

As the Sr. Highs turn the calendar to January, their work and ministry continues. On Sunday, January 8, at 5:30 p.m., the Sr. Highs will gather for a planning meeting with their parents and the advisors. On Saturday, January 21, the Sr. Highs are going to provide a noon lunch for "Friends to Friends" and then join them for a movie at the First Reformed Church in Ridgewood. Lindsey Barclay is the parent coordinator for this opportunity for ministry to our neighboring congregation.

The Senior High's will be sponsoring their annual SuperBowl Sub Sale on Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>. More information will be forthcoming in the subsequent worship bulletins.

**MUSIC:** The URCC music ministry wishes everyone a wonderful Christmas and happy New Year. We would like to say a big THANK YOU to our quartet and choir members for their dedication and effort to make the music program possible. We are truly blessed with their beautiful music as we celebrate the Christmas season. We also want to thank our congregation for their continual support and encouragement.

**FOOD GIFT CARD PROGRAM:** Thanks to you, the members of the chancel choir and the congregation of the Upper Ridgewood Community Church for the wonderful gift of gift certificates. You all are helping to ease the burdens that many of those less fortunate feel during the Holidays. We sent the gift cards to the following families:

- 1. A single mother of two whose divorce agreement is for rent and utilities only. She is looking for a job. She rarely has cash.*
- 2. A married couple with two children. They have working papers and are awaiting green cards. Both were professionals in their country.*
- 3. A recent widower with three teenaged daughters. They have been struggling with finances for three years since both parents suffered serious illnesses.*
- 4. A single mother of two school-aged boys. She is under-employed and looking for additional work. Her office is not as busy as it had been in the past.*
- 5. A married couple with two teenaged sons. His business has not generated income in several years. They are having difficulty feeding a family of growing boys.*
- 6. A senior citizen who lives alone in a reduced rent apartment and is waiting for senior housing.*
- 7. A married couple with two children. Both parents are under-employed.*
- 8. A married couple with three children. Both the parents and the children have had some unusual medical expenses in the past year.*
- 9. A married couple with three children. The couple invested money into a business that failed and have been struggling to get financially despite working.*

10. *A divorced mother of four who works full time but is having difficulty making ends meet as the children get older and eat more.*
11. *A divorced mother of three who has returned to work part –time and is waiting for full time hours.*
12. *A married couple with two children. He is extremely under-employed as his industry has changed and she works multiple jobs.*
13. *A married couple hit by industry changes and health issues.*
14. *A married woman in the process of obtaining a divorce. She has three young children.*
15. *A married couple with five children. He was out of work for two years. Although he is working, he is earning less money than in 2008 and a lay-off is possible.*

I think you all can see how much your help means to these neighbors in need. We can't thank you enough for these acts of kindness and concern.

Your gifts come to these families as an unexpected windfall that helps them in a time of great need. On behalf of the Board of Social Service Association, I thank you for all that you are doing to help our neighbors in need.

Regards,

Denise Vollkommer

Director, Social Service Association of Ridgewood & Vicinity

**EPIPHANY SEASON:** Epiphany means God made manifest or God revealed to us. In worship on January 8, we will celebrate the coming of the Magi and their recognition of Jesus as the prophesied King. Because the Magi are Gentiles we celebrate the extension of God's covenant and redemption for all nations. On successive Sundays in Epiphany, the lectionary passages point to God being revealed in the ministry of Jesus Christ. The scriptures include the baptism of Christ, the presentation of Jesus in the temple and ends with the transfiguration of Jesus. The season is a time to think about the light of Jesus Christ shining into the whole world. The Epiphany season will last until Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2012.

**ACCESSIBILITY FUND:** The fund has grown to \$6175 named in honor of Pastor Nolan's 30 years of ordained ministry. The fund is designated to make the Upper Ridgewood Community Church facilities accessible to all. Plans are in their initial stages but are moving forward. If you have not given or pledged to this fund and wish to do so, please send a check to the church office with your intentions.

**THANKSGIVING OFFERING:** The Thanksgiving Offering for 2011 totaled \$2010. It was sent to Social Service Association. SSA has opened the door for many who needed food, clothing, housing assistance, childcare, education and advocacy, to name a few. Their goal is to preserve the dignity and stability of the individual; to restore the confidence of the individual and to provide ongoing support and to empower individuals in seeking solutions in order to expand their opportunities. SSA is able to open the door to others due to grants from The United Way, generous financial supporters and faithful volunteers. Thanks for your generous support.

**CHRISTMAS OFFERING:** The special Christmas Offering for 2011 totaled \$1930.00. It was sent to Eva's Village in Paterson, a progressive and comprehensive non-profit social service organization dedicated to fighting homelessness and poverty. Their mission is to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, treat the addicted and provide medical and dental care to the poor with respect for the human dignity of each individual. Thanks for your generous support.

**HELP UNDECORATE THE CHURCH!** The un-decorating of URCC will take place on Sunday, January 8, after the worship service. Our advance thanks to those who will help take down and store all decorations.

**CONSISTORY RETREAT:** The consistory will hold its annual retreat on Friday and Saturday, January 6 - 7. The retreat will begin on Friday night with dinner at the home of Lindsey Barclay. It will be an opportunity to fellowship and to dine with one another without an agenda. On Saturday morning, the consistory will gather in church's Easton Great Room from 8 a.m. - noon and address two particular issues facing the church. Guests Rev. Judy Broeker and Marilyn Paarlberg will provide some of the leadership. Pray for the consistory in their work.

**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. SERVICE:** On Monday, January 16, 10 a.m. at the United Methodist Church in Ridgewood, 100 Dayton Street, it is the annual community Martin Luther King, Jr. Service. Please take advantage of this opportunity as we remember a prophet of our generation and pledge our continuing support not only for racial justice but also all human rights.

**URCC WORK DAY:** The Building and Grounds committee is scheduling a workday for January 28, 8 - noon! Come when you can; leave when you must. There are indoor maintenance issues to address. More information will be forthcoming in the church bulletin.

**OFFERING ENVELOPES:** The 2012 offering envelopes are now available on the table in the narthex. Please contact the church office if one is not available for you.

**STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY:** The 2011 Stewardship Sunday was a success as worshippers filled out their giving card (pledge) of time, talent and treasure, and offered it in the context of worship along with their regular offerings. Pastor Nolan also blessed the worshippers at the baptismal font as stewards and said: "The waters of baptism remind us that we belong to God and all that we have belongs to God, use their hands to do God's work." If you are unable to attend this special service, please mail your card to the church office. If you did not receive a giving card and would like one, please call the church office.

**SOCIAL HOUR HOSTS AND USHERS:** The volunteer sign up lists for Social Hour hosts are posted on the bulletin board in the church foyer. Just a reminder that hosts only prepare for Coffee Hour and only bring a small jug of milk (no snack) and no longer serve as greeters in the narthex (goodies are optional). Coffee Making instructions are posted in the kitchen; and please always feel free to contact Liz at the office and she can explain how the coffee urns work too. Tables for coffee hour are already in the Easton Great Room. Each Sunday a member of the Consistory serves as Head Usher at worship. Should you wish to assist on any Sunday, just sign up on the list posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. **This social time after worship is a vital part of our church.** Please make an effort to volunteer one Sunday because everyone's help is needed.

**CHANCEL FLOWER PROGRAM:** Our weekly program of listing celebratory events, remembrance of loved ones etc. is still available if you wish to do so. Our worship bulletin is a means of communication to our congregation so please feel free to contact Liz in the office to print your special “blurb” on a particular week.

**NEXT FOOD SUNDAY:** January 15 is the next date for the food collection for the Food Pantry at St. Paul’s Parish in Paterson. This food pantry provides emergency food supplies and household products to individuals and families in need. Persons are referred to this food program by ten different social service agencies, government offices and churches in the area. The next time you shop, please put a few extra items in your shopping cart for someone else.