

CHURCH STAFF

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Krista Odell, Accompanist
Jody Marsh, Parish Nurse
Robert Burkholder, Custodian
Dr. Mark and Diane Abbott, Spain
Blog: www.markabbott007.com
Rev. Paul D. Caseman, Alaska
Sandy Crossley, Connections
Joan Monroy, Connections

PASTOR STEVE'S OFFICE HOURS

M, T, W: 9am - Noon

PASTOR DAN'S OFFICE HOURS

M, W, F: 9am - Noon

Cornerstone District Office
Christ First UMC
663 Lakeview Ave.
Jamestown, NY 14701

From Pastor Steve's Desk...

Welcome to this edition of Grace Notes! We're so glad you picked up this copy of the Panama United Methodist Church newsletter! Everything you need to know about what is going on at Panama United Methodist Church is in here...enjoy!

Love Revealed!

The word REVEALED is a verb which means, "to make known, disclose, or divulge." If something is revealed, it was previously unknown, realized, and recognized. Things like secrets and crushes can be revealed. A budding flower reveals its blossom. A background of white reveals the deer that walk the edge of the woods. Revelation is a gift that we often overlook.

Other things can also be revealed. I like Christian illusionists like Harris III (<http://harrisiii.com>) because he's an expert at making you think ONE thing is happening, when actually, something completely different is going on. I've seen Harris make tables float, bend spoons, and more. Each time, I THINK I know what's happening, but then what's REVEALED is something better, more spectacular, and surprising. After the revelation takes place, we know more about what reality is and we can be thankful for the gift.

There is much about God and what God has done that we do not know. However, we know this: the undeserved favor of God has been made available to those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. That undeserved favor is called grace, and is available to you today. In fact, God revealed His grace to us in the form of Jesus Christ, who was born into flesh, yet fully divine, lived and died and rose again for the forgiveness of sin. The Apostle Paul writes this in 2 Timothy 1:9b-10, "This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." The reason God made this grace available to us was because God loves us. That's the most important and best reason ever!

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

This December, as we celebrate Advent and Christmas, spend time reflecting on the incredible love that is revealed to the world in Jesus Christ - both 2,000 years ago and today in our worship, discipleship, outreach, and missions. As we love God and those around us, WE are now the ones that reveal God's love to the world - we make known, disclose, and divulge the awesome love of God! We don't need dictionaries, or illusionists, or tricks to reveal it...we simply need to love like God loves us. Love will be revealed!

Blessings,
Pastor Steve

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

This December, the Panama UM faith community will be engaging in a four-week personal devotional called Love Revealed. Devotionals are available for pick up on a table in the Narthex. The devotionals are being provided by the Worship Team.

Come, let's experience Love Revealed in Jesus this Advent season - the COMING of The King!

GRIEFSHARE

A Journey from Mourning to Joy
Sundays; 4-5:30pm; PUMC Library

If you are journeying through grief, join others who are, too. While these sessions have already begun, we invite you to join us. We are including "Surviving the Holidays." We encourage you to allow the Lord to carry you through this very difficult process with others experiencing the same burdens.

Please call the church office at 782-4031 for more information. There are brochures available on the Welcome Table.

Pastor Steve's December Schedule



- 1 12pm: Clergy Shepherding Group; 1pm: Visitations; 6:30: Sanctuary Decorating
- 2 6pm: Praise Team Rehearsal; 7pm: Celebration Choir Rehearsal
- 4/5 Sabbath and Day Off; 12/5: Meeting in Rochester
- 6 8:30am-12pm: Prayer/Sunday School/Worship/Baptisms/New Members/Lunch
- 7 11am: Staff Mtg; 7pm: Prayer and Praise
- 8 1pm: Visitations
- 9 6pm: Praise Team Rehearsal; 7pm: Celebration Choir Rehearsal
- 10 4-9pm: Connections Dinner
- 11/12 Sabbath and Day Off
- 13 8:30am-12pm: Prayer/Sunday School/Worship; 4pm: Caroling; 5pm: Parsonage Open House
- 14 11am: Staff Mtg; 7pm: Prayer and Praise
- 15 1pm: Visitations; 6pm: Vision 20/20 Mtg with AODK
- 16 12pm: Lunch Bunch; 6pm: Praise Team Rehearsal; 7pm: Celebration Choir Rehearsal
- 17 7pm: Meeting
- 18/19 Sabbath and Day Off
- 20 8:30am-12pm: Prayer/Sunday School/Musical; 4pm: Musical
- 21 11am: Staff Mtg; 7pm: Prayer and Praise
- 22 1pm: Visitations; 7pm: Band of Brothers
- 23 6pm: Praise Team Rehearsal; 7pm: Celebration Choir Rehearsal
- 24 4pm: Worship; 11pm: Worship
- 25 ***Merry Christmas!!! LOVE has been REVEALED!***
- 26 Day Off
- 27 8:30am-12pm: Prayer/Sunday School/Worship
- 28-1/3 Vacation

December Birthdays and *Anniversaries*

- 1 Bert Anderson, Brianna Marsh
 2 Arianna Seekings
 3 Judy Parkman
 4 Earl Foulk
 5 Rob Peck, Paige Weise, *Dennis/Cindy Furlow*
 6 Eloise Smith
 7 Roger Kester
 8 Andrea Gleason, Kathy Peck
 10 Rebecca Sprague
 11 Ann Schnars, *Larry/Gay Ostrander*
 12 Christopher Brown, Warren Crouch, Amanda Anderson
Scotty/Cam James
 14 Rebecca Dominey, Debbie Loveless
 15 Alyssa Jaeger
 16 *Mike/Kelly Range, Jan/Howie Wheeler*
 17 *Andy/Terri Johnson*
 18 Olivia Nagel
 19 Tammy Rea
 20 *Steve/Krista Odell*
 22 Bruce Scolton, *Bob/Sarah Collins*
 23 Jamie Halpaine
 25 Peg Naetzker
 26 Becky Cable, Marie Dole, David Munsee
 29 Jessica Keefer, Landon Miller, Rachel Steffan,
Greg/Carrie Edwards, Jim/Rose Hunt
 30 Lee Kester, Janette Weaver

January

- 1 Carl Anderson, *Dean/Rebecca Sprague*
 3 Caroline Apthorpe, Reese McGaffick, Erin Miller, Pam Sali

Please let Pam Ireland or the office know if we need to add or update birthday or anniversary information for your family.
 This list is only as correct and up to date as the information we are given.

SUNDAY MORNING TEAM - December

Ushers

Don and Tabby Butler
 Ted and Sharon Passarelli

Nursery Helpers

December 6

Birth-2: Julia Nelson and Betsy Eggleston
 3-4: Stacy Taylor and Kelly Osborne

December 13

Birth-2: Buck and Kristine Seekings
 3-4: Adam and Tory Irgang

December 20

Birth-2: TBA
 3-4: Kathy Foulk and Riley Seekings

December 27

Birth-2: Susie Davis and Carolyn Hughesman
 3-4: Ken and Katie Braun

Thank you for volunteering to take care of our little ones during the worship service. We appreciate you!
 If something comes up and you cannot serve, please trade with someone or find a replacement. You may call Debbie in the Church office (Monday through Friday) by calling 782-4031.
 THANK YOU!!



Prayer Chain

If you have a concern for which you would like others to pray, please call:
 Susie Davis (782-4611) or Jean Edwards (782-2800).
 This request will be passed down the chain to 20+ others who will pray for your concern.
 (There are pink prayer chain updates on the Welcome Table.)

Visitation Ministry

December 6

Kathy Smith Tanglewood 235
Jean Trisket Corry Manor C44

December 13

Kathy Smith Tanglewood 235
Jean Trisket Corry Manor C44

December 20

Kathy Smith Tanglewood 235
Jean Trisket Corry Manor C44

December 27

Kathy Smith Tanglewood 235
Jean Trisket Corry Manor C44

Volunteers are needed... We are in need of more volunteers for the visitation ministry. Please talk to Bill Peck (or call the office) if this opportunity to visit some of our PUMC friends/ members is appealing to you. You will be blessed!

Grace Visitation Team

It is the responsibility of the Grace Visitation Team to check the attendance register to determine those that have not been in church for a period of time and to contact them either by phone, in person, by email or by USPS. We also track new folks as they come in our doors to worship with us. When we get their address from the attendance register, they receive a letter from the Pastor.

It is SO IMPORTANT for the attendance register to be passed down the row every Sunday so we know who is worshipping with us.

Most of all, if you see a visitor, please make an effort to make them feel welcome.

Remember to keep propelling Panama!

(Groups, continued)

Women and Missions (W.A.M.)

Jean Edwards

Meetings for this group are suspended until spring.
716-782-2800

For more information concerning PUMC Discipleship Groups, contact the church at 716-782-4031, or at debbie.johnson@panamaum.org. You may also contact Jon and Becky Cable, our Discipleship Group Leaders at 716-543-5050 or at jonbec95@gmail.com.

PROPELLING PANAMA TO ACTION...

We are still propelling! December is coming fast, and there will be new and exciting ways for you to be in action.
Watch for details!!

Looking for feedback...

During a recent conversation, the topic of evaluating the effectiveness and necessity of producing a monthly newsletter arose. In the past, our monthly mailing was over 300. Following a change in bulk mailings from the Panama Post Office, Church Council voted to include the newsletter on the website, leave some on the Welcome Table for those who wanted to pick up a hard copy and then send out about 50 via regular mail. We do not know how many read it online. Of the 50 that are on the table each month, there are usually about 20 that are not picked up. For those receiving it in the mail, is it beneficial?

We would like to ask you to send us your feelings regarding the continuance of this dissemination of church information. Do you get needed monthly information from the website, online Church news, bulletins and Sunday morning announcements? Please respond using the church email (www.panamaum.org), to me (Pam Ireland at alama-pi@yahoo.com) or put a note in the newsletter mailbox in the hallway.

Thanks so much for your time and honest feedback!

PUMC Discipleship Group
Information

C.H.A.T.

George and Trudy Anderson
1st Thursday of each month
gaanderson@windstream.net
716-782-3252

R.A.D.I.C.A.L.

Carl and Susie Davis
1st and 3rd Saturday of each month
appleoakstreeefarm@yahoo.com
suesue5@windstream.net
716-782-4611

Ladies of Light

Cindy Furlow
2nd and 4th Monday of each month; 7:15pm
cfurlow@chautauquamachine.com
716-782-2775

Band of Brothers

Craig Vollmer
4th Tuesday of each month; 7pm
craig.vollmer@gmail.com
716-763-0879

Young Adult Group

Kyle and Brynne Hinsdale
One Saturday a month
kbhinsdale@windstream.net
716-355-4382

We Care

Thea Kester
Every other Thursday; Rowdy Rooster; Noon
rtkester@windstream.net
716-782-4620

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With Sympathy to the Family of...

*Vincent T. Bensink
February 25, 1935 - November 19, 2015
Vincent was the brother of Everett Bensink.*

The love and prayers of your PUMC family are with you
and your loved ones as you continue through
this time of grief and adjustment.

***** **CARD SHOWER** *****

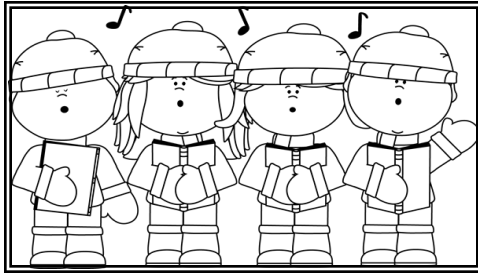
Following an emergency call at her home early in November, Peg Naetzker has been in a rehab facility in Erie. She is making progress and like her daughter, Sally, told me, "If anyone can do this, it's my mom!" Peg continues to be in rehab and will probably be in Erie all of December, but will probably not be in the same rehab as her original placement.

Sally asked if the church could help lift her spirits by sending birthday cards (December 25!) and/or Christmas cards her way. I said I would pass along the information. Cards can either be sent via USPS to: Sally Baer, 11829 Young Road, Conewango Valley, NY, 14726 OR sent via our Christmas Post Office Box in the Narthex. For those using the PUMC mail, the cards will be gathered and taken to Sally for delivery to Peg.

Thank you so much, in advance, for sending birthday or Christmas wishes to Peg.

Please also remember our other shut-ins or those PUMC friends that we don't often see. Please use the Christmas Post Office for them and we will see that they are delivered or call the office for home delivery addresses. See Pam if you have any questions.





We will be
CHRISTMAS CAROLING
 on Sunday, December 13
 beginning at 4pm.

Following caroling,
 you are invited to an
OPEN HOUSE
 at the Taylor residence
 (AKA, the PUMC Parsonage)
 beginning at 5pm.

Watch your bulletins for
 additional details.



We hope you were able to join us for our yearly Christmas-time mission project of packing a shoebox to be sent to a needy child, somewhere around the world or even at home in our own USA. We hope this was a blessing to you as we know it will be for the child to whom it is delivered.

We were blessed to take 208 boxes to the gathering center. Thank you for your support in the endeavor.

Won't you join us for SUNDAY SCHOOL?

We have Sunday School classes for all ages here at PUMC! Sunday School runs from 9 - 10am each Sunday. Check out our classes and teachers for this year!

- Pre-K: Karen Morton and Stephanie Landin
- K-2: Trudy Anderson
- Grades 3-4: Becky Cable
- Grades 5-7: Carl Davis and Howie Wheeler
- Grades 8-12: We need someone for the Spring!
- Adult: Kyle and Brynne Hinsdale
- Adult: George Anderson
- Adult: Denny and Cindy Furlow
- Senior Adult: Stacy Taylor - meets every other Wednesday

Need help in finding a class? Ask the door greeters!
 We hope you will join us for Sunday School...
 ...or just come early for coffee and conversation!

SUNDAY MORNING MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

CAMPBELL LABELS for the Red Bird Mission School in Kentucky (also look for labels on Swanson products, Pepperidge Farm, Prego and V8). To those of you who take the time to cut just the UPC code and logo from the product for us, we thank you.

PENNIES for the Domestic Abuse Program offered by the Salvation Army in Jamestown. As you read in the papers and media, you know that Domestic Abuse is on the increase and it is important to help when we can. Please drop your pennies and other small change in the container in the narthex.

NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS for God's Groceries - things like toilet paper, soap (all kinds), toothpaste and brushes, shampoo, and anything else that you feel would help those that are having a difficult time making their money go further. The use of the Food Pantry is growing and we thank you for your support.

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As always, please remember to pray for the youth of our church as they are representing Jesus Christ at school and during their extra-curricular activities. Please pray for the Youth Ministry Support Team, Family Ministry Support Team, and the Christian Education Team as they continue to work to provide the best ministry opportunities for our church family.

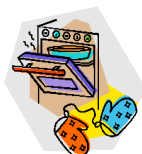
Have a blessed and peaceful Holiday season!

Pastor Dan <><

Chocolate Marshmallow Fudge

Jody Marsh, Parish Nurse

- 1 2/3 c. sugar
- 2/3 c. fat free evaporated milk
- 2 T. reduced calorie margarine or light butter
- 12 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, chopped, 1 1/2 c.
- 14 large marshmallows



Coat an 8x8 pan with cooking spray. In medium saucepan, stir together sugar, milk, and margarine/butter. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce to medium low and cook, stirring constantly, about 3 minutes. Stir in chocolate and marshmallows, remove pan from heat and stir until smooth. Pour mixture into prepared pan and refrigerate until firm, about 2 hours. Cut into 36 1 1/3" squares and serve.

Makes 36 pieces.
Each serving = 2 WW points.

WHITE GIFT

To Bless Those in Need this Christmas

The White Gift Fund is Pastor Steve's discretionary fund that is used specifically to meet the short-term financial needs of those in our church and community. On the first Sunday of every month, a special offering is received for the White Gift Fund. For many years, the Panama United Methodist family has generously given to the White Gift Fund. During Advent each year (this year, November 29 - December 20), the donations are used to bless 3-4 families in our community. These families usually are in some financial hardship, have children at home, and receive the gifts with appreciation and joy. All donations that are given to the White Gift Fund during Advent are used directly for the Christmas Outreach. Be on the lookout for small, white, cloth bags that you can use as a family to share your White Gift. Other ways to give are by dropping off cash donations in the office, including them with your regular giving in your envelope, or placing donations in the special baskets available in the main aisle of the Sanctuary.



In addition to your donations, Pastor Steve and Stacy need help identifying families in our community who may need some assistance with Christmas this year. Please be in prayer about your neighbors and friends and let Pastor Steve know. All contacts are kept strictly confidential. Please include phone numbers, addresses, and some information about the families, as available. We will need all names prior to December 19th.

Thank you!





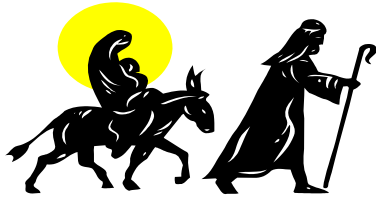
MUSIC NOTES, Julie Nagel, PUMC Music Director

Christmas is Coming...

On December 20th, the Celebration Choir and a small cast of “characters” will present “Under a Starry Sky”. “Under a Starry Sky” is a dramatic musical for Christmas that takes the reality of His coming, and the telling of His story, and connects it to a cast of Biblical and modern-day characters who encounter the true meaning of Christmas.

The musical will be presented during the worship hour at 10:15am, and again at 4pm. There will be a time of fellowship following the afternoon presentation.

We hope that you will invite your friends and neighbors to this musical presentation. Be sure to mark this date on your calendars. You won’t want to miss it!



Christmas Eve Worship

This Christmas Eve, we will again worship at 4pm and 11pm.

At 4pm, we will gather to praise the Lord and experience the Christmas Story in an upbeat and celebrative worship experience. We are planning this worship service for everyone to attend, but especially invite those who can’t come out late at night, those with children who will be tucked in by 11pm, or anyone who wants an additional chance to worship on that special day. At our 11pm Candlelight worship, we’ll reflect on the love poured out on the world through Jesus coming as the incarnation of God!

See you there!

Corner...

Pastor Dan's

Happy Advent and Christmas Greetings, Panama UMC!

It has been a wonderful year here at PUMC with our various youth and family ministries. God has blessed our church greatly, especially in our youth group! It is always exciting to look back on the year and see how God has been active and blessing our church.

We have been blessed with a great group of kids in the youth group, including many newcomers. We had a great fall, working our way through the Sermon on the Mount and also the book of Jonah. We will even get to cap off the fall semester with a youth retreat here at our church with the youth ministry Infuzion from Rochester on December 4-5 from 7pm-4pm. We will also be welcoming youth groups from our Cornerstone District and the Gerry Free Methodist group, as well. It’s always great to share in ministry with other area churches.

Our Sunday School classes have been going great. However, Sunday School is not at its best without you there! If you haven’t checked out a class yet this year, please make sure you don’t miss out on this great opportunity to grow as a disciple of Christ! See the class listings on page 11. We are in need of one or more volunteers to lead our Sr. High class this spring. Please see Becky Cable or Pastor Steve if you are interested.

Stephanie, Isaac, Asher and I have been greatly blessed to call Panama United Methodist our church home for the past three and a half years. The love and care that you have shown us has been amazing. We are excited for the ways in which God has been active in us and our church while we’ve been here and we are fully confident that he still has great things in store for our church. We are also excited for the ways in which God will continue to use us, just in a different church. We love you and will miss you, but we are thankful that we will still have opportunities to visit and keep in touch. Please pray for us as we transition to our new church, St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Muncy, PA. Our new address will be 203 South Main Street, Muncy, PA, 17756. You will certainly be in our prayers.

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