

# EXPRESSIONS

CHURCH IN THE HILLS PC (USA)



Advent means “Coming” and we are waiting for the coming of Christ, but are we really just waiting for Christmas? Most of us don’t think much about the second coming of Christ, but the early Christians were consumed by it. Almost everything written in the New Testament was shaped by the expectation of Jesus’ imminent return. The passing of 2000 years has changed our expectation. Some Christians today focus on the second coming and they seem fanatical to us. We want our faith to be more level-headed. If this is accurate, we are missing something important in our faith. Much of what Jesus said encouraged believers to pay attention to what is happening in the world and be prepared. It’s hard to understand exactly what we are to prepare for. Jesus doesn’t want us to focus on the timing of his return and be tricked by people claiming to be the messiah. We are to keep our faith despite what happens in the world around us. We are not to give in to despair, but trust in the Lord. His message sounds simple and easy to us. “Keep the faith no matter what” is how I would paraphrase his message. That message may sound simple and easy to us because we’ve never been persecuted. We’ve never had our faith tested like the early followers of Jesus. Could Jesus be preparing us for a time when we are tested to the point of giving up the faith?

I think we lose something important when we dismiss the second coming of Jesus Christ. We miss the humbling reality that things may get so bad; we might be tempted to give up hope. We need to be reminded that our savior was brutally murdered by church leaders and his early followers met the same fate. Our faith was forged in pain, death and glorious resurrection. We should never think our faith is strong enough to face anything that may come. We should be ready and prepared to have our faith tested. How can we prepare? By living our faith every day. Put your faith to the test. Go out and share it. Go out and share your wealth with those in need. Go out and make a difference in the world in the name of Jesus. If you are pushing the edges of your faith, you will be strengthened for whatever comes. If Jesus waits to return, you’ll be ready. If he returns next week, you’ll be ready. I heard a preacher say one time, “Don’t expect you’ll be able to die for Jesus until you’ve lived for him.”

The Peace of Christ be with you!

David Ramage

## DEACONS' CORNER

The Deacons are hosting a "Holiday Cheer" light luncheon on December 9<sup>th</sup> after church. All are welcome to enjoy appetizers, wassail, and Christmas carols along with fellowship. We are asking bakers in the congregation to bring a plate of their favorite Christmas cookies to share with a cup of coffee.

The Deacons would like to shout a big "thank you" to Andy and Tamara Byerly for taking all our pictures for the new church directory. We really appreciate it!

Merry Christmas and a very safe and happy New Year from your Deacons.

**Deacon on call for December**  
**Judy Card 676-1616**

## DEACONS

### Class of 2018

<b>Katrina Marshall</b>	<b>331-6013</b>
<b>Barb Salo</b>	<b>533-4122</b>
<b>Gloria Weiss</b>	<b>377-7168</b>

### Class of 2019

<b>Judy Card</b>	<b>676-1616</b>
<b>Nancy Edleman</b>	<b>533-8586</b>
<b>Marge Glyshaw</b>	<b>533-8203</b>

### Class of 2020

<b>Marty Harris</b>	<b>533-6105</b>
<b>Sarah Juntune</b>	<b>533-9403</b>
<b>Terrie Ramage</b>	<b>392-1704</b>

On November 10<sup>th</sup> the Kalamazoo College Singers put on a terrific concert at Church in the Hills to an almost sell-out crowd. Their repertoire of songs around a harvest theme inspired the audience and left everyone with a renewed hope for a more united, peaceful world. This wonderful concert never would have happened in Bellaire had it not been for a conversation between Dorothy Clore and Chris Ludwa, the choir's conductor. Many thanks to the two of them for arranging the concert, to Pastor Ramage for opening the church to such an event, to the congregation for attending and donating generously to the free-will offering and to the cadre of women who helped organize, prepare, serve, and clean up for the luncheon and reception after the concert. Thinking about Pastor Ramage's sermon on Sunday and this concert, there were certainly lots of reasons to be "thankful" and an equal number of chances to express "praise". Thank you all for welcoming the students and our son to Church in the Hills for a gratifying afternoon of music.

Gratefully,  
Nancy and Ray Ludwa



Thank you for all the prayers, concerns and cards during this long journey on my return to good health. Marge Glyshaw



Jane Olson	04-Dec
Kathy Munger	05-Dec
Thomas Craigie	06-Dec
Nancy Hanson	08-Dec
Ed Hagmaier	09-Dec
Veta Brooks	11-Dec
David McBeth	14-Dec
Tom Frey	14-Dec
Rem Siekmann	15-Dec
Scott McManus	21-Dec
Allen Brown	24-Dec
Betty VanMersbergen	25-Dec
Betty Bea Washburn	28-Dec
Jack Berry	30-Dec

**CHRISTMAS FAMILIES**

We are helping about 50 persons, but we focus on the children, trying to get one item of clothing and one “fun” present for each child. We also try to provide each family with hats, mittens (preferably waterproof), and “stocking stuffer” items (like shampoo, lotions, and deodorant) plus a gas/grocery card. The little tree in the Mission Corner has gift slips (color-coded by family). If you wish to help more than one person in the same family, pick slips of the same color. Please bring your gifts back wrapped and with the colored slip attached (but removable) by Sunday, Dec. 16. (Monetary gifts, labeled “Christmas Families,” will be used to purchase the gift cards and items for any slips not taken.)

**CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING:**

**A PERFECT GIFT THIS ADVENT SEASON**

During this Christmas and Advent Season, we celebrate leadership -- past, present, and future -- through support of the Christmas Joy Offering, one of 4 Special Offerings our church collects. We do so because church leaders greatly impact our lives of faith, walking with us down the path to be more like Jesus. The Joy Offering supports the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, providing those leaders with the resources they need when they find themselves grappling with a critical financial need. The Offering also helps our future leaders in the church and world, like those educated at our Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Supporting these students helps the whole church develop leaders who reflect the wideness of God’s intended diversity. May our gifts, and the leaders who receive them, point us always to the truth of the one whose birth we celebrate, Jesus Christ -- the truly perfect gift.



Joe and Chris Bostater	04-Dec
Jack and Bea Berry	12-Dec
Allen and Sue Brown	15-Dec
Walt and Dee Owens	15-Dec
Ron and Betty VanMersbergen	16-Dec
Jim and Carolyn Hatcher	23-Dec
Ed and Sue Blugerman	28-Dec

CITH is supporting a new group that has formed in Bellaire: "**Friends of Veterans**". The group supports Veterans and their families through public awareness and other needs as they become known. The "Friends of Veterans" group has offered community members the opportunity to purchase a flag in honor of or in memory of a loved one. You will begin to see flags displayed throughout Bellaire in a number of places - The Medical Clinic, Family Fare, Area Seniors to name a few. "Friends of Veterans" supports as needed such as providing personal needs items for homeless veterans (and yes we have some in Antrim County), finding and donating sleeping bags or blankets, clothing, backpacks and food. There is a form that "Friends of Veterans" has available which gives anyone the opportunity to purchase a flag in honor of or in memory of a loved one. If you're interested forms are available at the back of the church.

## **Year-End Contributions**

This year, the last church bank deposit for 2018 will be made on the morning of Monday, December 31<sup>st</sup>. For any church contributions to be included in your annual contribution letter, they must be received by CITH **before** December 31<sup>st</sup>, either through Sunday offerings, mail, or in person. Contributions received on or after December 31<sup>st</sup> will be counted as 2019 gifts. 2018 contribution letters will be mailed to you in January.

Sincere Thanks to All,  
Finance Committee

### **Shed needed for the ice rink at Richardi Park for BYI/Rotary Club.**

In order to open the ice rink in Bellaire we need a shed to store our equipment in (skates, hoses, small Zamboni, etc). Lyle from Woodcrafter's has offered to let us use his heated building across from Mama's Restaurant in Bellaire to build the shed. He will get all the materials for us. What we need is 6-8 men with your own tools to come on Sat. Dec. 15th at 9:00 am. Enjoy hot coffee & donuts and build the shed. We will be paying for the materials. (Donations accepted). A sample of the shed (with the 2 doors) is at the Bellaire Hardware. Please consider helping us for Bellaire Families who so enjoyed the ice rink for the last few years. We need your help.

Thanks!

Gary Lockwood 248-231-8820

Dee Lynch 231-377-7077

### **90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Open House**

For: Jack Berry Sr.

When: Saturday, December 29<sup>th</sup>

Time: 1 – 3 pm

Where: Red School House, Rapid City

Stop in and say HI.

No gifts please.

# DECEMBER 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM	3 PASTOR'S DAY OFF  DEACONS 10:00 AM	4 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 AM	5 CHOIR 3:30 PM	6 MEN'S RAP 9:00 AM  FINANCE 1:00 PM	7	8
9 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM  HOLIDAY CHEER AFTER WORSHIP  MISSION 12:00 PM	10 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	11 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 AM	12 SESSION 9:00 AM  CHOIR 3:30 PM	13 MEN'S RAP 9:00 AM	14	15 JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
16 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM	17 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	18 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 AM	19 CHOIR 3:30 PM	20 MEN'S RAP 9:00 AM	21	22
23 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM	24 PASTOR'S DAY OFF  CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 7:00 PM	25 CHRISTMAS DAY OFFICE CLOSED	26	27 MEN'S RAP 9:00 AM	28	29
30 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 AM  2018 CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE	31 PASTOR'S DAY OFF					

Church in the Hills  
PO Box 319  
Bellaire, Michigan 49615

## DECEMBER 2018

**CHURCH IN THE HILLS**  
*A Presbyterian Community of  
Faith and Friendship in Christ*  
6401 Shanty Creek Rd  
PO Box 319  
Bellaire, MI 49615  
Phone: 231-533-6001

OFFICE E-MAIL:  
office@churchinthehills.net  
WEBSITE:  
www.churchinthehills.org

Service of Worship: Sunday 10:00 AM  
Children's Program: Sunday 10:00 AM

OFFICE STAFFED  
Mon – Thu, 9 AM – 1 PM  
Lisa Luxton, Office Manager

Church in the Hills is a member of the  
Presbytery of Mackinac  
The Synod of the Covenant  
The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

**Reverend David Ramage** revramage@gmail.com

Clerk of Session: Mary Ann Waara 350-0067

### Class of 2018

Linda Bicum	Christian Education	322-2811
Marlene Garvey	Personnel/Prayer	544-1111
Tom Juntune	Finance	533-9403

### Class of 2019

Maureen Stenback	Worship	544-6522
Mary Ann Waara	Mission	350-0067
Phil Weiss	Finance	377-7168

### Class of 2020

Paul DeLange	Bldg & Grnds	377-7333
Gordon Harris	Finance	599-2636
Dottie Schaefer	Membership	377-7848

### Music Staff

Dorothy Clore, Nancy Hanson, Carol McLeod

Edena Williams PW of CITH  
Reverend Mr. Donald E. Gordon, Pastor Emeritus