

EXPRESSIONS

CHURCH IN THE HILLS PC (USA)

december



The word, "Advent" means "coming" or "arriving." We are in the season of Advent because we are waiting for the arrival of Jesus into our broken world. We overlap the birth of Jesus with his second coming so that we learn to be expectant with our faith. If our faith is only focused on what happened two thousand years ago, we become stagnant. The Jewish people in Jesus' day were expectant of the Messiah coming mostly because their lives were oppressed by Rome. Whenever people are oppressed, hope in a future savior helps them endure the present difficulties. Many great spiritual songs came from black slaves in America as they anticipated Jesus' return to deliver them as Moses delivered the Israelites. We are certainly not oppressed which brings up the question, "What are we expecting this season of Advent?" "What are we waiting for?"

I know most of you remember waiting for almost everything when you were younger. You took pictures and had to wait for them to be developed. When you came home from school, you had to wait for supper to be prepared. If you went to the doctor, you had to wait days or weeks for test results. Every important milestone dangled in front of you, but you had to wait. You probably couldn't date until a certain age. You couldn't drive until you were 16. You couldn't make decisions for yourself until you were 18. I don't know how everything changed. It might be computers or the internet or cell phones but waiting seems like a thing of the past. We've lost the virtue of patience.

If everything we need is a click away and all comforts including the temperature of a room are controlled by our phone, what is left to wait for? I think this question has a simple answer. The things we complain about are the things we are waiting for. If we complain about war or immigration or elections, we are waiting for solutions. Complaining is a sign of discontent, but we might miss the opportunity discontent provides. We think complaining might bring a simple answer like ordering pizza on our phone. Complaining is the easiest response to discontent, but it accomplishes nothing. Prayer, on the other hand, channels our discontent and directs it to the creator and redeemer of the world. If we acknowledge our discontent before God, we feel the oppression of the darkness still rampant in our world. We become desperate for change like the poor and oppressed. We become hopeful of a better future, a future we can't yet obtain. Waiting for Jesus' return is not about preparing for an event. It's about our willingness to be agents of his love in the world and paving the road for his kingdom to arrive "on earth as it is in heaven." The Advent of his Kingdom is worth waiting for. It's worth praying for. It's worth living for and even dying for.

Rev. David Ramage
Pastor of Church in the Hills

As part of a way for us to SEEK · LOVE · SERVE each other and God, the Membership Committee is featuring members and friends of CITH in our newsletter with some fun Q&A. We encourage you to take the time to read and get to know members and friends of the Church in the Hills family!

Jean Rowe

I was baptized and confirmed an Episcopalian. We found the Presbyterian church during the first year of Church in the Hills and have been attending since, and I now call myself a Presbyterian.

Much to my parents' dismay, the most spontaneous thing I have done is quit college after my junior year and move to Boston, where I attended secretarial school, then worked for the New England advertising manager of The Wall Street Journal. I loved the creativity of the advertising industry. After Boston, with a future job in San Francisco, I returned to our family cottage on Lake Bellaire "just for the summer", and Grant and I were married there that year, 1969, after having dated every summer since 1963.

My favorite quote is one from my dear friend, Susie: "It's an ill wind that doesn't blow some good." I find myself using it a lot.

My favorite place on earth is northern Michigan, although, Italy runs a close second. I love the art, the food, and the people. Thankfully, I have been there many times and have sampled a lot of it.

We are so blessed to have two happily married sons and six grandchildren. God has been good to us, and we know it! Thank you, Dear God!



Jean Rowe



Joe and Chris Bostater	04-Dec
Allen and Sue Brown	15-Dec
Jim and Carolyn Hatcher	23-Dec
Ed and Sue Blugerman	28-Dec

DEACONS

Class of 2025

Judy Heimbuch	440-242-7352
Colleen Jordan	231-670-6888
Sarah Juntune	231-676-3996

Class of 2026

Barb Antosik	602-509-2051
Pat Hallberg	231-533-6006
Janet Siekmann	513-315-8760

Class of 2027

Tammy Hickman	231-350-0090
Patty Moore	616-681-2450
Terrie Ramage	231-392-1704

DECEMBER Birthdays

Kathy Munger	05-Dec
Ed Hagmaier	09-Dec
Veta Brooks	10-Dec
Bev J. Dickinson	11-Dec
Tom Frey	14-Dec
Jill Packer	15-Dec
Gail Preston	15-Dec
Rem Siekmann	15-Dec
Scott McManus	21-Dec
Allen Brown	24-Dec
Terry Moore	24-Dec
Betty VanMersbergen	25-Dec
Betty Bea Washburn	28-Dec

YEAR-END CONTRIBUTIONS

The last church bank deposit for 2025 will happen on Tuesday, December 30th. For any donations to be included in your Church in the Hills giving statement, they must be received by CITH **before** December 30th, either through Sunday offerings or mail. Contributions received on or after the 30th will be counted as 2026 gifts. 2025 contribution statements will be mailed to you in January 2025.

Sincere Thanks to All,
Finance Committee

Christmas Cheer Event

The Deacons would like to invite everyone to the Christmas Cheer luncheon which will be held December 14th following the Church service. You don't have to bring anything, just come, and have fun. We will be singing Carols, providing great fellowship, and enjoying fine food.

Christmas Families



We are helping 15 families this year, with a total of 33 children. Thank you for taking so many of the wish slips. At this point what is most needed are monetary donations and items for the childrens' 'stockings': mittens, crayons, coloring books, other small toys, small books for elementary-aged children, etc. Please put your gifts in the box labeled for that family. Everything is due December 7. Your generosity is so appreciated.

Christmas Joy Offering

"PREPARE THE WAY" In Isaiah 40, the prophet asks his listeners to prepare the way for the very real presence of God. The Christmas Joy Offering, one of the four Churchwide Special Offerings, prepares the way to bring hope through education and emergency assistance. Presbyterian centers of learning prepare the way for students from every walk of life to be active, compassionate and informed citizens of the world, and the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions prepares a way for church workers to find a measure of peace and security in times of financial crisis, providing critical assistance at the most anxious times in church workers' lives, like health or housing instability. Please consider helping the Church continue to "Prepare the Way" this December.

Soul sisters

Will be lunching at Short's on Friday, December 19th at 12:30. Get the Christmas sweater out of mothballs and let's party! Bring along a friend, neighbor or relative. Let Linda Bicum know you intend to come by Wed, Dec 17th. 231-322-2811 or [bic和平@torchlake.com](mailto:bicum@torchlake.com).

DECEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 DEACONS 10:00 A.M.	2 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 A.M. WORSHIP 3:30 P.M.	3 CHOIR 3:30 P.M.	4 MENS RAP 9:00 A.M. FINANCE 2:00 P.M.	5 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	6
7 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 A.M. CHRISTMAS FAMILIES DUE ANTRIM COUNTY COMMUNITY CHOIR 4 PM	8	9 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 A.M.	10 CHOIR 3:30 P.M. SESSION 10:00 A.M.	11 MENS RAP 9:00 A.M.	12 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	13
14 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 A.M.	15	16 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 A.M.	17 CHOIR 3:30 P.M.	18 MENS RAP 9:00 A.M.	19 PASTOR'S DAY OFF SOUL SISTER'S LUNCHEON	20
21 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 A.M.	22	23 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 A.M.	24 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 7:00 P.M. NO CHOIR	25 CHRISTMAS DAY OFFICE CLOSED	26 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	27
28 WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 A.M. MISSION 11:00 A.M.	29	30 BIBLE STUDY 10:00 A.M.	31 NEW YEARS EVE NO CHOIR			

EXPRESSIONS

DECEMBER 2025

Reverend David Ramage

revramage@gmail.com

or

pastor@churchinthehills.org

Clerk of Session: Mary Ann Waara 231-350-0067

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.org
WEBSITE:
www.churchinthehills.org

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

OFFICE STAFFED
Tue – Thu, 9 AM – 3 PM
Becky Watrous, 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.)

ELDERS

Class of 2025

Paul DeLange	231-377-7333
Lindsay Eggers	989-992-5514
Ron Lynch	231-631-5368

Class of 2026

Bev Dickinson	248-217-9393
John Kerr	248-770-5923
Ken Salo	231-944-9972

Class of 2027

Linda Bicum	231-322-2281
Cynthia Tschudy	231-544-6167
Mary Ann Waara	231-350-0067

Director of Music

John Dickinson	248-990-6846
----------------	--------------