

Christmas Carols

I was taught in seminary to sing Advent hymns during Advent and Christmas Carols during the Christmas season. So, I got to my first appointment, fresh out of seminary and with good intentions to apply what I learned. Well, in that two point charge, I got in big trouble because we did not sing any Christmas Carols until Christmas Eve. I was in hot water and the church members were not happy! My seminary professor never told me of the dangers of following his advice.

There is something extra special and meaningful in our beloved Christmas Carols. It is actually a shame that we only sing them once a year.

I am sharing some of the hymn stories in our Sunday School Class, introducing one hymn each week and sharing some of the back story of that particular hymn. Every song has a back story. The one who wrote the lyrics was inspired in some way and sometimes quite amazingly.

So for this article, I thought I would share some of the back story from the wonderful Christmas Carol, "O Little Town of Bethlehem." It was written by Phillip Brooks in 1868. Two years earlier he toured the Holy Land and was struck by the things he saw in the town of Bethlehem that Christmas Eve. Two years after his visit he was looking for a carol for his Sunday School at Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia. He sat in his study thinking about this and his mind went to Bethlehem and what he saw two years before. He pictured Bethlehem in its quiet, peaceful manner. Inspired by these thoughts, he took out his pen and wrote the lyrics to "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Philip Brooks became a bishop but

died at the early age of 58. Still, the words of his beloved Christmas Carol are sung every year at this time.

If you read the bulletin on Sunday morning and pay attention to the details, you know that Dave and Marti Lantz compose music and lyrics, too. We are blessed to have their talent and creative skills in our church!

This year pay attention to the Christmas Carols we sing. Listen to the words. Think of the pictures they portray as they come to your mind. Let them sink in deep into your mind and soul. They contain some powerful imagery and help us get into the spirit of the season.

I understand what I was taught in seminary and we will sing a few Advent hymns, but we will also sing Christmas Carols before Christmas Eve again this year. They are wonderful hymns that should be sung more often!

I hope this season brings you closer to the one who was born in a manger and changed the world for all time. Sing the carols and sing them loud! Our world needs to hear them, too!



Bob Shank

Daily Scripture Readings

December 1
Psalm 4

December 2
Psalm 5

December 3
Psalm 6

December 4
Psalm 7

December 5
Psalm 8

December 6
Psalm 9

December 7
Psalm 10

December 8
Psalm 11

December 9
Psalm 12

December 10
Psalm 13

December 11
Psalm 14

December 12
Psalm 15

December 13
Psalm 16

December 14
Psalm 17

December 15
Psalm 18

December 16
Psalm 19

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Psalm 20

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Psalm 21

December 19
Psalm 22

December 20
Psalm 23

December 21
Psalm 24

December 22
Psalm 25

December 23
Psalm 26

December 24
Psalm 27

December 25
Psalm 28

December 26
Psalm 29

December 27
Psalm 30

December 28
Psalm 31

December 29
Psalm 32

December 30
Psalm 33

December 31
Psalm 34

Gather! Grow! Make a Difference!



December Birthdays

1	Tim Stewart
5	Carol Romanksy
11	Emily Vail
14	Jimmy Stewart
18	Alex Herrero
18	Carole Vuchak
20	Lydia Shank
20	James Shank
20	Scott Sebring
23	Robin Farrow
26	Betty Michelin
28	Rose Schwedler
28	Cindy Transue
31	Crista Kopec

If you would like a card on your special day, please call the church office - 570-421-6020.

Pocono Concert Choral



Pocono Concert Chorale, under the direction of Dr. James Maroney, will hold its inaugural concert on Sunday, December 4 at 2:30 pm at the First Presbyterian Church, 575 Main Street, Stroudsburg.

The program will include "Liebeslieder Waltzes", by Johannes Brahms, a collection of love songs; and "Sing We Now of Christmas", by Harry Simeone, a colorful holiday program of carols, hymns and secular songs of the season.

Tickets are available at the door:

Adults - \$10.00

Seniors - \$8.00

Students - \$5.00

Laurie Braman, Mandy Cunard and Krista Montgomery are part of the choir



To Serve You in December

Greeters	8:30
Diane & Cliff Rogell (all month)	11:00
4	Gary Braman
11	Ana & Bob Dellicker
18	Joanne Reed
24 7:30 pm	Joanne Reed & Joni Singer
25	Susan & Charles Armitage

Ushers	8:30
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DeAnn Harris
Kay Bucci
Janet Woolever

11:00

Dick Seip
Bob Dellicker
Sue Gouger
Kelly Edinger
Eva Knight

Counters

Carole Everitt & Sue Gouger

Altar Guild

JoAnn Calkins & Joanne Reed

Soup Kitchen

Sunday afternoons at 4:00 pm

4	Tom Odenwelder-Pen Argyl UMC 570-269-4206
11	Kate Andrews-Faith UMC 570-242-8432
18	Nancy Fisch-PIM 570-426-1387
25	ESUMC - Breakfast and lunch 570-421-3280



OUR CHURCH STAFF:

Ministers	Everyone
Pastors	Bob Shank & Ted Good
Pastor Emeritus	Tom Anderman
Church Secretary	Jackie Herrero
Choir Director	David Lantz
Organist	Marti Lantz
Youth Leader	Bill Hardy
Handbell Director	Lynn Seip
Custodian	Matt Parton

OUR CHURCH LEADERS:

Daniel's Dream Team

Chairperson, Sue Scarborough
admin@poconoymca.org

Worship

Chairperson, Pastor Bob Shank
bobshank@stroudsburgumc.com

Property & Building

Chairperson, Dick Seip
relseip@ptd.net

Servant Resource Team

Chairperson, C. J. Penwell
cjpen53@ptd.net

Stewardship

Chairperson, Paul Edinger
paul.edinger@stroudsburgumc.com

Missions

Chairpersons, Ruth Weber & Kathy Cook

Membership & Evangelism

Chairperson, Peggy Stewart
bpstew@juno.com

Lay Leader

Beryl Hellgren
bykoh@verizon.net

Dates to Remember in December

December 3, 2016

Pizza with Santa, 6:00-8:00pm in the Fellowship Room
Admission \$5.00 (children under 5 are free)

December 10, 2016

Second Saturday Supper (Covered Dish) 5:30 pm

December 11, 2016

Choir Christmas Cantata
Both services

December 24, 2016

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:30 pm
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion 11:00 pm

December 25, 2016

Christmas Day Worship 8:30 & 11:00 am

The Pleasant Valley Choral Society will present its annual Christmas concert on Saturday, December 10 at 7 pm and Sunday, December 11 at 3 pm at the Pleasant Valley High School auditorium in Brodheadsville. This year's concert will feature traditional favorites, as well as lesser-known songs, both secular and sacred.



Attending the concert would be a great way for you and your family and friends to begin your celebration of the Christmas season.

Suggested donation is \$8.00 for adults while children under 12 are free. Tickets can be purchased at the door. For more information, please call 570-402-2026.

To Market, To Market to Buy a Fat Mbuzi

ON OCTOBER 29, 2016 BY MOLLY MARONEY IN UNCATEGORIZED

The 20th of every month is a special day, the day to end all days, a magical day full of wonder, excitement, and festivity. Yes, it's Mnada day! Around 7:30 am, just after the sun has fully cleared the horizon, it begins. Off in the distance the low rumble and clatter of the supply trucks begins to rise in the cool morning air. As the sound draws closer, the excitement level of the village grows. Soon the trucks are driving through the village proper, trailed by 20 or so screaming children trying their hardest to keep up. Each truck is packed to the brim with a myriad of items ranging from sacks of rice and onions, to plastic kitchen goods, mattresses, soap, clothes, cheap phones, and solar panels. Perched on top of the bars holding everything in are approximately 50 people, the sellers, clinging on as the truck bounces from pothole to pothole. They're headed to a shaded field in the next village to set up for the monthly Mnada market, where the people in the surrounding villages can fulfill all of their home good and non-perishable food needs, instead of paying the 10,000/= (\$5) that it costs to travel to and from town.

Some of the people in my village also sell goods at the Mnada so once the trucks pass the mamas gather their wares and start the 5+km walk to the next village. With great excitement the children run along behind, elated to be getting out of school for the day and to see their friends. Sometimes people don't want to walk, or their load is too heavy to carry that far, but using a combination of bikes, motorcycles, and cows everybody gets there in good time.



One "Pikipiki" (motorcycle) can fit 3 or 4 people, plus all of their belongings

As the crowd moves closer to the grounds more and more people pop out of the *pori* (forest) so by the time the Mnada is actually within sight the crowd has become so thick it's something akin to a herd of cattle, babbling and kicking up pillars of dust in its wake. With the addition of a number of actual cows on their way to be sold, the whole procession makes quite a show. Upon arrival at the Mnada grounds, one is greeted with the sights, sounds, and smells of the butchery. Each month at least 20 cows are sold, slaughtered, and either sold for meat or cooked right there as soups (more so for intestines), marinated grilled skewers

called *mishikaki*, or just grilled plain over coal – *nyama choma*. The meat is cut, weighed on small scales, then sold – a half kilo runs around 2,000/= (\$1). Even the local dogs get a treat now and then if they hang around long enough. By the end of the day everyone will have had more than their fill of meat.



The Mnada is always the best place to find relatively cheap clothes. Jeans, shirts, school uniforms, football jerseys (wo Manchester), baby clothes...this is the place. Walking up and down the isles in a whirl of color and sound can be overwhelming – sellers yelling out prices, flashing their shirts in front of you to grab your attention, mamas arguing over the prices, kids darting between piles and people, but with enough patience and a careful eye there are bargains to be had.



A jeans vendor showing his product



Piles of clothes waiting to be rifled through

The Mnada is also the best place to pick up some shoes. The most popular styles and sturdy tire flip flops with colored bands (my favorites), plastic soccer cleats, and shoes somewhat like cheap crocs. Each pair costs around 2,500-3,000/= (about \$1.50). In Tanzanian culture, cloth called kitenge or khanga (the difference is slight) is used for any function you could possibly think of. Women's wraps, baby holders, clothes, blankets, diapers, bags, head wraps, curtains, table cloths....one can never have too many. So cheap kitenge are always available, and a *fundi ya nguo*, tailor, comes along to cut and hem the pieces right on site using his treadle sewing machine.

Once the ocean of clothes has been circumnavigated, it opens up into the island of home goods...plastic ware especially. Plastic is great because it's cheap, lightweight, colorful, and the critters have a hard time getting into it... no one wants partially eaten mouse rice. It's also durable, so it works well to store and carry heavy items for travel. Metal rusts and bends, wood gets moldy and wears out, clay breaks, but plastic...oh plastic. A wondrous thing. The plastic ware vendors drive a hard bargain, but with enough exclamations of *jamani* (come on!!) those mamas will eventually get the price they want to pay.



Also in home good are bags, soap, combs, jewelry, solar panels, phones, radios....the list goes on. If you're brave enough to wander into the dense maze of consumerism you'll be able to find pretty much anything.



The maze of stuff



Vendors posing for the pictures



Heralding to all Mnada shoppers, all the way at the end of the grounds, are the *mgahawas*, small stalls where basic foods like rice, beans, and fried bread can be procured. An endless fountain of Chai tea, soda, and beer flows as plate after heaping plate of *ugali na mlenda* (a stiff corn porridge and veggie mash) is passed around. My favorite is a mama who makes the best *pilau* (a spiced rice) with roasted goat. Delicious.



Some things don't change.



Sugar cane: a sweet treat for all ages.



Eyeing the chai.



The Pilau mama

As the sun starts to set everyone makes their way to the produce area where lines of mamas lording over mounds of fresh fruits and veggies call out their prices. Since fresh vegetables can usually only be procured in town, this is usually the one time a month people are able to stock up. Some families will leave with over 50 kilos of fruits and veggies to last them as long as possible. Even families with very little money will splurge on a few tomatoes and onions to make a simple *mchuzi*, a thin tomato sauce, to go with their evening meal. With a long walk ahead of them, families pack it up and head for home, vendors load the rest of their wares on the trucks, and life proceeds to return to normal. Another eventful day at the Mnada. Home again, home again jiggy jig.



Dear Volunteer,

After nine months of planning, hundreds of calls, texts and emails, we hosted the “Holly Day Market” at our church on November 5th and it was a success!

Between table spaces sold and food sold we were able to raise over \$1,000.00. This money will be used toward our bell tower repair fund. Monies raised from the sale of food was split between the Youth Group and the bell tower repairs.

We also had over 200 shoppers in our church! Your help included shuttle driving, set up, donating tables, hanging posters, cooking, baking, serving food, greeting customers, donating cash, being “Santa”, cleaning up afterwards and providing moral support.

Whatever role you played, please know we truly appreciate your help and could not have done it without you! The “Holly Day Market” was a huge endeavor and would not have been possible without your selfless help.

Thank you again -

God Bless You!
Kim, Kim and Jackie



PATH GIFT COLLECTION

Pocono Area Transitional Housing provides a Christmas gift for children that have previously resided in our houses. Their families have ‘graduated’ into a stable housing situation but still struggle financially.

Your \$15-\$20 charitable donation will fund the purchase of a toy for one child this holiday season. Please mail your contributions to PATH, 7 N 9th St, Stroudsburg, PA 18360. Please call 570-476-1828 with questions. Final day for this collection is Sunday, December 18.

Thank you for your kindness.

The holidays are fast approaching!
Kick off your holiday season here with us
at Stroudsburg UMC
547 Main Street
Stroudsburg, PA
3rd annual

PIZZA WITH SANTA!

Everyone is welcome!

Saturday, December 3, 2016

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

\$5.00 admission

(Children under 5 are free)

Enjoy pizza, caroling, photos with Santa and other Christmas activities

RSVP's are appreciated so we know how many to plan for

Questions? Please call the church office - 570-421-6020

or email - jackieherrero@stroudsburgumc.com



DECEMBER 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 8:30 AM Worship-Sanctuary 9:45 AM Sunday School-Children through Adult 11:00 AM Worship/Sanctuary 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	28 1:15 PM Monday Tea Time-Nancy Haase's Home 7:00 PM Cherub Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Nar Anon - Dining Room	29 7:00 PM Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room	30 10:00 AM Bible Study-Lounge 12:00 PM Prayer and/or Quiet Reflection-Sanctuary 6:00 PM Cub Scouts 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal-Sanctuary	1 10:00 AM My Brothers' Keepers Quilting & Little Quilts-Downstairs 7:00 PM Scouts 6:00 PM Cub Scouts 7:00 PM Youth Group 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary	2	3 9:00 AM Monroe County Farmer's Market 6:00 PM Pizza with Santa-Fellowship Room
4 8:30 AM Worship/Communion-Sanctuary 9:45 AM Sunday School-Children through Adult 11:00 AM Worship/Communion-Sanctuary 12:30 PM Daniel's Dream Team Meeting-Lounge 2:00 PM Cub Leaders Planning Meeting 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	5 1:15 PM Monday Tea Time-Nancy Haase's Home 7:00 PM Cherub Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Nar Anon - Dining Room	6 7:00 PM Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room	7 10:00 AM Bible Study-Lounge 12:00 PM Prayer and/or Quiet Reflection-Sanctuary 2:00 PM Stitch & Pray Small Group-Lounge 6:00 PM Cub Scouts 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal-Sanctuary	8 10:00 AM My Brothers' Keepers Quilting & Little Quilts-Downstairs 7:00 PM Scouts 7:00 PM Youth Group 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary	9 Church Office Closed	10 9:00 AM Monroe County Farmer's Market 5:30 PM Second Saturday Supper (Covered Dish)
11 Choir Christmas Cantata 9:45 AM Sunday School-Children through Adult 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	12 1:15 PM Monday Tea Time-Nancy Haase's Home 7:00 PM Cherub Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Nar Anon - Dining Room	13 6:30 PM M & E Meeting 7:00 PM Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room	14 10:00 AM Bible Study-Lounge 12:00 PM Prayer and/or Quiet Reflection-Sanctuary 6:00 PM Cub Scouts 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal-Sanctuary	15 10:00 AM My Brothers' Keepers Quilting & Little Quilts-Downstairs 7:00 PM Scouts 7:00 PM Youth Group 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary	16 Church Office Closed	17 9:00 AM Monroe County Farmer's Market
18 8:30 AM Worship-Sanctuary 9:45 AM Sunday School-Children through Adult 11:00 AM Worship/Sanctuary 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	19 1:15 PM Monday Tea Time-Nancy Haase's Home 7:00 PM Cherub Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Nar Anon - Dining Room	20 7:00 PM Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room 7:00 PM Stitch & Pray Small Group-Lounge	21 10:00 AM Bible Study-Lounge 12:00 PM Prayer and/or Quiet Reflection-Sanctuary 6:00 PM Cub Pack Meeting 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal-Sanctuary	22 10:00 AM My Brothers' Keepers Quilting & Little Quilts-Downstairs 7:00 PM Scouts 7:00 PM Youth Group 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary	23 Church Office Closed	24 7:30 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 11:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion
25 Merry Christmas! 8:30 AM Worship-Sanctuary 9:45 AM Sunday School-Children through Adult 11:00 AM Worship/Sanctuary	26 Church Office Closed 1:15 PM Monday Tea Time-Nancy Haase's Home 7:00 PM Nar Anon - Dining Room	27 7:00 PM Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room	28 10:00 AM Bible Study-Lounge 12:00 PM Prayer and/or Quiet Reflection-Sanctuary 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal-Sanctuary	29 10:00 AM My Brothers' Keepers Quilting & Little Quilts-Downstairs 7:00 PM Scouts 7:00 PM Youth Group 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary	30	31

The Membership and Evangelism Team
invites everyone to our December

Second Saturday Supper
December 10th at 5:30 pm



We'll provide:
Plates, utensils, and beverages
(iced tea, punch, and coffee)

Our Program will be:
“Christmas Carols”

Besides a covered dish to share,
if possible, we'd like you to bring an unwrapped toy.

Help us plan: Please sign up in the back of the sanctuary or call the church office (570-421-6020) and let us know how many will be coming and what type of dish you plan to bring.

Questions?? Contact Peggy Stewart
570-424-0625 or bpstew@juno.com

STROUDSBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
547 MAIN STREET
STROUDSBURG PA 18360
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
December 2016

NON-PROFIT ORG.
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Stroudsburg, PA

