



Volume 38, Issue 12

December 2016

INTERIM PASTOR'S MESSAGE

**Port Orange
United Church of Christ**
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Luke 2: 38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

A Season of Advent!

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Staff

Interim Pastor:
Rev. Steven Mitchell
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Bob Brewster
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Thrift Store Manager:
Bob Gaither
Youth Leader:
Sher Buller

The turkey dinner has been prepared, family and friends have gathered, feasting and recalling significant family events of the past, thanking God for the many blessings that we have received. Some of us even did our "Black Friday" shopping on Thursday evening, either in stores or on line, or both! What a great feeling of satisfaction, to have so much going on in one day! Then comes Friday and many days afterwards dealing with left-overs!

Why, why, why did we fix so much food, more than what we could possibly eat in two days? But this is just the beginning of a season of excess! Over the next four weeks we will eat too much, attend too many events, over shop, purchasing items that are not really needed, over decorate, and physically over extend ourselves all in the name of Christmas. What is wrong with this picture?

To begin with, we do not start the season of Christmas until December 25, the day we have deemed the birthday of baby Jesus. Secondly, the season of Christmas only lasts for twelve days following the birth of Jesus. (*Please note I do not use the word 'Christ', as Christ was not born until the resurrection.*) We have now entered the season of **Advent!** Four weeks of reflection; reflection on *hope, preparation, love, and joy.*

As I started my morning with a cup of coffee in hand, I thought of Luke's birth story of a young pregnant woman (a teenager really) and her betrothed making their way from Nazareth to Bethlehem. What they found upon their arrival was no room to stay, except that of a stable; bedding down with the animals. I am amazed at how this simple story is talking about our lifestyle of present day. A life that is filled during this season with excesses. Excess to the point that leaves little room in our hearts for God to enter, leaving only "out of the way" places in which God's *hope, love, and joy* can be born. Advent is a season of *preparation*, the making room for God in our lives. Advent is a season of saying, "no" to excess, making room for reflection to occur; to prepare for the joy and hope that is born through love.

As a church, we are living a season of Advent! We are in a time of reflection and of preparation; a season of anticipation. We are doing the hard work of self-examination. We are looking at the behaviors that prevent us from having the space to which God can come and dwell more fully among us. We are seeking God's guidance as we discover new ways to share hope to a world that sees little hope; to share love in a world that does not exercise much love; and to bring joy to those who are heavy in heart.

Like Mary, we to must accept the request of God to come and dwell among us. Like Mary, we need to be willing to travel unfamiliar roads, trusting God in our journey. Making room for the baby Jesus is an ongoing invitation, saying, "***We are your servants Lord, may your word to us be fulfilled.***" We are the "Mary" in the birth story, pregnant with the future joy of the World! May this season of Advent be filled with reflection and anticipation of the hope, joy, and love to come! Amen

Pastor Steven

CROSSROADS WORKSHOP



Crossroads participants jumped right in with enthusiasm. High energy and excitement filled the room. After seeing the results of the SWOT workshop, people could hardly wait to see what the second one would tell us. The question of the day was “Why do I attend and participate in the services and programs offered at Port Orange United Church of Christ?” When asked exactly in what they participated, the sprint was on: responses were quick and numerous and delivered with gusto. It took two scribes to keep up with the listing of folks’ activities and how they felt while doing them.

That was merely the beginning. Tables full of animated participants listed those elements that helped identify who we are as a congregation and what it is that makes us Port Orange United Church of Christ and not something else. Working together, groups prioritized their combined lists, then shared them with the entire workshop via the “Sticky Wall.” As responses were read, papers on which they were noted were slapped onto the wall, grouped into pairs, then assembled into related categories.

Have we answered the question “Who are we?” The wall, with its categories named by the people gathered, indicated these responses:

- Loving acceptance of all God’s children
- Meaningful and uplifting choices of worship
- We serve our community using our members
- Space for spiritual growth
- God is love
- Fostering friendship through fellowship
- We have fun together
- Raising our children with faith
- Connection (Titled “Location, location, location”)

Question for Workshop Number One was “What?” Question for Workshop Number Two was “Why?” Question Number Three will be “How?” The next step, Workshop #3, will become a strategy session building on the work that has been done so far. “How do we plan prayerful strategies to assure the message of Jesus Christ matches with the Why we attend and what we’d like to consider for the future of Port Orange United Church of Christ?” We intend to construct those strategies while asking ourselves “How can we be faithful to God’s call? How can we recognize what that is?”

In order to identify approaches we might take we will use the highly visual method of Bubble Charting. Want to know what that is? Come see. Workshop #2 was vibrant; wait until you see Workshop #3!

Workshop #3 is Sunday, December 4th following a Combined Service beginning at 9:45 AM . A Luncheon and AED Defibrillator Instruction will follow the Workshop.

Kay Russell and Tom Besaw

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Stewardship Sunday is December 4th. We will be having a Service of Dedication of your Pledge Cards at the 9:45 AM Combined Service. Please remember to complete your pledge cards and bring them on Sunday. Correction to the Stewardship Booklet—on the Education Page, Linda Rodgers (not Cindy Deitch) is assisting Assistant Pastor Beverly in development of a children’s program.



DEACONS CORNER



Your Deacons want to wish everyone associated with POUCC – Pastors, Staff, Members, Friends & the many volunteers who give their precious time & talents, a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy Successful New Year! As our church works to make this holiday season memorable for everyone, we are also looking forward to 2017 with great anticipation and excitement for the journey we are on in selecting a called Permanent Pastor and in the important process of identifying more fully our church's missions.

Faithfully, Your POUCC Deacons: Gail Besaw, Bob Brewster, Ruth Brewster, Sher Buller, Louise Eagan, Faith Coppolo, Sandy Kransi, Bonnie Morisset, Tim Schafer & Janna Thompson

OPERATIONS TEAM

The Operations Team would like to thank Tom & Gail Besaw, Bob & Skip Brewster, The Buller Family, Jim & Louise Eagan, Cindy Deitch, Bob Russell, and Sue Turner for tireless work at cleaning up the grounds and the church. You did a great job and it looks spectacular! And thanks to Jackie Gaither, Ernie & Peggy Fodor, and Pastor Beverly for beautifully decorating the Sanctuary for the Christmas season.



The Team met on November 14th and the following topics were discussed.

- The AED Defibrillator has arrived and is to be installed in the Sanctuary. Jack Barrick will instruct the AED training for all interested members following the workshop and luncheon on December 4th.
- Painting of the Church doors continues.
- Estimates for repair of the roof and ceiling in the Jim Reed Room Hallway are being obtained.
- Operations is in the process of researching and developing the 2017 Budget.

The next Operations Meeting is scheduled for December 12th @ 6:30 PM.

Sher Buller, Secretary of the Operations Team



Financial Update

Operational Budget as 10/31/16

	ACTUAL	BUDGET
	<u>Jan.-October 2016</u>	<u>Jan.-October 2016</u>
Income	\$ 137,445	\$ 139,223
Expenses	\$ 149,900	\$ 139,238
Net Income	-\$ 12,455	\$ 15

We have had a trying year with expenses this year. I am very hopeful that we can make some of this up by the end of the year and that next year will be better. Respectfully submitted by: Susie Greiff, Treasurer

Offering Envelopes



ARE AVAILABLE IN THE JIM REED ROOM.



MISSIONS NOTES



With the holidays fast approaching, the Missions Team continues to be very busy with the various projects. With your generous support, we are able to aid those in need within our congregation as well as our community. As the temperatures begin to drop, please remember the Sock Box located at the rear of the Sanctuary and the Mission Boxes that benefit Sophie's Circle-the local pet food pantry.

Thanks to your donations to the CROP Campaign, we raised \$176 to help end hunger and delivered 37 jars of peanut butter to this worthwhile cause.



Our Thanksgiving Food Collection in support of families at Spruce Creek Elementary School was very successful. We collected 46 bags of food and through your generosity and a portion of the proceeds from the Election Day Bake Sale we purchased 15, \$15 Publix gift cards.


Again this year, we are partnering with Spruce Creek Elementary School in support of children within our community. The decorated Angel Tree listing the sizes, ages, and clothing requests of the children is in the Sanctuary. The wrapped gifts, with the name tag attached outside, should be placed under the tree by **Sunday, December 11th** so that they can be delivered prior to their Christmas break. Your labor of love at the holiday season is greatly appreciated and puts big smiles on the faces of those in need.



Again this year, we will deliver Christmas Bags to the residents at Palmetto House. Anyone interested in helping to assemble the bags, please call Jackie Gaither, 290-3050.

Beginning in January, we will again raise funds to support Holy Joe's Café a coffee house ministry for UCC Chaplains and Troops in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait. Chaplains invite U.S. Service Members into a safe and informal "coffee house" where they can receive spiritual care and good coffee. The project came into being in 2006 and it is responding to 172 Military Chaplains who have requested supplies from Holy Joe's Café. More information on this mission to follow.



 **THE CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING "GOD'S LOVE COLORS EVERYTHING":** This offering for Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a way in which we, as members of the UCC enabled the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance program to provide Pension Supplementation, Health Premium Supplementation, Emergency Grants and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks to individuals and families in need. Offering will be received on **December 18th**. Look for the red envelope in the bulletins and on the table in the rear of the Sanctuary.

YOUR FOOD BASKET DONATIONS

Communion Sundays are designated as "Fill the Food Basket" Sunday. As a reminder, **December 4th is our next collection date and will benefit Grace Episcopal Pantry.** Please be generous and make sure all donations have NOT passed their expiration dates clearly marked on all cans, boxes, and containers.



YOUTH CORNER



A big thank you to the youth that helped with the church clean up. Your muscle and energy were greatly appreciated! (Elijah, Aydan & Blake Buller)

Community Thanksgiving Service:

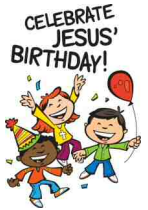
Our Terrific Tuesday youth group attended the Community Thanksgiving Service at Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church November 22nd. We were happy to see a number of our POUCC fellow church friends there as well. The service was wonderful. Pastor Steven did a great job as the Keynote Speaker.



The youth have been working hard on their Christmas Service coming up **December 11th**. We hope to see you all there.

Thought for December:

As we approach the Christmas celebration of Jesus' birth, let us do so with anticipation. Looking for the "AhHa" God Moments in our life. Opening ourselves up to Feel the Holy Spirit moving in us and through us. **Merry Christmas!**



The Light of God Surrounds Me,
The Love of God Enfolds Me,
The Power of God Protects Me,
The Presence of God Watches Over Me,
Wherever I Am—GOD IS!

PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS

THE GIFT & THRIFT STORE

CALLING ALL SHOPPERS! The Gift & Thrift Store has a wide variety of unique gift giving items for all on your holiday shopping list. Make sure you check us out! Also, we are especially in need of Christmas decoration donations and artificial Christmas trees. We also need plastic bags to pack up all the great sales. The more stock we have, the more we sell! The Thrift Store is continuing its upward trend. Sales to date totaled \$22,000. Many thanks to all who volunteer, donate, and shop. Your support helps the church and the community. *Bob Gaither, Manager*



SECOND THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP DINNER



Christmas Dinner

Every Second Thursday at 6:00 pm, POUCC has a wonderful Fellowship Dinner in the Jim Reed room.

Our next fellowship dinner is December 8th. It's a "Christmas Pot Luck". Bring Your Favorite Christmas Dish. Sign-up on Sanctuary Bulletin Board.

NEWS & NOTES



Poinsettias

The Christmas Season has arrived and as is our tradition, we will be decorating our Sanctuary with poinsettias for the Christmas Services. All are invited to bring in a poinsettia with your name on them by **Monday, December 19th** (place in Jim Reed Room). Poinsettias may be taken home or donated after the Christmas Day Service. If interested, a sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in rear of the Sanctuary.

Walk Through Bethlehem: Experience Bethlehem the night Jesus was born presented by CrossRoads Ministries, 1851 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., **December 9-11th and 16-18th, 6:00-9:00 PM.** For more information contact (386) 760-4806, info@crbible.com.



The 2017 Edition will be available at the Annual Meeting in January. If you have any address or contact changes, please notify the Church Office as soon as possible.

SPECIAL NOTE: As a follow-up to the program on Human Trafficking presented by Leslie G. Niece at November's Fellowship Dinner, if you suspect this illegal activity is occurring you can call 1-888-373-7888 or text help to BeFree (233733). No human being illegal or non-illegal should be subject to inhumane treatment!



Diane and Scott Kirilin have moved into their new home at 5262 Orange Avenue, Port Orange, 32127 which also means that Pastor Steven & Paul are settled in at 608 Moonpenny Circle, Port Orange, 32127. We hope all are happy in their new homes.



December 13, 2016

@ 7:00 p.m.

Blue

Christmas

Helping Hurting People Cope
With the Holidays

... For anyone who has experienced a loss...
The loss of joy and meaning in life, the loss
of a family member, the loss of or a broken
Relationship, the loss of a job, depression ...

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PRAYER REQUESTS*

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DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS*

Dalen Mills	12/4
Ted Batturs	
Kaylei Wierzbicki-Talverdi	12/5
Chuck Henderson	
Grayson Osteen	12/6
Beverly Schafer	12/7
John MacNeil	
Chuck Knopsky	12/10
Drew Knock	
Joshua Wheeler	
Selena Wheeler	12/13
Tracy Davis	
Susie Greiff	12/16
Erika Hobson	12/17
Joe Thompson	12/19
Terri Zinke	12/24
Suzette Wheeler	
Milissa Davis	12/25

Jewel Carter	Daughter of Helen Holmes
Drew & Linda Cochran	Friends of Sheila Fisher
Karen Donahue	Member of the Kransi Family
Rev. Dr. Bill Ebbert	Member of POUCC
Juan Faria, Sr.	Friend of the Thompson Family
Pat & Jack Hilgenberg	Member of POUCC
Louise & Bob Johnson	Member of POUCC
Moira & Sheila LeClerc	Friends of POUCC
Harry Manchester	Friend of the Fisher Family
Liz Mills	Member of POUCC
Sharon Milukas	Friend of POUCC
Deb Pack	Friend of POUCC
Susan Patterson	Sister-in-Law of Kathy Cratin
Elyse Phillips	Friend of the Thompson Family
F/F of Jane Pierson	Mother of Cindy Pierson
Rosemary Sansevero	Sister of Tom Buller
Jim Turner	Husband of Sue Turner
Eric Walter	Friend of the Bullers
Beverly Woodacre	Member of POUCC

In Care Facilities

Jeanette Campbell	Member of POUCC (Care Facility in MA)
June Ferreri	Member of POUCC (Care Facility in PA)
Bob Fisher	Member of POUCC (Bridgewater rehab in Ormond Beach)

Special Needs

All of Our Military, First Responders & Their Families

Broader Concerns

Victims of Terrorism Worldwide

Pray for Peace in our World

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES*



Bill & Susie Greiff	12/12/1970
Ron & Sonnie Zinke	12/23/1958
Bob & Louise Johnson	12/26/1955



Note: *Please contact the church office to update our records if we missed your special date or to add a Prayer Concern.



POUCC December 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 Combined Service & Crossroads Workshop 9:45 am	5 POMA 3:45 pm Compassionate Friends 7:00 pm	6 Adult Study 1:30 pm POMA 3:45-5:15 pm Terrific Tuesday 6:00 pm	7 POMA 4:30 pm CPT 6:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	8 Fellowship Dinner 6:00 pm	9	10
11 Combined Service Children's Christmas Service 9:45 am	12 POMA 3:45 pm Operations 6:30 pm	13 Adult Study 1:30 pm Blue Christmas 7:00 pm	14 Palmetto House 5:30 pm CPT 6:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	15 POMA 3:45 pm Line Dancing 6:00 pm	16	17
18 Combined Service Lessons & Carols 9:45 am	19 Council 7:00 pm	20 Terrific Tuesday Christmas Party 6:00 pm	21 CPT 6:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	22 Line Dancing 6:00 pm	23 Office Closed	24 Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm 
25 Christmas Day Service 10:45 am 	26 Office Closed	27	28 CPT 6:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	29 Line Dancing 6:00 pm	30	31 

Thrift Store Hours: M-F 9 am – 3 pm, Sat 9 am – Noon, Church Office Hours: M-F 9 am - 1 pm

Join us for Fellowship & Refreshments Each Sunday Between Services

Fellowship December: Fellowship Team, January: Missions



A FAITH—PROMISE TO GOD AND TO PORT ORANGE UCC

Out of gratitude for God's gifts and trusting God's enabling power, I/we have made the following faith-promise:

<input type="checkbox"/> \$125	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yearly	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly	

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Church Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Steven Mitchell
Assistant Pastor: Beverly Schafer
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. C. William Ebbert
Office Manager: Kathy Shaffner
Minister of Music: Dr. Tom Naus
Media Communications: Bob Brewster
Custodian: Deb Viola
Thrift Store Manager: Bob Gaither
Youth Leader: Sher Buller

Office Hours

9:00 AM—1:00 PM
Monday—Friday

Thrift Store Hours

9:00 AM—3:00 PM
Monday—Friday
9:00 AM—Noon
Saturday

Sunday Worship

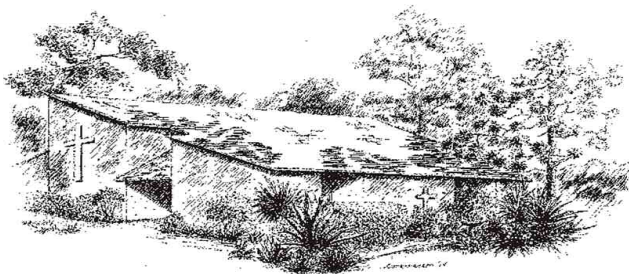
8:45 AM & 10:45 AM

Sunday School

9:45 AM

Terrific Tuesday

6:00 PM



Phone (386) 788-0920

Email: uccpo@bellsouth.net Website: portorangeucc.org