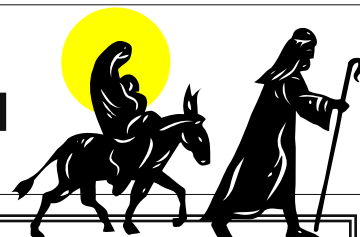


WILLOW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE COMMUNICATOR

DECEMBER 2014



A Message From Pastor Marianne

Pastor's Article:

"Silent Night" is probably one of my favorite Christmas carols. Perhaps because since my childhood I cannot recollect a Christmas Eve when I did not sing it in a beautifully decorated church sanctuary, surrounded by loved ones, candlelight and the feeling of God's presence in the air.

What is it about silence that is so powerful? Silence is either peaceful or painful. And, depending upon our circumstances, the place we find ourselves, we may try to avoid silence at all costs. It can seem so difficult to come face to face, for example, with things within us that we don't like about ourselves – the sin that so easily entangles us, or with the circumstances we may find ourselves in – strained relationships, loss, grief, or our perceived failures. Silence does not always seem golden. But, perhaps when we find it the most difficult thing to do, being silent is precisely what we need to do most.

This time of year can get really crazy, but I highly encourage you to stop for at least 10 minutes a day, in silence – just you and the Lord. Just breathe, sit, and listen to the stillness, to the silence. And, in it, you may meet with God in a very precious way, feeling his love for you, experiencing God's joy in you and receiving God's peace that is always there for you, no matter what you may be facing.

As you prepare for the celebration for the coming King – baby Jesus, allow God's Holy Spirit to minister to you, and to prepare you to be an extension of Christ's love to those around you.

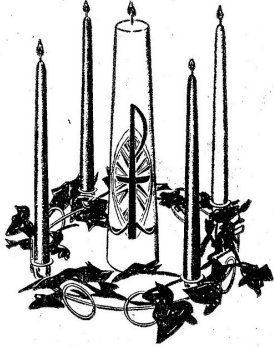
My love and prayers,

Pastor Marianne

Sermon Titles and Texts for December:

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| December 7 | Not a Silent Night Series: "Beginning With the End" Acts 1:8-14 |
| December 14 | Not a Silent Night Series: "The Piercing of Mary's Soul" Luke 2:33-35 |
| December 21 | Not a Silent Night Series: "Amazed, Astounded, Astonished" Luke 2:41-51 |
| December 24 | "It Was Not a Silent Night" Luke 2:1-7 |
| December 28 | Jeanne Lochner preaching |





Sermon Series for Advent: “Not a Silent Night” by Adam Hamilton

“Imagine Jesus from Mary’s point of view – proud of her son, in awe of his gifts and mission, guided by love for him as a person and so much more. In this series we will begin at the end; with Mary at the Crucifixion and Resurrection; and then travel back in time as she witnesses Jesus’ life and ministry; and end at the beginning, with the Christ Child born in a stable. Mary’s beautiful baby. This year, we will experience Advent and Christmas with Mary.” (Abingdon Press)

Each week of the sermon series, beginning December 7, we will meet for a further discussion time on Thursday evenings at 7pm at Wanda Young’s home on 19070 Otto Court, New Boston. All are welcome, invited to attend this special Advent Study/Discussion time. No previous Bible knowledge is needed. We will view the DVD teaching and share our thoughts, questions, and insights with one another. If you would like to purchase the book by Adam Hamilton, “Not a Silent Night,” you may go on-line at Cokesbury.com, or order a book from Pastor Marianne. The cost is \$16.99 plus tax and shipping. You do not need to purchase a book to be an active participant in the discussion group or sermon series.



The Wreath is on the Door

The wreath is on the door
And the snow is on the tree
God has laid His holy hands
On all that we can see.

Be quick to raise your voice
And praise what He has brought.
Keep now His love in every choice
And Christmas in every thought.

Willow Church Holiday Activities

Church Christmas Potluck

Join Willow Church for a Christmas Potluck as we come together to welcome in this most blessed of holidays. Saturday, December 6th 5:00 PM



Children's Program

Sunday December 14th 9:30

The children of Willow Church will present their annual Christmas Program. Plan to be there early...this is the time for the children to "shine!"

Cookie Walk: Sunday, December 7th — after church

The women's group is hosting a cookie walk immediately following church. Members of the church will be donating cookies to the church for you to purchase. Cost is \$5.00 per pound.



Mitten Tree:

Willow UMC is presently accepting donations for the Hat, Mitten, and Scarf Tree. The items donated will be distributed by the Goodfellows. We invite you to join us in this community outreach. New mittens, hats and scarfs can be hung on the tree that has been placed in the church entry.

EMBRACE THE DAY: "Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day"

Henri J.M. Nouwen; Dutch priest





Advent Celebration

You are invited to join us in the celebration of Advent.

November 30: 1st Sunday of Advent – Service at 9:30am Special Musical Worship with the music ministry of Ron Elrod.

December 7: 2nd Sunday of Advent – Service at 9:30AM

Holy Communion

Cookie Walk after Worship – hosted by the women of the church, proceeds going to outreach.

4:00 PM Blue Christmas Service

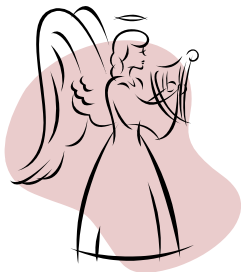
December 14: 3rd Sunday of Advent – Children's Christmas Program
Coffee Hour after service

December 21 4th Sunday of Advent – Service at 9:30am

Christmas Cantata

Children's Christmas Party 5:00 PM

December 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00 PM



Blue Christmas Service

Willow Church is hosting a Blue Christmas Service, held on **Sunday, December 7th at 4:00pm –**

This casual, quiet worship service offers those in grief or experiencing other types of loss or sadness to come together in acknowledgement of our individual pain in the midst of the “holiday” season.

We gather to support one another with our presence and our prayers.



Were you here?

When Lilly and Hailey Johnson did a Liturgical Dance?

When Jim Farr sang an Honor to our Veterans?

When our congregation made paper chains for outreach and memorial?

When we “remembered” those who are not here with us on All Saints Day?

When Pastor Marianne reminded us not to forget the saints in our lives.

When Mark Buttignoli, lay leader, told us that we are all ministers of Jesus Christ and asked us what does being a Christian mean to us?



Merry Christmas



Daily Devotional Available

Did you know that Willow UMC offers free daily devotional materials each month? They are called "The Upper Room" and you may take one home for your use. The Upper Rooms are located next to the bulletins and hymnals today. Large print available.

SCRIPT PROGRAM

Our church benefits from the purchase of Script gift cards. Every time you purchase a card we receive a percentage of the purchase price. Use the cards as Christmas Gifts or for your own personal use.

Please see Martha Molnar for an updated list of retailers and order information.

**ELEPHANTS AND CRICKETS** from the Upper Room Dec.14

Have you ever had an elephant in your house? Probably not! But if you ever did, you would know exactly where it was. Have you ever had a cricket in your house? Last year I did and spent days searching for that high pitched chirping, and just when I thought I had found it, the chirping would stop. I spent a lot of time on this little cricket—looking for it, listening for it. But when I stopped focusing on the cricket, one day it left my house.

At times life bring us "elephants" - the huge ordeals of death, divorce, disease and worry. But for the most part, our days are spent with the crickets: those little things in life that seem to annoy us, stress us, dominate our thoughts, and take our minds off more important things.

When our days seem full of cricket chatter, we can intentionally tune it out by turning to the Lord through scripture and prayer. We can think about whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is commendable and worthy of praise. When we are listening for God's word, we won't be able to hear the crickets!

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: When I'm thinking about God, I won't hear the crickets.

PRAYER: Gracious God, keep our thought on you today and how you want to use us in your world.



Willow United Methodist Church
36925 Willow Road
New Boston, MI 48164

Marianne McMunn, Pastor

Email address: marianнемcmunn@sbcglobal.net

Office Hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays

734-654-9020

Fax: 734-654-9020

Sunday Service 9:30 AM

Jeanne Lochner: Children's Ministry

Karen Struble Organist and Choir Director

FOOD PANTRY 24/7 734-753-4320



God's Boxes

I have in my hands two boxes, which God gave me to hold.
He said, 'Put all your sorrows in the black box, and all your joys in the gold.'

I heeded His words, and in the two boxes, both my joys and sorrows I stored,
But though the gold became heavier each day, the black was as light as before.

With curiosity, I opened the black, I wanted to find out why,
And I saw, in the base of the box, a hole, which my sorrows had fallen out by.

I showed the hole to God, and mused, 'I wonder where my sorrows could be!'
He smiled a gentle smile and said, "My child, they're all here with me.."

I asked God, why He gave me the boxes, why the gold and the black with the hole?
'My child, the gold is for you to count your blessings, the black is for you to let go'



December 2014

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

		<p>2</p> <p>Rotary 6:30 PM</p>	<p>3</p> <p>AA 6:00 PM</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Bible Study 7:00 PM at Wanda Young's</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Church Christmas Pot Luck 5:00 PM</p>
<p>7 Holy Communion</p> <p>Advent II Children Church</p> <p>Cookie Walk</p> <p>Blue Christmas</p> <p>4:00 PM</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Rotary 6:30 PM</p>	<p>10</p> <p>AA 6:00 PM</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Bible Study 7:00 PM at Wanda Young's</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14 Advent III Willow Church Children's Christmas Program</p> <p>Coffee Hour Women's Mtg.</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Ann Arbor District Clergy Christmas Gathering</p> <p>Rotary 6:30 PM</p>	<p>17</p> <p>AA 6:00 PM</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Bible Study 7:00 PM at Wanda Young's</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>21</p> <p>Advent IV Choir Christmas Cantata</p> <p>Children's Christmas Party 5:00 PM</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Rotary 6:30 PM</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Candlelight Christmas Eve Service 7:00 PM</p>	<p>25</p> 	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Rotary 6:30 PM</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1</p> <p>January</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>