



WILLOW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

36925 Willow Road , New Boston, Michigan 48164

Reverend Brad Lewis, Pastor

OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS



THE COMMUNICATOR

DECEMBER 2016

On Sunday, December 22, 1996, Carnell Taylor was working on a paving crew repairing the Interstate 64 Bridge over the Elizabeth River in Virginia. The road was icy, and a pickup truck slid out of control and hit Taylor, knocking him off the bridge. He fell seventy feet and hit the cold waters of the river below. His pelvis and some of the bones in his face were broken.

Joseph Brisson, the captain of a barge passing by at that moment, saw Taylor fall and quickly had to make a life-or-death decision. He knew Taylor would drown before he and his crew could launch their small boat and reach him. The numbingly cold water and strong currents of the river could kill him if he dived in to rescue Taylor. He had a family, and Christmas was three days away.

Brisson decided to risk his life for a man he had never met; *He dived into the river, swam to Taylor, and grabbed hold of him.* "Don't worry, buddy," he said, "I got you." Brisson held Taylor's face above the water and encouraged him to keep talking. Then he took hold of a piece of wood in the water and slid it under Taylor to help keep him afloat. The current was too strong for them to swim to safety, and eventually the cold caused Brisson to lose his grip on Taylor. So Brisson wrapped his legs around the injured man's waist and held on.

After nearly thirty minutes the crew from the barge was finally able to reach the two men and pull them from the water into the small boat. Taylor was hospitalized for broken bones. Brisson, the hero, was treated for mild hypothermia.

Brisson later told the Associated Press he knew what he had to do when he saw the man fall. "I have a family," he said. "I thought about that. But I thought about how life is very important. I'm a Christian man, and I couldn't let anything happen to him."

Few of us will ever be confronted with such a life or death decision. Yet, at Christmas we are challenged by our culture to buy and give many gifts that have little real meaning. Joseph Brisson gave the gift of himself to help someone he didn't even know. This Christmas, consider giving the gift that has real meaning, the gift of your presence to those you love and those you don't even know.

The God of love knows better than anyone the tremendous value of a human being and his or her eternal soul. For even one person Jesus was willing to leave the safety and joy of his family in heaven and give himself to save others.

At every opportunity you have, share the gift that has real meaning; your presence and God's love.



Pastor Brad

Willow Church Ministries

Food Pantry: Ethel's food pantry offers short term assistance for any in need. 1 bag of groceries at a time. The food pantry is open 24/7. Please call the church for information or to request assistance.

Spiritual Growth and Bible Study: A weekly study fellowship with emphasis on deepening personal spirituality with practical disciplines. Study group meets Thursdays at 7:00 pm.

Prayer Ministry: Our congregation offers, through prayer and meditation, intercessory prayer for any concern 24 hours a day. Please call the church office to leave your prayer requests.

AA Ministry: Utilize a 12 step program to help those suffering the effects of alcohol addiction. Meetings are held at the church Wednesdays at 6:00 pm

Music Ministry: Choir and worship opportunities through music participation. Practice every Wednesday at 7:00 pm.

Children's Ministry: Christian education during worship service is offered weekly to foster and guide our children in their faith. Children's Church is held each Sunday, coordinated by Jennifer Johnson.

This newsletter is compiled by Donna Lee Hornyak. A special thanks to Gail Sobacki and all who submit articles. If you would like to add to "The Communicator", please email dhornyak2@gmail.com.

Thought for the Month: WHEREVER WE ARE, WE CAN CELEBRATE THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND THE GIFT OF JESUS CHRIST.

Altar Flowers: Altar flowers can be displayed as a memorial or in honor of someone or something or a special event. Cost per bouquet: if only 1 bouquet is purchased for the same week is \$15.00. Cost if 2 vases are purchased is \$12.50 each. Make all checks to Darlene's Flowers. Orders and payments are required 2 weeks prior to date. Please contact Bridgett Gering.

Willow United Methodist Church

36925 Willow Road
New Boston, MI 48164

Rev. Brad Lewis, Pastor

Email address: bklewis2105@gmail.com

Pastor Cell Phone Number: 1-989-906-5231

Office Hours Wednesdays and Thursdays

1:30—3:30 PM and upon request

Church phone: 734-654-9020

Fax: 734-654-9020

Sunday Service 9:30 AM

Jeanne Lochner: Children's Ministry Director

Karen Struble Organist and Music Director

FOOD PANTRY 24/7 734-753-4320



MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN "THE HANGING OF THE GREENS"...WILLOW CHURCH IS READY FOR CHRISTMAS!!

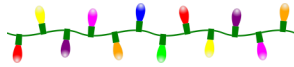
PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SISTER CHURCH

WHITE PIGEON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

In White Pigeon, Michigan.



Advent Calendar



December 4, Sun.: Second Sunday of Advent/Advent Friend-all church pot luck 10:30

December 11, Sun.: Third Sunday of Advent/Advent Friend

Children's Christmas Program/Cookie Walk

Coffee after Worship

December 17, Sat.: Children's Christmas Party at Willow UMC

December 18, Sun.: Fourth Sunday of Advent/Advent Friend

Christmas Cantata by Willow UMC Choir

December 24, Sat.: 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service

December 25, Sun.: Christmas Day Worship: at Willow Church...we'll be asked to share our favorite Christmas memory.



Were you here when?

When our sermon reminded us that "all things work together for the goodness of God."

When on All Saints Day we were told that the bible's emphasis is on living saints not dead ones.

When the ladies of Willow gathered at Karen Wilson's home for painting class.

When several in the congregation drew names for an Advent friend.

When Pastor Brad asked us to live morally, spiritually and ethically as if Jesus will return at any time.

When many in the congregation volunteered at "God Works", a program at St. Paul's UMC in Monroe, serving a hot meal to those in need.

When on Christ the King Sunday we were reminded of a king who died on a cross for us.

When on Thanksgiving Eve, we gathered at Willow Church to remember the GOODNESS OF GOD.

When on the First Sunday of Advent we received an invitation to open our hearts and minds to the arrival of the Christ.



Only when you are overwhelmed with the goodness of God can you overflow with the goodness of God to others.



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,
And all your joys in the gold."

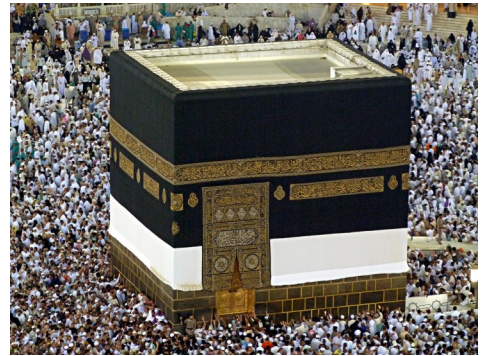
I heeded His words, and in the two boxes
Both my joys and sorrows I stored
But though the gold became heavier each day
The black was as light as before

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 aloud,
"I wonder where my sorrows could be."
He smiled a gentle smile at me.
"My child, they're all here with me."

I asked, "God, why give 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."

Author Unknown



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Greg & Bridgette Gering



BLESSING OF THE HATS, SCARVES AND
BLANKETS



OUR CHOR SINGS AND SOLO
BY CALVIN HAYDAMAKER



PAINTING AT KAREN WILSON'S





The True Story of Rudolph

A man named Bob May, depressed and brokenhearted, stared out his drafty apartment window into the chilling December night. His 4-year-old daughter Barbara sat on his lap quietly sobbing. Bob's wife, Evelyn, was dying of cancer.

Little Barbara couldn't understand why her mommy could never come home. Barbara looked up into her dad's eyes and asked, "Why isn't Mommy just like everybody else's Mommy?"

Bob's jaw tightened and his eyes welled with tears. Her question brought waves of grief, but also of anger. It had been the story of Bob's life. Life always had to be different for Bob. Small when he was a kid, Bob was often bullied by other boys. He was too little at the time to compete in sports. He was often called names he'd rather not remember.

From childhood, Bob was different and never seemed to fit in. Bob did complete college, married his loving wife and was grateful to get his job as a copywriter at Montgomery Ward during the Great Depression.

Then he was blessed with his little girl. But it was all short-lived. Evelyn's bout with cancer stripped them of all their savings and now Bob and his daughter were forced to live in a two-room apartment in the Chicago slums.

Evelyn died just days before Christmas in 1938. Bob struggled to give hope to his child, for whom he couldn't even afford to buy a Christmas gift. But if he couldn't buy a gift, he was determined to make one - a storybook!

Bob had created an animal character in his own mind and told the animal's story to little Barbara to give her comfort and hope. Again and again Bob told the story, embellishing it more with each telling.

Who was the character? What was the story all about? The story Bob May created was his own autobiography in fable form.

The character he created was a misfit outcast like he was. The name of the character? A little reindeer named Rudolph, with a big shiny nose.

Bob finished the book just in time to give it to his little girl on Christmas Day.

But the story doesn't end there.

The general manager of Montgomery Ward caught wind of the little storybook and offered Bob May a nominal fee to purchase the rights to print the book.

Wards went on to print, "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and distribute it to children visiting Santa Claus in their stores. By 1946 Wards had printed and distributed more than six million copies of Rudolph.

That same year, a major publisher wanted to purchase the rights from Wards to print an updated version of the book. In an unprecedented gesture of kindness, the CEO of Wards returned all rights back to Bob May.

The book became a best seller. Many toy and marketing deals followed and Bob May, now remarried with a growing family, became wealthy from the story he created to comfort his grieving daughter.

But the story doesn't end there either.

Bob's brother-in-law, Johnny Marks, made a song adaptation to Rudolph. Though the song was turned down by such popular vocalists as Bing Crosby and Dinah Shore, it was recorded by the singing cowboy, Gene Autry.

"Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" was released in 1949 and became a phenomenal success, selling more records than any other Christmas song, with the exception of "White Christmas."

The gift of love that Bob May created for his daughter so long ago kept on returning back to bless him again and again. And Bob May learned the lesson, just like his dear friend Rudolph, that being different isn't so bad. In fact, being different can be a blessing.

MERRY CHRISTMAS



Did you know this? The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ. -Two turtle doves are the Old and New Testaments. -Three French hens stand for faith, hope and love. -The four calling birds are the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John. -The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of ...the Old Testament. -The six geese a-laying stand for the six days of creation..... -Seven swans a-swimming represent the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit--Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy. -The eight maids a-milking are the eight beatitudes. -Nine ladies dancing are the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit--Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control. -The ten lords a-leaping are the ten commandments. -The eleven pipers piping stand for the eleven faithful disciples. -The twelve drummers drumming symbolizes the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed. So there is your history for today. **MERRY CHRISTMAS!!** ♡ yes, I said **MERRY CHRISTmas** because Christmas is not without **CHRIST!**

Willow United Methodist Church
November Administration Board Meeting

November 20, 2016

Meeting opened with prayer at 10:47 a.m. Mark Buttignoli

ATTENDANCE: Jan Holland, Martha Molnar, Mark Buttignoli, Pastor Brad Lewis, Amy Harrison, Donna Lee Hornyak, R.P & Helena Lilly, Jim & Kathy Farr, Linda Kemp, Mary Krezmenski, Katherine Buck, John Tarr, Tyler Johnson, and Debbie Carter.

ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD: October Ad Board minutes were read. Jim motioned to accept the minutes as read. R.P supported. Motion carried.

PASTORS REPORT: District Supervisor shared with Pastor Brad information regarding church growth. Pastor Brad distributed Basic Church Growth Principles.

TRUSTEES: John reported the monitor is still being looked into. John motioned to transfer \$5,000 from the general account to the trustee's account. Mark supported. Motion carried. This will help with the Beldon drain assessment. Martha is taking over as trustee treasure.

FINANCIAL: October financial report was reviewed. Mark motioned to accept the report. Martha supported. Motion carried.

BUDGET: Our budget is ahead by \$3,989.92. The proposed 2017 budget was presented. After discussion, Kathy Farr motioned to accept the 2017 budget of \$63,372. R. P. supported. Motion carried. The board would like to thank Jim Buck for his time and effort creating the budgets. THANK YOU JIM!

CHURCH USE: Donna Lee motioned that the fee for church use be waived for the Good-fellows. Debbie supported. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: Jim Farr motioned to adjourn. Mark supported. Meeting adjourned
11 :45 am.

Recording Secretary — Janet Holland

December 2016



Sun

Mon




Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

						
				1 Bible Study 7:00 pm Loretta Maxwell	2	3
4 Holy Communion Second Sunday of Advent All Church Pot Luck Children's Santa Shop	5	6 Rotary 6:30 pm Deborah Lewis	7 AA 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm	8 Bible Study 7:00 pm Helen Koszykowski	9	10
11 Third Sunday of Advent Children's Christmas Program Cookie Walk Coffee after worship	12 Celeste Mathews	13 Rotary 6:30 pm	14 AA 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm	15 Bible Study 7:00 pm Ella Mumford	16	17 Children's Christmas Party at Willow
18 Fourth Sunday of Advent Advent Friend Choir Christmas Cantata Ad. Bd. Mtg.	19 Heather Adkins	20 Rotary 6:30 pm	21 AA 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm	22 Bible Study 7:00 pm	23 	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00 pm
25 Christmas Service at Willow Church 9:30 am	26 	27 Rotary 6:30 pm	28 AA 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm	29 Bible Study 7:00 pm	30	31