



The Copper Hill Connection

December 2016

Pastor's Postings

by Rev. Dr. Kelvin S. Jones

The Wonder of Christmas

Christmas is a supernatural season. What is there about these days surrounding Christmas that seem to have a different atmosphere? There is a generosity, a kindness, an excitement in the air. Holiday lights, adding to the festivity, are a sign that spiritual light has come into the world. Sometimes it might be too easy to allow all the busyness to distract us from the core meaning of the season, the true "Wonder of Christmas."

On the first Sunday of Advent at Copper Hill, we talked about "The Wonder of a Star." Christmas is a multifaceted message showing God's desire to reach out to us. On the second Sunday we explored "The Wonder of a Name." The name "Jesus" means "God saves." As we come to understand how God provides salvation through Jesus, we understand also why Christmas is so joyful. On the third Sunday, December 11, our bishop will visit to cap our church's 200th anniversary celebration. Since Christmas is a child-focused time, the children will sing, "I Saw Three Ships," reviewing the Christmas story. On the fourth Sunday, December 18, Pastor Kelvin will speak about "The Wonder of the Angels," since there are so many appearances of angels in the Christmas story.

The heart of the story of Jesus' birth, however, is the wonder that the only begotten Son of God should condescend to be born in an earthy manger, a cattle trough. That act of self-giving continues to transform our world. On Christmas Eve, the message will be "The Wonder of a Manger."

Christmas also means that God has chosen to be one of us in a major way. One of the names given to Jesus is "Emmanuel," meaning "God with us." Christmas is a living demonstration of God's promise that He will never leave us nor forsake us as we trust in the One born in the manger.

On Christmas morning (10:00 AM), we will talk about "The Wonder of the Promise."

"Give Him the name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."



Matt. 1:21

CHRISTmas Celebrations

Our New Bishop to Visit

We are excited to have Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Bickerton, our new Bishop, visit us on **Sunday, December 11** for the 9:30 AM service. As far as we know, this is the first time a presiding bishop has visited Copper Hill Church. The Children's Choir will be singing during the service. Afterwards, we'll all enjoy a chance to chat with Rev. Bickerton at **Coffee Hour**.

On Saturday, **December 10**, we will once again share the season's joys by **Christmas Caroling** for residents at Meadowbrook Nursing Home. Join us there at 1:30 PM and watch their faces light up as they sing their favorite carols with us.

"The Hanging of the Greens," a longtime tradition, will be presented on Sunday, **December 18** at 9:30 AM. The children will tell the story of Christmas with music and readings. Each child participates in bringing beautiful ceramic figurines, bells, and greenery to decorate the altar. It reminds us that the Christ Child is a gift for all ages. Coffee Hour will follow the program.

Please join us on **December 24** at **5 PM** for our Family **Christmas Eve Service**. Special music will include a Celtic harp and flute duet. We'll end, as always, with the candle lighting.

December 25, 10:00 AM: Come share the true joy of **CHRISTmas DAY** as we celebrate Jesus' birthday and His coming to earth to enrich and bless our lives. Our CHOIR will add to the festivities with the joyous "Ring the Bells," an anthem praising "our wonderful Savior."

Ministries of Our Church

Food Pantry Support



As one way we minister to the food pantries in our area, we continue to collect non-perishable food, personal care items, paper products and cleaning supplies. When the box is full, the contents are taken to one of the three food pantries we support. The collection box has been moved to the back of the kitchen for the winter months. When you are doing your weekly shopping, please pick up an item or two for those less fortunate.

United Methodist Women

The group for all women of the church

We invite all the women of the church and their husbands to join us on Tuesday, December 13 at 6:30 PM for a potluck dinner at the church. As we have done in the past, we will hold a \$5 Charity Drawing. Each person who wishes to participate puts in \$5 and the name of their favorite charity. Then a charity name is drawn, and all of the money collected is sent to that charity. Plan to join us for this evening of good food and fellowship! *Please note* – there will be no UMW meetings during January and February.

Grassroots Community Prayer Service

Praying for our community and our country was the theme of our Grassroots Prayer Service at West Granby UM Church on October 27. The pastors from both our UM churches and Life Church led the service. Members from all three churches joined to form a community choir. We look forward to the next community prayer in February.

Christmas Bible Study at Higley Village

Copper Hill Church is sponsoring a new video Bible Study at the Higley Village Clubhouse on Wednesdays at 1:30 PM until Christmas. The group is exploring topics that parallel the message series at church titled “The Wonder of Christmas.” A short video segment introduces each week’s discussion. Pastor Kelvin leads the informal time which includes a prayer time and refreshments.

Pastor Kelvin plans to begin a second Bible study about a month after Christmas.

Gift Cards

Christmas is a great time to share with those in need! We are collecting **Gift Cards** again this year for Christmas baskets for Social Services in East Granby and Granby, and Emergency Aid in Suffield. The donations may be in any amount for a store where people would like to shop for the holidays (such as Walmart, Target, or grocery stores). Please identify if you want the cards to be donated to a specific town, and give them to Susan Madry or Janet Prevost **by December 11**.



“Goings On” at Our Church

Activities you may have missed

Children’s Harvest Party - October 30

Even though the hayride had to be cancelled due to rain, the children enjoyed a costume parade with prizes for all, games, crafts, and an early supper.

Holiday Bazaar - November 18, 19

We had many hand-made items and LOADS of baked goods for sale both days. On Saturday, we served a soup and sandwich lunch. Business was brisk, and we did very well. Items for sale will continue to be displayed in the Fellowship Hall until December 13, if you’re looking for gift ideas.



Sanctuary Decorating

Children and adults helped decorate the sanctuary on November 27, following the morning service. Afterwards, we all enjoyed a delicious **potluck lunch**.

Returnable Bottle Collection

In case you don’t want to bother with returning those deposit bottles, bring them to church and put them in the “Returnables” barrel in the kitchen. Any money collected is added to the church’s General Fund. Thanks for your help!



The Year in Review: Celebrating 200 Years

It's been a wonderful year celebrating our 200th Anniversary here at Copper Hill! As we looked back at our humble beginnings as a house church in 1816, we could see God's hand. The vision of a few grew to include a church building, and a sense of God's Presence spreading into the nearby community.

We feel very blessed that God has chosen to continue the ministry of Copper Hill Church. We continue to seek to share His love in word and deed to those around us.

Our year included many special events, under the enthusiastic leadership of committee chair Carol Griffin and her able helpers. It was a delight to have friends from the community come in and celebrate with us.

We kicked off "200 Days of Celebration" in April with a history emphasis in our service, music, and sermons. We also included a "History Moment," and a time for members to share what the church has meant to them personally. Our fellowship hall was decorated with old-time pictures and historical mementos.



The first special event, in May, was the popular "**Victorian Lady**" with her elaborate costuming and tales of old-time fashion and etiquette. In June, **historian Denis Picard** offered an interesting presentation on how churches have changed over the years. Next, our **Summer Picnic** was a slice of Americana: good food and a family softball game. We also received a visit in August from **archivist Beth Patkus**, who shared tips on preserving old family heirlooms.

In September our **Musical Celebration** drew many community visitors who enjoyed a concert featuring a variety of musical instruments and styles from across the years. At our **October Friend Sunday**, we welcomed our District Superintendent Rev. Kenneth Keiffer and former State Representative Ruth Fahrback, bringing official recognition. The next Sunday, Rev. James Moore came dressed as **John Wesley**, sharing Wesley's life and heartwarming experiences. At the close of the service, we all trooped outside to bury a **time capsule** filled with our memories to share with future generations in the years to come.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton to visit Copper Hill

Excitement mounts as we look to host Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton on Sunday, December 11. Hearing about our 200th Anniversary celebration, he announced his intention to visit the church. No one remembers a United Methodist bishop visiting Copper Hill Church, so the visit is even more special.

Bishop Bickerton will bring the morning message during the 9:30 AM service. We count it an honor to host his visit, capping our 200th Anniversary events. A coffee hour will follow.

Bishop Bickerton was elected in 2004 and served the Western PA conference. He recently began his service to the 447 congregations of the New York Annual Conference. Bishop Bickerton has also chaired the UM Church's global health initiative responding to the killer diseases of HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria. This effort, through the church's "Imagine No Malaria" campaign raised over \$70 million within the denomination. Copper Hill church participated each year in that campaign through their annual fundraising walk on the rail trail.

Copper Hill Honored for Full Participation

As a part of the greater United Methodist Church, our local church is responsible to contribute to the NY Annual Conference budget. Copper Hill was recognized again this year for 100% participation in this district responsibility. A big thank you to all you faithful stewards who support our church. May God richly bless you for your faithfulness.

Parsonage Open House Dec. 17, 18

Pastor Kelvin and JoAnne invite you to stop by anytime between the hours of 1—4 PM on Saturday or 2—5 PM Sunday to enjoy some holiday goodies and to see Pastor's train village. Children especially are welcome. Bring your friends!



Copper Hill United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 422
East Granby, CT 06026



Copper Hill Connexion

the Newsletter for Members and Friends of
Copper Hill United Methodist Church

27 Copper Hill Road, East Granby, CT 06026

Editor: Judy Holcomb Assistant Editor: JoAnne D. Jones

 You're Invited! 

Dec. 11—9:30 AM Bishop Bickerton Visits
Children's Choir & Coffee Hour

Dec. 18—9:30 AM "Hanging of the Greens"
Children's Program & Coffee Hour

Dec. 24—5:00 PM Family Christmas Eve Service
Celtic harp & flute *** Traditional Candle Lighting

Dec. 25—10:00 AM Christmas Day Service *** Christmas Choir

Join us each Sunday morning for our Family Worship Service—9:30 AM



Find us on the **web:** www.CopperHillChurch.us

Pastor's Blog: at www.learn tobewise.com

Facebook at www.facebook.com/copperhillchurch

Phone: Pastor Kelvin S. Jones: 860-653-2891

