

HOPEWELL

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

'A Place to Find Hope and Be Well'

20220 Hopewell Road

Gambier, OH 43022

Special Advent Edition – Dec 2012

Christmas Letter 2012 – Pastor Joe Beran

Since last year at this time much has transpired in our lives, Katie and I decided to attempt a Christmas letter. We never seem to get these things done in a timely fashion. I am going to start and then I'll leave the details to a good detail person.

Last year at this time I was busy, happily hunting in East Texas. I had not yet shot my nice deer, but I was only five days away from that. There was a lot going on in Ohio. Katie's dad was not doing well, and our grandchildren, for some strange reason, began to reach ages that we didn't think were possible yet. All of this came as not so much a shock as it did an awakening. We began to discuss our retirement plans. It was obvious to us that our caretakers more than likely would be living in Ohio. Katie also had a desire to be closer to her father and stepmother.

We thought it was a good time to start looking for a retirement property in Ohio. It would allow us to take advantage of the flat real estate market. We started to look at places on the Internet and make calls to a couple a real estate agents. All of these efforts seemed rather fruitless. Finally we decided that if we relocated in Ohio we wanted to be about halfway between where our children currently live. Katie got out the maps and the dividers. It began to look like the Mount Vernon, Mt. Gilead area would be a good place. Making a long story shorter we hooked up with John Neibarger in Johnstown and found a property just outside of Fredericktown. We found it ironic that we would be returning from some wonderful years in Texas and Tennessee (among other states) to Ohio and a great house on Yankee Street.

Still we were sure when we should move. For 12 years we tried to leave our plans open to God's will for us. We were thinking retirement, but we prayed that if God was not through with us, let us know. As our house deal in Fredericktown began to come together, we received a phone call from Three Rivers District of East Ohio conference of the United Methodist Church. If we were interested, there was an opportunity to pastor at Hopewell United Methodist Church. This was a part-time appointment, which appealed to our plans to establish ourselves back in Ohio with our families. It seemed to be a God thing. It is unusual for a local pastor to be able to move from conference to conference especially when there are three states in between appointments.



Continued...

Accepting that appointment began a difficult process of leaving a wonderful church family in Wells, Texas. We both were very happy and fulfilled at Falvey United Methodist Church. We had grown very close to all the folks, not only in that church but also in that community. I have a love for Texas that is only second to those fortunate enough to have been born there. I knew part of me would remain in Texas. In about a two-month period, we purchased the house, packed up, said our goodbyes, and moved to Ohio. I do not recommend moving for people in their mid-60s, especially over a long distance with a limited timeframe.

We are working at reestablishing ourselves into our grandchildren's lives and reconnecting with our brothers and sisters and friends. We all agree that it seems almost strange when we visit. We don't have to say our goodbyes like we won't see each other for months at a time.

We find ourselves very comfortable in a beautiful home situated on five acres. We have a running creek that divides our lot almost in half. Our lot has a slope down to the creek, and then there is a wooded, fairly flat lot on the remaining acreage. I was pleased to find evidence of deer travel and quickly began to put out a salt block, shelled corn, and my game camera. It wasn't long until the camera had captured images of deer and turkeys. I now can walk out of my house and go about 100 yards to the base of my tree stand. I hope to expand my hunting area, but this has certainly been helpful this first year.

Katie has most of a full walkout basement in which she is arranging her looms and other craft areas. I have an amazing 36 X 36 ft. separate building in which I am setting up my office and shop. It is an amazing man cave, and I am blessed beyond measure.

Shalom,
Pastor Joe

Christmas Poems – *by Mary Cryder, late aunt of Bob Joseph*

1964

The Light of Christmas
Comes sometimes when we are not looking
As it came to....

Noah, pounding away on his ark
Sure in the knowledge of rain

Job, refusing to be shaken
By the misery of his comforters

Jonah, sitting in gourd shade
Watching gourd weaken, worm grow

To us all, may it come again
And may we know it when we see it.

2004

Some, checking workmanship
Of rough-hewn stable
Or judging quality of manger hay,
May not have even seen the Christ
Or worshipped Him that day.

'Twas there, of course, not here
And then, of course, not now
Priorities askew
They did not bow.

The Four Stages of Man – *from Country magazine*

The first is when you believe in Santa Claus.
The second is when you don't believe in Santa Claus.
The third is when you are Santa Claus.
The fourth is when you look like Santa Claus.

Advent 2012 – Pastor Joe Beran

God and Sinners Reconciled
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Advent, anglicized from the Latin word *adventus* meaning "coming", is a season observed in many Western Christian churches, a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas. It is the beginning of the Western liturgical year and commences on Advent Sunday, called *Levavi*. The progression of the season may be marked with an Advent calendar, a practice introduced by German Lutherans. At least in the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Moravian, Presbyterian and Methodist calendars, Advent starts on the fourth Sunday before December 25, the Sunday from November 27 to December 3, inclusive.

Latin *adventus* is the translation of the Greek word *parousia*, commonly used in reference to the Second Coming of Christ. For Christians, the season of Advent anticipates the coming of Christ from two different perspectives. The season offers the opportunity to share in the ancient longing for the coming of the Messiah, and to be alert for his Second Coming.

The theme of readings and teachings during Advent is often to prepare for the Second Coming while commemorating the First Coming of Christ at Christmas. With the view of directing the thoughts of Christians to the first coming of Jesus Christ as savior and to His second coming as judge, special readings are prescribed for each of the four Sundays in Advent.

The usual liturgical color in Western Christianity for Advent is either purple or blue. The purple color is often used for hangings around the church, on the vestments of the clergy, and often also the tabernacle. On the 3rd Sunday of Advent rose may be used instead, referencing the rose used on Laetare Sunday, the 4th Sunday of Lent. In some Christian denominations, blue, a color representing hopefulness, is an alternative liturgical color for Advent. The Methodist Book of Worship identifies purple or blue as being appropriate for Advent. There has been an increasing trend to supplant purple with blue during Advent as it is a hopeful season of preparation that anticipates both Bethlehem and the consummation of history in the second coming of Jesus Christ

On Faith – *Patrick Overton (Shared by Chris Cordle, a friend of Hopewell UMC)*

"When you have come to the edge of all light that you know and are about to drop off into the darkness of the unknown, faith is knowing one of two things will happen: There will be something solid to stand on, or you will be taught to fly."

Calendar Notes

Sunday, December 2

Communion

Advent message: **Do You Hear What I Hear**

Decorate the church: Let's decorate our church like we are expecting a KING!

Monday, December 24 -- **Christmas Eve service, 7PM**

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