



# The Bell

# DECEMBER

# 2009



We are taking orders for **Christmas poinsettias** from Sunday, December 6 through Sunday, December 20. These are 7½" red potted poinsettias wrapped in foil. Cost for each plant is \$9.00. **Flowers are to be paid for with your order.** Checks can be made out to Howland UMC.

You can take your poinsettia with you after the

Christmas Eve Service, or you may have the poinsettia taken to a shut-in.

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of poinsettias: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed with payment: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please take poinsettia to a shut-in: \_\_\_\_\_

I am able to help deliver poinsettias to shut-ins: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please place this order form either in the offering plate or turn it into the church office. Deadline is Sunday December 20.**

**Sunday, December 13  
9:30 a.m.**

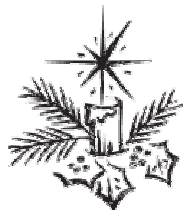


CHOIR  
CHRISTMAS  
CANTATA

Share the joy of song and music as we celebrate Advent and Christmas with our Chancel Choir leading worship.

*"The Gift of Christmas—Worshipping The Gift and the Giver."* Written by Claire Cloninger and Gary Rhodes. Frank McCauley, *music director.*

## Advent Banners



Our children and youth have been working hard during Sunday school, making Advent banners to be presented to the congregations during Advent. On each Sunday during Advent, one class will light the Advent wreath, read scripture, present their banner, and explain what the symbol on the banner means.

Plan to worship with us during each Sunday of Advent as our young people help to bring us the message of the season.

## Members In Service

### Trustee-of-the-month for December

Mike Taylor

### Altar Flowers for December

- 6 The Johnson Family
- 13 Choir Cantata—no flowers
- 20 The Summers Family
- 27 Sally Wehmer

### Ushers for December

George Ray, *captain*; Dick Lytle, Tom & Bonnie Johnson, Betty Allen, Mike Taylor, Logan Sturgeon

### Staff

- Ronald C. Spore**, *pastor*
- Andy McCracken**, *lay leader*
- Patty Davis**, *secretary*
- Frank McCauley**, *director of music*
- Lori Seinar-Roknick**, *organist/accompanist*
- Robert Gray**, *director of music emeritus*
- Carrie Santti**, *Christian Preschool acting director*
- Logan Sturgeon**, *custodian*
- Beth Ferrell**, *missionary*
- John L. Hopkins**, *resident bishop EOC*
- Dan Bryant**, *Mahoning Valley district superintendent*

## December Worship Schedule

- December 6—Charge Conference, 11 a.m.
- 13—*Choir Cantata* during Worship
- 20—9:30 a.m. Worship

### Christmas Eve

- 7:00 p.m.—Family Worship
- 9:00 p.m.—Candlelight Worship with Holy Communion
- December 27—9:30 a.m. Worship

**Dear Friends,**

Like many of you, I've been thinking lately about the ups and downs of our economy over the years. I am reminded of the many stories in the Old Testament, of prosperous times and lean times, of feast and of famine.



There can be no doubt that we are now experiencing lean times in our own society. Many people are unemployed, struggling to pay bills, and all that goes with it. Christmas this year might not be flowing with milk and honey, or champagne and caviar.

I don't believe God is punishing us, but I do believe that he designed a world in which we have to face consequences of our behaviors. We are by nature prone to excesses. We enjoy the pleasures of the world—our homes and cars and properties and all kinds of things. These 'things' can take us out of control. Now and again we are called back, to reflect on the beautiful gifts God provides. We tend to forget that we in our nation have access to overwhelming abundance compared to most of the world. God wants us to share the resources he gives us with those who are on the edge.

As painful as this moment is for so many, it is an opportunity for us all to rethink our priorities. How can we live on less and share more, so that all may be blessed? It is the way of Jesus.

May we be blessed as we bless the least and the lost among us!

  
Pastor Ron

**Thank You ...**

- ▶ to **all who came out on Sunday**, November 22, to "Hang the Greens" in preparation for Advent and Christmas. Special thanks to Sue Baker for her excellent direction, especially in the brief worship service that blessed our Advent decorations in service to Christ as we make way for him to come into our lives in a fresh way.
- ▶ to **Tom Macino**, who headed our stewardship efforts during this very challenging time in the history of the church and the whole world. The result of Tom and his team's focus on stewardship has been encouraging. Even in this troubled financial time, pledges to the church are ahead of last year at this time. We still have a long way to go to meet our ministry and mission goals and obligations, but, thanks to your responses, we are on the way to making 2010 goals a reality. The projected \$40,000 budget deficit for 2009 is a real concern, and we pray that God will bless us in meeting our commitments, so that our church will continue to be a beacon of hope in our community and a model of discipleship for Jesus Christ.

**Charge Conference  
Sunday, December 6  
11:00 a.m.**

Our annual charge conference, postponed from October 1, will take place on Sunday, December 6, following worship. We will consider this a "Church" Conference," meaning it is open to every member of the church. Everyone can participate in the discussions and all members have a vote.

Rev. Dan Bryant, appointed as district superintendent of the Mahoning Valley District July 1, 2009, will conduct the conference. Rev. Bryant will also preach during morning worship and his family plan to be present. A brief fellowship and refreshment time in the narthex will immediately follow worship.

Please plan to attend worship and the church conference.

Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.

Luke 2:15b



**Acts of Kindness**

*Thanks to Karen France for picking up Becca and Brian and getting them to church when I got a flat tire. (I'm sure I'm a lot more thankful than Brian was!)*

- **Jeanne Smith**

In the Narthex, there are pencils and coupons – quarter sheets of paper that you can write on.

*If you do something nice for someone during the week; If you see someone do something nice for someone else; If someone does something nice for you.*

**Write it down and put it in the box or the church office!**



**Please pray for...**

Bob Gray, Carl Isom, Ed Baker, Gene Stefani, Dick Gibbs, Dave Harriett, Bette Champ, Mid Nighswander, Joanne Thomas, Earl Thomas, Donna Lowman, Louis Steib, Dorothy Heitzenrater, Martha Johnson

Friends and Family: Todd Santti, Diana Barreto, Delores Ross, Anthony Petrosky, Tim Flannery, Andrew Howe, Nick Macrinos, Fred Norton, Krista Ronai, Diana Anderson, Ray Dales, Jr., Susan Cunningham, Donna Thorpe, David El Hatton, Alexander Thompson, Jan Kazonyi-Rokus, Marsha Wissinger, Luke Holko, Lois Catley Tate, The Sprague Family, Julie Carbone, Lola Eynon, Dale Anderson, Faith Gormley, Bob May, Greg Flick, Tim Johns, Harold McCracken, Robbie Corbin, Sam Delaquilla, Ron Kilner, Matt Karlovic, Rosie Danvers, Cheryl Boyd, Kristen Schlotter, Linda Fink, Wyatt Girard, Linda Moore, Aaron Kent, The Family of Don McClune, Stephanie Sheeley, Jim Barber, Leslie May, Suzanne & Pete Adams, Lori Johnson & Family (upon the death of her husband, Thomas R. Johnson), The Family of Charlie Tewksbary (upon his death)

The Senior High youth have been busy! We made dinner for a few families in our congregation, we visited a haunted house and enjoyed wings at "The Lube," we had a great scavenger hunt which showed the creative side of our group, and we had a wonderful night of Bible study.



Our members are very active with sports and school activities and yet they make time for fellowship with each other and with God. We are fortunate to have such a great group of kids!!! And we are very excited to invite members of Howland Community Church's Senior High youth to join our group for our December 6 meeting. We hope to have them join us for many more meetings!

- December 6—Bible Study
- December 13—Game night
- December 20—Christmas Caroling and party



Can you believe it is December already?? The school year so far has gone by so quickly and so amazingly smooth for us. It is a true joy to be in the wonderful season of Advent! Please remember to share the joy of Jesus with everyone you see this busy and hectic month!



Our **Cookie Trays** can be purchased on Sunday, December 13 after church. Thank you to all who have volunteered to bake and to all who will buy! This is one of our biggest fundraisers and we owe much of it to you, so thank you again!!

Special thank-you to **FriendWeavers** for collecting money for our Angel Fund and to the **Garage Sale** for challenging the congregation and helping to support our Angel Fund. This year we have two amazing students who are using the Angel Fund and their families have said many times how blessed they are to be here and how wonderful our school is. Thank you to all who support the Angel Fund.

The Preschool Christmas plays will be on Monday and Tuesday nights, December 14 and 15 at 6:30 p.m. Our *Happy Birthday, Jesus* parties will be all day on Wednesday, December 16. Please join us in celebrating this blessed event!

Wishing you all a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS,  
Carrie Santti

## Middle School Youth Notes

We had a wonderful turnout of youth at the Soup Kitchen in November. Thanks to all of you who came to follow the call of Jesus to "feed the hungry." Your sacrifice of time, sensitivity to those in need, and your cooperative spirit are wonderful. You make our church proud!

We will be caroling with the Senior High Group on the 20<sup>th</sup> and will end up at Dr. McClain's office for a Christmas Party.

2009 has been a year of fellowship, service, learning and fun. Thanks to all of you who make that happen. We have great plans for the New Year as well. Confirmation class continues go well with near perfect attendance, great participation and enthusiasm. Our youth are thinking globally and locally when it comes to service. We had a bake sale November 22nd, splitting the proceeds between *World Vision* and HUM.

Thanks to all those came out for the Hanging of the Greens, our church looks festive!



**W** This session of *FriendWeavers* keeps the enthusiasm going through Wednesday, December 16. Each Wednesday program now includes 28 registered elementary students, 4 Circle of Friends leaders, 8 Center leaders, up to 7 kitchen crew members, and 5 supportive adult workers. When we count the 9 Confirmation students and their teacher who also meet from 4:30 to 6:15, HUM is a happening place on Wednesdays! Hopefully, everyone is noticing the weekly photos displayed on the *FriendWeavers* board in the narthex. All those great photos will be given to the respective "subjects" as a memory packet later.

Since October 7, we have been following the adventures of faithful Moses and the Israelites through the Red Sea and into the wilderness area. At Mount Sinai, God's ten commandments had a premiere presentation. To weave the lessons into their lives, the students have experienced songs, Bible verses, action dramas, participation prayers, good efficient meals, journal pages of their weekly thoughts about God, Biblical surprises, crafts with a purpose, fun games that teach a lesson, and friendships.

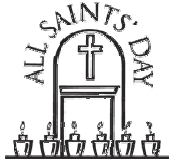
Are there more fun Wednesdays ahead? Yes! Although you can join *FriendWeavers* any week, the second session will begin Wednesday, January 6, and go through March 24th. The Confirmation class will also follow that schedule and continue to join the group of *FriendWeavers* for dinner each week. It's great to have the Confirmation class provide the clean-up each evening. It's a good program for all those involved. Feel free to join us—we can always use more friends!

### Dear HUM Church Family,

Thank you for all of your prayers, support and kindness over the last eight months. Don was enjoying pre-retirement, diligently seeking employment. After eight months of unemployment, he has accepted a full time job as an Employee Assistance Counselor with Workplace Options in Raleigh, a short drive from our home. We are indeed grateful and Don is excited about the new opportunity. An exciting side note — the person who hired Don for the job is from Warren, Ohio and Don worked with her on several committees in the 1990's.

A special thank you to Pastor Ron for all of his support. He continues to be a very caring Pastor to Beth and me even though we are living in Raleigh, NC. Once again, thank you for everything. HUM is a great church full of caring and kind Christian people.

Love & Peace,  
*Don and Beth Dickens*



### Howland United Methodist Church

*All Saints Day 2009*

X

**On Sunday, November 1, we recognized the following saints of our church who died in the Lord since All Saints Day, 2008:**

Geneva Hoffman	May 10, 1918—Nov 9, 2008	Aunt of Gene Heitzenrater
Robert Curtis	May 18, 1920—Nov 10, 2008	Uncle of Nancy Hoy
Mrs. Bloomberg	Jul 15, 1919—Nov 21, 2008	Grandmother of Carli Wojciak & Andrea Lupton
David T. Hert	Apr 4, 1942—Nov 24, 2008	Cousin of Harry Schoger
Robert Wills Sr.	Dec 22, 1938—Dec 20, 2008	Friend of Carl & Nanette Isom
Ruby Catley	Apr 25, 1918—Dec 21, 2008	Aunt of Nanette Isom
Charlotte Alexander	Sep 19, 1920—Dec 19, 2008	Charter Member of HUM
Azeeza Duke	Jul 13, 1927—Dec 26, 2008	Friend of Carl & Nanette Isom
Ray Huston Vaughn	Jun 4, 1924—Jan 10, 2009	Father of Paul Vaughn & Dale Vaughn
Paul "Pete" Gardner	Oct 21, 1928—Jan 20, 2009	Uncle of Glenda McCracken
Dr. Robert Pegues, Jr.	Mar 6, 1936—Feb 12, 2009	Friend of Carl & Nanette Isom
Bill Lansdowne	May 20, 1938—Mar 2, 2009	Nephew of Mid Nighswander & Ginny Churchill
James Joseph	Apr 12, 1927—Mar 15, 2009	Brother-in-law of Gloria Gibbs
Dick Locke	Jan 17, 1943—Mar 25, 2009	Uncle of Sean Craigo
Sharlene Carmichael	Nov 24, 1935—Apr 7, 2009	Mother of Amy Bertilacci
Mary Fowler	Sep 26, 1918—Apr 19, 2009	Mother of Cathy Rausch
David Bruno		Uncle of Dennis Moore
Judy Moyer	Sep 20, 1939—Apr 21, 2009	Sister-in-law of Sally Allen
Robert Duke, Jr.	Jan 30, 1943—Apr 30, 2009	Friend of Carl & Nanette Isom
Catherine L. Taylor	Sep 28, 1915—May 9, 2009	Grandmother of Jennifer Alberini
Lawrence Catley	Jan 5, 1942—Sep 6, 2009	Cousin of Nanette Isom
Stan Atwood	Mar 9, 1933—Sep 7, 2009	Cousin of Mary Nameth
Steve Turcola	Sep 24, 1949—Sep 23, 2009	Uncle of Jackie Jones
Ashley Monro	Apr 12, 1984—Sep 30, 2009	Granddaughter of Gene & Georgia Stefani
Sally Jones	Apr 12, 1940—Oct 2, 2009	Aunt of Sherry Manning
Jacklyn Cook Stokes	Apr 30, 1946—Oct 12, 2009	Cousin of Nanette Isom
Thomas J. Hofstetter	Dec 28, 1927—Oct 13, 2009	HUM Member
Edgar Milton Horner	May 27, 1929—Oct 22, 2009	Uncle of Jack Norton

**May God keep each one in eternal care and comfort their families with the promise of life everlasting!**

DECEMBER CALENDAR

**An Open Letter to HUM,**

Each night after I help my mother get settled for the night, I spend a few minutes going back over the day. I am overwhelmed at the number of blessings my mother and I receive each day. When I name the people who have blessed us each day, there are very few that are NOT from HUM. It isn't only the meals, the rides, the outside chores, the errands, and the hugs. It's the avalanche of cards, phone calls, visits, and prayers. There are no words to convey the feelings we have when we think about what everyone has done.

It's like trying to describe God. In fact, it IS describing God, because each person who has helped us, fed us, called us, sent us cards, or prayed for us has shown what God is like. When we were hungry, you fed us. When we needed clothes, you clothed us. When we needed help, you extended your hand. When we needed love, you hugged us. And when we didn't know what we needed, you prayed for us. There are no strangers among us at HUM, for we are all family. The love, support, and assistance you have offered has shown us over and over what Christ is like.

Some people are blessed to experience a "God-thing" once in a while—that event that reminds them of and reconnects them to God. My mother and I are blessed to experience "God-things" all the time with our family at HUM. Our hearts runneth over.

May God grant you all a special blessing,  
*Deborah and Donna Lowman*



**No Book Bunch in December**

Join us after Christmas on Thursday, January 21 at 7:00 p.m. for our discussion of *Have a Little Faith* by Mitch Albom.



**Operation Christmas Child Update**

Operation Christmas Child was a great success this year. We collected 48 shoeboxes. Each shoebox was filled with small toys, toiletries, and treats. Each will bring Christmas joy and Christ's joy to a child somewhere in this world.

Many thanks to **Linda Drew and Shari Dillon** for their efforts in preparing shoeboxes for us and for getting them to the proper place for mailing.

**Cookie Bakers Needed!**

It's time again for our Christian Preschool's annual Christmas cookie tray fundraiser. This is one of our biggest fundraisers of the year and we need your help.

Will you bake a double batch of cookies? If so, have them at the church by Friday, December 11 (the church office close at noon that day).

Don't want to bake? Will you donate \$18.00 per double-batch so Deanna Andamasaris can bake for you?

Please contact Sue Spore by Friday, December 4, if you would like to have Deanna bake cookies for you. If you are baking cookies yourself, just bring them to the church by December 11, before noon.

We thank you for helping our Preschool children during this Christmas season!

**Vacation Bible School 2010**

We're now forming a small group who will begin planning for our 2010 Vacation Bible School. If you would like to participate in VBS leadership this year, please contact Sue Spore [suespore@yahoo.com](mailto:suespore@yahoo.com) as soon as possible.

**Family Promise**

HUM will be hosting Family Promise December 20-27. As always, we need people to prepare dinners, provide food for breakfast and lunch, spend the night, and stay at church during the day on Christmas and the day after.

We would like to take the families to CiCi's Pizza again for dinner. They really enjoyed this the last time. We would also like to do something fun for the kids, such as bowling or a movie. Please consider making a monetary donation to help cover these costs.

Currently the families in the program are a single mom and her 10 year old son; a husband and wife with a 2 year old, 1 year old and newborn; a husband and wife with a 15 year old son and 11 year old daughter; and a single mom with five children between the age of 4 and 11. We will have an angel tree in the narthex for our families. Please consider participating in this so the families will have a nice Christmas.

The director of Family Promise told me that HUM is the families' favorite church because we are so loving and make them feel like this is their home. Please sign up in the narthex to help with this program. Our times with the families have been such a blessing to them and us. Let's all pull together to make this Christmas week a wonderful time for everyone.

~Debbie Macino

### In Honor of Shirley Hosterman

Marilyn Wright, University of Virginia, honors her mother, Shirley Hosterman, this Christmas. Marilyn has provided a contribution to the church, designated for new candle holders and candles for our Christmas Eve candlelight services.

Shirley has been an active and faithful participant in the life of our church for many months, and we are pleased that Marilyn has chosen to honor her in this way.

Merry Christmas, Shirley!

### Howland United Methodist Church November/December 2009

#### Sunday School and Worship Time Survey

Discussions concerning Sunday morning Sunday School and worship times have been ongoing for the past several years. Many requests have come to church leaders asking that we consider making changes in our Sunday morning schedule. This survey attempts to further that discussion to reach a decision.

Please complete this form by indicating your first (1) and second (2) choices. We will collect these forms for four Sundays. Please submit only ONE time. If we agree to make time changes, the change will take effect the second Sunday of the new year, January 10.

1 or 2	Start Times		Comments
	<u>Worship</u>	<u>Sunday School</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	9:30	10:45	Current
<input type="checkbox"/>	10:00	11:15	
<input type="checkbox"/>	10:30	9:30	
<input type="checkbox"/>	11:00	10:00	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	Other

Submit ONE time only during these four weeks (November 15—December 6).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Appalachia Service Project

Planning is underway for our 2010 Appalachia Service Project mission trip. Our application has been accepted and teams will be traveling the week of June 20, 2010.

As the weather gets colder and we make plans for the Christmas season, take time to think of those in Central Appalachia who are cold, who are hungry, and who don't know how they will be able to provide even small gifts for their children. The Appalachia Service Project makes homes warmer, safer, and drier. Our teams bring more than work boots, hammers, and kind words to the work sites – by their actions they are bringing God's love and hope to families in need. Please support this project!

Are you interested in being part of a team? Youth must be at least 14 years old and have completed 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Adults of any age are needed. Bill Headland is our fearless leader, and he will be glad answer any questions you have.



#### HUMC Financial Status January through October 2009

**INCOME:**  
 Church Receipts \$ 182,866.73  
 Other Receipts 11,335.08  
**Total Church Receipts \$ 194,201.81**

**EXPENSES:**  
 Staff Salaries & Benefits \$ 124,374.50  
 Programs 8,023.53  
 \*Trustees Accounts 49,993.84  
 \*\*Apportionments/Stewardship 8,773.29  
 Administration 7,246.85  
**Total Expenses Paid \$ 198,412.01**  
**Under-giving Subtotal - \$4,210.20**  
**Commitments not met -\$32,331.48**  
**Total Under-giving -\$36,541.68**

\* Trustee Accounts include maintenance on the church and parsonage buildings and grounds, utilities, janitorial and lighting supplies, insurance, capital improvement, etc.

\*\* Apportionments are our share of money paid to the East Ohio Conference and Mahoning Valley District. As of October 31, 2009, the Capital Improvement Escrow and our East Ohio Conference apportionments have not been paid for March-October. The District apportionments and our missionary have not been paid for August-October. The copier lease has not been paid for one month.



**Howland United  
Methodist Church**

730 Howland-Wilson Rd NE  
Warren OH 44484  
Phone: (330) 856-3463  
Fax: (330) 856-7037

Email: HUMchurch@embarqmail.com  
Web: www.howlandumc.com

The Bell is published monthly.

Ronald C. Spore, pastor  
Patty Davis, editor

Worship—9:30 a.m.  
Sunday School—10:45 a.m.

Non-Profit Organization

Bulk Rate

U.S. Postage PAID

Vienna, OH

Permit No. 33

*Return Service Requested*

**Deadline for the  
January 2010 newsletter:  
Tuesday, December 15, 2009**



**Handel's "Messiah" — Sunday, December 6  
4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.  
Blessed Sacrament Parish**

The portion of MESSIAH commonly referred to as "the Christmas part" will be recreated in the sanctuary of Blessed Sacrament Parish on December 6th at 4:00 p.m. and again at 7:00 p.m. The chorus of 100 voices will be joined by four soloists and orchestra. Jeffrey Johns is the concertmaster, and John W. Kurtz, director of music at Living Lord Lutheran Church in Howland, will conduct.

The work begins with a prophecy from Isaiah, promising deliverance: "Comfort ye, my people," sung by tenor Leonard Suzelis, the dean of the soloists, having first sung with the chorus in 1982. The chorus responds that "Every Valley shall be Exalted." Baritone Tom Scurich warns, "For behold, darkness shall cover the earth and the people that walked in darkness." The soprano section of the chorus will announce "For unto us a Child is born."

Corinne Morini, soprano, expresses the joy of the time in "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion," but contralto Karen Emmett reminds us "He was despised."

The text of MESSIAH was supplied by Charles Jennens, a wealthy admirer of Handel. The words were taken directly from the Bible and Jennens skillfully assembled Old and New Testament quotations into a stirring narrative of Christ's birth, sacrifice and resurrection.

There is no admission charge but a free-will offering will be received.

***Male Call*  
Men's Breakfast  
Saturday,  
December 12, 2009  
8:30 a.m.**

All HUM men are invited to enjoy fellowship, worship, and breakfast! *Women of the congregation are also invited to attend this month.*

The speaker this month is ***Koby McFarland of Hospice of the Valley***. She will talk about the work of Hospice. In addition, she will talk about some of the unusual end-of-life experiences of her patients and what the implications of those experiences might be about the spiritual realm and/or afterlife.

Sign up in the narthex or call the church office if you plan to attend.

*Cost is free, but donations are gratefully accepted to help defray costs.*