



**PORTAGE  
LAKE  
UNITED  
CHURCH**

# ***PLUC***

***United Church of Christ & Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)***  
**1400 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, MI 49931-1208**  
**906.482.5224 • office@pluc.org • www.pluc.org**

January 2019

## ***What's Happening @ PLUC***

### **Consistory Highlights**

*submitted by Terry Monson, Clerk*

- The Treasurer reported that that the Church's savings and checking account balances on November 30 were \$1,318 and \$26,679. The checking account balance was divided between the General Fund (for Church operations) of \$6,887 and designated and special funds of \$19,792, of which flood relief funds comprised more than half (\$10,107).
- The Financial Secretary reported that through the end of November, pledges, unpledged, loose plate, and building use were 88%, 306%, 104%, and 119% of what was budgeted for 2018. She also reported that as of November 30, 24 pledging units pledged \$59,867 for 2019..
- The Office Manager reported that she gave out two food vouchers since the Consistory's November meeting, she continues to be concerned about the number of folks she needs to call on each week as volunteers, she received correspondence regarding donations to Presbytery Point. Because of her injury, she requested help stuffing envelopes and folding bulletins, asked for suggestions to identify more

volunteers for ushers and greeters and to handle the coffee time following services.

- The Consistory discussed suggestions to make it easier for volunteers to provide refreshments following services and concluded that the Church will provide cookies and/or crackers and will not expect volunteers to provide elaborate food. This arrangement will begin after January 1 and will be announced during church services..
- The Consistory reviewed the Membership List (total membership is now 45 adults and 8 children), and agreed to review the Church By-Laws (last updated in January, 2016) during its January 2019 meeting.
- Lydia Lytle, the Pastor Search Committee Chair, reported that it reviewed five pastor profiles and will recommend that the congregation call Peter Norland as our next permanent pastor during the February Congregation/Corporation meeting.
- The Consistory discussed the condition of the Fellowship Hall carpet and postponed any action until bids are received for several replacement options (new carpeting, laminate flooring and tile).
- The terms of Elders Helman and Sprague will end on December 31. The Consistory thanked them for their input and advice during their Consistory service.

## Financial Report

*Information received from Financial Secretary*

### Received in December (thru 12/23)

Pledge	\$3689.50
Unpledged	620.00
Loose Plate	79.00

## Other News

### Mark Your Calendar

#### Annual Meeting of the Congregation/Corporation

February 3, 2019  
following Worship

Accept Final 2019 Budget  
Accept 2018 Annual Report  
Accept Rev. Peter Norland as the Pastor  
for PLUC

### Wanted - Christmas Decorations

*Submitted by Bobbie Dalquist*

**Wanted** - your surplus Christmas decorations. Fellowship Guild is planning a Holiday Decorations Rummage Sale next fall. When you put away your Christmas decorations, please put decorations you no longer use in a separate box so that you can easily pull them out and donate them to our sale next fall. Thank you!

## Fellowship Guild Luncheon

*Submitted by Judy Albee*

**N**ine Fellowship Guild members gathered in the private dining room of The Bluffs for their traditional holiday luncheon and 'basket filling', December 10<sup>th</sup>. Additional members, although unable to attend, provided items to be included in the offerings for our staff and several senior residents associated with Portage Lake United Church.

Judy Albee shared a seasonal reading from I Wish You Joy, by Edwin Osgood Grover before our relaxing meal. This gave impetus to attendees reflecting on current personal 'joys', (events) in their lives. It was a great way to catch up with each other's family happenings during this busy season.

After our meal the baskets containing a variety of fruit, cookies or bars, candy as well as cereal mix, small loaves of homemade bread and cards were completed. Barb Brookhouse and Lois Jambekar made sure the items were properly divided, enclosed in large cellophane bags, tied with decorative bows and ready for distribution. Thank you to everyone who facilitated this effort. We trust the baskets brought joy to each recipient.

Our next gathering is set for Monday, January 14<sup>th</sup> back at The Bluffs. Lunch will again be at 12:30 in the private dining room. Our plan is to review the budget, set dates for future events and hear updates on holiday survival. A signup sheet will be on the table in the lounge. We hope that many of the women of the church can fit this into their New Year's schedules.

## Christmas Pageant

One more short article to finish up our wonderful season. This year our Christmas Pageant was presented during the December 23rd Sunday service during the Sermon Under the Trees time. As always, this was a fun event for both the performers and audience while also reminding us of the true meaning of Christmas. We thank all of the performers, and especially Bobbie Dalquist, for pulling this all together.



## Update from the Pastor Nominating Committee:

After 6 months of reflection, advertising through both PC(USA) and UCC, and reviewing of applications, the pastor nominating committee is pleased to announce a primary candidate for Portage Lake United Church's pastor search. Amidst a total of five talented applicants, Pastor Peter Norland's name continued to rise to the top of the list. Peter has been serving as our transitional minister since the departure of Pastor Melinda Quivik last spring. We are impressed by his compassion for our community, prioritization of service, ability to listen, and thought provoking sermons. We are excited to move forward together as we take the next steps towards hiring our next pastor!

Pastor Peter Norland has been active in various forms of ministry since his high school days. In 1999, he and Christina were married at the bible camp at which they met years before. Peter and Christina have three teenage children, Magdalen, John Paul, and

Amos. Peter earned his M.Div at North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago (2007) and was ordained by the Evangelical Covenant Church (2010). With a love for rural life and small town ministry, Peter has pastored congregations in South Dakota, Vermont, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Enjoying backyard agricultural pursuits, and having a long desire to relocate to the Keweenaw, the Norlands made the move in 2015. They now live at their beloved "Superior Homestead," a 20 acre hobby farm with a view of the big lake.

**Peter's Candidacy Sunday will take place on February 3, 2019**, where Peter will have the opportunity to lead our Sunday service as our top pastor search candidate. **Following the service, we will gather for the scheduled congregational meeting and vote** to accept or decline our nominated candidate.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support throughout the search process! If you have any questions please contact committee chair, Lydia Lytle ([llytle@mtu.edu](mailto:llytle@mtu.edu)).

## Helping Hands

*submitted by Beth Smock, Office Manager*

It has been another very busy year with Helping Hands. As of December 28th we have given out 33 food vouchers to Jim's Foodmart and 3 gas vouchers to Dave's BP. These are the same number as last year but we did give out a little bit more money this year. We had several people who had been affected by the flooding come in needing help with food. They were given \$75.00 vouchers instead of the usual \$50.00.

Thank you to all those who gave to the Helping Hands fund. Without your generosity we would not be able to help those in need.

## The Angel Mission

*Submitted by Barb Brookhouse*

**W**hat a great day it was! On Saturday, December 15, Lois and I wrapped gifts for the Moms and Dads of 85 kids who came to "Kids Shopping Only" at the Angel Mission. As in past years it was fun for us to watch the kids. Some find gifts right away while others take a much longer time and often need assistance in finding just the right gift. The children had quite an array of gifts to choose from, especially for their moms. (If you are not aware, throughout the year those donations that come into the mission which are suited for Kids Shopping are set aside and not put out until the big day.) Besides hearing "thank you", my favorite exclamations this year were: "Wow, we had nothing like this downstate" and "You wrap the gifts too!" Oh.....Santa was at the Mission too. He chatted with the kids and had his picture taken with them also. It was a great day!

At the writing of this article, 200 children will be receiving gifts this Christmas because of the Angel Mission's Angel Tree project. Each child will receive not just one gift, but several that meet their needs and wants. Thank you so much to all of you who provided the gifts or money to help put big smiles on so many faces this Christmas. (Not just children's faces but parents too.) A special thanks to Lynn and Eleanor and all the many volunteers at the Angel Mission for all the time and effort they put into wonderful happening.

Though I walk through the  
valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil.



## New Year's Eve Party - Phantom Guest?

**T**revor's New Year's Eve party was an annual occurrence with numerous guests arriving. During the evening, a man knocked on the door, was greeted heartily although no one knew who he was, and was led to where the drinks were, in the kitchen. He sat there happily, chatting away, for a couple of hours before a strange light dawned on his face. 'You know,' he confided to Trevor, 'I wasn't even invited to this party. I just came over to tell you that some of your guests' cars are blocking my drive.' He continued, 'My wife's been sitting out in the car waiting for me to get them moved, so that we can go out.'

**Editor's Note:** I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable New Year's Eve (and went to the right party).. Let's all believe that the challenges of 2018 are past (or at least getting fixed) and that 2019 brings better days.

January 2019

Volume 23, No 1: Published 11 times/year

### **Portage Lake United Church**

United Church of Christ & Presbyterian Church  
(USA)

1400 E. Houghton Ave., Houghton, MI 49931  
906.482.5224

office @pluc.org pluc.org

Pastor: Rev. Peter Norland

Office Manager: Beth Smock

### **General Office Hours:**

8:00-11:00 AM - Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri

### **Pastor Office Hours**

9:30 AM - 12:00 Noon - Thursday or by appointment

**Return Service Requested**

**Portage Lake United Church  
1400 E. Houghton Ave.  
Houghton, MI 49931**



Short reminder: There will be no February newsletter due to the Annual Report. Check for the February calendar toward the end of January.

