

THE MESSENGER

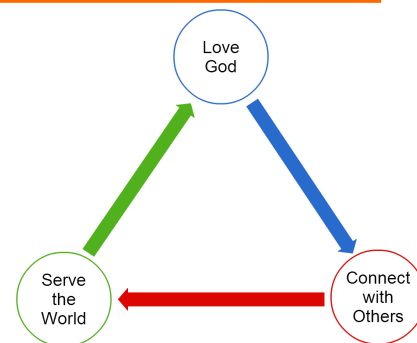
January 2023

Cherry Valley United Methodist Church

Rev. Mark Harkness, Pastor
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Our Mission: *Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by loving God, connecting with others, and serving the world.*



A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:3-14 NRSV)

Grace and peace in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

It seems that my first letter of the year should reflect upon all the glorious possibilities that lie ahead in the New Year. Culturally, we look to the New Year as a time to begin anew by changing those things about ourselves that we wish were better. To that end, we seek advice on weight loss or liberation from addictions. By Candlemas (February 2) we start to feel the *Groundhog Day* effect as the new year seems to revert to the same old struggles.

Why is that? Why is it that we tend to revert? But also, why does contentment seem so elusive?

In answer to the first question, I think it has to do with the misconception that novelty (i.e. newness) is necessarily superior to the familiar (i.e. old). Young people eschew Facebook as being for old people, always moving to new apps. Fashion trends suggest that we need to refresh our wardrobe every year or even more often. I'm not good at that. My favorite shirt is over twenty years old. Susan has "repaired" the button holes so many times that she now says, "No more."

I've suggested an alternative approach to save that shirt which involves adding a piece of fabric. Does that mean that it's no longer the same shirt? By no means. Although adaptation leads to change, rather than replacing what we cherish, it makes those things accessible. When Jesus was accused of abandoning Moses, he said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill." (Mt 5:17) Likewise, the coming of a new year invites us to claim God's grace, rather than seizing upon every new manner of presenting ourselves as worthy and good.

Maybe that's why contentment seems so elusive. Novelty continually changes what we're supposed to believe is good or acceptable so that we're never quite sure where we fit.

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In the movie *Groundhog Day*, the main character, Phil, finds himself “trapped” on the same day. Nothing “new” ever happens around him. However, he gets to do new things each day. Repeated opportunities for indulgence lead to continual despair. When he adapts to his new reality and looks for ways to claim it more fully, he finds contentment and eventually a new day.

God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Through Jesus, God Almighty demonstrate how much he cherishes you. Whereas everything in the world says to abandon the past for the new, God invites us to cherish all that we are even when that means adapting/changing what we do and/or how we do things in order to know life as he intended for us.

I go for long periods without wearing my favorite shirt: sometimes because it’s so difficult to keep buttoned and sometimes because Susan has stashed it away in her mending basket. Even with the changes that have occurred over time, it’s still comfortable and reminds me of the promising day when I bought it. Sometimes we can go for periods in which prayer or attending public worship get set aside. Regardless of the reason whether changing family dynamics or Covid restrictions or other life changes that may have change our routine, God’s grace perseveres. God’s past promises live on as our present hope and our future triumph.

Wearing my favorite old shirt takes work. It compels me to continually look for open buttons, lest I become a spectacle. But the truth is, I worry about it more than others. I still think it’s worth it. Rising prices and rising contention in the world compel us to succumb or to find hope. Our life together as Christians (in worship and prayer) brings out that hope, even if it seems worn out and takes a bit of work. In the end, I promise that it’s worth it.



Your brother in Christ,

Rev. Mark Harkness



Members & Friends

- Sandra Baxter
- Glenn Carnine
- Mary Lou Clevenger
- Violet Collier
- Pat Gorsuch
- Joe Hunt
- Trudy Hunt
- Doris Kuelz
- Lyons Meyers
- Lorraine Robbins
- Kathy Sundberg

Military Personnel

- Gage Christensen
- Sean Conderman
- Dan Harter
- Wesley Harter
- Mark Kincaide

Mission

- Pastor Kim & the Next Generation Ministry

Those Who Mourn

- Shirley Neff Family



PRAYER REQUESTS: If you have prayer concerns that you wish to express, please fill out a prayer request card located in the Prayer Chapel and on the small table in the sanctuary. Please indicate how you would like your request shared via the check boxes at the bottom of the card and then place the concerns in the prayer request box in the chapel or fold and put into the offering plate. Your request will be given to the pastor or forwarded to the Prayer Chain. You may also email your prayer requests to the secretary who will pass it on the Prayer Chain.

amazonsmile

You shop. Amazon gives.
GREAT NEWS!

Cherry Valley UMC been added to the approved charity list on AmazonSmile!

If you use Amazon.com for purchases, consider signing up with smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases - at no cost to you. **You may choose from many charities, with CVUMC being our favorite!**

AmazonSmile offers the same products, same low prices, and same services as the Amazon you know.

To get started, visit smile.amazon.com on your web browser and sign in with your Amazon.com credentials. Choose a charitable organization to receive donations, or search for the charity of your choice. Select your charity and start shopping.

To join AmazonSmile from the mobile app, open the app and find "Settings" in the main menu. Tap on "AmazonSmile" and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on Amazon Smile on your phone.



Dates to Remember

- January 1 Wesleyan Covenant Service
- January 8 Remove Christmas decorations after worship
- January 10 6:00 pm Finance Committee Meeting
7:00 pm Church Council Meeting
- January 16 -20 Pastor in classes in Wisconsin



Scripture Readings

January 1 Wesley Covenant Renewal Service
 First Lesson..... Deuteronomy 31:9-13
 Second Lesson 2 Kings 23:1-3
 Third Lesson 2 Chronicles 34:29-3
 Fourth Lesson Jeremiah 31:31-34
 Fifth Lesson Psalm 50
 Sixth Lesson 1 Peter 1
 Seventh Lesson Matthew 25:15-46
 Eighth Lesson John 15:1-8

January 8 Baptism of the Lord
 Psalm 29
 Scripture Lessons Isaiah 42:1-9
 Gospel Lesson..... Matthew 3:12-17
 Message "Called to Righteousness"

January 15 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany
 Psalm 40:1-11
 Scripture Lesson 1 Corinthians 1:1-9
 Gospel John 1:29-42
 Message "The Disciples' Handbook"

January 22 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany
 Psalm 27:1, 4-9
 Scripture Lesson To be announced
 Gospel To be announced
 Message Holly Snyder Testimony

January 29 4th Sunday after the Epiphany
 Psalm 15
 Scripture Lesson Micah 6:1-8
 Gospel Matthew 5:1-12
 Message "Happy! Happy! Happy!"



Greeters Needed

We are still seeking motivated people to place in rotation on the greeter schedule. The greeter is the first person that a visitor sees upon their arrival....it can set the tone for the experience that person has at the worship service.

If you think you would like to be a greeter, but may be a bit embarrassed to say you don't know what a greeters responsibilities are, you are probably not alone. First, smile....a smile is always a welcoming sight, especially when one is new to a place. It goes a long way to a warm welcome.

A greeter will honor the members and guests. The way to honor them is to say more than "hello." You can say "Welcome to our church" or "We're glad you're here," or "It's good to see you (and your family)" You can help them know where to go. Visitors may not have been to the church before and may not know where the sanctuary is located.

This is just a few ways in which the greeter can be an ambassador for the church. If you are interested in becoming a greeter, you may speak with Juanita Barnes.



Methodist Women

The women met Sunday, December 11th following worship. We maintained our usual routine of opening with devotions and prayer followed by the Secretary and Treasurer's reports. We collect donations for the food pantry each month.

We celebrated our donations to the Rock House Kid's. We collected and delivered 200 Christmas stockings. I even have a few to start next year's collection. THANK YOU!

In the spirit of Christmas, we addressed cards for those of our congregation who are in care and those who are unable to attend church whom we miss.

We encouraged those present to attend the Christmas Carol Sing Along and Potluck that was on December 14th.

We completed our plans for the Cookie Walk that was on December 18th. This was a big event for our group. Thank you for supporting us in this endeavor. We would not be able to do the things we do without your support.

We discussed plans for a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on February 21st. We will be asking for help manning the grill.

Discussion for a spring garage sale was met with mixed emotions. We are asking for your input on this issue...what do you think about a church garage sale in the spring?



Our next meeting is January 15th. All women of the church are welcome to come and share with us.

Juanita Barnes

HEBREWS 6:10

"God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them."



We are eager to begin the new year refreshed with meaningful outreach to our members and community. Please join us for our next meeting Thursday, January 12 at 7 p.m. in the Gathering room.

We have identified several community organizations for our

Sunday mission moments. Our Mission Moments fall on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We will reach out to The Salvation Army; Carpenter's Place and the Rock River Food Pantry. If there are other service organizations you would like to know more about, please let us know. Awareness is the key to making our community stronger and our church vital.

We also know that the winter months are challenging for many of our members – not only the identified home bound but also those who simply find the snow/cold/ice beyond their ability to get out. We will find you; give you a hug; pray with you and leave a Valentine surprise.

We continue to serve lunches at the Rockford Rescue Mission on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 10:30-12 noon. We have committed to providing 3 volunteers for each lunch. We encourage anyone who has the time and the heart to serve our less fortunate to join us. Need a ride – just ask! It is, as Pastor Mark has mentioned, a most rewarding experience. Remember we are blessed beyond measure when we share God's love.

We, of course, would welcome new members. If you are unable to meet in person, you can join us through our 'Zoom' link on the church website.

With God's grace we grow together!

Judy Long

judylong1949@gmail.com

Prayer Shawl Ministry



The Prayer Shawl Group meets every third Wednesday at 10 am.

If you like to knit or crochet prayer shawls, scarves or hats, please feel free to join us.

You are also welcome to bring your own craft and join in the fellowship.

After the meeting, we often go to lunch at one of the local restaurants. **Our next meeting will be January 18th at 10:00 am.** All are invited to join us.

Lucy Powell

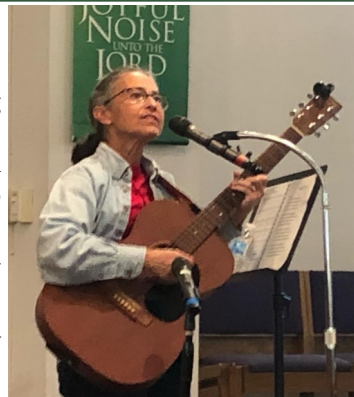
Wrapped in Love 



Grace International School

We recently had a special Mission Team worship service to bring attention to Grace International School in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Judy Long, former missionary to Grace International led the service with the message entitled "Cherry Valley United Methodist Church and Its Call to International Missions." Paul Jarot, one of the missionaries, spoke about international mission and Dawn DiVenti gave a personal testimony and sang a solo.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the service. It was a very uplifting and meaningful worship time.



- 3 Jan Mills
- 5 Kathleen Sundberg
- 7 Connor Kloss
- 15 Taryn Ward
- 18 Jordyn Nystrom
Nick Brown
- 27 Lavern Neff
- 28 Dave Anderson
Donna Layng
- 27 Susan Harkness
- 31 Jim Coulter



Anniversaries

- 7 Keith & Terri Burritt



Thank You



Thank you to all who donated to the Rock House Kids Christmas Stocking Program. We delivered 200 Christmas stockings to the RHKs on Tuesday, December 6.

We are happy to announce that our goal of 200 stockings was met and actually exceeded. We collected 210 stockings so we will have 10 to start next year's collection!

Thank you for supporting this project! The Rock House Kids surely had a blessed Christmas, partially because of your generosity and compassion for these kids in need.

ROMANS 12:13

"Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."

Rock River Valley Food Pantry

Feeding Rockford One Meal At A Time



Thank you for your continued support of the Rock River Valley Food Pantry. The pantry currently serves approximately 6,800 clients per month. You can help by bringing your non-perishable foods and placing them in the basket located in the foyer of the church.

CURRENT NEEDS LIST

Canned Fruit	Applesauce	100% Juice
Canned Vegetables	Pasta and Rice	Cereal
Peanut Butter	Tuna	Soup

PEANUT BUTTER ENDOWMENT

The Rock River Food Pantry also has a Peanut Butter Endowment program in which charitable contributions of property, assets or funds are placed. Endowments are created for non-profit organizations in support of a specific goal. The Peanut Butter Endowment was created to purchase food to distribute to our clients. Join in this valuable cause by making a one-time or recurring donation. You may go to the web site at <http://www.rrvp.org/peanut-butter-endowment/> and view the brochure outlining the program and you can donate on line.

The Twelve Days of Christmas

We all heard and have probably sang the "Twelve Days of Christmas" song during the Christmas season but did you know that the Twelve Days of Christmas begins on December 25th, Christmas Day and ends on January 5th, the Epiphany?

There's a theory claiming that during a time when Christians were punished for worshipping openly, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" song was used to secretly pass on the ideology of Christianity. Per this theory, each gift on the list symbolizes a different aspect of the Christian faith:

The **Partridge in the Pear Tree** is Jesus Christ.

The **2 Turtle Doves** are The Old and New Testaments.

The **3 French hens** are Faith, Hope and Charity, the theological virtues.

The **4 Calling Birds** are the four gospels and/or the four evangelists.

The **5 Golden Rings** are the first five books of the Old Testament.

The **6 Geese A-laying** are the six days of creation.

The **7 Swans A-swimming** are the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments.

The **8 Maids A-milking** are the eight beatitudes.

The **9 Ladies Dancing** are the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The **10 Lords A-leaping** are the ten commandments.

The **11 Pipers Piping** are the eleven faithful apostles.

The **12 Drummers Drumming** are the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed.

Submitted by Donna Layng

Scout Blood Drive



Thank you to everyone who came out to the Scout blood drive on December 12th. We had 20 people come through and if three lives are saved per donation that adds up to 60 lives. Way to go everyone!

Sandy Laughlin Schwartz—Via Facebook

Ancestry® Library Edition

Did you know that your Cherry Valley Public Library card gives you free access to Ancestry® Library Edition? This database includes billions of historical records and photographs from around the world, including from the U.S., the U.K., and Canadian census and vital records, immigration and passport records, periodicals and books and more.

Ancestry® Library Edition can only be used in the library. You may go to the library and use their public computers or you may take your own computer to gain access there.

Start researching your family's history today. It's fun and very enlightening.



Reprinted from the Cherry Valley Public Library Newsletter.

Successful Cookie Walk!

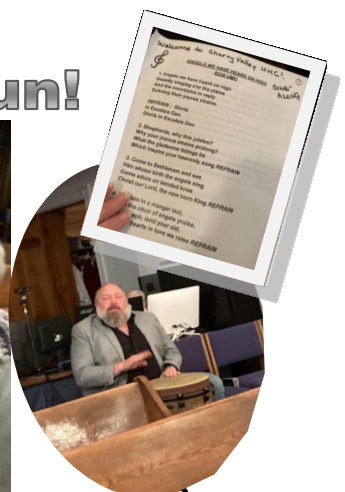


The Cookie Walk held on Sunday, December 18th was a tremendous success!

Thank you to all who donated an amazing variety of delicious cookies, candies and breads. Thank you to all who bought the delicious treats and donated so generously. Total sales were \$360!

Lucy Powell, Treasurer
CV Methodist Women

Sing-along fun!



Global Mission Secondary School

The JOY of the Lord always warms me when I read the posts by Pastor Kim. I am instantly reminded of God's presence and His goodness everywhere!

Pastor Kim's most recent posts start with the phrase... 'Follow the Word and the Holy Spirit (1010) Hallelujah!' I believe she starts with that phrase to remind herself and those around her that this mission is driven by the Word and the Holy Spirit. It is not hers; it is His! She rarely shares the difficulties she faces in this ongoing project to build a mission school in a foreign country. So much bureaucracy; almost always driven by money challenges in every move. She writes about the building of the prayer chapel – thinking it will be the easiest of all the buildings because of its size...and yet she says, 'there were so many interruptions that the 12 pillars were torn apart; they were all broken and re-worked, and it took a lot of time to find someone with trust and skills because the construction workers demanded too much money. (There is that word 'money' again.) Indeed, there are so many untold, beneath the layers of stories, but they humble me before the mighty Lord.'

Somehow God finds a way through the maze of challenges; beyond our own efforts. We know that the challenges are part of the story; for they involve the very people of the country; and they witness what God can do. Praise the Lord! If it were easy to do, do you think the people would believe?

She says, and I paraphrase; she invited Choi Kwon-si, a member of the Korean United Methodist Women of the Northern Illinois Conference who helped provide the funding, to come to the closing ceremony. She (Pastor Kim) was moved when she walked with the principal and student representatives among the students and faculty who lined up for the closing ceremony, she felt like she was dreaming and hot tears rolled out as she prayed for the dedication.

"Lord, let the fourth year students who are graduating from this school love and trust in you and know the power of prayer and enjoy praying. I am sure that if you give me experiences of prayer-answers while you are in school, you will be key players that will change Tanzania and the world. Lord, please climb this prayer tower and meet everyone who desperately seeks you and lead them to hope and future. In the name of Jesus I pray. Amen. "

The prayer chapel is in the center of the school; a focal point of this mission school; a reminder that the Word and the Spirit dwell in this place.

With God's grace we grow together! Judy Long

The Prayer Tower was built by committed Korean United Methodist Women in Northern Illinois Conference, United States. Mrs. Choi, president of this KUMW came to Tanzania and was part of its dedication service. May God bless Mrs. Choi, Korean United Methodist Women in NIC, and the GMSS community.

Our Missionary in Tanzania

Young Seon (Christina) Kim continues her mission to help bring secondary education to the people of Tanzania with the construction of The Global Mission Secondary School.

DONATIONS:

You may send a check to:
Advance GCFA
P.O. Box 9068
New York, NY10087-9068
With the advance
number on the memo line
Advance # 3022281

Contact information for Young
Seon Kim
Telephone: +255 68 976 1708
Email: yskim1023@gmail.com
Facebook: Young Seon Kim
Kakaotalk: yskim1470



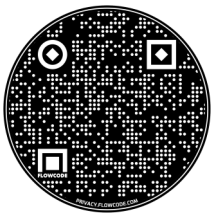
January 2023

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
1 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 	2 6:00 Scouts BSAG	3 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	4 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Praise Team 2:00 pm Choir 6:30 pm Trustees	5 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	6	7 9:00 am GA
8 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Methodist Women	9 6:00 Scouts BSAG	10 6:00 pm Finance Committee Meeting 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB 7:00 pm Church Council	11 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Praise Team 2:00 pm Choir	12 6:30 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm Mission/ Outreach	13	14 9:00 am GA
15 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship <i>Messenger items due today</i>	16 6:00 Scouts BSAG <i>Pastor in Wisconsin for classes January 16—Jan 20</i>	17 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	18 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Praise Team 2:00 pm Choir 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Group	19 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	20	21 9:00 am GA
22 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship	23 6:00 Scouts BSAG	24 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	25 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Praise Team 2:00 pm Choir	26 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	27	28 9:00 am GA
29 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship	30 6:00 Scouts BSAG	31 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB				

MESSENGER ITEMS ARE DUE TO THE SECRETARY ON THE 15TH OF EACH MONTH.



Cherry Valley United Methodist Church
112 South Cherry Street, P.O. Box 235
Cherry Valley, Illinois 61016



Let us
WORSHIP
Together

Sunday@ 9:00 am—Sunday School all ages
(September—June)

Sunday@ 10:00 am—In-person Worship
Live You Tube streaming at Cherry Valley
United Methodist Church.

Contact us:

Office phone: 815/332-5075

E-mail: churchinthevalley@comcast.net

Web Site: cherryvalleyumc.com

Facebook: [Cherry Valley United Methodist Church](https://www.facebook.com/CherryValleyUnitedMethodistChurch)



Pastor: Rev. Mark Harkness
Deacon: Rev. Danice Loveridge
Secretary: Nancy Laurent

Church Office Hours
Tuesday – Friday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm