



THE MESSENGER

December 2023

Cherry Valley United Methodist

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Our Mission: *Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of*

A Word From the Pastor

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

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

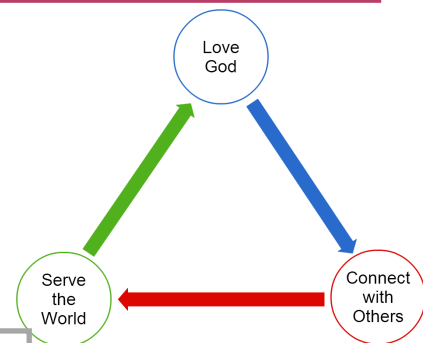
I've been thinking about Christmas lately. In particular, I've pondered Christmases past; but not because I've had a visit from Jacob Marley's ghost. Instead, I've been reflecting on how my expectations of Christmas have changed over the years.

For instance, I remember the blue aluminum Christmas tree that my grandma and grandpa had back in the 1970's. Oh, how I admired that glorious tree. Now, I wouldn't consider having something so ghastly {hyperbole} in my home. I remember the disappointment of unwrapping a gift, only to find socks. Blah! Now, I look forward to seeing what socks I do receive. As a child, I combed the catalogues (remember them) making notes of everything that I wanted to get for Christmas. Now, I spend my time contemplating what gifts I'll give to others.

As a child, I remember leaving Christmas Eve services at Bartonville Christian Church singing "Joy to the World" to find that Santa had come to church too with a bag of oranges. For the past few decades, Christmas Eve worship has concluded with candlelight and "Silent Night," and I no longer wonder why baby Jesus would sleep in heavenly peas.

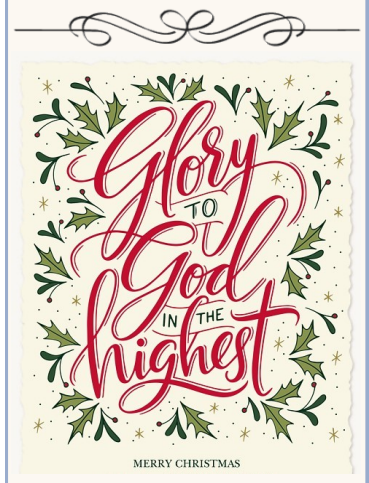
Even though my particular expectations have changed/evolved/matured, Christmas continues to fill me with a sense of anticipation. God did a new thing for us that first Christmas, choosing not only to send Jesus as a savior, but entrusting a simple and ordinary young virgin, a carpenter, their family, and community to care for him and to raise him. Like other new parents they were filled with joy and possibilities of infant's birth; and as other parents probably feeling a bit of trepidation about, not only the changes this would mean for their lives, but also about what the future holds for this new life.

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It's a common trope among clergy to remind our people that the Christmas season doesn't **end** on December 25, but that it **begins** on December 25. Although we celebrate Christmas at the end of our calendar year, it is about anticipating the new possibilities that lie ahead. Even in Dicken's *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge discovered that wonder of anticipation about what might be – and chose to live for a better future. Having fallen out of the habit of spending Christmas with his family and friends, he lost them. But when he found excuses to be with them again, his family was restored and friendships blossomed.

In Christmas, God offers us an annual opportunity to be filled with hope and anticipation about what the future holds for us in his love. Likewise, Christmas serves as an invitation and an excuse to renew our relationship with God and one another. As we approach Christmas this year, may you be filled with a sense of anticipation for what God will do in your life and in the world. Then maybe, instead of waiting to have your sleep disrupted by ghosts, take time to ratify that anticipation as we gather to meet a newborn hope in Jesus.

Your brother in Christ,

Rev. Mark Harkness



Members & Friends

Les Banks
Sandra Baxter
Glenn Carnine
Pat Gorsuch
Doris Kuelz
Hannah Lawrence

Military Personnel

Gage Christensen
Sean Conderman
Dan Harter
Wesley Harter
Mark Kincaide

Mission

Pastor Kim & the Next
Generation Ministry

Those Who Mourn



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.

Finance Committee Report

Income \$12,334.46
Expenses 14,184.68
Deficit -1,850.22

Thankfully, income was \$2,000 more in October than in September. However, quarterly property and liability insurance of \$2,651.67 was due so our expenses were higher.

Thank you for your continued support of CVUMC!



Nursery Available During Worship



We have a wonderful space specifically dedicated as a nursery for pre-school toddlers and infants. We have recently added new furnishings to make the space inviting for children and for their parents as well. You are welcome to bring your infant or pre-school toddler to the nursery so that the worship service might be more meaningful without worry or distraction.

"PLAY GIVES CHILDREN A CHANCE TO PRACTICE WHAT THEY ARE LEARNING."

- Mr. Rogers



*Thank you to all who helped with the
Hanging of the Greens
on Sunday, November 26.
The sanctuary looks wonderful!*

Keep Up to Date with our APP



MinistryOne™



Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play

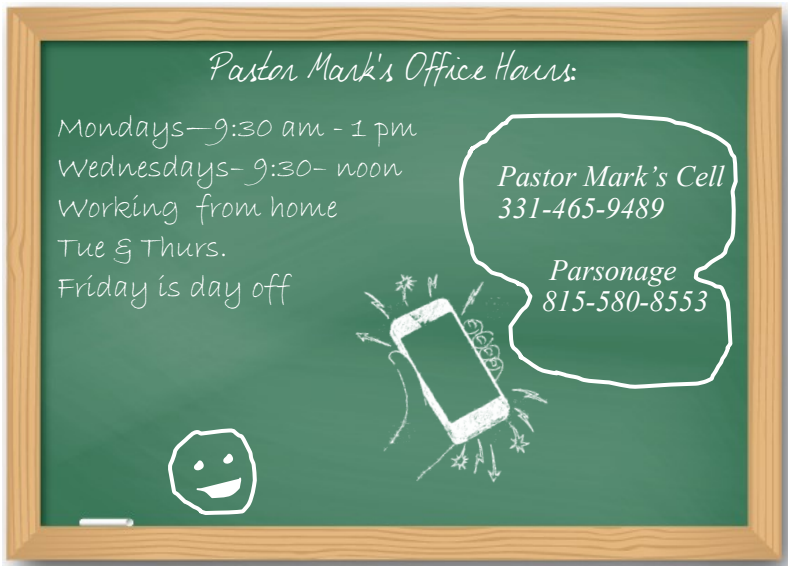
Directory — Calendar — Streaming links — More...

Scripture Readings

December 3	1 st Week in Advent
Psalm	80:1-7, 14-19
Scripture Lesson	Isaiah 64:1-9
Gospel	Mark 13:24-37
Message	“Stay Tuned!”
Series.....	<i>Coming Soon #1</i>
December 10	2 nd Sunday in Advent
Psalm	85
Scripture Lesson	2 Peter 3:8-15a
Gospel	Mark 1:1-8
Message	“Baptismal Limitations”
Series.....	<i>Coming Soon #2</i>
December 17	3 rd Sunday in Advent
Psalm	126
Scripture Lesson	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Gospel	John 1:6-8, 19-23
Message	“John, the Doppelgänger”
Series.....	<i>Coming Soon #3</i>
December 24	4 th Sunday in Advent
Psalm	UMH # 199
Scripture Lesson	Romans 16:25-27
Gospel	Luke 1:46b-55
Message	“The Subjunctive Space”
Series.....	<i>Coming Soon #4</i>
December 24	Christmas Eve
Psalm	96
1 st Scripture Lesson....	Isaiah 9:2-7
2 nd Scripture Lesson...	Titus 2:11-14
Gospel	Luke 2:1-20
Message	“The Foggy Fringe”
Series.....	<i>Coming Soon #5</i>
December 31	1 st Sunday of Christmas
Psalm	148
Scripture Lesson	Galatians 4:4-7
Gospel	Luke 2:22-40
Message	“The Credits Roll”
Series.....	<i>Coming Soon #6</i>



Thank you to **Juanita Barnes** for delivering to the Rock River Food Pantry in November the **105 pounds** of food that you had donated. Thank you for your support of the Pantry!



Methodist Women

The Methodist Women met on Sunday, November 12th following worship. After an opening prayer, we conducted our usual business.



- We extended a thank you to Dana Ward for spearheading the Women's Gathering in October. We discussed the possibility of another event in the Spring, extending the invitation to more women.
- The discussion about changing our meeting time from the second Sunday to the third Sunday was resolved by keeping the second Sunday meeting time.
- Terri Burritt reported on the Christmas Shoe Box project. She reported that there was sufficient money to ship the boxes with no further funds required. Once again, this congregation has stepped forward to serve a need.
- The Cookie Walk will be December 17th. We discussed how we would distribute the work load with the crews who have volunteered to work the event.
- Plans were discussed to deliver the Christmas stockings we have collected to the Rock House Kids. Since we have all the stockings needed for this year, we will be collecting money to purchase stocking for next year.
- Thanksgiving cards were distributed among the women. We send cards to shut-ins and those of our congregation on that we miss seeing on Sundays.

We were honored to have Deacon Danice join us. She has offered to serve us in any way we would like. We made some suggestions and will inform you of our activities.

Juanita Barnes

Women's Bible Study

The Monday evening Women's Bible Study is on a break until January 8th when we will resume our study of *Ten Women of the Bible*, by Max Lucado. Please contact Terri Burritt or Lucy Powell if you would like to attend.



Greeters and Liturgist Needed



We are still seeking a few dedicated people to volunteer to greet and perform liturgist duties.



We have provided a sign-in sheet on the table at the back of the sanctuary. Please check your for your availability and consider volunteering for these very important aspects of the worship service. Your church needs you!

For more information, please speak with Juanita Barnes.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays of the Month

- 5 Nicholas Mungor
- 6 Delilah Herold
- 10 Carolyn Kloss
- 12 Pat Cowan
- 14 Bill Harned
- 16 Craig Wilt
- 19 Karen Harter
- 20 Veronica Layng
- 22 Lynn Brown
- 26 Ann Harned
- 29 Nola Carnine
- 31 Jenny Dwyer

Anniversaries

29 Ryan & Jamie Spears



Below is the listing of the leadership of the Cherry Valley UMC for the upcoming year. The nominations were approved at the Church Conference on October 25. A copy of this and other reports that were submitted to the Conference are available from the church office.

Cherry Valley United Methodist Church (Mark Harkness, Pastor)
Nominations Report 2023 (for 2024)

Church Leadership

Pastor	Rev. Mark Harkness	
Lay Leader	Scott Layng	2024
Recording Secretary	Juanita Barnes	2024
Treasurer	Scott Layng	2024
Financial Secretary	Mary Lou Clevenger	
Lay Members to AC	Sue Layng	2024
	Dave Ward	2024
Membership Secretary	Barbara Anderson	2025
Worship Committee – Chair	Juanita Barnes	2024
Outreach & Evangelism Chair	Rev. Danice Loveridge	2025
Memorials Committee – Chair	Grace Harter	2024

Administrative Council (serves as SPRC/Finance/Trustees)

Pastor	Rev. Mark Harkness	Class
Lay Leader / Treasurer	Scott Layng	<i>ex officio</i>
SPRC Chair	Cindy Kerr	2024
Finance – Chair	Lucille Powell	2025 (2)
Trustees Chair	Yolanda Beets	2026 (1)
Lay Member to Annual Conference	David Ward	2025 (1)
Recording Secretary	Juanita Barnes	2024 (1)
At-Large	Mary Coulter	2026 (1)
	Charles Schnuckel	2026 (1)
	David Harter	2026 (1)

Fundraising/Stewardship Team

Lucille Powell (Finance Chair)

Property Team

Dave Anderson Dave Ward
Charlie Schnuckel Ray Beets

Nominations Committee

Rev. Mark Harkness (Chair)
Scott Layng (Lay Leader)
Lavern Neff 2025
2026

Audit Committee

Sally Hollebeak
Charlie Schmuckel

Outreach & Evangelism

Rev. Danice Loveridge (Chair) 2025
Amanda Kloepfer
Terry Burritt

Worship Committee

Juanita Barnes (Chair) Ray Beets
Barb Clucas Holly Snyder
Lavern Neff Shirley Cardani
Patricia Irps (worship tech)
Mandy Kloepfer (streaming tech)

Committee on Memorials & Gifts

Grace Harter (Chair) 2024
Jordyn Burritt 2025
Lavern Neff 2025
Donna Layng 2024

Lay Members to Annual Conference

Sue Layng, Dave Ward

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.

What Exactly is a Deacon in the UMC



Hello Cherry Valley UMC! For 3 ½ years now Mike and I have been worshipping and serving with you here. It has been a joy for us to get to know some of you better. While we have been together all this time, I have neglected to help you understand the difference between a deacon and an elder. They are equal in value but called to distinct ministries.

Pastor Mark is an Elder and he is called to preach and teach the Word, help its people serve inside and outside of the church, preside over the sacraments, and administer over the order and function of the church. He is appointed by the Northern Illinois Conference Bishop to a specific church (s) for a specific length of time.

I am a Deacon. Deacons are clergy leaders who are called by God, authorized by the church and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of word, service, compassion and justice. Deacons exemplify Christian discipleship, nurture others in their relationship to God and lead the church to respond to the needs of the needy, neglected and marginalized of the world.

In the congregation, deacons teach, preach, officiate at funerals and weddings, offer pastoral care, assist the elder in administering Baptism and Holy Communion, lead discipleship development ministries and help lay people identify and claim their own ministries. Deacons lead the congregation in its servant ministry and equip and support all baptized Christians in their ministry. Outside the walls of the church, deacons share the good news in word and in their advocacy for the poor, neglected, oppressed and discouraged; provide ministries of mercy; and invite Christians into these ministries.

When deacons are appointed to primary ministries outside of the walls of the church, then they must also have a secondary appointment to a church where they can worship and serve. I am appointed to 4HealthyU as a certified Health and Wellness Coach. My secondary appointment is to CVUMC as a non-compensated clergy. Here, I assist the elder in as many ways as I can, but I am not an elder and do not work for the church. I plug in where and when I can. Primarily, in addition to assisting the elder with worship, I facilitate the Missions and Outreach arm of the church.

I do hope this letter helps with the understanding of the differences between the two orders in the UMC. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. I look forward to many more years of service with you as we develop disciples for Christ for the transformation of the world!

Grace and peace,
Rev. Danice Loveridge, Deacon



The Missions and Outreach (M and O), met in September to plot the course for our future endeavors. At that time, we felt that we needed to hear from the Pastor and the Administrative Council on their thoughts as to the direction of the church before we could move forward. We asked them if the church should become internally focused or stay externally focused.

At the November Council meeting, it was decided that as a church, we will focus more on providing nurture and care for our members and visitors and find ways to invite the public to our building. There were discussions of how we could promote the church as a community center for specific activities. In the future you will see M and O focusing more on inviting folks to our building and reminding them that we are a church.

We will continue to partner with Rockford Rescue Mission and serve lunch on the third Thursday of the month. We welcome anyone who would like to assist. There are jobs to be done at all skill and ability levels. We will also continue to collect stockings for Rock House Kids, collect food for the local food pantries, and support Operation Christmas Child Shoebox ministry.

Our Mission Moments will be focused on informing the congregation about our new direction. If you have ideas for ways you would like to see the church being used in the community, or have ideas for how you would like to see the church nurture and care for its members and visitors, please feel free to reach out to me. We are always looking for folks to serve on this team and share their hearts for missions.

In His Service,
Deacon Danice

"Give your hands to serve, and your hearts to love."
– Mother Teresa

Global Missions Update



As I reviewed the recent posts of Pastor Kim, I was moved by her heartfelt concern of the life of Nestory. She said, there is a student who makes me cry every time I see him climb the prayer tower. As a teacher we all have special students who capture our hearts. These special students are what make teaching so rewarding; these special students are what keep us moving forward. Pastor Kim obviously is moved by this young man.

Nestory is virtually blind.

In order to learn, he sits in the front row to capture the words on the blackboard. He holds a book close to his face to make out the words. Nestory is always smiling, but his eyes are bad. Even with these limitations, Nestory rises above both academically and socially. He is a strong leader respected by his peers and is the student president. Two months ago, he went to a hospital to get his glasses checked. There he was told by a specialist that the structures of his eyes are weak and can't reflect light, so he must take medicine to restore the eye. *Glasses will not help!*

At chapel, Nestory gave his testimony. "I have difficulty reading books or things that teachers write on blackboards. No one knows what pain I'm going through, but God does. He is with me and he helps me. So I don't get sad and I don't give up. Praying and believing that God will heal me."

Pastor Kim then lead the GMSS Global Mission Middle School community in a relay prayer as students and teachers prepare for the national exams. Nestory said he took his exams all week long, and said he felt the power of prayer.

Nestory came in 5th place with a GPA of 86.48. He originally was a student who received 50% of his entire tuition fees - a half-paid scholarship, but received an additional 300,000 shillings as a grade scholarship. Pastor Kim thanks the Lord for the gift of encouragement to Nestory who is reading a book almost up to his nose. "Lord, I believe and pray that you will heal Nestory."

Pastor Kim is a prayer warrior. She built the prayer tower in the center of the campus for a reason. She believes in the healing power of our Lord Jesus Christ. ***Church - Let us join her in her prayer for a miracle of sight for Nestory.***

With God's grace we grow together!
Your missionary in Christ!
Judy Long

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

Operation Christmas Child



Thank you to all who assembled shoeboxes and donated to this cause that means so much to children around the world.

Thirty-nine (39) shoeboxes were delivered to the collection site on Monday, November 20th.

Look for a more detailed report in the January *Messenger*.



A very big "Thank You" to this group of Scouts and friends who cleaned the outside gardens on October 28th. It looks fantastic and all ready for the winter season. We are so grateful to the scouts who do so much for CVUMC!

To view the picture more clearly, visit Facebook page [Cherry Valley United Methodist Church Group](#)

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 9:00 am GA
3 10:00 am Worship	4 6:00 Scouts BSAG 7:00 pm Advent Study	5 6:00 pm Finance 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	6 9:00 am Bible Study 2:00 pm Choir 6:30 pm Trustees	7 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	8	9 9:00 am GA
10 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Women's Group	11 6:00 Scouts BSAG 7:00 pm Advent Study	12 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	13 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Group 2:00 pm Choir 5:30 pm Christmas Sing-Along & Potluck	14 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	15 <i>Messenger Items Due Today</i>	16 9:00 am GA
17 10:00 am Worship 11:00 pm Cookie Walk 	18 6:00 Scouts BSAG 7:00 pm Advent Study	19 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	20 9:00 am Bible Study 2:00 pm Choir	21 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	22	23 9:00 am GA
24 10:00 am Worship 7 pm & 11 pm Christmas Eve Worship Services 	25 	26 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB <i>Church Office Closed</i>	27 9:00 am Bible Study	28 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	29	30
31 10:00 am Worship						

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

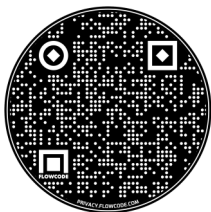




Joy to the world



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



Pastor: Rev. Mark Harkness

Deacon: Rev. Danice Loveridge

Secretary: Nancy Laurent

Church Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm



It's Poinsettia Time!

It's time to order poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas and honor your loved ones.

The varieties available are all red, white and marbled pink, which is a variegated pink and white. The cost is \$12.00 per plant, regardless of the variety you choose. Fill out the order form below with the type and number of plants desired, along with your check made out to Cherry Valley United Methodist Church and return it to Juanita Barnes before December 5.

Deadline: December 5, 2023

Name of Family Ordering Plant _____
In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Red poinsettia # _____ @ \$12.00 Total amount \$ _____
White poinsettia # _____ @ \$12.00 Total amount \$ _____
Marbled poinsettia # _____ @ \$12.00 Total amount \$ _____
The poinsettias will be in the sanctuary for Christmas Eve.
Please take your plant (s) home after the candlelight worship service on Christmas Eve.

★ **Date: December 17th** ★

★ **After Worship** ★

Cookie Walk



Goodies will be sold after worship. Come early... Get treats for your special Someone...and for yourself! This is one of our very best Fundraisers. Invite your friends and family to come and take advantage of these delicious treats.

Home made Christmas cookies & candies sold for \$5 per pound. Breads are individually priced. All proceeds will benefit the Cherry Valley United Methodist Church missions and church projects.

Contact person: Donna Layng

