

Board Walk Plus ~ Holiday Edition

Dear Friends,

Since this issue will include happenings and information for November and December, I decided to name it a “Holiday Edition.” There is so much going on at the Hornell United Presbyterian Church that I have forgotten things I meant to include! I hope you are finding this newsletter to be informative and useful. If you have ideas for a column, or wish to contribute to a future issue, please let me know. You may email me at: cindy.fitzwater@gmail.com.

I hope to start highlighting a “Church Family of the Month” and including more committee notes and/or minutes. Please send me anything you would like added.

Please take time to enjoy the holiday season. Reach out to someone in need, share a smile, offer support to a stranger. Be KIND - to yourself and to others. Count your blessings. May the spirit of this Advent Season bring you much JOY.

Faithfully yours,

Cindy Fitzwater

PS. We are still looking for volunteers to provide a message to our church youth on Sundays! If you would like to do a **Children’s Message**, please let me know. I have an empty calendar as of January 1st so please consider helping out! Thank you.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 12/7: Alternative Holiday Market Kick-off
- 12/14: Christmas Pageant
- 12/15: Bazaar Committee Meeting – 7 PM
- 12/16: Joint meeting Trustees & Session – 6 PM
- 12/17: Christmas Socks Party – 3:45 PM
- 12/18: Blue Christmas Service & Vendors 5-8 PM
- 12/24: Christmas Eve Service – 7 PM



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The Pastor's Pathway...

As I pass the 90-day mark as your called Pastor—and nearly a full year of serving this congregation; it is humbling to reflect on all that God is doing in and through UPC. Here are a few highlights from recent months:

- We eagerly prepare for our traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service, always a cherished moment in our life together.
- CareFirst NY invited me to write a letter in support of a grant application, and I am delighted to share that they received the funding. It is a joy to partner with organizations strengthening our community. We also received a nice thank you card from Catholic Charities for assisting with their pantry.
- The grief support will resume after the holidays. Participants all offered feedback that this is a most helpful service. We continue to receive new inquiries to participate.
- This year we will hold our first Blue Christmas Service, acknowledging that the holidays can be difficult for many. CareFirst asked to participate, and with Session's approval, we will welcome several community organizations to host tables in the Great Room before the service. We have people offering services for addiction, behavioral health, hospice, and more. I feel encouraged by the growing relationships forming through this effort.
- We also hosted our first Transgender Day of Remembrance Service, honoring those lost to violence since the observance began in 1999. While the number of deaths in the U.S. was lower this year, we were saddened to learn that many were older adults. It was a sobering and important time of learning and remembrance.
- Our 9th annual Crèche Lighting was a beautiful success. Community members arrived early, taking photos and enjoying the decorations. The new Crèche figures offer a meaningful reminder of why we celebrate this season.
- I am thankful to all those who helped decorate our church for the holidays. Indeed, our sanctuary is a place of God's peace and hope, and a reminder of eternal life in Christ.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, I look forward to what God has planned for us in the new year.

Pastor Ted

ALTERNATIVE HOLIDAY MARKET 2025: Indoor Plumbing

I can remember the good old days of our family camping trips, and I bet you can, too. Sure, it was a great adventure to camp out in the woods, roughing it and tramping to the outhouse...for a few days. But do you also remember grabbing your flashlight and trying to make your way to the outhouse after dark? It became a whole different experience at night! Strange noises, the rustling of unseen raccoons or the whiff of a skunk, afraid of the unknown but 'nature calls.' The call is stronger than the fear, so you press on. Now, imagine this is not a family vacation or a weekend adventure, but a way of life - because your village has no plumbing. Instead of an outhouse, you must find a spot wherever you can, not too close and not too far, hoping that you have privacy and that you're not too near the local water supply.

Alternative Holiday Market (AHM) continued...**According to the World Health Organization (WHO):**

- Over 1.5 billion people still do not have basic sanitation services, such as private toilets or latrines.
- Poor sanitation is linked to transmission of diseases such as cholera and dysentery, as well as typhoid, intestinal worm infections and polio.
- Women are especially vulnerable. Going out at night is not just a challenge, but a real danger! Instead of the occasional raccoon or opossum, you must be on the lookout for deadly snakes, tigers or worse, two-legged predators lying in wait. Women and girls of child-bearing age require, and deserve, extra privacy each month for personal hygiene. Lack of proper facilities may result in missing several days of school each month. Again, from the WHO, "Poor sanitation reduces human well-being, social and economic development due to impacts such as anxiety, risk of sexual assault, and lost opportunities for education and work."

Benefits of improved sanitation include:

- reducing the spread of intestinal diseases that cause suffering for millions
- promoting dignity and boosting safety, particularly among women and girls
- promoting school attendance: girls' school attendance is particularly boosted by the provision of separate sanitary facilities

We are so fortunate to have hot and cold running water and indoor plumbing. Everyday conveniences, which we often take for granted, are a luxury, even life-saving services for others around the world. This year the Alternative Holiday Market will collect funds for the Latrine Project through Presbyterian Giving to help promote community safety and good hygiene in villages across the globe. Watch for more details.

Submitted by Bev Packard, AHM Coordinator

ALTERNATIVE HOLIDAY MARKET is a FUN-draiser!

Be sure to stop at December Fellowship Hours to play some games to help us raise funds for this very important and worthwhile mission.

Board Walk ~ November 2025**Session Boardwalk**

Session had a long discussion about the UPC Website at its November stated meeting. Several Elders met with Jason Tutak, who has redesigned our website, on 18 November to learn what needs to be done to get the site in its final shape. Jason worked with Jen during this meeting, showing her how to make changes to content. Session will work with Jen to see what she needs. She will be the primary person to make changes in content, but we need to have others who can provide backup. Pastor Ted will have his own page.

Session discussed members that the Rolls Committee reported as needing attention. Elders will be in touch

with these members to explore what their spiritual needs are.

Session decided to keep the mission amounts in the budget the same as this year.

Pastor Warner will offer a Blue Christmas service on 18 December, and Session approved inviting community non-profit organizations to participate by providing information.

Thanks to Linda Cox, Session will introduce Elder-of-the-Month starting in January. Linda has already been doing this, but other Elders will now volunteer for a month at a time.

Submitted by Jim Varner, Clerk of Session

Trustees Boardwalk

Happy Holidays from the Trustees! We've been busy working on a number of important projects:

- The Trustees have opened a new account with Maple City Savings Bank to allow for the use of a debit card, as many purchases now require one. A new policy for safe and appropriate card use has been created and approved by both the Trustees and Session.
- A new online donation system has been set up and will soon be available on our website and social media.
- A KnoxBox has been purchased and will be installed per the request of the Hornell Fire Department.
- A new contract has been signed for snow removal.
- Budget planning for next year is well underway.
- Church maintenance projects continue, including efforts to secure a contractor for the bathroom remodel/repairs.
- Manse maintenance projects are also progressing—the front porch light has been replaced, along with other items currently in the works.

We hope everyone has a wonderful and blessed Holiday season!

Submitted by Jeremy Holbrook, Trustees Chairperson



Committee Comments

Crèche Committee: The new crèche figures were set up in front of the church on Saturday November 29th. Thank you to everyone who came and helped – it was truly a group effort. From carrying or carting the figures from the shed, tying them down, adjusting lights, and finding a perfect spot for the owl, many hands made light work, for sure. It is a community treasure.



Crèche Lighting 2025: The ninth annual Crèche lighting service took place on Sunday November 30th at 6:00 PM, with about 50 people in attendance - from our church and the Hornell community. Jo Barnard welcomed everyone to this special event and Pastor Ted opened the service with prayer. Megan Haley shared a brief history of our crèche, and Lisa Sanford read an original poem about it. Orpheus sang a beautiful song and some members of our UPC choir led the singing of two familiar Christmas carols. What a magnificent sight when the lights were turned on and our beautiful new figures illuminated for all to see and enjoy during this Advent season. Cookies and hot cocoa were served following the service in the Chapel.



Christian Education Committee: Our Sunday School youth will be presenting a **Christmas Pageant** on Sunday, December 14, 2025 during worship. Please plan to attend!

Music & Worship Committee – This committee coordinated decorating of the church for Advent. The process this year made the job seem much easier than it is, but we had many volunteers who helped so that the sanctuary and other areas of our church are magnificent. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way. Hanging of the Greens and Chrismon's took place on Sunday 11/30 during worship.

We discussed our budget for next year, and with some adjustments, submitted a request for \$50 less than in 2025. The Session tasked us with revisiting and updating our wedding and funeral policies. We began discussions at our November meeting. Alternative

Holiday Market plans were formulated, and we identified families to light each Advent candle.

We are still seeking people to purchase a name plate for our new Glory to God hymnals – for \$25 you can have a hymnal dedicated in honor or in memory of someone special to you. Forms are available at the office. This will recognize someone special in your life, and will help defray the cost of the hymnals.

We are a very busy group, as evidenced by our marathon three-hour meeting in November! I would like to thank everyone who serves on this committee for the time and talent they dedicate to this work: Bev Packard, Cindy Banker, Diane Griffin, Diane Willey, Earl Packard, Jen Kellogg, Jon Richeson, Lee Richeson, Linda Varner, Peg Knopf-Willsey, and Pastor Ted.

Submitted by Cindy Fitzwater, M & W Chair

Bazaar Committee: There will be a Bazaar Committee meeting on Monday December 15th at 7:00 in the conference room. IF you helped in ANY way with the bazaar, you are part of the committee! We need to decide how to disburse our funds from the 2025 bazaar and to discuss any changes, complaints, or praise for this year or thoughts for next year. Zoom will not be available so if you have thoughts or ideas and can't be at the meeting, please email them to Cindy Banker (cjbanker@stny.rr.com) or text them to her at 607-661-6831 before the 15th. Thank you!

Submitted by Cindy Banker

Stonework Committee Reception

The Stonework Committee hosted a reception in October to thank everyone who contributed in any way to the stonework project. Held at Racalto's, the event was attended by community members and Hornell area business owners. The contractor who did the construction, along with his son and father, drove from Buffalo NY to attend. They presented committee members with a book chronicling the project. A slide show played for everyone to enjoy the transformation to the stonework on our beautiful building.



Tom Cox & Dennis Wilson thank the contractors at the reception

A New Season of Giving: Our Church Angel Tree

How to Participate in the Angel Tree

1. Pick a tag and purchase your gift.
2. Return the gift wrapped with the tag taped to the gift.
3. Place gift under the tree by 12/17
4. Care First will know exactly what person this gift will go to and deliver.
5. If purchasing a gift card – drop it off in the office.

Additionally, many of our hospice families are struggling to have enough food and household supplies. Under the tree will be a large, wrapped box. There will be a **need** "shopping list" filled with non-perishable ideas. Feel free to take a grocery list to help with your shopping. Please place your non-perishables in the wrapped box - the groceries will be separated into individual bags to be delivered with the personal gift.

As our mission continues to grow, one thing remains constant: our desire to serve others in the true spirit of Christmas: Sharing Christ's Love Through Giving.

This season, we invite you to bring hope, warmth, and joy to individuals in our community who could especially use a reminder that they are seen, cared for, and loved.



Church Contacts:

PASTOR: Rev. Ted Warner, MDiv.
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ADMIN ASST: Jennifer Kellogg
| 607-324-0755
secretary@presbyhornell.org

ADDRESS: 150 Main St., Hornell NY 14843

**Congratulations to everyone
celebrating in December:**

Birthdays:

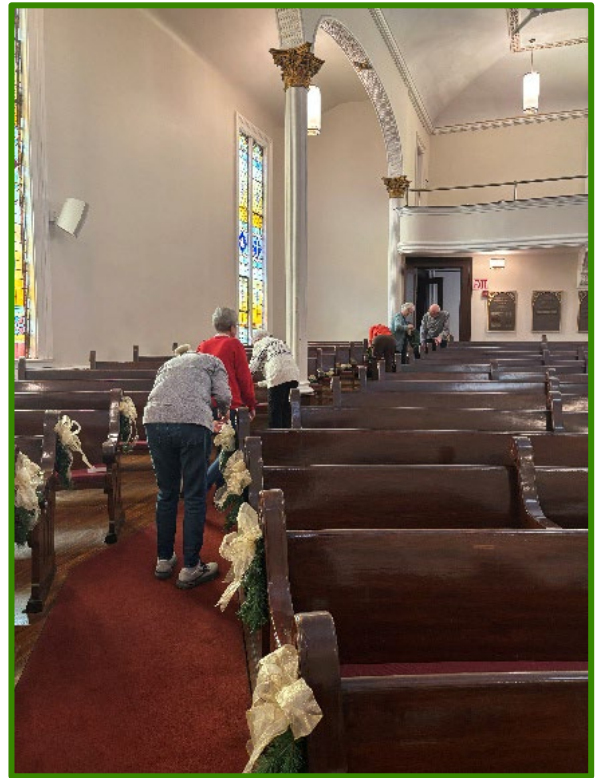
4 – Jim Tastor
6 – Joanne Mastin
11 – Lynn Wilson
12 – Kat Holbrook
14 – Carmen Wilkins
15 – Margaret Nichols
18 – Lynn Buddenhagen
20 – Deb Mammosser
24 – Gene Baker
28 – Bev Packard
29 – Martha Tymeson

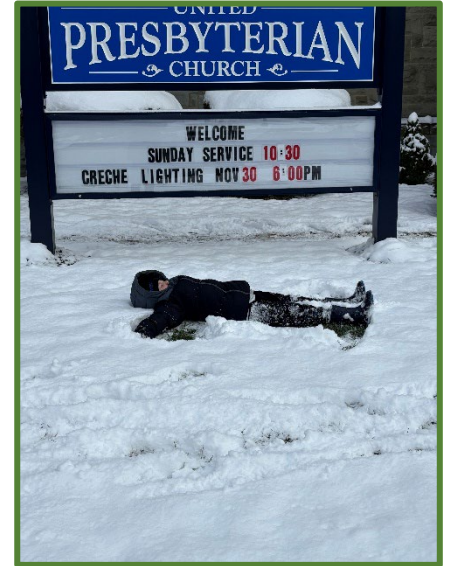
Anniversaries:

15 – Deb & Bill Mammosser
20 – Mary & David Kilgore
31 – Megan & Adam Haley
31 – Bev & Earl Packard

[Please let Cindy F know of any additions or corrections]

Decorating our Sanctuary!





Hanging Chrismons

